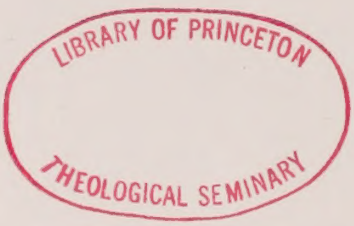

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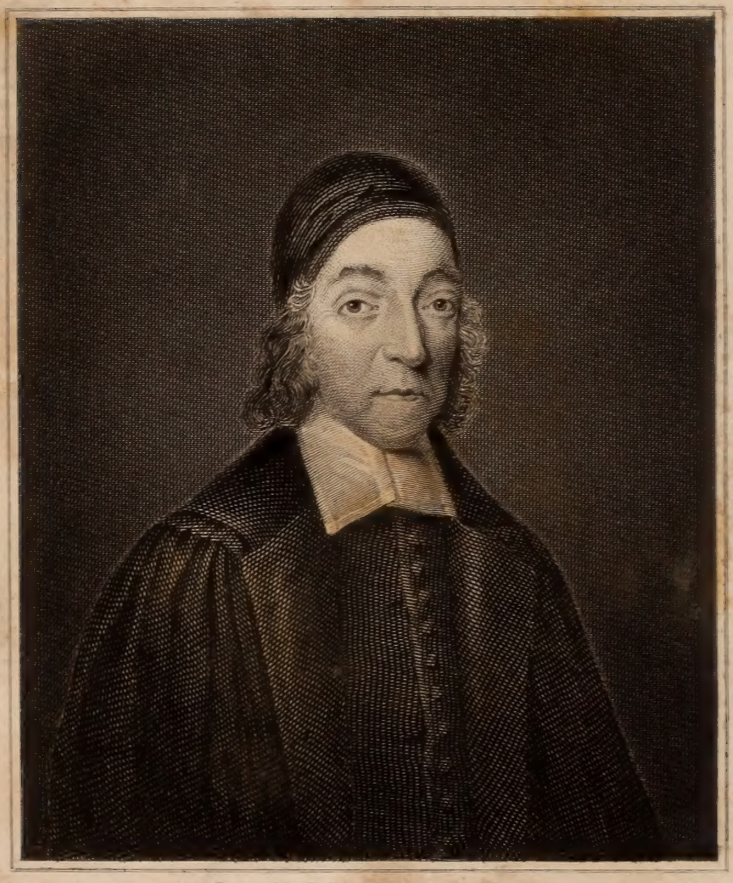
THE

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OF THE

REV. MATTHEW HENRY, V. D. M.

BUNGAY: STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED BY J. R. AND C. CHILDS.



Engraved by R. Scott, from an original Painting

Philip Henry. M. A.

Ob. June 24. 1696. Æt. 65.

Non sub Lege, sed sub Gratia.

Dec. 15. 93.

your unworthy Cosin
Friend & Brother
Philip Henry

London. Published by J.O. Robinson Sept. 1st 1829

Engraved by R. Graves from an original Painting

Mrs Katharine Henry

Ob: Mar 25. 1707. Æt: 79.

Sir Yours much obliged

Kd Henry

London, Published by J O Robinson, Sept.r 1st 1829

THE

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OF THE

REV. MATTHEW HENRY, V. D. M.

CONTAINING,

IN ADDITION TO THOSE HERETOFORE PUBLISHED,

NUMEROUS SERMONS,

NOW FIRST PRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL MSS.

AN APPENDIX,

ON WHAT CHRIST IS MADE TO BELIEVERS, IN FORTY REAL BENEFITS,

BY THE REV. PHILIP HENRY,

NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

AND

A PREFACE,

BY J. B. WILLIAMS, ESQ. F. S. A.

LONDON:

JOSEPH OGLE ROBINSON, 42, POULTRY.

STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED BY J. R. AND C. CHILDS.

MDCCCXXX.

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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PREFACE.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

"THE lips of the righteous," said Solomon, "feed many;" and in our times especially is the assertion verified by the published relics of persons so denominated. In the publications referred to, as in ample storehouses, hath been laid up for the church most invigorating food; and the press, like the blessing upon the widow's stock, continues to multiply and perpetuate the treasure.

Few individuals have been more distinguished for their endeavours to advance the divine honour, by such means, than Matthew Henry. His name, because of his productions as an author, is deservedly *great* in Israel; and in the gates thereof do his works praise him. His course on earth terminated long ago, but not until, in a far more exalted sense than the racers in the Grecian games, he had delivered a torch to survivors—a torch, which guides to heaven; and which not only has remained unextinguished, but still flames with increased and cheering brilliance.

The favourable reception given to the late edition of our author's Scripture Commentary, in three octavo volumes,* has induced the enterprising and zealous proprietor of that unique impression, to send forth, in a size exactly uniform, the ensuing collection of the same inestimable man's Miscellaneous Compositions.

Various editions, some smaller, and some more extended, bearing a similar title, have heretofore appeared. But if the folio of 1726, and the quarto of 1811, be excepted, not one has made the least pretension to completeness. Neither of those editions, though the most perfect of any, is fairly entitled to the distinction. The quarto contained the Sermon at the opening of the Meeting-house in Chester, which was omitted in the folio; and the folio preserved the collection of Family Hymns, while the quarto retained only the Prefatory Essay to that collection. But neither embraced his Treatise on Baptism, nor yet his Memoirs of Mrs. Radford, Mrs. Hulton, or Dr. Tylston.

All Mr. Henry's publications, (except only the tract on the schism bill,† which cannot be discovered,) including the Prefaces he wrote to the Life of Thomas Beard,‡ and Mr. Murrey's book on Closet Devotion,§ will be found in the present undertaking. Many discourses from original, and hitherto unpublished, manuscripts, are added; as are also the admirable sermons, delivered on occasion of his death, by the Rev. Dr. Daniel Wiliams, the Rev. William Tong, and the Rev. John Reynolds of Shrewsbury. They are all, as I am informed, accurately corrected, as well as beautifully printed: and elegance is united with cheapness.

* Originally printed in 6 folios. Mr. Thoresby of Leeds, of antiquarian celebrity, and Mr. Henry's friend, (see the Life prefixed to the Exposition, in oct. *ut supra*, vol i. p. 35.) possessed "the memorable pen, wherewith the far greatest part of the volumes, in folio, was writ, the gift of the reverend author, 1712." See Thoresby's Ducatus Leodensis, Dr. Whitaker's edition, p. 70. in the Catalogue of Natural and Artificial Rarities, fol. 1816.

† See the Life, *ut supra*, p. 108.

‡ The Holy Seed, or the Life of Mr. Tho. Beard, by Jos. Porter, duod. 1711.

§ Closet Devotions, by Robert Murrey, duod. 1713.

Had Mr. Henry's life been lengthened, it was *his* intention to have published the manuscript sermons now introduced, and many others.* The series, alas! in present circumstances broken, would then have been perfect.

As selections from his usual pulpit preparations, and amounting to scarcely more, in any instance, than sermon skeletons, the manuscripts now published will, if compared with other parts of the volume, suffer from the common disadvantages of incompleteness. But while this circumstance has been felt as a reason against their introduction, the consideration of the welcome they are sure to meet with, and the prospect, therefore, of their usefulness, has outweighed that and several other objections. One of those objections—brevity—will be to some persons, no doubt, a recommendation.

It will be observed, by careful readers, how well the manuscripts referred to accord with Mr. Henry's more finished productions, which it will now be seen, more clearly than ever, were only a faithful representation of their author. What he appeared to the world to be as a preacher, he really *was* among his stated auditors, both at Chester and Hackney.

To the whole is appended a set of discourses by the venerable Philip Henry, his father, on what Christ is made to believers in forty real benefits. The subjects of this part of the volume are now first published from the hand-writing of the holy man who penned them; and being thus associated with his Life,† are not, it is thought, unsuitably preserved in the present volume. They have been introduced, indeed, because of their intrinsic excellence; for the greater honour of the writer; and for the sake of a wider circulation than would probably have been secured if published in a detached or separate form.

Independently of their interesting subjects, their author's special approbation of these sermons may be noticed. Philip Henry selected them from his accumulated collection of papers as a legacy to his excellent daughter Mrs. Savage;‡ a fact perpetuated by herself in the commencement of the original manuscript, which forms a thick duodecimo volume.

"What Christ is made of God to true believers in forty real benefits, preached at his meeting-house, at Broad Oak, in Flintshire, by my honoured father, Mr. Henry, thus written with his own dear hand, and left to me, S. S. by his last will, to the end I may learn Christ, and live Christ, and be eternally happy with him. Amen." §

The treasure thus distinguished, is possessed by my respected friend, Mrs. Bunnell, Lower Terrace, Islington, a descendant of Philip Henry; and at my request she kindly communicated it for publication.

Notwithstanding similar regrets attach to the contents of the Appendix, as to the rest of the fragments now, for the first time, made public, the same arguments for their admission preponderated in the one case as in the other; and they fully demonstrate, though unfinished, our author's accuracy, when he pronounced his father's preaching to be "very substantial, and elaborate, and greatly to edification." ‖

All the sermons included in the Appendix are, as their title imports, concerning Christ—in various of those endearing relations which he bears towards his church. It is their individual and combined object to *exalt* him; to maintain his true and proper divinity; to illustrate the necessity and infinite nature of his atonement; and thus to fix every eye upon his cross. They exhibit likewise, in lively and familiar terms, those sources of satisfaction to believers, which alone can minister joy as they travel to their everlasting rest.

It is the exclusive design of one discourse, the eighth of the series, to prove—that Jesus Christ is the Lord our Righteousness; and that it is the *duty* of believers to call him so. No

* See the Life, *ut supra*, p. 111.
† See p. 9.
‡ See her Life, duod. 1828. 4th. ed.
§ Mrs. Savage. The original MS.
‖ See *post*, p. 106.

reader, it is to be hoped, will slight the request which is prefixed to the discussion of that all-interesting topic. *

Nor should it escape notice, in reference to the same sermons, that irrespectively of the uncommon importance of the subjects discussed, they are among the very choicest relics of their author. The date of the first is July 26, 1691, and of the last June 5, 1692. Philip Henry died June 24, 1696. So that, instead of containing any thing crude, they memorialize the piety and wisdom of that eminent man, when both were most matured.

Such are some of the claims which the present volume has upon the public attention.

Besides which, the responsible duties of an editor of all the manuscripts now first printed, have been most judiciously and faithfully discharged by the Rev. Edward Hickman: a gentleman who numbers no less than three of the ejected worthies in the line of his ancestry; and who is himself the fourth in his family of a regular succession of nonconformist divines. His residence at Denton, in Norfolk, so near the press, rendered this service by him especially convenient; and his attainments in the knowledge peculiar to his sacred profession; his ardent attachment to the writings of Mr. Henry; and his deep admiration of their merits; attest his particular fitness for the task, which happily for the public, and the credit of our author, he undertook.

In contemplating Mr. Henry's Miscellaneous Works, in themselves a library of theology, it naturally occurs, how much less known, and consequently less esteemed, *they* have hitherto been than his Exposition. So far, indeed, as paramount attention to Holy Scripture is concerned, this is just as it should be; and it is not wished by any effort, either of commendation or criticism, to weaken the force of that prepossession. The Exposition is, and ever must be, regarded as the *magnum opus* of its author. Nor can it be any presumption to predict of it, as Ovid is reported to have done respecting the far-famed poem of Lucretius, that it will live till the dissolution of all things.

Still it appears somewhat reproachful to the Christian public, that the Miscellaneous writings of our author should, in general, be, as a whole, in a comparative state of neglect: for it will be found on examination, that the same commanding excellences which have rendered Mr. Henry so celebrated as an expositor, distinguished him as a preacher; and have imparted to his Sermons, and Treatises, and Tracts, a charm not less fascinating than that which pervades the Commentary. There is, throughout, the same soundness of doctrine, the same "strange readiness, and fertility of invention," † the same novelty, the same felicity of illustration, the same pointedness of remark, the same ingenious contrivance of proverbial sentences, ‡ and the same unvarying attention to usefulness. His zeal for this latter object, like the fire of the vestal virgins, was always burning.

Whatever prejudices may exist against theological compositions, in the form of *Sermons*, that neither accounts satisfactorily for the neglect of Mr. Henry, nor does it annul the fact—that one of the most interesting and valuable sections of English divinity, consists entirely of sermons. And the remark must not be withheld, that considering the age in which Mr. Henry lived, he is entitled, as a sermonizer, to special honour. There are few discourses, ancient or modern, which possess more intrinsic excellences; or which contain, without the slightest pretensions to greatness, more various reading, more powerful appeals, more appropriate imagery, or a purer spirit of sacredness. Having explained his text, and so explained it as to fix the attention, he commonly divides his main proposition into parts; and generally restricts his observations, sometimes avowedly, as at p. (83.), to the context. His explication of the doctrine deduced from the text discovers occasionally, as do all his applications, powers of discrimination equally uncommon and striking. The subdivisions are so managed as to

* Appendix, p. 24. † Funeral Sermon, by Mr. Reynolds, p. 1291. ‡ Ditto, by Dr. Williams, p. 1301.

assist the memory; as when, for instance, he describes the nature of the sacramental supper —as a commemorating ordinance; as a confessing ordinance; as a communicating ordinance; and as a covenanting ordinance.* And although these intended helps appear, frequently, too jingling and fanciful for correct taste; yet in Mr. Henry there is such an air of naturalness, even about *them*, as to prevent offence, if not to disarm criticism. When he comes to press the *uses*, and urge the *motives*, connected with his leading topic, he rises in instructiveness. Nor does he lose sight of a single fact or circumstance with which the truths he wishes to enforce can be associated. He seemingly exhausts the subject without exhausting the reader. Is there one, among all his discourses, which does not capitally illustrate those three qualifications of Baxter's "Best Teacher," which are essential to a good sermon?—a clear explication of the gospel; the most convincing and persuading reasonings; and a manner at once serious, affectionate, and lively.† If Addison's test be true, that the secret of fine writing is, for the sentiments to be natural without being obvious, Mr. Henry, in whatever department of authorship he is considered, is entitled to a far more exalted rank among illustrious writers than he has yet attained.

In *funeral* sermons he so excelled as to render it just occasion for regret that he published so few. They all mingle liveliness with affection in a very remarkable degree. They are grave without being dull; and seriousness is seen at the widest possible distance from gloom. One of them expatiates with singular beauty upon the duty of Christians giving *thanks* when in sorrow;‡ the death of "good men and good ministers" is represented in the exquisite imagery of the Scriptures; eternal realities are even familiarized; the instruction of the living is most powerfully attempted; and the ability and excitation of the biographical sketches, which are perfectly free from panegyric, cannot be estimated too highly. His sermon on the death of Mr. Tallents, is one of the finest specimens of preaching that can be instanced; the text selected by his revered friend was peculiarly appropriate, and, united with the occasion, called forth all Mr. Henry's powers. There are many passages in it of great strength and beauty; but his representation of "the delights of sense, and all earthly amusements and entertainments, as only despised crowds through which the soul of a Christian, big with expectation, presses forward in pursuit of everlasting joys,"§ is too noble not to be specially noticed. It is a kindred thought to that of the apostle, when he speaks of pursuing, or pressing toward the mark for the prize of the believer's high calling,—or should its originality be questioned, it must be allowed the merit of a happy paraphrase.

Another of those sermons is entitled, though in a different aspect, to more than incidental attention. It was preached on the death of the Rev. Daniel Burgess,‖ after, as the reader will perceive by the date, Mr. Henry's removal to London, a circumstance here noticed, because of the supposed influence of that event upon several of its statements. The allusions, coupled with the circumstances of the case, are, indeed, most significant; and admirably unfold our author's excellent spirit, his talents, and masterly adaptation of passing occurrences to the purposes of general instruction.

The case is this: Shortly before that discourse was delivered, Mr. Henry was attacked, through the press, by the able and untiring pen of De Foe—not by name, but by inuendo; and so graphically as to appear as visible to the mind, as De Foe himself, a few years before, had been made, by a state advertisement for publishing a political squib. The delineation upon the face of it was highly honourable to Mr. Henry, but it was so completely neutralized by sarcasm, and no small portion of scorn, as to be grossly insulting. It touched with an unsparing hand the tenderest point in Mr. Henry's history; and being published so soon

* P. 336, &c. † Poor Man's Family Book, p. 303. duod. 1691. Works, vol. 19. p. 510. oct.
‡ P. 805, 806. § P. 776. ‖ P. 820.

after his settlement at Hackney, respecting which his Life fully details his distress,* was but too well adapted for his own annoyance, and the irritation of his beloved, but dissatisfied, flock at Chester.†

To De Foe's uncalled-for representation Mr. Henry opposed no express reply; still less did he again revile; he took occasion, however, from the text of the sermon now under consideration—"We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us"—to expatiate upon the infirmities of Christ's ministers; to acknowledge that "they have their faults, their flaws, their blemishes, as earthen vessels have;" ‡ and to notice also, how frequently they are "despised and trampled upon," § even "loaded with reproach and calumny." ‖ And then, applying the whole to himself and his brethren, he added, and it must have stung such a man as De Foe to the quick—"By keeping the grace of humility in its strength and exercise," we shall have "this to say to those who think and speak lightly of us, That they cannot have a meaner opinion of us than we have of ourselves, nor lay us lower before men, than we lay ourselves every day before God." ¶

The infusion of this spirit of Christianity through every part of Mr. Henry's works it is, which constitutes one of their peculiar charms. And—because of it, it cannot be otherwise than gratifying to those who admire him, either as a man or a writer, that increased attention is still likely to be given to his remains. The Exposition, indeed, which has been so long a favourite with studious dissenting ministers, and plain unlettered Christians, not to mention some members of the established church, is now greatly extending its range in the latter direction; and that, notwithstanding the increasing circulation of the popular and invaluable Commentary of the Rev. Thomas Scott. The demand for that excellent work was, at one time, such as to threaten our author's exclusion from one large circle of the community; but the paroxysm being over, and reflection having succeeded excitement, Mr. Henry's unequalled work has been restored to its rightful pre-eminence; and it has lately been afresh commended by a zealous clergyman of the establishment.

To prevent, as much as may be, the possibility of disappointment in any reader, who now, for the first time, may resolve upon the study of *all* our author's writings—the Exposition *and* those which are Miscellaneous—it may not be amiss to observe, how important, as well as just, it will be, to make proper allowance for the difference of the ground-work in the two classes of the publications as so distinguished; and to keep especially in constant recollection, the aids to thought which are inseparable from an exclusive consideration of the divine testimony: otherwise a comparison to the disadvantage of the latter class of authorship may easily, and even unintentionally, be formed. Without a caution so necessary, even in the absence of any thing else, our author's Exposition, like the Contemplations of Bishop Hall will be very apt to disparage his other productions; a consequence the more to be deprecated because the Miscellaneous Writings, as is the case with the Sermons of the revered prelate just mentioned, actually evince quite as extraordinary faculties, both of ingenuity and instructiveness, as the Commentary; though less obviously, because the opportunity for presenting uncommon remarks is less frequent, and because the range for observation is necessarily extended. The style of Mr. Henry, however, on every subject, as is the style of the good Bishop of Norwich, is enriched by Scriptural allusions; many of them surprising, and even delighting the reader, not less than some of those incidents, drawn from the same pure fountain, with which Milton adorned the sublimest of all poems.

The habit of sprightly and apt allusion to Scripture facts, and the use of Scripture language, which Mr. Henry diligently cultivated, has not only enriched, but unspeakably enlivened

* Life, *ut supra*, p. 45, &c. † See De Foe's Present State of the Parties in Great Britain, p 307—309. oct. 1712.
‡ P. 825. § P. 826. ‖ Ib. ¶ P 830.

the ensuing Miscellanies; and frequently more instruction is conveyed by the manner in which he has seized the *hints* scattered up and down in the sacred volume, than by the lengthened and elaborated topical discussions of many celebrated writers. And—his *application* of such references is incomparable. In this point of view the exordiums to his sermons deserve especial regard. They are fine instances of the advantageous illustration of one scripture by another; while, as specimens of the beneficial observance of biblical phraseology, they are unrivalled. An attempt at citation would involve considerable extracts from most of the sermons in the volume.

In the management of texts, as well as their illustration, every reader conversant with what are called the old divines, will perceive in Mr. Henry a vast improvement upon the canons of most preceding theologians. It is true *his* style, like that of the majority of the admirable persons referred to, was oftentimes too quaint, and too antithetical; but even in those respects, great advances are discoverable towards the happier modes of division and expression, which are now in use. Mr. Henry is both less strained and less excessive; as may be seen in the exordium to the "Pleasantness of a Religious Life," where, perhaps, he has put forth his antithetical prowess to the uttermost.

From another fashion of his predecessors and contemporaries—the fringing of the margin, "with variety of choice reading"—Mr. Henry, except in the "Treatise on Meekness," and the sermon entitled "Christianity no Sect," has still further departed. Not that he was unequal to the task; for his reading was extensive, and various, and well managed; and in the compositions thus mentioned, he has shown the ease with which he could have vied with even the most erudite of his brethren in citations from antiquity. But ever after those two discourses were published, wiser in this respect than many of the ancients, he deemed it sufficient to state the *results*, rather than the sources, of his thoughts. And so completely, from that time, were the ideas he collected from others moulded and fashioned in his own mind, as to render it almost as difficult to trace them as it would be to detect the flowers and blossoms from whence has been extracted a mass of honey.

Socrates has directed mankind to limit their studies to things of real utility. And Mr. Henry, in his official capacity especially, diligently acted upon this counsel. Therefore it was, that in drawing the portraiture of a good minister, he declared he should do it "by his interest and fidelity, not by his learning, or the arts and languages" of which he was master.* And therefore it was, that instead, on the one hand, of hunting after novelties instead of the gospel; or, on the other, of borrowing largely from celebrated philosophers, and admired, but profane, classics, either to adorn his compositions, or display his learning; he bestowed all his energies to increase men's acquaintance with the *Scriptures;* to make, by the use of the words of truth, the "countenance of truth," as Hooker expressed it, "more orient." There is not in all his writings a single attempt to resolve any one of the absurd inquiries which are so common on the lips of mere speculators and triflers. Like the apostle Paul, whom he admired more than all mere mortals, and whom he has signalized as "the most active, zealous servant that ever our Master had," † he daily studied to know nothing "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." His preaching, as was the case with his beloved friend Mr. Samuel Lawrence, tended "to bring people to *Christ and heaven;* to heaven as their end, and to Christ as their way." ‡ This the reader may see beautifully illustrated at the close of the sermon entitled, "Faith in Christ inferred from Faith in God." §

Far from contenting himself with mere illustrations in geography, or natural history, or the "fine-spun cobwebs of school notions," or maxims of heathen ethics, Mr. Henry's whole soul was absorbed in a mighty effort to unfold the meaning of God's word; to convince

* P. 739. † P. 734. ‡ P. 803. § P. 796, 797.

mankind of sin; to induce reflection; to exhibit the riches of salvation; and to guard against neglecting it. Instead of glancing, now and then, at the essential parts of the Christian system, as if at a spectre; instead of treating the doctrines of the cross with reserve and hesitation, as if afraid they should do harm; he evidently *gloried* in them, and delighted, upon all occasions, to give to them the greatest prominence. This spirit leavens the whole of his writings; and such is his regard to the necessity of divine influence, and such the earnestness of his solicitude that all might be *saved*, that we seem carried back to the ministrations of the apostles themselves; the energies of the soul are called into continual exercise; and holy cheerfulness is promoted. Mr. Henry, indeed, *was* a *happy* Christian, and all his publications breathe the air of heaven. There is impressed upon them a calmness, a vivacity, a heart,* so strongly indicative of "joy and peace in believing," as to form a running commentary on his own memorable declaration, that—"a holy, heavenly life, spent in the service of God, and communion with him, is the most pleasant and comfortable life any man can live in the world;"† or on that other striking assertion—"I would not exchange the pleasure of converse with the Scriptures, and divine things, for all the delights of the sons and daughters of men, and the peculiar treasures of kings and princes." ‡

It was this settled persuasion, combined with zeal that others might enjoy the same blessedness, which so urged him onward in his style of writing, as, oftentimes, to give an idea of almost breathless haste; an anxiety for the reader's good, which never seems to have allowed him to stop till all his emotions had found utterance. The reader must be struck with this in his Recommendation of Sober-mindedness to the Young; § in his Improvement of the Death of Mr. Tallents; ‖ and, indeed, in all his published labours, treatises as well as sermons.

As an author Mr. Henry is what Lord Bacon would pronounce a "full" writer. He takes many things, after the manner of Holy Scripture, for granted. There are no digressions. He never aims at making a single sermon a complete body of divinity; and still less does he waste one page after another in a dry repetition of truisms, which when pronounced are, because of their commonness, as ill calculated to move as to interest the mind. More is often implied by him than expressed; and even the most important instructions are frequently conveyed incidentally. "Gospel ordinances," he remarks, "*in which we deal much in our way to heaven*, are very agreeable to all the children of God." ¶ And again—"we must take up our cross, *when it lies in our way*, and bear it after Christ." ** The Miscellaneous Writings, like the Exposition, are full of such examples. But the most perfect and continuous of them, occurs in the 4th chapter of the Communicant's Companion, under the title of Helps for Self-examination.

Whatever our author's defects may be, they are never important; nor do his writings sustain by them more injury than a fine face does by a mole. He never offends by bigotry, nor disgusts by mysticism, nor wearies by feebleness, nor puzzles by abstruseness. Some persons, notwithstanding even efforts to be intelligible, and efforts to all appearance as strenuously put forth as was the strength of certain mariners when rowing towards Tarshish, are still obscure, and full of oracle-like uncertainty. Mr. Henry, on the contrary, is perfectly lucid, and clear.

His diction, always expressive, is often felicitous; and though it makes no pretension to elegance, is both nervous and forcible. His writings are not, it is true, "embossed," like Bishop Taylor's, "with graceful ornaments;" but ordinary subjects are treated by him in an extraordinary manner;—an attainment Horace thought so difficult. Nothing can

* See p. 1279. † P. 283. Life, *ut supra*, p. 76. ‡ P. 331.
§ P. 554. ‖ P. 1032. ¶ P. 253. ** P. 258.

be more appropriate or instructive than his description of his mother's wisdom—as consisting in being "well versed in Solomon's proverbs." * And—when he delineated "the pleasure of a proud man in his dignities, and the respects paid him, as Herod, in the acclamations of the crowd," he represents it as but affecting "the fancy;" as "vain glory;" as "but the folly of him that receives the honour, fed by the folly of them that give it:" †—does he deserve less regard, or is he less accurate, than Shakspeare himself, in the celebrated catechism of Falstaff?

In definitions, indeed, our author excelled greatly. His writings abound with them, and they are uniformly distinguished by the best characteristics; they are simple, original, and uncommon. "What is heaven," he asks, "but holiness in honour? grace crowned with glory?" ‡ "Meditation is thought engaged, and thought inflamed." § "Our love to God in this world is love in motion, in heaven it will be love at rest." ‖

His allusions and imagery, in like manner, always please, and always edify; the former, because they are generally Scriptural; the latter, because, like the parables of our Lord, they are derived from the most common occurrences. It is their reflection of the images of every-day life which gives to them such an inexpressible charm, and an impression, also, upon the memory so difficult to efface. Let his reference to Jacob and Boaz ¶ be well considered in illustration of one of the classes now under consideration; and such instances as the following of the others;—"Wisdom not only makes the face to shine for the present, but leaves a good report to succeeding generations, like the after-beams of the sun when he is set, surrounded with which he lies down in honour." ** "The yoke of Christ is more than easy, it is sweet and gentle; not only easy as a yoke is to the neck when it is so well fitted as not to hurt it; but easy as a pillow is to the head when the head is weary and sleepy." ††

Sometimes he produces a singular and powerful effect by a peculiar and impressive *repetition* of a word. At first sight, indeed, the phrase may appear capricious; frequently it really is so; but if considered, it will, nevertheless, be uniformly found to convey some truth of special moment, if not to unite with some portion of Scripture worthy of supreme attention. For instance—the concluding sentence of the exordium to the funeral sermon for his mother; ‡‡ the last paragraph of the same discourse; §§ and the close of the first branch of the application to the sermon entitled—Christ's Favour to Children. ‖‖

It is remarkable, that when Mr. Henry is ever so awakening his address is always *attractive*. Though filled with zeal, he never indulges in the awful style of some ardent and talented writers, who, when writing against evil, have so expressed themselves as to make it questionable whether they did not mistake pride, or malignity, or passion, for Christian charity. Under a better influence Mr. Henry employed—plain and Scriptural statements; tender and kind expostulations; the sweetness of condescension and respect; and no small portion of that "long suffering" which, in reference to one of its brightest manifestations, was proclaimed a pattern to subsequent believers—for guidance surely, as well as encouragement. ¶¶ So that when he makes the reader start, it is not so much by a voice of terror, as of solemn importunity. If the individuals alluded to (and it seems to have been the case) were provoked by human offences, like warring elephants by "the blood of grapes and mulberries," to *fight*, Mr. Henry's heart was melted. The dishonour done to God, and the imminence of man's danger, affected *him*, as they did David when he grieved because of transgression; and David's Lord, who, beholding Jerusalem, wept. It is observable, that Mr. Henry advised others to a like course. *** The truth is, he regarded the present world in connexion with a system of mediation; a system which it is the design of the New Testament

* P. 168. † P. 232. ‡ P. 164. § P. 365. ‖ P. 267. ¶ P. 257. ** P. 167.
†† P. 231. ‡‡ P. 167. §§ P. 174. ‖‖ P. 709. ¶¶ 1 Tim. i. 16. *** P. 324, 610.

to unfold; and of individual ministers, in proportion as they are actuated by a genuine desire of usefulness, to exhibit and enforce. Hence, how poignant soever his reproofs, his very tone and manner discover such *love* to mankind, as forbid the supposition of even an inclination to angry violence. In his Discourses against Profaneness, where all his hostility to sin is consolidated, there is actually nothing to inspire displeasure at his rebukes. Nay, the very *titles* of those productions are enough, if prejudice previously existed, to disarm it. One is a "Friendly Admonition—to Drunkards and Tipplers;" another a "Word of Advice—to the Wanton and Unclean;" the next is a "Serious Address—to those who Profane the Lord's Day;" and the last, a "Check—to an Ungoverned Tongue."

Mr. Henry *knew* the terrors of the Lord, but, in imitation of the great apostle of the Gentiles, that knowledge was not used for purposes of intimidation. He *persuaded* men. He aimed, by means of motives and arguments, at "alluring" sinners "into the ways of wisdom and holiness." * This was a method of treatment to which from childhood he had been accustomed; his honoured parents constantly used it towards their children: † and, successfully pursuing the same course, his own writings display a power of insinuation precisely similar to that which prophecy and poetry have attributed to the dews and the snow of heaven. How singularly is this the tendency of the Treatise on the Pleasantness of Religion. That inestimable little work is introduced by an allusion to a principle of ratiocination insisted upon by a great name in the Platonic school, Dr. Henry More; and upon that principle Mr. Henry proceeded in a train of holy argumentation, and with a persuasiveness which has never yet been surpassed. Though the treatise in question was the last our author wrote, it is a sample of all his other publications, and may be fitly recommended to such as are unacquainted with his merits as the first to be read.

Let it not be inferred, however, from any of the foregoing remarks, that, because Mr. Henry never provoked hostility, he trimmed, either in his writing, or preaching. Instead of withholding any part of God's counsel to please men, he paid as little regard to human prejudice, or human passions, when opposed to the promulgation of truth, as an eagle does to flies. In the discourse entitled "Christianity no Sect," ‡ he has expressed himself fully on this point, as also in one of his ministerial exhortations; § and the works now collected admirably illustrate and confirm those statements. He greatly disapproved of not giving to each "principle of religion its due weight, and each practice of it its due place and proportion." ‖ He would not have "one precept of the gospel, any more than one table of the law, dashed in pieces." ¶ In spite, therefore, of cavillers he uniformly combines—privileges with duties; and doctrines with obligations. He equally recognises divine power, *and* human agency. He exhibits the grace that bringeth salvation; but he also maintains, and upon the same unerring authority, that perdition is the fruit of sin.

He every where uses great plainness of speech; an acquirement of singular importance, but which, so frail is human excellence, may easily degenerate into lowness, if not vulgarity. Instances of that kind do, it must be confessed, occur occasionally in our author's writings; and lest the present remarks should be considered as savouring of inordinate partiality, and lest, also, any person should follow even Mr. Henry, as an exemplar, injudiciously, one instance shall be noticed. It occurs in the "Directions how to Spend the Day with God." —"We must wait upon God," says our author, "as the holy angels do, who always behold the face of their Father, as those who are at his beck, and ready to go upon the least intimation of his will, *though but by a wink of his eye*, wherever he sends them." ** It cannot, surely, admit of doubt, whether the words thus printed in Italics are a blemish to the passage or not. They *do* detract from its force and dignity. The idea is actually

* P. 259. † P. 171. ‡ P. 321. § P. 728, 729. ‖ P. 230. ¶ Ib. ** P. 443.

debased by the homeliness of the illustration; and the familiarity of it reminds us of the lightness, and taste for punning, so assiduously cultivated in the middle ages.

Connected with Mr. Henry's studied plainness of speech, must be noticed his boldness. Frequently that quality is very striking. His exposure of transubstantiation in the Communicant's Companion;* the seventh direction at the close of his Advice to the Wanton and Unclean;† and the whole of the sermons entitled "Self Consideration necessary to Self-Preservation,"‡ are deserving of especial remark in this respect. Astonishment, indignation, inquiry, antithesis, and grave announcements, are so mingled, as to press upon the reader with a force absolutely overwhelming; comparable only to the fervid eloquence of Baxter; and best accounted for upon the principle Mr. Henry once stated as a reason for earnestness—a sight of death at the backs of his hearers.§

For the same reasons, when the exposure of error justified it, an observer will perceive that Mr. Henry did not conceal even his natural facetiousness; and occasionally it amounted to direct satire. He is evidently so to be understood when he alludes to the "cannon" of the angry;‖ when he mentions dragoons as the "booted apostles" of the church of Rome;¶ when he adverts to children intended for tradesmen learning Latin and Greek, with a design to forget it;** and when, as if determined, if possible, to cure an inclination to mysticism, he observes in the Commentary, (to which in this edition of the *whole* works one allusion may be allowed,) that none should be puffed up with a conceit of visions and revelations, since "even an ass saw an angel."††

A few remarks must be offered upon our author's compositions in the *order* in which, from time to time, they were first published; because a regard to this will discover, to great advantage, some of the excellences and characteristics of his spirit.

The Tract on Schism, for example, his *first* publication, instead of emitting controversial sparks, displays, like all his other works, the most enviable moderation; a moderation indicative of the sobriety and seriousness of a mind deeply impressed, as his certainly was, with the presence and the coming of Christ. Nothing can be imagined better adapted than that small pamphlet to draw men off from the circumstantials to the essentials of religion; to destroy a party spirit; to promote Christian unity and love; to put bigots to shame; and to explode superstitious fancies, as absurdities fraught with inexpressible danger. And the same excellent temper, it may be remarked in passing, breathes throughout his "Layman's Reason for Dissent;"‡‡ the Sermon delivered by him at the Opening of his New Meeting-house;§§ and, indeed, all his other works.

A Collection of Family Hymns followed the Tract on Schism. And these discover an impulse still more celestial. The avowed design of this labour of love was to "help forward" the doing of God's will "on earth, somewhat like as it is done in heaven."‖‖

To the Psalms and Hymns succeeded the Life of his venerable and celebrated Father.¶¶ A volume in which he presented to the reader's eye a "living epistle of Christ;" just such an exemplification of the principles of piety as he longed to see imitated. Who that knows that lovely specimen of biography will not admit, that the peaceableness of its subject; his patience; his freedom from ambition; his entire deadness to the world; and habitual aspirations after the heavenly glory, are, in fact, a picture of what imagination supposes the life of an angel would be, if one of those supernal beings were permitted to tabernacle for a season among men!

Whether the reader concurs in these views or not, it will be worth his while to mark care-

* P. 238. † P. 490. ‡ P. 519. § Life, p. 53. ‖ P. 286. ¶ P. 625.
** P. 834. †† V. i. p. 393. Numb. 22. ‡‡ P. 857. §§ P. 856. ‖‖ P. 705, 706.
¶¶ See p. 9—224. of the present volume, where it is printed with the enlargements and illustrations recently added.

fully, as he proceeds, all the remaining tractates, and discourses; those, I mean, not already specifically noticed.

The Essay on Meekness, for instance, is eminently characteristic of the author; and it shows, that while the endeavours of many writers seem to have been directed to the scorching up of every vestige of Christian love from the earth, Mr. Henry sought diligently "to promote, and to charm men" into another temper; a frame of mind "conducive to the comfort of human life, the honour of our holy religion, and the welfare and happiness of all societies, civil and sacred." *

The Communicant's Companion has no rival. All who preceded our author in that charming work; such as Dyke, (the title of whose "Worthy Communicant" Jeremy Taylor seems to have adopted,) and Vines, and Doolittle, and Shower, to mention no others, appear immeasurably below him. The productions of those good men, and they were all men of renown, had, it is willingly admitted, their individual excellences. Some of them, especially Mr. Dyke's Manual, (a book much prized by Philip Henry,†) and the Treatise on the Lord's Supper by Doolittle, (Mr. Henry's tutor,) were exceedingly popular. But the "Instructions for the right receiving of the Lord's Supper"‡ evince to the most careless examiner, such a striking superiority for all the purposes of Christian edification, as to forbid comparison. When there has been conceded to Dyke and Shower all the judiciousness and good sense; and to Vines all the learning and acuteness; and to Doolittle all the earnestness and simplicity; and to Bishop Taylor all the elaboration and splendour,—they can fairly claim; there will be found in Mr. Henry's little book, such a combination of attractive properties, in union with a native sweetness of disposition, peculiarly elicited by his subject, as fully to justify the preference which so long, and so wisely, has been given to it by the religious public.

The Catechisms, again, though in a state of comparative neglect, are treasures of divine truth. That "in the method of the Assembly's" has been styled by an excellent friend of mine, who ranks deservedly high as a preacher, and a scholar—"the ablest summary of divinity in our language."§

Nor are the other pieces of Mr. Henry, his "Method for Prayer," and his Sermons, (chiefly delivered, it will be observed, on special occasions,) entitled to less praise. Those of them, not to repeat such as have been mentioned, which are designated—"Directions for Daily Communion with God;" the "Right Management of Friendly Visits;"‖ on "Family Religion;" and "Disputes Reviewed" are deserving of peculiar attention; and are sufficient, had their author written nothing else, to have embalmed his name through all succeeding generations. The admirable nature of the instructions he has there embodied; the way in which true religion is exhibited—as a matter of principle, as a continual discipline of the heart and the life; and the skilful and impressive manner in which moral duties are connected with the Saviour, as their source, their incentive, and their medium, do the utmost credit to his understanding, his ability, and his zeal.

In one word—the direct *tendency* of all his compositions, those which have been specifically named, and those which have been included under a more general reference, is unmixedly and uniformly good. It is to render Christianity attractive; to divest it of those exorbitances and blemishes by which, during the lapse of ages, it has been dishonoured; it is to promote self-knowledge; to draw men to the Redeemer; and to meeten believers for their inheritance. Thither he was himself perpetually looking. He does not, indeed, any where attempt a minute description of what "the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man

* P. 268. † P. 14. ‡ P. 331. § MS. Letter.

‖ See, as to this, Dr. Watts's Humble Attempt. *Works*, v. 4. p. 626. oct.

conceived;" but he *does* discover such a familiarity with that better state, as to show "with what ease," like his beloved friend James Owen, he could "take leave of the world as one well pleased to think of being no more in it."* The comforts of grace, which Christians often experience, made *him* "long for heaven;"† and the removal of other saints excited him, by faith, hope, and holy devotion, to "follow them to the things above; on which as Christians," said he, "we are to set our affections."‡

It would be no irksome task to pursue these observations through *all* Mr. Henry's writings, individually; so as not only to mark their chronology, but by suitable excerpts to make the reader acquainted with their respective merits; but after what has already appeared, § it seems an indispensable duty to refrain.

The broader lines of our author's literary character and genius having, in the work just alluded to, been attempted; with observations, likewise, upon his defects and peculiarities; it will be well if many of the notices already submitted are not deemed needless; or at all events an improper detention of the reader from the volume. Since, however, this Preface is perfectly gratuitous, originating in personal conviction, and contributed with a view to the obtaining from the public, if possible, renewed attention to the valuable remains thus introduced, the service, it is hoped, will be readily borne with. And if what is commendable and attractive in our author, should appear to have been principally dwelt upon, let it be remembered how much more pleasant it is to dilate upon excellences than imperfections; upon that which is worthy of regard and imitation, than of censure and aversion. Nor must the remark be withheld, that Mr. Henry's defects, as critically studied, will be found to be not only, what Dryden has so well stated of some errors, "like stains flowing upon the surface," but so trivial, as—in comparison of positive and numberless beauties—to be unworthy of notice. His constant endeavour after perspicuity more than atones for some "poornesses of expression;" and the "infusions of sentiment," and "felicities of fancy," which every where abound, for inattention to critical exactness and laboured polish. Mr. Henry has furnished other employment than thinking upon words.

J. Bickerton Williams.

The Crescent, Shrewsbury,
December 21, 1829.

* P. 746. † P. 412. ‡ P. 757. § See the Life, vol. 1. p. 101, &c.

THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. PHILIP HENRY, A. M.

WITH

FUNERAL SERMONS FOR MR. AND MRS. HENRY.

BY THE

REV. MATTHEW HENRY, V. D. M.

Magnum et memorabile nomen. VIRGIL.

An example,—in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. ST. PAUL.

CORRECTED AND ENLARGED,

BY J. B. WILLIAMS, F. S. A.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL

PREFACE

TO THE LIFE OF PHILIP HENRY.

In presenting to the public a new edition of the Life of that "wise, good, and truly wonderful man, Mr. Philip Henry,"* the editor cannot forbear to state, that early and established prepossessions have powerfully concurred in its production.

The published work has been long distinguished by special approbation. Sir James Stonhouse designated it his "favourite piece of biography."† Dr. Doddridge "often spoke of it as affording him much instruction and encouragement."‡ By another writer it is represented, as "one of the most instructive and interesting pieces of religious biography ever written."§ Mr. Chalmers pointedly notices "the piety, Christian moderation, and good sense, which pervade the whole."‖ And, by a late revered friend, Dr. Edward Williams, it is appropriately characterized, "a beautiful delineation of primitive Christianity, and the power of godliness, where social religion and personal holiness are drawn to the life, and eminently manifested; where, in a word, the doctrine of the life of God in the soul of man, derives a striking proof, and a venerable sanction."¶

Judicious friends have repeatedly suggested to the writer, that existing manuscripts might be so selected, and incorporated with the work, as still to increase the estimation of this edifying volume, and have urged him to undertake the service. The materials in his possession, and within his reach, frequently disposed him to comply. Of late, various occurrences have served to engage his attention to it more fixedly, and the supply of numerous relics afforded a stimulus to the undertaking.

The whole seemed to form a deposit so favourable to the object, that, if attendant difficulties were not insurmountable, the obligation to publish was rendered imperative.

Indeed, had the task been declined, might not the editor have incurred an imputation of selfishness, for improperly hoarding treasure so calculated for general usefulness? These and other considerations determined him to commence the work, and to proceed with it as quickly as constant professional engagements would allow.

In the "Entire Collection of Mr. Matthew Henry's Writings,"** the Life of his Father was inserted.

With this exception, the editor is not aware of any *genuine* edition, since the third, which was published in 1712; improved by the author's final

* Life of the Rev. T. Rosewell, p. 20. oct. 1718.

† Letters from the Rev. Job Orton, and the Rev. Sir James Stonhouse, Bart. M. D. to the Rev. Thomas Stedman, M. A. Vicar of St. Chad's, Shrewsbury, ed. 1805. vol. 2. p. 300; and see also, vol. 1. p. 171, note.

‡ Life, by Orton, p. 63. oct. 1766.

§ Eclectic Review, N. S. vol. 7. p. 273.

‖ Gen. Biog. Dict. vol. 17. p. 361. by Alexander Chalmers, F. S. A.

¶ Preface to Morrice's Social Religion Exemplified, p. xv. ed. 1786.

** In seven volumes, 4to, 1811. edited by the Rev. George Burder, and the Rev. Joseph Hughes, A. M.

corrections,* and the addition of a sermon, preached by himself, on the death of his honoured mother.

A new and valuable, but abridged, republication appeared in 1765, under the superintendence of the Rev. Job Orton. The copy which he used on that occasion,† with the alterations in his own hand, being in the possession of Mr. Stedman, through his kindness an opportunity was afforded to the present editor, of noticing the great extent of the variations. It was dedicated,—"To the Descendants and other Relations of Mr. Philip Henry;" and in the opinion there expressed most readers will concur. "I esteem it," says Mr. Orton, "one of the chief excellences of this book, that it is, as the author hints in his Preface, the history of a person who manifested such an eminence of piety, prudence, humility, zeal, and moderation, as would have adorned the highest station, and is scarcely to be equalled. He is, therefore, a suitable and bright example to persons of every rank, as well as an admirable model for the ministers of the gospel."‡

Of the second edition,§ of the original work, a re-impression has lately been given by a dignitary of the established church,‖ Dr. Wordsworth; who, in his Preface, has observed, that "if he could any where have found nonconformity united with more Christian graces than in Philip Henry," the example should have obtained its station in the work.

Various other editions, both Scotch and English, more or less inaccurate, might be enumerated, but the supply can furnish no reason for withholding one more correct and enlarged.

A minute detail of the sources whence the new materials have been derived has been deemed unnecessary. Nor has it been thought expedient to distinguish, in every instance, the particular nature of the manuscript resorted to.

The diary, in compliance with well-established custom, is uniformly pointed out. A few but immaterial alterations have been made; such as occasional abridgments and transpositions, and the completion of here and there a sentence. Sometimes obsolete words or phrases have been changed or expunged.

In general,—"to prevent any repellent effect, it was thought advisable to adopt the modern orthography." In two instances, the one a letter from Lady Puleston, the other from Mrs. Henry, the original spelling has been retained.

Being favoured with nearly the whole of the Life, in Mr. Matthew Henry's hand-writing,¶ the editor has, by collating, been enabled to make such comparisons and additions as to insure uniform accuracy.

As to the general plan, much difficulty was felt; but to have made alterations, or to have done otherwise than *reprint*, would have been to destroy the charm which will ever attend the volume, as a memorial of strict fidelity and filial affection; as distinguished also by an enviable simplicity, and a *naïvéte*** of expression, in perfect unison with the subject.

Objections may arise to such large additions to the original volume, and it may be feared that the

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* 1711-12, January 22. I began to read over my father's Life, to correct it for the press. Rev. Matthew Henry's Diary, Orig. MS.

† The first edition, 1698.

‡ Dedication, pp. iv. v. See Mr. Griffin's Sermon on "The Decline of Religion," oct. 1812. p. 68. Mr. Henry's Life is there urgently recommended to ministers.

§ Printed in 1699.

‖ See Ecclesiastical Biography; or Lives of Eminent Men connected with the History of Religion in England, by Christopher Wordsworth, M. A. Dean and Rector of Bocking, (now D. D. and Master of Trinity College, Cambridge,) in 6 vols. oct. 1810.

¶ In the possession of Mr. Witton.

The following notice of the undertaking, in a letter to the Rev. F. Tallents, shows the author's anxious desire of accuracy:—

"Chester, November 21, 1696.

"If this find you, as I trust it will, somewhat revived, let it also acquaint you that I am over-persuaded myself to put together what materials we have of my dear father's life, wherein I shall, as well as I can, pursue the directions you gave me; when it is done, (and it is not yet begun,) I shall submit it to your censure, and desire you to put a short preface before it. I purpose, in a chapter by itself, to give some very short accounts of his friends and brethren in the ministry, that went to heaven before him, having materials for it out of his own diary; only I do not remember that I met with any thing there concerning Mr. Hildersham of Felton, who yet I know was his great friend. When you are at leisure, I shall be glad to have from you two or three lines concerning him, particularly his age, and the time of his death; and whether he ordered this to be his epitaph, (as I think I have heard,) —'Here lyes S. H. Minister of Welsh Felton,' till August 24, 1662." Matthew Henry. Orig. MS. British Museum, fol. No. 4275. Plut. 111. E. Bibl. Birch.

** It was not till after the above paragraph was written, that the editor noticed, in the History of Dissenters, by Messrs. Bogue and Bennett, vol. 2. p. 295. a like statement. The Rev. Master of Trinity College has adopted a different phraseology. *He* says of the work in question,—"It abounds somewhat too largely in certain quaintnesses of expression introduced into religious subjects, and affected by the puritanical divines." Eccl. Biog v. 6. p. 109, *ut supra*. If it be here intended to insinuate, that quaintness of expression was *peculiar* to the puritans, a query at once presents itself as to Bishops Latimer, and Andrews, and Fell, the poet Herbert, and other eminent episcopalians. See *post*, p 214.

Were *they* puritanical divines! And was Sir Edward Coke of the same fraternity? Mr. Justice Blackstone says, "The great oracle was *not a little infected with quaintness*." Comment. v. 1. Introd. § 3. p. 71. 15th ed. The truth is, that, in those times, to adopt a remark

editor, through impartiality, or for other reasons, has been led to introduce passages too unimportant for publicity. He hopes, however, to stand acquitted, at all events, by those who regard his *end*; and that, on perusal, the book will display somewhat of watchful caution for the avoidance of such an error. He does not expect, indeed, that *all* will approve either the plan adopted or the selections furnished. It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to arrange, or extract from, a mass of theological effusions, like Mr. Henry's, so as to give *universal* satisfaction. Nothing is made public, it is hoped, which can justly be deemed offensive to a discriminating judgment, inconsistent with a due regard* to the venerated writer, or prejudicial to the interests of that charity for which he was so deservedly famed.

To suppress what appeared fitted more fully to develop Mr. Henry's character, was deemed improper. And more especially so, as it was considered, that to give prominence to his sentiments on a variety of topics, would render more exemplary and more instructive his moderation and candour; virtues which, drawn into exercise by difference of judgment, impart gracefulness to the determinations of a well-regulated mind, give weight to argument, and attraction to Christianity.

Excerpts of a nature so devout and so practical as those ordinarily introduced, appear, it is thought, with advantage in connexion with the events of their writer's life. They illustrate and enforce each other. Letters, particularly when fraught with evangelic sentiment, and adapted for *general* utility, are usually much esteemed, and for biographical purposes are invaluable.

Epistolæ vitam ipsam hominis repræsentant.—ERASMUS.

Letters, therefore, constitute a large proportion of the additions. For the sake of more convenient arrangement, these, with some other enlargements, have been interwoven with the original text, but, for easier distinction, are separated by brackets.

Many of the papers, thus exhibited, being scattered when the Life was originally written, were probably unknown to Mr. Henry's biographer. Various causes,† too, which might at that time have rendered omissions prudent, have now ceased to exist. We are happily removed to a distance from the irritations peculiar to that afflicted era;—a kindly feeling of brotherly love, between Christians of different parties, has gradually been diffused;—the rights of conscience are more widely recognised, and better understood, and an agreement to differ is acknowledged practically, as well as in theory, to suit human affairs better than the prejudices of ignorance, the penalties of legislative enactments, or the dogmas of assumed infallibility.

The work, abounding with allusions, required references to other compositions, and, frequently, extracts from them. The reader will perceive, that an effort has been made to supply illustrations, wherever practicable, from manuscripts hitherto unpublished; and that brevity has been studied throughout.

A Scriptural phraseology characterizes the papers of Mr. Henry, and the Life now reprinted. In some instances only, has it been thought advisable distinctly to solicit the reader's attention to such borrowed passages. To have done so in all cases was unnecessary, and would have been tedious.

There being only one note to the original work, (see p. 18.) it was thought needless to apply any mark of distinction to the annotations now introduced.

The references, occurring in the first edition of the Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Henry, were placed in the *margin*. The same course, for distinctness sake, is followed on the present occasion.

If a desire of accuracy have occasionally led to an exactness apparently trivial, the error may be classed among the few which are harmless, if not beneficial.

Most of the authors quoted were contemporary with Mr. Henry, or immediately precedent. Some are of a date still more ancient. This arose partly from necessity, and in part from choice. The editor,

made by Mr. Nichols in his preface to the improved edition of Fuller's Worthies of England,—"Quaintness was the characteristic of almost every writer of eminence."

* See Mr. Scott's Commentary, Deut. xxxiv. Practical Observations.

† See *post*, p. 223.

while he admires modern elegancy, believes, with an antiquated poet, that,—

> "Out of the olde feldes, as men saieth,
> Cometh all this newe corn, fro yere to yere;
> And out of olde bookes, in good faieth,
> Cometh all this newe science that men lere." *

He is convinced also, that many of the writings thus noticed, notwithstanding their style, and independently of the clue they furnish to Mr. Henry's studies, are of peculiar value.† This, he acknowledges, has sometimes influenced him in these citations,—that the reader may be induced to study such compositions more at large. They commonly receive, it is admitted, a quaint designation,—"Old Dyuynes,"‡—as if, by inculcating a ceremonious reverence, to obstruct intimacy;—but familiarity, instead of producing its ordinary effects, will excite attachment, and perpetuate esteem.§ *Inquire of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers. For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow.*

It is not, however, intended that the passages so given, or referred to, should be regarded as a selection, either complete, or preclusive. Quotations from the Fathers, not to mention almost innumerable later theologians, and others, unnoticed in the following pages, would have furnished notes, perhaps, equally apt and useful. But the design was to avoid diffusiveness, and, by a reference to publications of comparatively easy access, to meet general convenience. The diligent admirer of antiquity‖ will easily trace, in the more remote "lights of the church," not a few of the sentiments and phrases here used, together with many illustrative parallels, which, for the reasons before mentioned, have been omitted.

Nor do the opinions, thus expressed, result from such love to the olden time as is implied in the perverse dotings of indiscriminate veneration;¶ nor yet in "a critical desire," as Dr. Johnson expresses it, "to find the faults of the moderns, and the beauties of the ancients." *Non vetera extollimus recentium incuriosi.* Such opinions cannot, therefore, be justly considered as disparaging to later compositions, particularly those, and they are various, whose prominent features display "profound scholarship, disciplined and vigorous reason, masculine eloquence, and genius-breathing enchantment."** Productions so exquisitely ornate render comparisons invidious, and would aggravate detraction. The editor, because of their illustrious eminency, and without seeking to lessen their deserved influence, aims only to dissuade those who "seek and intermeddle with wisdom," from such a regard, as, from its exclusiveness, might prove injurious. Not only will the neglect of much "fruitful erudition" be thus effectually prevented, but, in the assiduous use of means so excellent, a kindly impulse will be given to the whole process of edification;—

> "For, though old wrytynges apere to be rude;
> Yet, notwithstandynge, they do include
> The pythe of a matter most fructuously." ††

It furnishes an opportunity for congratulation, too congenial to be omitted, that, at a time when the capabilities of the English tongue, for elegant combination, have been so signally manifested, and so many invaluable productions have raised our national literature to an unprecedented elevation, sufficient encouragement should have been afforded to the enterprising spirit of typography, not only to reprint the remains of many early Reformers, and other Protestant Divines, but to give to the voluminous labours of Archbishop Leighton; Bishops Hall, Hopkins, Taylor, and Beveridge; Doctors Light-

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* Learn. Chaucer's Parliament of Birds, verse 22.

† See a Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians, by William Wilberforce, Esq. M. P. chap. vi. pp. 379, 383. oct. 1797.

‡ The Dore of Holy Scripture, 1540. oct. Ames and Herbert's Typographical Antiquities, by the Rev. T. F. Dibdin, vol. 3. p. 410.

§ When a young man, a little too forward, had, in presence of many, said, that he could conceive no reason, in the reading of the old authors, why men should so greatly admire them;—"No marvel, indeed, (quoth Master Fox,) for, if you could conceive the reason, you would then admire them yourself." Life of Fox, prefixed to the Martyrology, vol. 1 fol. 1684.

‖ Blessed be God, for the monuments of antiquity, and the primitive church. Matthew Henry. Orig. MS.

¶ See Caryl on Job, v. i. p. 705. fol. 1676. And, Baxter's Practical Works, vol. v. p. 586. oct. ed.

** Essay on Popular Ignorance, by John Foster, p. 89. 2d edit. See Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon, pp. 63, 64. 4to, 1801. Some curious remarks upon "bokes," and their "stile," occur in "Nicholas Udall's Preface to the Translation of the Paraphrase of Erasmus upon Luke," the three last pages, fol. 1548.

†† Ames's Typographical Antiquities, by Herbert, vol. 3. p. 1756.

foot, Barrow, Owen, Watts, and Doddridge; John Howe, Charnock, Baxter, Matthew Henry, and President Edwards, permanent external respectability. The omen is favourable; and the impulse, it is hoped, will not become extinct, nor even feeble.

But while so much in the signs of the times is calculated to cheer, by a conviction of increasing intelligence and liberality, there still remains enough to render too apposite, in a spirit of mild accommodation, the caustic remark of Milton;—"Things of highest praise and imitation, under a right name, are mis-called, to make them infamous and hateful." * To those who *follow the things which make for peace*, it cannot be otherwise than grievous that such an attestation is not exclusively applicable to those times of perilous disquietude which prompted the complaint. And still more so, that of late especially, and among the *literati* too, the originating cause of that complaint should have furnished new evidence of undecaying vigour. There needs but a slight acquaintance with the republic of letters, and particularly the history and biography of the last thirty years, both original and edited, to notice many confirmatory instances; instances which would have warranted, in the following annotations, a system widely different from that pursued. How much might be adduced,—to hold no inquest upon motives,—which is *adapted* to produce party-prejudice, and antichristian temper! Has not the power of truth, by zeal for preferences, merely secular or ritual, been lamentably obstructed, and the censures of deists thus disgracefully countenanced? Has not godliness itself been so misrepresented and caricatured, by attacks upon puritans, nonconformists, and Calvinists, and so identified with alleged imbecility or extravagance, as to inspire, in not a few cases, contempt and aversion? How irrational, to say the least, is such a course! As if the exhortations to love and good-will, which abound in the sacred oracles, and which are enforced by tremendous sanctions, were to be measured by human fancy; as if they respected only those whose thoughts run harmoniously about trifles, who congregate as one party, or rally under one visible standard! Not more incongruous would be the assertion,—that the cause of truth is best promoted by ignorance and error; or, that the enmity against God, (including his image, as impressed upon the saints,) which constitutes a carnal mind, would be most effectually counteracted by the infusions of hatred, the "moroseness of bigotry," and the workings of bitter disaffection.

For the better avoidance of evils, like these referred to, the original design of the Life, the elevated spirit of catholicism which it breathes, and the sweet fragrancy † which is uniformly associated with Mr. Henry's name, have been kept habitually in view.

The animadversions on some of Dr. Wordsworth's statements will appear to the reader, it is believed, in nowise inconsistent with this profession. Sincerely regretting the existence of those statements, the writer would have passed them by, had it been warranted by a conviction of their accuracy, or been consistent with official fidelity.

It is hoped that the introduction of the *fac-similes* and portraits will be deemed an improvement. Mrs. Henry's picture has not before been engraved. The print conveys the exact expression.

The engraving of Mr. Henry, by White, prefixed to the early editions of the Life, is a performance but ill evincing the justness of the character usually given of that once popular artist. Nor can any thing better be said of a subsequent attempt by Trotter.‡ A comparison of the three engravings, which are from the same painting,§ will demonstrate the superiority of the one now published.

The late Mrs. Brett, of West Bromwich, informed the editor, that Mrs. Savage, her near relation, and the eldest daughter of Mr. Henry, pronounced the representation in the painting good, but rather too sorrowful.

> "*His* eye was meek and gentle; and a smile
> Play'd on his lips; and in his speech was heard
> Paternal sweetness, dignity, and love."‖

To Nicholas Ashton, of Woolton Hall, in the

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* The Answer to Eikon Basilike. Milton's Prose Works, vol. 2. p. 399, oct.

† Mr. Dorney's Account of the Rev. Joseph Caryl. Divine Contemplations, p 344, duod. 1684.

‡ In Middleton's Biog. Evan. vol. iv. p. 76. oct. 1786.

§ Thus dated, "Ann. æt. 60, Aug 24, 1691." The portrait illustrating Mr. Orton's Abridgment of the Life, *ut supra*, is a memorial of younger days.

‖ Cowper's Task, book ii.

county of Lancaster, Esq., acknowledgments are due, and are thus publicly offered, for the contribution of the picture from which Mr. Henry's portrait, introduced into this volume, was taken, and of which it is a faithful resemblance.

For permission to copy the painting of Mrs. Henry, and also for the communication of the baptismal covenant, from which the *fac-simile* has most accurately been made, as well as for various useful manuscripts, thanks are respectfully tendered to P. H. Witton, Esq., of the Ravenhurst, near Birmingham, a lineal descendant of Mr. Henry, whose name he bears.

The manuscript diaries used on this occasion, in addition to that which is possessed by the editor, were kindly furnished by his much respected friend, Joseph Lee, Esq., Redbrook, near Broad Oak; also, by Miss Bunnell, (now Mrs. Lewis,) London; Mrs. Osborn, Worcester; and, through the friendly application of the Rev. J. Robertson, of Stretton-under-Fosse, by Mrs. Bunting, Spratton. To all of whom the editor begs to express his grateful sense of their politeness and liberality.

The editor's excellent friend, the Rev. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, is entitled to particular remembrance, not only for the loan of manuscripts, but also for much personal trouble.

To the Rev. Thomas Stedman, and Thomas Weaver, Shrewsbury; J. Grundy, Leicester; James Payne, Ipswich; J. E. Good, Salisbury; and John Pearce, Wrexham;—also, to Mr. and Mrs. Bunnell, Islington, London; Mrs. Kenrick, Wynne Hall, near Wrexham; Miss Hunt, Exeter; Joshua Wilson, Esq., Highbury Place, Islington, London; Joseph Lee, junior, Esq. Redbrook Farm, near Broad Oak; Mr. Lewin, Shrewsbury; Mr. Lewis, Wrexham; and Mr. W. Cook, Liverpool; the editor is likewise much indebted for the liberal communication of manuscripts.

Mr. Matthew Henry's sermon on the death of his father is now first published from an authentic transcript, obligingly communicated by Mr. Stedman.

To the learned and Rev. S. Butler, D. D. Archdeacon of Derby; and also to the Rev. Mr. Archdeacon Owen, and the Rev. J. B. Blakeway, the elegant historians of Shrewsbury, the editor's obligations have been increased, in connexion with the present undertaking, by frequent information, as well as by friendly communications, at all times, from their curious and valuable libraries.

Nor, in this reference to the editor's obligations, can he content himself to omit his esteemed friend, Mr. Chalmers.* He is entitled to special acknowledgments for repeated attentions, which, bestowed in the midst of laborious avocations, became doubly obliging.

Should the engagement result in the correction of but one fatal error,—should it promote the establishment of only one sincere Christian,—should it assist in estimating the importance, reality, and necessary effects of primitive piety,—should it aid in a correct judgment of the principles of the nonconformists,† and evince that there is no "connexion between dissent and fanaticism," any more than between Christianity and imposture,—should it, therefore, tend to bury unjust censures, and display, with additional clearness, that friendship to monarchy, loyalty to the king, and attachment to the English constitution, are perfectly compatible with separation from an ecclesiastical establishment,—should it, especially, be the means of promoting "living, powerful religion," which ever disdains the limits of a party,—the editor will regard apology as misplaced, his object will be happily attained, and his toil delightfully rewarded; nor will he regret having devoted to the undertaking, hours which were redeemed from morning slumbers, or stolen from the vacancies of leisure.‡

The writer cannot dismiss these prefatory remarks, without trespassing upon the reader's patience, by a few hints in reference, more particularly, to the due *improvement* of biographical compositions. Mr. Henry's character will, thereby, be somewhat illustrated, his predilection for such writings§ explained, and similar attachments, it may be, excited. It is in the use of *means* that divine influence, so essential to the vigour and very existence of spiritual life, is to be expected; and

* See *ante*, p. xv.

† See Dr. Doddridge's Works, vol. 4. p. 201, &c. oct. 1802.

‡ See Lord Bacon, on the Advancement of Learning, p. 10, 4to, 1605.

§ See the Life, *post*, p. 127.

an increasing recognition of that influence, with earnest desires for its possession, stands in near affinity to the proper observation of its *effects*.

So great and so obvious are the attractions of biography, when brought efficiently to bear upon personal history and individual excellence; and so decidedly is the meed of public approbation bestowed upon it, that to explain at large, *why* the lives of wise and good men ought to be perused and esteemed; or to inquire *how* it is that they are, in fact, daily read with profit and delight, would be a superfluous discussion. It will suffice to remark, of Christian memoirs generally, with an appeal for confirmation to the present volume,—that, by illuminating the judgment, by enriching the memory, by elevating the affections, by demonstrating that eminent religious acquirements are attainable, such memorials conduce, in a very high degree, to the best interests of man.* Regulating the love of incident, and stimulating to laudable emulation, they are adapted to give to thoughtful habits a correct tendency, and inquiries, as the narrative proceeds, instead of being instituted for the gratification of curiosity, are associated with self-observance and self-improvement.† Whence, asks the awakened intellect, this comparative indifference (as in the case of Mr. Henry) to all things earthly, in the midst of their diligent use and happiest enjoyment? Wherefore an ardour in the service of Jehovah so vigorous and unabating? By what process has subjection to his appointments, thus enlightened, and uniform, and acquiescent, been attained? Whence can be derived peace so holy, uprightness so inflexible? Whence springs, and what nourishes, compassion towards transgressors, and affection even for enemies, so tender, and so sincere?

To such queries Christianity alone can furnish a satisfactory reply. In accordance with the inspired testimony, a *life of faith* may thus luminously be demonstrated to be the *path of the just*, the principle of spiritual animation, and all real virtue. By that sublime grace,—significantly designated the *evidence of things not seen*,—it was, that the admired subject of the ensuing portraiture, beholding *him who is invisible*, connected all his actions, and all his thoughts, with eternity and with God.‡

The subject thus exhibited, is both directive§ and animating. Mr. Henry's biographer, indeed, has more than once given to the idea due prominence. Nor is it too much to affirm, that the volume, unfolding, with enviable attractiveness, the *one thing needful*, and the fruits of early instruction, so discovers the happy consequences of fervent piety and enlightened decision, as to instruct the inquiring, to cheer the timid, to invigorate the feeble, and to fill with joy the cup of the desponding. While it illustrates the Christian warfare, and shows, that high attainments in holiness furnish no exemption from the ordinary calamities of life, it inculcates the *pleasantness* of religion, and teaches all who tread her paths, instead of encouraging doubts, or yielding to despondency, to look *constantly* to the Saviour, as the centre and medium of revealed mercy, and as *made of God*, to all believers, *wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption*. Not only will the *plants of righteousness*, under such influence, bud and blossom, as did the rod of Aaron, but they will bear, in gladdening abundance, those fruits of peace, which, like the *leaves of the tree of life*, are intended for the *healing of nations*.

The editor feels it unnecessary to indulge in eulogy upon the illustrious character delineated in the following pages; or to point out the light which they cast over the history of Britain, civil and ecclesiastical; nor has he a desire to animadvert upon the persecuting spirit of the times,—a spirit, which, notwithstanding its hostile and provoking tendencies, seemed, in the case of Mr. Henry, and of

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* It doth us good to read and hear such true, holy, and approved histories, monuments, orations, epistles, and letters, as do set forth unto us the blessed behaviour of God's dear servants. Bishop Coverdale's Address, prefixed to his Letters of the Martyrs; reprinted in "The Fathers of the English Church," vol. 4. p. ix. oct. 1809.

† See Mr. Orton's Preface to his Memoirs of Dr. Doddridge, p. vii. *ut supra*. "One page of Philip Henry's Life," observes an eminent preacher of the present day, "makes me blush more than all the folios of his son Matthew's Peerless Exposition." The Rev. J. A. James's Address at his Brother's Ordination, appended to the Church Member's Guide, p. 231.

‡ There is a God. There is a judgment to come. Were these two firmly *believed*, what a change would it make! Philip Henry, Orig. MS.

§ See Mr. Baxter's Remarks, prefixed to the Life of the Rev. Joseph Alleine, duod. 1672. Introd. p. 4. And, also, Mr. Wilberforce's Practical View, ch. vii. § 11. pp. 465, 467, *ut supra*.

many others, to elicit and nerve the sublimest virtues. Yet he cannot forbear to reiterate the remark of Mr. Jay,—"Who, without sentiments of love and veneration, can think of Philip Henry?"* If Ennius was justly commended by Cicero, for having bestowed lofty epithets upon poets, because of their peculiar gifts, a like course, in the present instance, would, for similar and more powerful reasons, have been defensible; for, undoubtedly, *Mr. Henry* was "one of the most pious and excellent men of the age in which he lived, or any other."† At the same time, let it not be inferred, that he constituted an anomaly in the records of the new creation. Although he is even "believed by many, to have come as near the pattern of the apostles, and the first ministers of the Christian church, as any that, to this day, have succeeded them;"‡ and although it deserves acknowledgment, to the glory of God, that no public blot defaces the accurate delineation here exhibited, enough of the "stain of human frailtie" is visible, to show that he was *human*, and, therefore, to prevent "esteem above that which behoveth."§

Connected with, and perhaps in proportion to, such impressions, the work of *praise* to God, a duty always incumbent, will not be overlooked. The eye of the mind, instead of resting upon the picture, how beauteous soever, will ascend to the Eternal Benefactor,‖ in devout adoration of his mercy, and the triumphs of his grace. *Love to the brethren* is an affection, neither sordid nor imbecile: while ministering, with obedient assiduity, to the *household of faith*, it rises, instinctively, to the ever-blessed Jehovah; by whose power the new nature is, in every instance, produced, and into whose image the indispensable transformation is invariably effected. When, therefore, that sacred renovation, which forms the attractive cause of Christian love, has been *perfected*, though by the violence of death, the expectants of similar dignity, instead of occasioning, by inferior considerations, a suspension of the principle, should *indulge* in lively gratitude, and the anticipation of a more endearing friendship. Shall the entrance of the *heirs of God* upon their unfading kingdom, occasion only *heavenly* acclamations? Shall it excite on *earth* no delight; inspire no "hymn of laud, no solemn canticle?" Shall not hope restrain sorrow, and faith exult over the vanquished grave? When Mrs. Henry was bereaved of her venerated husband, she expressed her thankfulness that she had him so long, and that she had the prospect of being eternally with him in glory.¶

It cannot escape remark, that those associations with eternity, which, by a moral necessity, attend written lives, gain, in a case like the present, special *ascendency:* they seize the mind with a firm grasp, and, if duly cherished, disentangle it from the world. Having traced the earthly sojournings of the heaven-bound traveller, and witnessed the increasing development of principles, as unvarying as they are immortal, every advance towards the "final hour" occasions new and refined excitements. At length placed, in imagination, upon the brink of that river which "has no bridge," we gaze upon the pilgrim as he draws nigh to the water, and listen to his parting salutation; as the billows rise and swell around him, every thing irrelevant and unhallowed is absorbed in personal interest; the "reign of stillness" commences, and other cares, and other thoughts, save those of future and interminable existence, are silenced and suppressed.

How singularly, how deeply, interesting** the communications of an expiring believer! The attention is arrested, nay, awed, by reflecting, that the chief result of vigilant observation is then imparted,—in the immediate prospect of eternity. Mr. Henry, consciously unable to recapitulate his history, or to detail his enjoyments, or to dispense, minutely, his counsels, and in haste to enter upon the "blessedness of the righteous," gave utterance, with a rapidity peculiarly striking, to the one main sentiment of his soul. *Follow peace and holiness,*

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* Memoirs of Mrs. Savage, Mr. Henry's eldest daughter. Preface, p. 1.

† Dr. Richards's Welsh Nonconformists' Mem. p. 360.

‡ The New Spiritual Magazine, 1783, vol. 1. p. 62.

§ Hooker's Eccl. Pol. Pref. § 4. fol. 1662.

‖ See Reeves's Apologies of Justin Martyr, &c. vol. 2. p. 35. oct. 1709: also, *post*, p. 172.

¶ See *post*, p. 120.

** Some remarks on this subject, with more particular reference to the latest revelations of Jesus, introduce Bishop Heber's Lectures on the Personality and Office of the Christian Comforter, pp. 1—4.

was the instructive exhortation. The accents, now that the spirit has long fled to celestial occupations, seem to linger upon the fancy; the last flashings of the fire ethereal are yet seen through the lengthened distance, and each word, at all times valuable, becomes, by no violent metamorphosis, a pearl indeed,—deriving an additional lustre from the deepened shadowings of the "vale of death," the use of succeeding generations, and the hope of that untold felicity, which will consist in their fullest exemplification, and ever-brightening splendour.

The disregard, or non-improvement, of an event so momentous as the soul's transition to unknown regions, involves deplorable indifference, if not stupidity, comparable only to that of the Egyptian monarch, or the very auditors of Zechariah: concerning the latter of whom, it is affirmed, to their perpetual reproach, that they *made their hearts as an adamant stone.* It should always be remembered, that death, in the case of every human being, is so inevitably certain, as to render, when the appointed season shall arrive, every plea, whether for exemption or postponement, fruitless. *No man hath power in the day of death: there is no discharge in that war.* And an apostle, as if to force onward the thoughts with an impetuous ardour, urges the solemn warning,—*We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.*

When man's probationary existence, its termination, and the altered, but endless mode of being which then commences, are *thus* contemplated, not only is biography suitably improved, but the proclamation, that—*time shall be no longer*—once to be *heard* from the apocalyptic angel,—will fill the mind, and chase to a distance, with irresistible authority, all terrestrial attractions. Visions of eternity, succeeding in awful progression, and undefinable grandeur, obliterate those "characters of divinity which men set upon absurdities, and errors;"* *sweep away*, as *with hail*, every *refuge of lies*, and exalt the religion of the Bible to her rightful pre-eminence. The glorified Saviour, as a prevailing intercessor,—as the vanquisher of unseen foes,—as still effecting the work of "redeeming mediation," is beheld in the bright effulgence of uncreated divinity, and is invested, as the *Lamb that was slain*, with loveliness inexpressibly captivating. Employed in such meditations, the Christian participates in the grateful admiration and vehement aspirings of Stephen, when, *full of the Holy Ghost, he saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God;* and, mingling astonishment with triumph, uttered the memorable invocation,—*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!*

These views of the subject, while they prevent our wonder at the multiplicity of Scripture narratives, and account satisfactorily for the interest Mr. Henry took "in the lives, actions, and sayings of eminent men,"† discover also to the reflective and pious mind their legitimate effect. Nor can it escape notice, that the *chiefest of the apostles*, when closing the early records of faith, has consolidated, in one unexampled address, and as a deduction from the whole, sentiments the most noble and sublime:—*Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Let it never be forgotten, that admiration, however glowing, bestowed upon the affecting structure of a passage, like that just cited, can avail, for practical purposes, either personal, or in reference to the community, only as the metaphorical allusions, which it embodies, are duly regarded. But let that regard be once prevalent; let the eye be intently fixed upon high examples, and not upon those who rank, at best, only as inferiors in the school of Christ; let the attention be, especially, directed to the Great Exemplar himself; and effects, fruitful and all-pervading, will invariably follow. Then will be given to base companionship the hap-

* See Locke's Essay concerning Human Understanding, ch. iii. § 26.

† See the Life, *post.* p. 127. The names of the ancient fathers should be very precious with us, and the remains of their lives and labours; the first Reformers in our own land, in other lands; the good old puritans; those ministers and Christians who have been eminent in our own country. We should not despise the way of our fathers, but be ashamed to think how short we come of them. We must regard their testimony; and, as far as it agrees with the word of God, put a great value upon it. We must follow them as far as they followed Christ. Matthew Henry. Orig. MS. And see *post.* p. 188.

piest overthrow; then will calumniated piety be upheld by unanswerable vindications; religious attainments will be advanced to an enviable maturity; and, while individual happiness, and the prosperity of the "holy church" universal, are efficiently promoted, *glory in the highest*, ever justly due, will be secured to the *only living and true God*.

JOHN BICKERTON WILLIAMS.

Swan Hill, Shrewsbury,
February 12, 1825.

THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. PHILIP HENRY, A. M.

WITH

FUNERAL SERMONS FOR MR. AND MRS. HENRY.

BY THE

REV. MATTHEW HENRY, V. D. M.

Magnum et memorabile nomen. VIRGIL.

An example,—in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. ST. PAUL.

CORRECTED AND ENLARGED,

BY J. B. WILLIAMS, F. S. A.

TO HIS MUCH HONOURED FRIEND

SIR HENRY ASHURST,

BARONET.

SIR,

THE ministers of the gospel are, in the Scripture language, stars in the right hand of Christ, to signify their diffusive light and beneficial influences. As in the future state of the resurrection, some stars shall differ from others in glory, so in the present state of the regeneration, some ministers are distinguished from others by a brighter eminence in their endowments, and a more powerful emanation of light in their preaching. Of this select number was Mr. Philip Henry, in whom there was a union of those real excellences of parts, learning,* and divine graces, that signalized him among his brethren. This does evidently appear in the narrative of his life, drawn by one very fit to do it;—as having had entire knowledge of him, by long and intimate conversation; and having, by his holy instructions, and the impression of his example, been made partaker of the same sanctifying Spirit. The describing the external actions of saints, without observing the holy principles and affections from whence they derived their life and purity, is a defective and irregular representation of them. It is as if an account were given of the riches and fecundity of the earth, from the flowers and fruits that grow upon it, without considering the mines of precious metals contained in its bosom. Now, only an inward Christian, that has felt the power of religion in his heart, can, from the reflection upon himself, and his uncounterfeit experience, discover the operations of grace in the breasts of others.

Mr. Henry was dedicated to the service of Christ by his mother in his tender age. His first love and desires, when he was capable to make a judicious choice, were set upon God. He entered early into the ministry, and consecrated all the powers of his soul, understanding, memory, will, and affections, with his time and strength, to the service of Christ. And such was the grace and favour of God to him, that he lost no days in his flourishing age, by satisfying the voluptuous appetites; nor in his declining age by diseases and infirmities, but incessantly applied himself to his spiritual work. He was called to a private place in Wales, but his shining worth could not be shaded in a corner. A confluence of people from other parts attended on his ministry. Indeed, the word of truth that dies in the mouths of the cold and careless, (for they are not all saints that serve in the sanctuary,) had life and spirit in his preaching; for it proceeded from a heart burning with zeal for the honour of Christ and salvation of souls. Accordingly he suited his discourses to the wise and the weak; and imitated the prophet who contracted his stature to the dead body of the widow's son, applying his mouth to the mouth of the child, to inspire the breath of life into him. The poor and despised were instructed by him with the same compassionate love and diligence as the rich, notwithstanding the civil distinction of persons which will shortly vanish for ever; for he considered their souls were of the same precious and immortal value. In the administration of the Lord's Supper, he expressed the just temperament of sweetness and severity. With melting compassion he invited all relenting and returning sinners to come to Christ, and receive their pardon sealed with his blood. But he was so jealous of the honour of Christ, that he deterred, by the most fearful consequences, the rebellious that indulged their lusts, from

* Every one knows Mr. Philip Henry was an excellent scholar; he was certainly possessed of a rich treasure of all polite and useful learning, both in languages and in the sciences. Life of the Rev. Matthew Henry, by W. Tong, oct. 1716. p. 24.

coming to partake of the feast of the unspotted Lamb. He was not allured by temporal advantage, which is the mark of a mercenary, to leave the first place where, by the divine disposal, he was seated.

When the fatal Bartholomew-day came, though he had fair hopes of preferment, by his attendance upon the King and Duke of York in their early age,—of which the remembrance might have been revived,—yet he was guided by a superior spirit, and imitated the self-denial of Moses, (a duty little understood, and less practised by the earthly-minded,) *rather choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the good things of this world.* As the light of heaven, when the air is stormy and disturbed, does not lose the rectitude of its rays; so his enlightened conscience did not bend in compliance with the terms of conformity, but he obeyed its sincere judgment.

After his being expelled from the place of his public ministry, his deportment was becoming a son of peace. He refused not communion with the Church of England in the ordinances of the gospel, so far as his conscience permitted. Yet he could not desert the duty of his office, to which he was, with sacred solemnity, set apart. He was faithful to improve opportunities for serving the interest of souls, notwithstanding the severities inflicted on him. And after the restoring our freedom of preaching, he continued in the performance of his delightful work till death put a period to his labours.

After this account of him as a minister of Christ, I will glance upon his character as a Christian. His conversation was so holy and regular, so free from taint, that he was unaccusable by his enemies. They could only object his nonconformity as a crime;—but his vigilant and tender conscience discovered the spots of sin in himself, which so affected his soul, that he desired repentance might accompany him to the gate of heaven. An excellent testimony of humility, the inseparable character of a saint. His love to God was supreme, which was declared by his chosen hours of communion with him every day. The union of affections is naturally productive of union in conversation. Accordingly, our Saviour promises;—*He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.* And he repeats the promise;—*If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him.* To his special and singular love to God, was joined an universal love to men. He did good to all according to his ability. His forgiving of injuries, that rare and difficult duty, was eminently conspicuous in the sharpest provocations. When he could not excuse the offence, he would pardon the offender, and strive to imitate the perfect model of charity exprest in our suffering Saviour; who in the extremity of his sufferings, when resentments are most quick and sensible, prayed for his cruel persecutors. His filial trust in God was correspondent to God's fatherly providence to him. This was his support in times of trial, and maintained an equal temper in his mind, and tenor in his conversation. In short, he led a life of evangelical perfection, most worthy to be honourably preserved in the memory of future times. The following narrative of it, if read with an observing eye, how instructive and affecting will it be to ministers, and apt to transform them into his likeness!

Thus, Sir, I have given a short view of the life of that man for whom you had such a high veneration and dear love. It argues a clearer spirit, and a diviner temper, than is usual in persons of conspicuous quality, when holiness is so despicably mean in the esteem of carnal men, to value it above all titles and treasures, and the perishing pride of this world. I am persuaded it will be very pleasing to you, that your name, and excellent Mr. Henry's, are joined in the same papers.

I am,

Sir,

Your very humble and faithful servant,

WILLIAM BATES. *

* The Rev. W. Bates, D. D. died July 14, 1699, æt. 74. See the Biog. Brit. v. 1. p. 687.

A PREFACE

TO THE READER.

THAT which we aim at in this undertaking, and which we would set before us at our entrance upon it, is, not so much to embalm the memory of this good man, though that also is blessed, as to exhibit to the world a pattern of that primitive Christianity, which all that knew him well observed to be exemplified in him while he lived; and when they saw *the end of his conversation*, as it were with one consent, desired a public and lasting account of, or rather demanded it, as a just debt owing to the world, by those into whose hands his papers came, as judging such an account likely to conduce much to the glory of God's grace, and to the edification of many, especially of those that were acquainted with him. He was one whom the Divine Providence did not call out, as neither did his own inclination lead him, to any very public scene of action. He was none of the forward men of the age, that made themselves talked of. The world scarce knew that there was such a man in it. But in his low and narrow sphere he was a *burning and shining light;* and therefore we think his pious example is the more adapted to general use, especially, consisting not in the ecstasies and raptures of zeal and devotion,—which are looked upon rather as admirable than imitable;—but in the long series of an even, regular, prudent, and well ordered conversation, which he had in the world, and in the ordinary business of it, with *simplicity and godly sincerity;* not with *fleshly wisdom*, but *by the grace of God.* It hath been said, that quiet and peaceable reigns, though they are the best to live in, yet they are the worst to write of, as yielding least variety of matter for the historian's pen to work upon;—but a *quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty*, being the sum and substance of practical Christianity, the recommending of the example of such a life, in the common and familiar instances of it, together with the kind and gracious providences of God attending it, may be, if not as diverting to the curious, yet every whit as useful and instructive to the pious, readers. If any suggest that the design of this attempt is to credit and advance a party, let them know that Mr. Henry was a man of no party, but true catholic Christianity, not debauched by bigotry, nor leavened by any private opinions or interests, was his very temper and genius. According to the excellent and royal laws of this holy religion, his life was led with a strict and conscientious adherence to truth and equity; a great tenderness and inoffensiveness to all mankind; and a mighty tincture of sincere piety and devotedness to God. And according to those sacred rules, we shall endeavour, in justice to him, as well as to our reader, to represent him in the following account; and if any thing should drop from our pen, which might justly give offence to any, which we promise industriously to avoid, we desire it may be looked upon as a false stroke; and, so far, not truly representing him, who was so *blameless, and harmless, and without rebuke.* Much of our materials for this structure we have out of his own papers, especially his diary, for by them his picture may be drawn nearest to the life, and from thence we may take the truest idea of him, and of the spirit he was of. Those notes being intended for his own private use in the review, and never communicated to any person whatsoever; and appearing

here as they ought to do, in their own native dress,* the candid reader will excuse it, if sometimes the expressions should seem abrupt; they are the genuine, unforced, and unstudied breathings of a gracious soul, and we hope will be rather the more acceptable to those who, through grace, are conscious to themselves of the same devout and pious motions. For, as in water *face answers to face*, so doth one sanctified and renewed soul to another; and as Mr. Baxter observes, in his Preface to Mr. Clark's Lives,†—"God's graces are much the same in all his holy ones; and therefore we must not think that such instances as these are extraordinary rarities; but God hath in wonderful mercy raised up many, by whose graces even this earth is perfumed and enlightened." But, if *one star* be allowed to *differ from another star in glory*, perhaps our reader will say, when he hath gone through the following account, that Mr. Henry may be ranked among those of the first magnitude.

* Tong's Life of the Rev. Matthew Henry, p. 3. *ut supra.*

† The Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons in this latter Age; in Two Parts; Part I. of Divines; Part II. Of Nobility and Gentry of both Sexes. By Samuel Clark. Fol. 1683.

POSTSCRIPT.

THIS Account of the Life and Death of my honoured father, was first published the year after he died; and in a little time, there was a second impression of it, in which many considerable errors of the first were amended. It having now been long out of print, and often inquired for, this third edition comes abroad at the request of many who have found this portraiture of a Nathaniel, *an Israelite indeed*,—a genuine son of faithful Jacob,—that *plain man dwelling in tents*,—very serviceable to themselves and others, both for direction, quickening, and encouragement in the ways of God and godliness; for even this way, as well as in conversation,—*as iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*

Frequent mention being made in the book of the comfort he had in all the branches of his family, whom, with satisfaction, he saw planted in families of their own, it may not be amiss here to mention the changes which the Divine Providence made among them, soon after the Lord had taken away our master from our head, who was a daily intercessor for us.

In the year 1697, the year after my father died, two of his four daughters died, in Chester, of a malignant fever, within three weeks one of another: two excellent Christians; and one of them, by some papers of her writing found after her death, appearing to have had such an experimental acquaintance with the principles, powers, and pleasures, of the spiritual and divine life, as few Christians, that have more than doubled her years, attain to.

In the year 1699, two of his four sons-in-law* died, likewise, in Chester, within four or five months one of another; both of them useful good men in their places, and blessings to their families. One of them was Dr. John Tylston, a physician,—like St. Luke,—*a beloved physician;* some time of Trinity College, in Oxford. Though he died at thirty-five years of age, he was for several years very eminent, and of great repute, in his profession. He was a universal scholar, had abundance of knowledge, and used it aright; and was a very devout, serious, conscientious Christian, and one that made it his business to *do good.* Many excellent papers he also left behind him, full fraught with proofs both of his learning and piety. He was greatly and generally lamented; and his memory is, and will be, very precious in this city. Having this occasion, I cannot forbear, even at this distance of time, dropping some tears afresh over his dust, thus publicly; for he was to me as my own soul; and upon every remembrance of him, I must still say, as I did then, what David said of Jonathan,—*I am distressed for thee, my brother; very pleasant hast thou been unto me.*

* The one, Dr. John Tylston, died April 8, 1699. See his life in the Investigator, v. 2. p. 254, &c. The other, Mr. Samuel Radford, died August 20, 1699. See an interesting record of this event by Mrs. Savage, in the Memoirs of her Life and Character, p. 22, &c. Also Tong's Life of the Rev. Matthew Henry, p. 149. *ut supra.*

It pleased God graciously to prolong the life of my dear and honoured mother* almost eleven years after my father, very much to the comfort of all her relations: she continued, to the last, at her house at Broad Oak, where she was born, a great example of wisdom, piety, and usefulness, and abounding in good works. I think I may say, in her sphere and capacity she was not inferior to what my father was in his. She was very happy in a constant calmness and serenity of mind, not easily disturbed; which, as it was a singular gift of the divine grace, and an instance of her wisdom, so it contributed very much to her close and comfortable walking with God, and her doing good. She lived and died rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and in a pleasing expectation of the glory to be revealed. Dr. Benyon† preached her funeral sermon in the meeting-place at Broad Oak, not a year before I preached his at Shrewsbury, on Hebrews vi. 12.—*Be ye followers of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.* The first sermon I preached at Broad Oak after that sad occasion, I wrote over at large afterwards, designing it for the benefit, not only of her children, but of her grand-children, of whom she had twenty-three following her to the grave. They have had it in manuscript among them, and now, in compliance with the desire of many of my friends, I have here added it to this edition of my father's Life; and it is all I have thought fit to add to it.

I confess, I am not solicitous, as some perhaps may think I should be, to make an excuse, and to ask pardon for troubling the world with the little affairs of my poor family, and with the indulgences of my natural affection to it. I design nothing in it but, if it may be, by the grace of God, to do good to plain people like myself.

MATTHEW HENRY.

Chester,
February 27, 1711-12.

* Appendix, No. I.

† Tutor of an Academy at Whixall, in Shropshire, afterwards at Shrewsbury. He was born June 14, 1673; and died March 4, 1707-8. æt. 35.

AN

ACCOUNT

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF

MR. PHILIP HENRY.

CHAPTER I.

MR. PHILIP HENRY'S BIRTH, PARENTAGE, EARLY PIETY, AND EDUCATION AT SCHOOL.

He was born at Whitehall, in Westminster, on Wednesday, August 24, 1631, being Bartholomew Day. I find, usually, in his Diary, some pious remark or other upon the annual return of his birth-day. As in one year he notes, that the Scripture mentions but two who observed their birth-day with feasting and joy, and they were neither of them copies to be written after: viz. Pharaoh, Gen. xl. 20. and Herod, Matt. xiv. 6.—But, saith he, I rather observe it as a day of mourning and humiliation, because *shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin.* And when he had completed the thirtieth year of his age, he noted this,—So old, and no older, Alexander[a] was, when he had conquered the great world, but, saith he, I have not yet subdued the little world, myself. At his thirty-third year he hath this humble reflection,—A long time lived to small purpose. What shall I do to redeem it? And, at another,—I may mourn, as Cæsar[b] did, when he reflected upon Alexander's early achievements, that others, younger than I am, have done much more than I have done for God, *the God of my life.* And, to mention no more, when he had lived forty-two years, he thus writes,—I would be loth to live it over again, lest, instead of making it better, I should make it worse; and besides, every year and day spent on earth is lost in heaven. This last note minds me of a passage I have heard him tell of a friend of his, who, being grown into years, was asked how old he was, and answered,—On the wrong side of fifty;—which, said Mr. Henry, he should not have said; for, if he was going to heaven, it was the right side of fifty.

He always kept a will by him ready made; and it was his custom, yearly, upon the return of his birth-day, to review, and, if occasion were, to renew and alter it. For it is good to do that at a set time, which it is very good to do at some time. The last will[c] he made bears date,—This 24th day of August, 1695, being the day of the year on which I was born, 1631, and also the day of the year on which, by law, I died,[d] as did also near two thousand faithful ministers of Jesus Christ, 1662: alluding to that clause in the Act of Uniformity, which disposeth of the places and benefices of ministers not conforming, as if they were naturally dead.

His father's name was John Henry, the son of Henry Williams, of Britton-Ferry, betwixt Neath and Swansey, in Glamorganshire. According to the old Welsh custom, (some say conformable to that of the ancient Hebrews, but now almost in all places laid aside,) the father's Christian name was the son's surname.[e] He had left his native country, and his father's house, very young, unprovided for by his

a Plutarch's Lives, v. 4. p. 223. ed. 1792, oct.

b Julius Cæsar. Plut. v. 4. pp. 337, *ut supra.* Also, Paradise Regained, Book iii. 39, &c. Milton's Poetical Works by the Rev. H. J. Todd, M. A. F. S. A. v. 5. p. 153, note.

c Appendix, No. II.

d When that eminent martyr, "Master George Wischard," was prohibited preaching, "he grew pensive; and being asked the reason, said,—'What do I differ from a dead man, but that I eat and drink?'" Clark's Gen. Martyr, p. 263. fol. 1677.

e See Verstegan's Restitution of Decayed Intelligence, p. 311. 1628. 4to.

relations;[f] but it pleased God to bless his ingenuity and industry with a considerable income afterwards, which enabled him to live comfortably himself, to bring up his children well, and to be kind to many of his relations; but public events making against him at his latter end, when he died he left little behind him for his children, but God graciously took care of them. Providence brought this Mr. John Henry, when he was young, to be the Earl of Pembroke's[g] gentleman, whom he served many years. The Earl coming to be Lord Chamberlain, preferred him to be the King's servant. He was first made Keeper of the Orchard at Whitehall; [For which he had, besides a dwelling-house at the garden-stairs, with the perquisites of the water-gate, and lodgings of considerable yearly value,[h] and the profits of the orchard, ten groats per diem[i] standing wages, with livery out of the wardrobe,——[k] per annum, insomuch that he lived plentifully, and in good repute, but laid by nothing.[l]

He was] afterwards Page of the Back Stairs to the King's second son, James,[m] Duke of York, which place obliged him to a personal attendance upon the Duke in his chamber. He lived and died a courtier, a hearty mourner for his royal master King Charles the First, whom he did not long survive.[n] He continued, during all the war-time, in his house at Whitehall, though the profits of his places ceased. The King, passing by his door, under a guard, to take water, when he was going to Westminster, to that which they called his trial, inquired for his old servant, Mr. John Henry, who was ready to pay his due respects to him, and prayed God to—Bless his Majesty, and to deliver him out of the hands of his enemies; for which the guard had like to have been rough upon him.[o]

His mother was Mrs. Magdalen Rochdale, of the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, in Westminster. She was a virtuous, pious gentlewoman, and one that feared God above many. She was altogether dead to the vanities and pleasures of the court, though she lived in the midst of them. She looked well to the ways of her household; prayed with them daily, catechized her children, and taught them the good knowledge of the Lord betimes. I have heard him speak of his learning Mr. Perkins's[p] Six Principles,[q] when he was very young; and he often mentioned, with thankfulness to God, his great happiness in having such a mother, who was to him as Lois and Eunice were to Timothy, acquainting him with the Scriptures from his childhood; and, there appearing in him early inclinations both to learning and piety, she devoted him in his tender years to the service of God, in the work of the ministry. She died of a consumption, March 6, 1645, leaving behind her only this son and five daughters. A little before she died, she had this saying, "My head is in heaven, and my heart is in heaven; it is but one step more, and I shall be there too."

His susceptors in baptism were, Philip[r] Earl of Pembroke, (who gave him his name, and was kind to him as long as he lived, as was also his son Philip after him,) James[s] Earl of Carlisle, and the Countess of Salisbury.[t]

Prince Charles[u] and the Duke of York being somewhat near of an age to him, he was in his childhood very much an attendant on them in their play, and they were often with him at his father's house, and they were wont to tell him what preferment he should have at court, as soon as he was fit for it. He kept a book to his dying day, which the Duke of York gave him; and I have heard him bewail the loss of two curious pictures, which he gave him likewise. Archbishop Laud[v] took a particular kindness to him when he was a child, because he would be very officious to attend at the water-gate, (which was part of his father's charge in Whitehall,) to let the Archbishop through when he came late from Council, to cross the water to Lambeth.

[And when the Archbishop was a prisoner in the Tower, his father took him with him to see him, and he would remember that the Archbishop gave him some new money.[w]]

These circumstances of his childhood he would sometimes speak of among his friends, not as glorying in them, but taking occasion from thence to bless God for his deliverance from the snares of the court, in the midst of which it is so very hard to maintain

f He had from his father, as I have heard, but one groat. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

g Ob. 23rd Jan. 1649-50. Collins's Peerage, v. 3. p. 127, &c. ed. 1812.

h £50 or £60 per annum. Orig. MS. of the Life of P. Henry, by Matt. Henry.

i Above £60 per annum. Ib.

k £27 per annum. Ib.

l P. Hen. Orig. MS.

m Afterwards King James II.

n 1652, Feb. 28th. My dear father, Mr. John Henry, died at his house in Whitehall. A very great affliction both to myself and sisters, especially the two little ones. The Lord provide for us! He was born July 20, 1590. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

o See a Mem. of the reign of K. Ch. I. by Sir P. Warwick, p. 379, and Sir Tho. Herbert's Memoir, p. 163.

p The Rev. W. Perkins died A. D. 1602, aged 44. Clarke's Marrow of Eccl. Hist. p. 850. 4to. 1654. It was the motto of the learned and godly divine, Mr. Perkins, *Fidei vita vera vita*;—the true life is the life of faith; a word which that worthy servant of God did both write and live. Bishop Hall. Works. vol. viii. p. 30. oct. ed.

q See Mr. Perkins's Works, vol. i. p. 1. fol. 1608.

r See Dunton's Life and Errors, v. 1. p. 344. ed. 1818. He died Dec. 11, 1669. Collins's Peerage, v. 3. p. 140, &c. *ut supra.*

s Died without issue in 1660, on which his titles became extinct. Collins's Peerage, v. 7. p. 205. *ut supra.*

t Lady Catharine Howard, youngest daughter of Thomas, Earl of Suffolk. She was married to William, the second Earl of Salisbury, Dec. 1. 1608. Collins's Peerage. v. 2. p. 490. *ut supra.*

u Afterwards King Charles II.

v He was born A. D. 1573, and beheaded Jan. 10. 1644-5. Hist. of his Troubles, Trial, Diary, &c. 2 vols. fol. 1695.

w Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

a good conscience and the power of religion, that it hath been said, though, blessed be God, it is not a rule without exception, *Exeat ex aulâ qui velit esse pius.*[x] The breaking up and scattering of the court, by the calamities of 1641, as it dashed the expectations of his court preferments, so it prevented the danger of court entanglements. And, though it was not, like Moses's, a choice of his own, when come to years, to quit the court; yet when he was come to years, he always expressed a great satisfaction in his removal from it, and blessed God, who chose his inheritance so much better for him.

Yet it may not be improper to observe here, what was obvious, as well as amiable, to all who conversed with him; viz. that he had the most sweet and obliging air of courtesy and civility that could be; which some attributed in part to his early education at court. His mien and carriage were always so very decent and respectful, that it could not but win the hearts of all he had to do with. Never was any man further from that rudeness and moroseness which some scholars, and too many that profess religion, either wilfully affect, or carelessly allow themselves in, sometimes to the reproach of their profession. It is one of the laws of our holy religion, exemplified in the conversation of this good man, to *honour all men.* Sanctified civility is a great ornament to Christianity. It was a saying he often used,—Religion doth not destroy good manners; [it destroys not civility but sanctifies it;[y]] and yet he was very far from any thing of vanity in apparel, or formality of compliment in address; but his conversation was all natural and easy to himself and others, and nothing appeared in him, which even a severe critic could justly call affected. This temper of his tended very much to the adorning of the doctrine of God our Saviour; and the general transcript of such an excellent copy, would do much towards the healing of those wounds which religion hath received, in the house of her friends, by the contrary. But to return to his story.—

The first Latin school he went to was at St. Martin's church, under the teaching of one Mr. Bonner.[z] Afterwards he was removed to Battersey,[a] where one Mr. Wells was his schoolmaster. The grateful mention which in some of his papers he makes of these that were the guides and instructors of his childhood and youth, brings to mind that French proverb to this purpose, "To father, teacher, and God all-sufficient, none can render equivalent."

But in the year 1643, when he was about twelve years old, he was admitted into Westminster School, in the fourth form, under Mr. Thomas Vincent, then usher, whom he would often speak of as a most able, diligent schoolmaster; and one who grieved so much at the dulness and non-proficiency of any of his scholars, that falling into a consumption, I have heard Mr. Henry say of him,—That he even killed himself with false Latin.

A while after he was taken into the upper school, under Mr. Richard Busby, afterwards Dr. Busby;[b] and in October, 1645, he was admitted King's scholar, and was first of the election, partly by his own merit, and partly by the interest of the Earl of Pembroke.

Here he profited greatly in school-learning, and all his days retained his improvements therein to admiration. [Nor was there any part of his life which he did more frequently speak of with pleasure than the years he spent at Westminster School.[c]] When he was in years, he would readily in discourse quote passages out of the classic authors that were not common, and had them *ad unguem*, and yet rarely used any such things in his preaching, though sometimes, if very apposite, he inserted them in his notes. He was very ready and exact in the Greek accents, the quantities of words, and all the several kinds of Latin verse; and often pressed it upon young scholars, in the midst of their university-learning, not to forget their school-authors.

Here, and before, his usual recreation at vacant times was, either reading the printed accounts of public occurrences, or attending the courts at Westminster Hall, to hear the trials and arguments there, which I have heard him say, he hath often done to the loss of his dinner, and oftener of his play.

But *paulo majora canamus.*—Soon after those unhappy wars begun, there was a daily morning lecture set up at the abbey-church, between six and eight of the clock, and preached by seven worthy members of the assembly of divines in course, viz. Mr. Marshal, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Herl, Dr. Staunton, Mr. Nye, Mr. Whitaker, and Mr. Hill. It was the request of his pious mother to Mr. Busby, that he would give her son leave to attend that lecture daily, which he did, not abating any thing of his school-exercise, in which he kept pace with the rest; but only dispensing with his absence for that hour. And the Lord was pleased to make good impressions on his soul, by the sermons he heard there. His mother also took him with her every Thursday, to Mr. Case's[d]

x Lucretius.

y P. Henry. Orig. MS.

z Who was very loving to me, and took pains with me. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

a Where I tabled at one Mr. Heyborn's by the water-side, and went to school to one Mr. Wells. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

b Died April 6, 1695, æt. 89. See Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 7. p. 436, &c. And Mattaire's Ep. at the end of the Preface in Vit. Joh. Barwick, S. S. P. ed. 1721. In the same volume is preserved an anecdote at once descriptive of the Doctor's exemplary temperance and the sad effects of prejudice. p. 233.

c Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

d Thomas Case. P. Henry. Orig. MS. Thomas Case, M. A. died May 30, 1682, æt 84. See the Noncon. Mem. v. I. p. 153. ed. 1802.

He preached a lecture at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields every Thursday, which he kept up above twenty years. Fun. Serm. by Thomas Jacomb. D. D. p. 41. 4to. 1682.

lecture at St. Martin's. On the Lord's day he sat under the powerful ministry of Mr. Stephen Marshal; in the morning at New-chapel, in the afternoon at St. Margaret's Westminster, which was their parish church. In the former place Mr. Marshal preached long from Phil. ii. 5, 6, &c.; in the latter from John viii. 36. of our freedom by Christ. This minister, and this ministry, he would, to his last, speak of with great respect, and thankfulness to God, as that by which he was, through grace, in the beginning of his days, *begotten again to a lively hope.* I have heard him speak of it, as the saying of some wise men[e] at that time,—That if all the Presbyterians had been like Mr. Stephen Marshal, and all the Independents like Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs,[f] and all the Episcopal men like Archbishop Usher,[g] the breaches of the church would soon have been healed. He also attended constantly upon the monthly fasts at St. Margaret's, where the best and ablest ministers of England preached before the then House of Commons; and the service of the day was carried on with great strictness and solemnity, from eight in the morning till four in the evening. [He likewise frequented extraordinary fasts and thanksgivings.[h] Here he used to sit always upon the pulpit stairs,[i] and] it was his constant practice, from eleven or twelve years old, to write, as he could, all the sermons he heard, which he kept very carefully, transcribed many of them fair over after, and, notwithstanding his many removes, they are yet forthcoming.

At these monthly fasts, he himself hath recorded it, he had often sweet meltings of soul in prayer, and confession of sin, (particularly once with special remark, when Mr. William Bridge,[k] of Yarmouth, prayed,) and many warm and lively truths came home to his heart, and he daily increased in that wisdom and knowledge which is to salvation. Read his reflections upon this, which he wrote many years after. "If ever any child," saith he, "such as I then was, between the tenth and fifteenth years of my age, enjoyed *line upon line, precept upon precept*, I did. And was it in vain? I trust, not altogether in vain. My soul rejoiceth, and is glad at the remembrance of it; the *word distilled as the dew, and dropt as the rain.* I loved it, and loved the messengers of it; their very feet were beautiful to me. And, Lord, what a mercy was it, that, at a time when the poor countries were laid waste; when the noise of drums and trumpets, and the clattering of arms, was heard there, and the ways to Sion mourned, that then my lot should be where there was peace and quietness, where *the voice of the turtle was heard*, and there was great plenty of gospel opportunities! *Bless the Lord, O my soul! As long as I live I will bless the Lord. I will praise my God while I have my being.* Had it been only the restraint that it laid upon me, whereby I was kept from the common sins of other children and youths, such as cursing, swearing, sabbath-breaking, and the like, I were bound to be very thankful. But that it prevailed, through grace, effectually to bring me to God, how much am I indebted! And *what shall I render?*"

Thus you see how the dews of heaven softened his heart by degrees.—From these early experiences of his own,

1. He would blame those who laid so much stress on people knowing the exact time of their conversion, which he thought was, with many, not possible to do. Who can so soon be aware of the day-break, or of the springing up of the seed sown? The work of grace is better known in its effects than in its causes.

He would sometimes illustrate this by that saying of the blind man to the Pharisees, who were so critical in examining the recovery of his sight. This, and the other, I know not concerning it, but,—*This one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see*, John ix. 25.

2. He would bear his testimony to the comfort and benefit of early piety, and recommend it to all young people, as a good thing to bear the yoke of the Lord Jesus in youth. He would often witness against that wicked proverb, "A young saint, an old devil;" and would have it said rather,—A young saint, an old angel.[l] He observed it concerning Obadiah, and he was a courtier, that he *feared the Lord from his youth;* 1 Kings xviii. 12. and it is said of him, verse 3. that he "feared the Lord greatly." Those that would come to fear God *greatly*, must learn to fear him *from their youth.* No man did his duty so *naturally* as Timothy did, Phil. ii. 20. who, from a child, knew the Holy Scriptures. He would sometimes apply to this that common saying,—He that would thrive, must rise at five. And, in dealing with young people, how earnestly would he press this upon them,—I tell you, you cannot begin too soon to be religious, but you may put it off too long. Manna must be gathered early, and he that is the first, must have the first. He often inculcated, Eccles. xii. 1. *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth;* or, as in the original, "the days of thy choice,"—thy choice days, and thy choosing days.

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e Mr. Baxter used to say so. Neal's History of the Puritans, v. 3. p. 349. ed. 1795.

f Nat. A. D. 1559. ob. Nov. 14, 1646. Lives of the Puritans, v. 3. p. 18.

g Nat. Jan. 4, 1580. ob. Mar. 21, 1655. Life and Letters, by his Chaplain, Dr. Parr, fol. 1686.

h P. Henry. Orig. MS.

i Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

k See the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 19. He died Mar. 12, 1670. æt. 70.

l Remember the olde proverbe, young saints, old devils; which proverbe, in very deed, is naught and deceitfull; therefore we may say thus,—Young devill, old devill; Young saints, old saints. Sermons by Bishop Latimer, p. 171. 4to. 1607.

[He would say sometimes,—The life of a Christian is a life of labour; *Son, Go, work;*—it is necessary work, and excellent work, and pleasant work, and profitable work; and it is good to be at it when young.[m]]

I remember a passage of his in a Lecture Sermon, in the year 1674, which much affected many. He was preaching on that text, Matt. xi. 30. *My yoke is easy;* and, after many things insisted upon, to prove the yoke of Christ an easy yoke, he at last appealed to the *experience* of all that had drawn in that yoke. —*Call, now, if there be any that will answer you; and to which of the saints will you turn?* Turn to which you will, and they will all agree, that they have found *wisdom's ways pleasantness;* and Christ's *commandments not grievous;*—and, saith he, I will here witness for one, who, through grace, has, in some poor measure, been drawing in this yoke, now above thirty years, and I have found it an easy yoke, and like my choice too well to change.

3. He would also recommend it to the care of parents, to bring their children betimes to public ordinances. He would say, that they are capable, sooner than we are aware, of receiving good by them. The Scripture takes notice, more than once, of the *little ones* in the solemn assemblies of the faithful; Deut. xxix. 11. Ezra x. 1. Acts xxi. 5. If we lay our children by the pool-side, who knows but the Blessed Spirit may help them in, and heal them.[n] He used to apply that scripture to this, Cant. i. 8. Those that would have communion with Christ, must not only go forth by the *footsteps of the flock*, themselves, but *feed their kids too*,—their children, or other young ones that are under their charge, *beside the Shepherd's tents.*[o]

4. He would also recommend to young people the practice of writing sermons. He himself did it, not only when he was young, but continued it constantly till within a few years before he died, when the decay of his sight, obliging him to the use of spectacles, made writing not so ready to him as it had been. He never wrote short-hand, but had an excellent art of taking the substance of a sermon in a very plain and legible hand,[p] and with a great deal of ease. And the sermons he wrote, he kept by him, in such method and order, that, by the help of indexes, which he made to them, he could readily turn almost to any sermon that ever he heard, where he noted the preacher, place, and time; and this he called,—Hearing for the time to come. He recommended this practice to others, as a means to engage their attention in hearing, and to prevent drowsiness, and to help their memories after hearing, when they come either to meditate upon what they have heard themselves, or to communicate it to others; and many have had reason to bless God for his advice and instruction herein. He would advise people sometimes to look over the sermon-notes that they had written, as a ready way to revive the good impressions of the truths they had heard, and would blame those who made waste-paper of them;—for, saith he, the day is coming, when you will either thank God for them, or heartily wish you had never written them.

But it is time we return to Westminster School, where, having begun to learn Christ, we left him in the successful pursuit of other learning, under the eye and care of that great Master, Dr. Busby; who, on the account of his pregnancy and diligence, took a particular kindness to him, called him his *child*, and would sometimes tell him he should be his heir; and there was no love lost betwixt them.[p] Dr. Busby was noted for a very severe schoolmaster, especially in the beginning of his time. But Mr. Henry would say sometimes, that, as in so great a school there was need of a strict discipline, so, for his own part, of the four years he was in the school, he never felt the weight of his hand but once, and then, saith he, in some of the remarks of his youth, which he wrote long after, I deserved it. For, being monitor of the chamber, and, according to the duty of his place, being sent out to seek one that played truant,[q] he found him out where he had hid himself, and, at his earnest request, promised to make an excuse for him, and to say he could not find him; which, saith he, in a penitential reflection upon it afterwards, I wickedly did. Next morning, the truant coming under examination, and being asked whether he saw the monitor, said, Yes, he did; at which Dr. Busby was much surprised, and turned his eye upon the monitor, with this word, Καὶ συ τέκνον; *What thou, my son!*[r] and gave him correction, and appointed him

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m P. Henry. Orig. MS.

n See John v. 2—8.

o It hath been observed of many eminent men, that they have written but bad hands, and some think that is the meaning of Paul's τηλικοις γραμμασιν, Gal. vi. 11. "Ye see with what sort of letters (how ill made) I have written to you with my own hand." But if that be a rule, Mr. Henry was an exception from it. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.* The same could not be said of the excellent commentator. Aware of it, in a letter to his friend, the Rev. S. Clark, he thus writes;—"I oft blame myself for writing carelessly, especially when my mind is intent." Chester, Dec. 4, 1700. Orig. MS.

p Mr. John Ireland, the editor of Hogarth's works, numbered Mr. Henry among his ancestors. His mother, the daughter of the Rev. Thomas Holland, of Wem, in Shropshire, was Mr. Henry's great-grand-daughter.

The first time Mr. Ireland was introduced to Dr. Johnson, he was stated to be a descendant of Mr. Philip Henry, on which that great man remarked, in his emphatic manner,—"Sir, you are descended from a man, whose genuine simplicity, and unaffected piety, would have done honour to any sect of Christians; and, as a scholar, he must have had uncommon acquirements, when Busby boasted of having been his tutor." Public Characters of 1800—1801. p. 339.

q One Nath. Bull, afterwards a Master of Paul's School. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

r The historian, narrating the murder of Julius Cæsar, records, that,—"with 3 and 20 wounds he was stabbed: dur-

to make a penitential copy of Latin verses, which, when he brought, he gave him sixpence, and received him into his favour again.

Among the mercies of God to him in his youth, (and he would say, it were well if parents would keep an account of those for their children, till they came to be capable of doing it for themselves, and then to set them upon the doing of it,) he hath recorded a remarkable deliverance he had here at Westminster School, which was this: It was customary there, among the studious boys, for one, or two, or more, to sit up the former part of the night at study; and when they went to bed, about midnight, to call others; and they others, at two or three o'clock, as they desired. His request was to be called at twelve; being awaked, he desired his candle might be lighted, which stuck to the bed's head; but he dropt asleep again, and the candle fell, and burnt part of the bed and bolster, ere he awaked; but, through God's good providence, seasonable help came in, the fire was soon quenched, and he received no harm. This gave him occasion, long after, to say,—*It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.*

When he was at Westminster school he was employed by Dr. Busby, as some others of the most ingenious and industrious of his scholars were, in their reading of the Greek Authors, to collect, by his direction, some materials for that excellent Greek Grammar, which the Doctor afterwards published.

But, be the school never so agreeable, youth is desirous to commence man by a removal from it. This step he took in the sixteenth year of his age. It was the ancient custom of Westminster School, that all the King's Scholars, who stood candidates for an election to the University, were to receive the Lord's Supper the Easter before, which he did with the rest, in St. Margaret's Church, at Easter, 1647; and he would often speak of the great pains which Dr. Busby took with his scholars, that were to approach to that solemn ordinance, for several weeks before, at stated times; with what skill and seriousness of application, and manifest concern for their souls, he opened to them the nature of the ordinance, and of the work they had to do in it; and instructed them what was to be done in preparation for it; and this he made a business of, appointing them their religious exercises instead of their school exercises. What success this had, through the grace of God, upon young Mr. Henry, to whom the doctor had a particular regard, read from his own hand. "There had been treaties," saith he, "before, between my soul and Jesus Christ, with some weak overtures towards him; but then, then, I think, it was, that the match was made, the knot tied: then I set myself, in the strength of divine grace, about the great work of self-examination, in order to repentance; and then I repented; that is, solemnly and seriously, with some poor meltings of soul. I confessed my sins before God, original and actual, judging and condemning myself for them, and casting away from me all my transgressions, receiving Christ Jesus the Lord, as the Lord my Righteousness, and devoting and dedicating my whole self, absolutely and unreservedly, to his fear and service. After which, coming to the ordinance, there, there I received him indeed; and He became mine;—I say, *Mine. Bless the Lord, O my soul!*"

Dr. Busby's agency, under God, in this blessed work, he makes a very grateful mention of, in divers of his papers,—The Lord recompense it, saith he, a thousand-fold into his bosom.[s]

I have heard him tell how much he surprised the Doctor, the first time he waited upon him after he was turned out by the act of uniformity: for when the Doctor asked him, "Pr'ythee, child, what made thee a nonconformist?—Truly, Sir, saith Mr. Henry, you made me one; for you taught me those things that hindered me from conforming."

"Encouraged by this experience, I have myself," saith he, in one of his papers, "taken like pains with divers others at their first admission to the Lord's table, and have, through grace, seen the comfortable fruits of it, both in mine own children and others. To God be glory."

Mr. Jeremy Dyke's[t] book of the sacrament, I have heard him say, was of great use to him at that time, in his preparation for that ordinance.

Thus was this great concern happily settled before his launching out into the world, which, through grace, he had all his days more or less the comfort of, in an even serenity of mind, and a peaceful expectation of the glory to be revealed.

May 17, 1647, he was chosen from Westminster School to Christ-church in Oxford, *jure loci*, with four others, of which he had the second place. At his election he was very much countenanced and smiled upon by his godfather, the Earl of Pembroke, who was one of the electors.

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ing which time he gave but one groan, without any worde uttered, and that was at the first thrust; although some have written, that, as M. Brutus came running upon him, he said, Και συ τεκνον; *And thou, my sonne!*" Suetonius, p. 33. fol. 1606.

s Upon hearing of the death of Dr. Busby, in April, 1695, after he had been near fifty-eight years Schoolmaster of Westminster School, Mr. Henry thus writes,—I believe I have as much reason to bless God for him, as any scholar that ever he had,—he having been so instrumental in beginning the good work in him. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

t He was "of a cheerful spirit; and know, reader, that an ounce of mirth, with the same degree of grace, will serve God farther than a pound of sadnesse." Fuller's Worthies, Hartfordshire, p. 28. fol. 1662. He died A. D. 1620.

The book referred to is entitled, "A Worthy Communicant; or, a Treatise, showing the due order of Receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." Duod. 1645.

CHAPTER II.

HIS YEARS SPENT AT OXFORD.

THOUGH he was chosen to the University in May, yet, being then young, under sixteen, and in love with his school-learning, he made no great haste thither. It was in December[a] following, 1647, that he removed to Oxford. Some merciful providences, in his journey, he being a young traveller, affected him much, and he used to speak of them, with a sense of God's goodness to him in them, according to the impressions then made by them; and he hath recorded them with this thankful note,—That there may be a great mercy in a small matter; as the care that was taken of him by strangers, when he fainted and was sick in his inn the first night; and his casual meeting with Mr. Annesly, son to the Viscount Valentia, (who was chosen from Westminster School at the same time that he was,) when his other company, going another way, had left him alone, and utterly at a loss what to do. Thus the sensible remembrance of old mercies may answer the intention of new ones, which is to engage our obedience to God, and to encourage our dependence on him.

Being come to Oxford, he was immediately entered commoner of Christ-church, where Dr. Samuel Fell[b] was then Dean; the tutor assigned to him and the rest of that election was Mr. Underwood,[c] a very learned, ingenious gentleman.

His godfather, the Earl of Pembroke, had given him ten pounds to buy him a gown, to pay his fees, and to set out with. This in his papers he puts a remark upon, as a seasonable mercy in regard of some straits, which Providence, by the calamity of the times, had brought his father to. God had taught him from his youth that excellent principle, which he adhered to all his days, that every creature is that to us, and no more, that God makes it to be;[d] and, therefore, while many seek the ruler's favour, and so expect to make their fortunes, as they call it, seeing every man's judgment proceedeth from the Lord, it is our wisdom to seek his favour, who is the Ruler of rulers, and that is an effectual way to make sure our happiness.

To the proper studies of this place he now vigorously addressed himself; but still retaining a great kindness for the classic authors, and the more polite exercises he loved so well at Westminster School.

He was admitted student of Christ-church, March 24, 1647-8, by Dr. Henry Hammond,[e] that great man, then Sub-Dean, who called him his god-brother, the Earl of Pembroke being his god-father also, and Prince Henry the other, who gave him his name.

The visitation of the University by the Parliament happened to be in the very next month after. Oxford had been for a good while in the hands of the Parliament, and no change made; but now the Earl of Pembroke, and several others thereunto appointed, came hither to settle things upon a new bottom. The account Mr. Henry in his papers gives of this affair, is to this purpose: The sole question which the visitors proposed to each person, high and low, in every college, that had any place of profit, was this, "Will you submit to the power of the Parliament in this present visitation?" To which all were to give in their answer in writing, and accordingly were either displaced or continued. Some cheerfully complied, others absolutely refused; (among whom he would sometimes tell of one that was but of his standing, who gave in this bold answer, "I neither can nor will submit to the power of the Parliament in this present visitation; I say I cannot, I say I will not." J. C.[f]) Others answered doubtfully, pleading youth and ignorance[g] in such matters. Mr. Henry's answer was,—I submit to the power of the Parliament in the present visitation, as far as I may with a safe conscience, and without perjury. His reason for the last salvo was, because he had taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy a little before, at his admission; which he was, according to the character of the good man, that he fears an oath, very jealous of doing any thing to contradict or infringe; which hath made him sometimes signify some dislike of that practice of administering oaths to such as were scarce past children, who could hardly be supposed to take them with judgment, as oaths should be taken. However, this answer of his satisfied; and, by the favour of the Earl of Pembroke, he was continued in his student's place. But great alterations were made in that, as well as in other colleges, very much, no question, to the hinderance and discouragement of young scholars, who came thither to get learning, not to judge of the rights of government. Dr. Samuel Fell, the Dean, was removed, and Dr. Edward Reynolds, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, was put in his room. Dr. Hammond and all the Canons,[h] except Dr. Wall, were displaced, and Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Pococke, and

a Dec. 15. Orig. MS.

b Born, 1584; ob. Feb. 1648-9. Wood's Ath. Oxon. By Dr. Bliss, v. 3. p. 242. 4to. 1817.

c See Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy, Part II. p. 110. fol. 1714.

d Dr. Harris "would often say, God made it appear to all beholders, that the best man is no more than God makes him hourly." Life, by W. D.[urham.] p. 46. duod. 1660. See Wood's Ath. v. 4. p. 146. *ut supra.*

e See his life by Dr. Fell, p. 2. duod. 1661. Dr. H. was born 18 Aug. 1605. Ob. 25 Ap. 1660.

f John Carrick. P. Henry. Orig. MS. See Walker, *ut supra.* Part II. p. 110. His answer provoked, and he was soon after turned out. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

g See the Lives of John Leland, Thomas Hearne, and Anthony à Wood, v. 2. p. 52. oct. 1772.

h Dr. George Morley, Dr. Rich. Gardiner, Dr. Morris, Dr. Sanderson, and Dr. Payn, and one more. P. Henry, Orig. MS.

others,[i] of the Parliament's friends, were preferred to their places. His thoughts of this in the reflection long after, was, that milder methods might have done better, and would have been a firmer establishment to the new interest; but, considering that many of those who were put out (being in expectation of a sudden change, which came not of many years after) were exasperating in their carriage towards the visitors; and that the Parliament, who at this time rode masters, had many of their own friends ready for University-preferments, (which, Oxford having been from the beginning a garrison for the King, they had been long kept out of,) and these they were concerned to oblige, it was not strange if they took such strict methods. And yet nothing being required but a bare submission, which might be interpreted but as crying quarter, he thought withal, that it could not be said the terms were hard, especially, saith he, if compared with those of another nature imposed since.

Among other student-masters removed, his tutor, Mr. Underwood, was one, which he often bewailed as ill for him, for he was a good scholar, and one that made it his business to look after his pupils, who were very likely, by the blessing of God, to have profited under his conduct. But, upon the removal of Mr. Underwood, he, with some others, was turned over to Mr. Finmore, who was then in with that interest which was uppermost, and was afterwards Prebendary of Chester; a person, as he notes, able enough, but not willing to employ his abilities for the good of those that were committed to his charge; towards whom he had little more than the name of a tutor. This he lamented as his infelicity at his first setting out. But it pleased God to give him an interest in the affections of a young man, an under-graduate then, but two or three years his senior from Westminster, one Mr. Richard Bryan,[k] who took him to be his chamber-fellow, while he continued at Oxford, read to him, overlooked his studies, and directed him in them. Of this gentleman he makes a very honourable mention, as one who was, through God's blessing, an instrument of much good to him. Mr. John Fell, also, the Dean's son, (afterwards himself Dean of Christ-church, and Bishop of Oxford,) taking pity on him, and some others that were neglected, voluntarily read to them for some time; a kindness which he retained a very grateful sense of, and for which he much honoured that learned and worthy person.

Here he duly performed the college-exercises, disputations every day, in Term-time; themes and verses once a week, and declamations when it came to his turn; in which performances he frequently came off with very great applause. And many of his manuscripts which remain, show how well he improved his time there, [though most of his philosophy collections were casually lost together in a trunk in some remove, which he oft lamented.[l]]

And yet, in some reflections I find under his hand, written long after, wherein he looks back upon his early days, he chargeth it upon himself, that for a good while after he came to the University, though he was known not to be inferior to any of his standing in public exercises,[m] yet he was too much a stranger to that hard study which afterwards he became acquainted with, and that he lost a deal of time which might have been better improved. Thus he is pleased to accuse himself of that, which, for ought I ever heard, no one else did, or could, accuse him of. But the truth is, in all the secret accounts he kept of himself, he appears to have had a very quick and deep sense of his own failings and infirmities, in the most minute instances; the loss of time, weakness and distractions in holy duties, not improving opportunities of doing good to others, and the like; lamentably bewailing these imperfections, and charging them upon himself, with as great expressions of shame, and sorrow, and self-abhorrence, and crying out as earnestly for pardon and forgiveness in the blood of Jesus, as if he had been the greatest of sinners. ["I was," he writes, "too much in love with recreation; a bowling-green, I remember, out of town, and a metheglin-house, which I often went to in winter for my morning draught, and it was such a draught as disfitted me for study after, though I cannot say I was ever drunk. These things are now bitter to me, and have been formerly, many a time, in the reflection, and here I record them against myself."[n]] For, though he was a man that walked very closely, yet withal he walked very humbly, with God, and lived a life of repentance and self-denial. This minds me of a sermon of his, which one might discern came from the heart, on that scripture, Rom. vii. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* A strange complaint, saith he, to come from the mouth of one who had learned in every state to be content. Had I been to have given my thoughts, said he, concerning Paul, I should have said, O blessed man that thou art, that hast been in the third heaven, a great apostle, a spiritual father to thou-

i Mr. Cornish, Mr. Langley, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Button, and Dr. Mills. Also great alterations among the students, and the like, in other colleges. P. Henry. Orig MS.

k See Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy, Part II. p. 110.

l Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

m What must needes bee done in colledge-exercise, for disputations every day, in Term-time, for theames and verses once a week, and for declamations, when it came to my turn, I did as others of my standing, and sometimes had prayse for it. But as for that which wee call hard study, giving myself to reading, late and early, and digesting what I read by daily serious review, I was too much a stranger to it. P. Henry. Orig. MS. See some Remarkable Passages in the Life of the Rev. Mr. Edmund Trench, p. 20. duod. 1093.

n P. Henry. Orig. MS.

sands, &c. and yet a wretched man all this while, in his own account and esteem. He never complains thus of the bonds and afflictions that did abide him, the prisons that were frequent, the stripes above measure; but the body of death; that is, the body of sin, that was it he groaned under. How feelingly did he observe from thence,—That the remainders of indwelling corruption are a very grievous burthen to a gracious soul.[o]

But to return. It may not be amiss to set down the causes to which he ascribes his loss of time when he came first to the University. One was, that he was young, too young, and understood not the day of his opportunities, which made him afterwards advise his friends not to thrust their children forth too soon from school to the university, though they may seem ripe, in respect of learning, till they have discretion to manage themselves. While they are children, what can be expected but that they should mind childish things? Another was, that, coming from Westminster School, his attainments in school-learning were beyond what generally others had that came from other schools; so that he was tempted to think there was no need for him to study much, because it was so easy to him to keep pace with others; which, he said, was the thing Dr. Caldecott, Chaplain to the Earl of Pembroke, and his great friend, warned him of at his coming to Oxford. Another was, that there were two sorts of persons, his contemporaries; some of the new stamp, that came in by the visitation, and were divers of them serious, pious young men, but of small ability, comparatively, for learning, and those for that reason he desired not to have much fellowship with. But there were others that were of the old spirit and way, enemies to the Parliament, and the reformation they made; and these were the better scholars, but generally not the better men. With them, for a while, he struck in because of their learning, and conversed most with them; but he soon found it a snare to him, and that it took him off from the life of religion and communion with God. *Elanguescere mox cepit*, saith he, in a Latin narrative of his younger years, *pristinæ pietatis ardor, &c.* But, "for ever praised be the riches of God's free grace," saith he, in another account, "that he was pleased still to keep his hold of me; and not to let me alone when I was running from him, but set his hand again the second time, as the expression is, Isa. xi. 11. to snatch me *as a brand out of the fire*." His recovery from this snare he would call a kind of second conversion; so much was he affected with the preventing grace of God in it, and sensible of a double bond to be for ever thankful, as well as of an engagement to be watchful and humble. It was a saying of his,—He that stumbleth and doth not fall, gets ground by his stumble.[p]

[Hence he writes, "Forasmuch as I have by often experience found the treachery and deceitfulness of my own heart, and being taught that it is my duty to engage my heart to approach unto God, and that one way of doing it is by subscribing with my hand unto the Lord; therefore let this paper be witness, that I do deliberately, of choice, and unreservedly, take God in Christ to be mine; and give myself to him, to be his, to love him, to fear him, to serve and obey him; and, renouncing all my sins with hearty sorrow and detestation, I do cast myself only upon free grace, through the merits of Christ, for pardon and forgiveness; and do propose, God enabling me, from this day forward, more than ever, to exercise myself unto godliness, and to walk in all the ways of religion as much as ever I can with delight and cheerfulness, as knowing that my *labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*."[q]]

At the latter end of the year 1648, he had leave given[r] him to make a visit to his father at Whitehall, with whom he staid some time; there he was, January 30, when the King was beheaded, and with a very sad heart saw that tragical blow given. Two things he used to speak of, that he took notice of himself that day, which I know not whether any of the historians mention. One was, that at the instant when the blow was given, there was such a dismal universal groan among the thousands of people that were within sight of it, as it were with one consent, as he never heard before, and desired he might never hear the like again, nor see such a cause for it. The other was, that immediately after the stroke was struck, there was, according to order, one troop marching from Charing-cross towards King-street, and another from King-street towards Charing-cross, purposely to disperse and scatter the people, and to divert the dismal thoughts which they could not but be filled with, by driving them to shift every one for his own safety. He did upon all occasions testify

o See the Works of Bishop Reynolds, fol. 1658. p. 624. and Dr. John Owen's Treatise on In-dwelling Sin, 1668. oct.

p A similar phrase occurs in the writings of Mr. Paul Bayne;—"He that stumbles, and comes not down, gets ground: the trippings of God's children, in which they recover themselves, bring them on with greater advantage." Christian Letters, p. 173. duod. 1637. Mr. Bayne died in 1617. See Clark's Lives, annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 22. fol. 1677. Mr. Baxter thought him "one of the holiest, choicest men, that ever England bred." Saints' Everlasting Rest, p. 416. 4to. 1662.

q Palmer's Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 490; said to be printed from Mr. Henry's Diary.

r At the latter end of the year 1648 I had leave given me to goe to London to see my father; and during my stay there, at that time, at Whitehall, it was, that I saw the beheading of King Charles the First. Hee went by water to Westminster, for hee took barge at Garden-stayres, where wee lived, and once he spake to my father, and sayd,—Art thou alive yet?

On the day of his execution, which was Tuesday, Jan. 30, I stood amongst the crowd in the street, before Whitehall gate, where the scaffold was erected, and saw what was done, but was not so near as to hear any thing. The blow I saw given, and can truly say, with a sad heart. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

his abhorrence of this unparalleled action, which he always said was a thing that could not be justified, and yet he said he saw not how it could be called a national sin; for, as the King urged upon his trial, it was certain that not one man of ten in the kingdom did consent to it;* nor could it be called the sin of the long Parliament, for far the greatest part of them were all that time, while the thing was in agitation, imprisoned and kept under a force, and scarce twenty-seven of the forty that were left to carry the name of a Parliament, did give their vote for it; which the Commissioners for the trying of the King's Judges, in the year 1660, (some of whom had been themselves members of the Long Parliament,) urged again and again, in answer to that plea which the prisoners stood so much upon, that what they did was by authority of the Parliament. But it is manifest it was done by a prevailing party in the army, who, as he used to express it, having beaten their plowshares into swords, could not so easily beat their swords into plowshares again, as having fought more for victory and dominion than for peace and truth; but how far these men were acted and influenced by another sort of people behind the curtain, the world is not altogether ignorant.[s] For some years after King Charles II. came in, he observed the yearly day of humiliation[t] for this sin, desiring that God would not lay the guilt of blood to the charge of the nation. But, afterwards, finding to what purposes it was generally observed, and improved even to the reproach and condemning not only the innocent, but of some of the excellent ones of the land, and noting that there is no precedent in Scripture of keeping annual days of humiliation for particular sins; especially after the immediate judgment is at an end, Zech. viii. 19. Heb. x. 2, 3. he took no further notice of it. But in his diary he adds this tender remark, according to the spirit he was of, "Yet good men, no doubt, may observe it to the Lord." Rom. xiv. 6. Thus he judged not, and why then should he be judged?

* See the Bishop of Chichester's Sermon before the King, Jan. 30th, 1697, page 25, 29. where he saith he did not see how it could be called a national sin.

In the year 1650-1 he took his Bachelor of Arts degree, and he hath recorded the goodness of God in raising him up friends, who helped him out in the expenses. Such kindnesses have a peculiar sweetness in them to a good man, who sees and receives them as the kindness of God, and the tokens of his love.

He would often mention it with thankfulness to God, what great helps and advantages he had then in the University, not only for learning, but for religion and piety. Serious godliness was in reputation, and besides the public opportunities they had, there were many of the scholars that used to meet together for prayer, and Christian conference, to the great confirming of one another's hearts in the fear and love of God, and the preparing of them for the service of the church in their generation. I have heard him speak of the prudent method they took then about the University sermons on the Lord's day in the afternoon; which used to be preached by the fellows of colleges in their course; but, that being found not so much for edification, Dr. Owen[u] and Dr. Goodwin[v] performed that service alternately, and the young masters that were wont to preach it, had a lecture on Tuesday appointed them. The sermons he heard at Oxford he commonly wrote, not in the time of hearing, but afterwards, when he came home, in his reflection upon them, which he found a good help to his memory.

In December, 1652, he proceeded Master of Arts, and in January following preached his first sermon at South Hinksey in Oxfordshire, on John viii. 34. *Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.* On this occasion he writes in his diary what was the breathing of his heart towards God,—The Lord make use of me as an instrument of his glory, and his church's good, in this high and holy calling.

His great parts and improvement, notwithstanding his extraordinary modesty and humility, had made him so well known in the University, that in the following act, in July, 1653, he was chosen out of all the masters of that year, to be junior of the act, that is, to answer the philosophy questions in *Vesperiis*, which he did with very great applause; especially for the very witty and ingenious orations which he made to the University upon that occasion. His questions were,—1. *An licitum sit carnibus vesci? Aff.* 2. *An institutio academiarum sit utilis in republicâ? Aff.* 3. *An ingenium pendeat ab humoribus corporis? Aff.* At the act in 1654, he was chosen *Magister Replicans*, and answered the philosophy questions *in comitiis*, with a like applause. His questions then were,—1. *An melius sit sperare quam frui? Neg.* 2. *An maxima animi delectatio sit a sensibus? Neg.* 3. *An utile sit peregrinari? Aff.*

Dr. Owen, who was then Vice-Chancellor, hath spoken with great commendation of these performances of Mr. Henry's to some in the University afterwards, who never knew him otherwise than by

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[s] See Dr. Parr's Life of Archbishop Usher, *ut supra*. Letters at the end, No. 293; and the Abr. of Baxter's Life and Times, v. i. p. 57, &c. oct. 1713.

[t] 1671. Jan. 30. Brings to remembrance the horrid murder of the late King. Deliver the nation from blood-guiltiness, O God! P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

1673. Jan. 30. We remembered this day the death of Charles I. with grief, and prayer,—that God would please to forgive it,—Exod. xx. 5.—*visiting the iniquity.* P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

See the life of the Rev. Thomas Cawton, p. 25. duod. 1662; and Clark's Lives of Eminent Persons, p. 19. fol. 1683.

[u] Nat. 1616. Ob. Aug. 24, 1683. See his Life by Mr. Orme, *ut supra*.

[v] Nat. Oct. 5, 1600. Ob. Feb. 23, 1679. Life prefixed to his works, vol. v. fol. 1704.

report; and I have heard a worthy divine who was somewhat his junior in the University, and there a perfect stranger to him, say, how much he admired these exercises of his, and loved him for them; and yet how much more he admired, when he afterwards became acquainted with him in the country, that so curious and polite an orator should become so profitable and powerful a preacher, and so readily lay aside the enticing words of man's wisdom, which were so easy to him.

There is a copy of Latin verses of his in print, among the poems which the University of Oxford published upon the peace concluded with Holland,[w] in the year 1654, which show him to be no less a poet than an orator.

He hath noted it of some pious young men, that before they removed from the University into the country, they kept a day of fasting and humiliation for the sins they had been guilty of in that place and state. And in the visits he made afterwards to the University, he inserts into his book, as no doubt God did into His,—a tear dropt over my University-sins.[x] [He would sometimes say, "When we mourn for sin because God is offended by it, and abstain from sin because of his honour, that we may not wrong him, or grieve him, this is more pleasing to him than burnt-offerings and sacrifices.[y]]

CHAPTER III.

HIS REMOVAL TO WORTHENBURY, IN FLINTSHIRE, HIS ORDINATION TO THE MINISTRY, AND HIS EXERCISE OF IT THERE.

WORTHENBURY[a] is a little town by Dee side, in that Hundred of Flintshire which is separated some miles from the rest of the county, and known by the name of English Mailors,[b] because though it is reputed in Wales, as pertaining to Flintshire, yet in language and customs it is wholly English, and lies mostly between Cheshire and Shropshire. Worthenbury was of old a parochial chapel, belonging to the rectory of Bangor,[c] but was separated from it in the year 1658, by the trustees for uniting and dividing of parishes, and was made a parish of itself. But what was then done being vacated by the King's coming in, it then came to be *in statu quo*, and continued an appurtenant to Bangor, till, in the second year of the reign of King William and Queen Mary, it was again by act of Parliament separated, and made independent upon Bangor. That was the only act that passed the royal assent with the act of recognition, at the beginning of the second parliament of this reign.[d] The principal family in Worthenbury parish, is that of the Pulestons of Emeral. The head of the family was then John Puleston, Serjeant at Law, one of the Judges of the Common Pleas.

This was the family to which Mr. Henry came from Christ-church, presently after he had completed his Master's degree, in 1653. Ordered into that remote, and unto him unknown, corner of the country, by that overruling Providence which determineth the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation.

The Judge's lady was a person of more than ordinary parts and wisdom, in piety inferior to few, but in learning superior to most of her sex, which I could give instances of from what I find among Mr. Henry's papers,[e] particularly an elegy she made upon the death of the famous Mr. John Selden,[f] who was her great friend.

This was the lady whose agency first brought Mr. Henry into this country. She wrote to a friend of hers, Mr. Francis Palmer,[g] student of Christ-church, to desire him to recommend to her a young man to be in her family, and to take the oversight of her sons, some of whom were now ready for the University, and to preach at Worthenbury on the Lord's days, for which a very honourable encouragement[h] was promised. Mr. Palmer proposed it to his friend Mr. Henry, who was willing for one half-year to undertake it, provided it might be required of him to preach but once on the Lord's day, and that some other supply might be got for the other part of the day, he being now but twenty-two years of age, and newly entered upon that great work. Provided also, that he should be engaged but for half a year, as little intending to break off so soon from an academical life, which he delighted in so much. But preferring usefulness before his own private satisfaction, he was willing to make trial for a while in the country, as one that sought not his own things, but the things of Jesus Christ, to whose service in the work of the ministry he had entirely devoted himself, bending his studies wholly that way. [One

w Appendix, No. III.

x May not Sterne have had in view this sentence when he penned the well-known passage,—"The accusing spirit which flew up to heaven's chancery with the oath, blushed as he gave it in;—and the Recording Angel, as he wrote it down, *dropped a tear* upon the word, and blotted it out for ever." Works, vol. vi. p. 42. duod. 1762.

y P. Henry. Orig. MS.

a Beneth Bangor, stil on the south side of Dee ryver, is a paroche caullid Worthembre; in Walch, Guothumbre; having a faire chirch, but as a membre to Bangor. Leland's Itinerary, vol. v. p. 30. oct. 1744.

b See Leland, *ut supra*, v. 5. p. 30.

c See Leland, *ut supra*, v. 5. p. 30.

d Sir John Trevor, the Speaker, being father-in-law to Sir Roger Puleston, the Patron. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra*.

e See Mr. Orme's Life of Dr. Owen. App. p. 511.

f John Selden, Esq. was born Dec. 16, 1584. He died Nov. 30, 1654. Mr. Chalmer's Biog. Dict. v. 27, p. 317.

g Probably the same person who contributed a copy of verses when the poems of William Cartwright, "the most noted poet, orator, and philosopher, of his time," were "usher'd into the world," A. D. 1651, oct. See Wood's Ath. Oxon. v. 3. p. 70. *ut supra*.

h My diet, and sixty pounds per annum salary. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

of the letters which passed on the occasion just referred to, has been preserved. It is introduced from the hand-writing of Lady Puleston, and the orthography correctly transcribed. It illustrates in some measure the nature of Mr. Henry's inquiries, and furnishes a pleasing corroboration of the character already given of its excellent writer.

19th Sept. 1653.

Cosin Palmer,

Y^e^ Messeng^r^ w^ch^ brought mee a lett^r^ fro y^u^ brought y^e^ judg one also fro his Nephew, Mr. Hamlet Puleston. But no motio of a Schoolm^r^. However I rely so much on y^r^ choice of y^e^ gent^lm^ pposed, y^t^ thers' no need to trouble Mr. H. Puleston. I am content to abate one of y^e^ sermons, hoping hee will pray in y^e^ family, insteed thereof, w^ch^ is so easy to a Christia y^t^ hee's rather lead then drawn therto, and if y^e^ expositions of chapters or Psalmes bee easyer to him then preaching, I shal like it (as ever I have done) bett^r^ then y^e^ other. Im' confident wee shall not differ heerin ffor I shall eyther wait ffor y^e^ guifts and calling of God in him (w^ch^ are w^thout^ repentance) or wholly indulg him ffro y^e^ fformalities of preaching, praying, &c.—as some use y^m^ please to send him away ffor y^e^ half yeer ffro y^e^ time hee comes till 26 weekes be compleat: his allowance shall be half y^e^ revenue pposd, and other accomodations mentiond formerly. This time of probatio will conclude us eyther on a ffarther time, or repayring to Oxford at Spring. ———————

Please to keeep y^e^ letter ——————— as an evidence of our bargain. I have delivered y^e^ Bearer 5*l.* ffor y^e^ Gentleman in part of y^e^ first quarteridg. what y^e^ charge of y^e^ journey takes out of it I will supply at y^e^ quarters end when I pay y^e^ rest to make out 15*l.* I have sent a horse and a ffootman to wait on him hither. Mr. Roberts is grown a worthy Christian and I greatly value him. if y^u^ have a mind to see what works God hath done in him, y^u^ shall finde him at one Mr. Courtneys Lodging in Milbanck neer Tuttle-Fields. God can doo as much ffor Mr. Henry y^u^ know. I pray y^u^ hasten him hyther.

If pleas God to give success to y^es^ endeavours I shal bee glad. I wish y^e^ Gentlem^n^ to take his journey on Fryday, and rest at my sister Grayes on Lord's day so hee may bee at Emral on Munday night. I desire a good-journey. ffrancis Palmer (Juni.) & Tremeli.[i]) notes upon y^e^ Bible I desire y^u^ to send mee. & y^e^ Bible in Greek, w^ch^ y^r^ learned ffriends, Septuagint,, translated ffor Ptolomy.

I thank y^u^ ffor y^r^ respect and shal ever rest

Y^r^ welwishing Cosin

ELIZABETH PULESTON.

If y^u^ will come see how wee thrive y^u^ shal bee welcome. My Roger Puleston love to y^u^ & so y^e^ rest.

To my much-respected
Kinsman Mr. Francis Palmer
a Master of Arts
at Christ's Church in Oxford.
or in his absence to one Mr. Henry
Master of Art & of y^e^ same
House. [k]]

In the latter part of his time at Oxford, as one grown weary of that which he used to say he found little to his purpose; he employed his time mostly in searching the Scriptures, and collecting useful Scripture observations, which he made very familiar to him, and with which he was thoroughly furnished for this good work. He got a Bible interleaved, in which he wrote short notes upon texts of Scripture as they occurred. He would often say,—I read other books, that I may be the better able to understand the Scripture.

It was a stock of Scripture knowledge that he set up with, and with that he traded to good advantage. Though he was so great a master in the eloquence of Cicero, yet he preferred far before it that of Apollos, who was *an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures*, Acts xviii. 24.

He bid very fair at that time for University-preferment, such was the reputation he had got at the late act, and such his interest in Dr. Owen; but the salvation of souls was that which his heart was upon, to which he postponed all his other interests.

In September, 1653, he came down to Emeral,[l] from whence a messenger was sent on purpose to Oxford to conduct him thither. Long after, when it had pleased God to settle him in that country, and to build him up into a family, he would often reflect upon his coming into it first; what a stranger he then was, and how far it was from his thoughts ever to have made his home in those parts; and, passing over the brook that parts between Flintshire and Shropshire, would sometimes very affectionately use that word of Jacob's—*With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.*

At Emeral he prayed in the family, was tutor to the young gentlemen, and preached once a day at Worthenbury, other help being procured for the other part of the day, according to his request, out of a fear, being so young, to take the whole work

i Intending, by this playful compliment, the version of Francis Junius and Immanuel Tremellius, first published in 1575.

k Orig. MS.

l On leaving Broughton I took the road towards Bangor. On the right lies Emral Hall, the seat of the Pulestons; a family settled here in the time of Edward I. but which took its name from Pulesdon, a township in Shropshire. Pennant's Tours in Wales, v. i. p. 297. See Leland, *ut supra*, v. 5. pp. 32, 33.

upon him. But it soon happened, that one Lord's day the supply that was expected failed; and so he was necessitated, rather than there should be a vacancy, to preach twice, in which he found the promise so well fulfilled, *As thy day is, so shall thy strength be;* and, *To him that hath* (i. e. that hath, and useth what he hath) *shall be given, and he shall have abundance;* that, to the great satisfaction of his friends there, from thenceforward he waved looking out for other help than what came from above, and would sometimes speak of this as an instance, that we do not know what we can do, till we have tried.

Here he applied himself to a plain[m] and practical way of preaching, as one truly concerned for the souls of those he spoke to. He would say sometimes,—We study how to speak that you may understand us; and, I never think I can speak plain enough when I am speaking about souls and their salvation. I have heard him say, he thought it did him good, that for the first half year of his being at Worthenbury, he had few or no books with him, which engaged him in studying sermons to a closer search of the Scripture and his own heart. What success his labours had in that parish, which, before he came to it, I have been told, was accounted one of the most loose and profane places in all the country, may be gathered from a letter of the lady Puleston's to him, at the end of the first half year after his coming to Emeral, when he was uncertain of his continuance there, and inclinable to return to settle at Christchurch. Take the letter at large.

Dear Mr. Henry;

The indisposition that my sadness hath bred, and the stay of Mrs. V. here yesterday, hindered my answering your last expressions. As to ordering the conversation, and persevering to the practice of those good intents, taken up while one is in pursuit of a mercy, you and I will confer, as God gives opportunity, who also must give the will and the deed, by his Spirit, and by the rule of his word. As to begging that one thing for you, God forbid, as Samuel said, that *I should cease to pray*, &c. This I am sure, that having wanted hitherto a good minister of the word among us, I have oft by prayer, and some tears, above five years besought God for such a one as yourself; which, having obtained, I cannot yet despair, seeing he hath given us the good means, but he may also give us the good end. And this I find, that your audience is increased three for one in the parish, though in winter more than formerly in summer; and five for one out of other places. And I have neither heard of their being in the ale-house on our Lord's day, nor ball-playing that day, which, before you came, was frequent, except that day that young Ch. preached. I think I can name four or five in the parish, that of formal Christians are becoming or become real. But you know all are not wrought on at first, by the word. Some come in no misfortune like other men, and this is the cause they be so holden with pride, &c. Hypocrites also have converted conversion itself. Yet God may have reserved those that *have not bowed the knee to Baal*, &c. and may call them at the latter part of the day, though not in this half year. It is a good sign, most are loth to part with you; and you have done more good in this half year, than I have discerned these eighteen years. But, however, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, you have delivered your own soul. I have prayed, and do pray, seeing God hath sent you, that you may be for his glory, and not for our condemnation.

It is easy to imagine what an encouragement this was to him, thus at his first setting out to see of the travail of his soul, and what an inducement it was to him not to leave those among whom God had thus owned him. However, that spring he returned to Oxford. The Lady Puleston soon after came to him thither, with her five sons, of whom she placed the two eldest under his charge in the college. In the following vacation he went to London to visit his relations there; and there, in October he received a letter from Judge Puleston, with a very solemn and affectionate request, subscribed by the parishioners of Worthenbury, earnestly desiring his settlement among them, as their minister, which he was persuaded to comply with, having fixed to himself that good rule,—In the turns of his life, to follow Providence, and not to force it. So, in the winter following he came down again, and settled with them. He continued in his student's place in Christchurch for two or three years, attending the service of it once a year; but disposing of most of the profit of it for the use of poor scholars there.

The tithe of Worthenbury belonged to [the] Emeral family, paying some rent to the Rector of Bangor. This tithe Judge Puleston was willing to give, clear of that charge, to the minister of Worthenbury for

[m] Let your preaching be plain. Painted glass is most curious; plain glass is most perspicuous. Be a good crucifix to your people. Preach a crucified Saviour in a crucified style. Paul taught so plainly, that the Corinthians thought him a dunce. Let your matter be substantial; wholesome food; God and Christ, and the gospel, faith, repentance, regeneration. Aim purely at God's glory and the salvation of souls. Study, as if there were no Christ; preach, as if there had been no study. Preach plainly, yet with novelty; preach powerfully, as Micah;—as Paul, in intension of spirit, not extension of voice. To this end get your sermon into your own souls. It is best, from the heart, to the heart. Preach prudentially,—as stewards, to give each their portion. Get your sermons memoriter. How can you expect your people should remember, and repeat, if you read? Yet use caution. Our memories are not of brass,—they are cracked, in all, by the fall. Beware of giving occasion to say,—I may stay at home in the afternoon; I shall hear only the same song. Mr. Porter at an Ordination. From a MS. in the hand-writing of P. Henry.

ever. But such was the peculiar and extraordinary kindness he had for Mr. Henry, upon the experience of his merits, that he chose rather by deed of indenture, bearing date October 6, 1655, between himself and Mr. Henry,—"In consideration of his being pleased to undertake the cure of souls, and to preach and teach, and perform other duties of divine service in the parish church of Worthenbury, (so the deed runs,) to give, grant, and confirm for himself and his heirs, unto the said Philip Henry, the yearly rent of one hundred pounds, charged upon all his messuages, lands, and tenements in the several counties of Flint, Denbigh, and Chester, to be paid quarterly, until such times as the said Philip Henry shall be promoted or preferred to some other spiritual or ecclesiastical living or preferment, with power of distress in case of non-payment." A hundred a year was more than Worthenbury tithes were worth at that time; and the manner of the gift freed the maintenance from much of that loss and incumbrance which commonly attends the gathering of tithe.

[About this period, judging from the hand-writing of the following letter, addressed to a friend at Oxford, (no doubt Dr. Owen, who was then Dean of Christ-church, and Vice-Chancellor,[n]) he received a summons to that city, which led him to add the postscript. But as the letter furnishes an illustration of Mr. Henry's character as a young minister, the whole may be here fitly introduced.

Most honoured Sir;

Being importuned to improve my interest for the supply of a vacant curacy in these parts, I make bold to acquaint you with the state of it, that, if you know of any, either in your own college or elsewhere, that is willing to accept of it, you would please to be instrumental in sending him hither.

The place is called Holt; it is in Denbighshire, but I think a man may throw a stone out of it into Cheshire; it is distant from Wrexham about three miles, and from Chester five; the situation of it for convenience is beyond exception; there are but few such hereabouts, only the salary, I fear, may appear somewhat too small to come so far for. It is as yet, upon certainty, but £45 per annum, but it is probable may be made, ere long, £65, paid in money, and no deductions out of it for taxes; for the place of his abode, if he be a single man, the Major of the town, a very godly person, hath promised it in his own house, till such time care be taken to provide for him otherwise. For his qualifications, Sir, he must, in a judgment of charity, be one that fears God, in regard he comes, not to a place that never heard of Christ, (as many such there be in Wales,) but to a knot of eminent, discerning Christians, scarce the like anywhere hereabouts, among whom there are divers able, indeed, to be themselves teachers of others; so that if he himself be one that hath no savour of the things of God, he will be no way acceptable or useful there. He must, moreover, be either fitted already for the administration of the ordinances, or in a capacity of being suddenly fitted; if he make haste hither, he may have an opportunity shortly of being ordained here in Shropshire.

Sir, if God, the Lord of the harvest, shall make use of you in his providence, as an instrument of thrusting forth a faithful labourer into this corner of his vineyard, I no way doubt but you will be often mentioned by some of them with rejoicing at the throne of grace, and that you, yourself, when you shall have reaped the fruit of their prayers, will bless God for putting such a prize into your hands.

Sir, craving your pardon for my boldness in troubling you, I leave the matter with your care, and yourself, and all your relations and concernments, with our ever good God.

Your Servant very much obliged,

P. H.

Sir, since my purpose of writing to you about the business above mentioned, I have received information from Christ-church of a summons to appear personally there, before Michaelmas Term: whereupon my request to you is, that by a line or two you would please to acquaint me, whether I may not obtain to be dispensed with. 1. In regard I was so lately there. 2. In regard of the great distance I am now at from thence; above fourscore miles. 3. Of the unusual unseasonableness of the ways and weather; and 4. Which is most of all, my very great indisposedness in point of health. If I may be excused, I would entreat you, Sir, to endeavour it for me; if not, that you would please to send me word, —1. Whether it will not serve if I come sooner: and 2. How long it will be required that I make my stay there. Sir, I have more reason to beg your pardon for this latter trouble than the former.[o]]

He still continued for some years in the Emeral family, where he laid out himself very much for the spiritual good of the family, even of the meanest of the servants, by catechising,[p] repeating the sermons, and personal instruction, and he had very much comfort in the countenance and conversation of the judge and his lady. Yet he complains sometimes in his diary of the snares and temptations that he found in his way there, especially because some of the branches of the family, who did not patrizare,

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n Le Neve, pp. 231, 466. fol. 1716.

o P. Henry. Orig. MS.

p Use catechising. Heretofore, catechising justled out preaching; now, preaching justles out catechising. Let the ship be ballasted with fundamental truths. Hearers will then not be so easily whirled about with every wind. Luther was called—*discipulus catechismi*. Mr. Porter, 1659. From a MS. in P. Henry's hand-writing.

were uneasy at his being there, which made him willing to remove to a house of his own; which, when Judge Puleston perceived, in the year 1657, out of his abundant and continued kindness to him, he did, at his own proper cost and charges, build him a very handsome house in Worthenbury, and settled it upon him by a lease, bearing date March 6, 1657, for threescore years, if he should so long continue minister at Worthenbury, and not accept of better preferment.

He hath noted in his diary, that the very day that the workmen began the building of that house, Mr. Mainwaring, of Malpas,[q] preached the lecture at Bangor, from Psalm cxxvii. 1. *Except the Lord build the house,*[r] *they labour in vain that build it.*— There never was truth, saith he, more seasonable to any than this was to me. It was a word upon the wheels.[s] He hath recorded it as his great care, that his affections might be kept loose from it, and that it might not encroach upon God's interest in his heart. When it was finished, he thus writes:—I do from my heart bless God, that no hurt or harm befell any of the workmen in the building of it.

Thus was his maintenance settled at Worthenbury. In the year 1659, he was, by a writing of Judge Puleston's, collated, nominated, and presented, to the church of Worthenbury; and, the powers that then were having so appointed, he had an approbation thereof from the commissioners for approbation of public preachers.

Some little opposition was made to his settlement at Worthenbury by Mr. Fogg,[t] then Rector of Bangor, because he conceived it an intrenchment upon his right to Worthenbury, and thought it might prejudice his recovering of it by course of law. I only mention this for the sake of the note he hath upon it in his diary, which is this:—I do earnestly desire that the Judge may give Mr. Fogg all reasonable satisfaction, that there may be no appearance of wrong to him, or any other, in this thing. And when Mr. Fogg insisted upon it, that he would have Mr. Henry give it under his hand, that he desired the consent of the said Mr. Fogg to be minister of Worthenbury, he yielded to do it for peace sake; and from thenceforward there was an intimate and entire friendship between Mr. Fogg and him.

Being thus settled at Worthenbury, his next care was touching ordination to the work of the ministry, to which he would see his call very clear, before he solemnly devoted himself to it. And though afterwards in the reflection, especially when he was silenced, it was some trouble to him, that he had so long deferred to be ordained, (and he would often, from the consideration of that, press those who intended the ministry, not to put it off,) yet, as the times then were, there was something of a reason for it.

The nearest acting class of presbytery, was in the Hundred of Bradford North, in Shropshire, wherein Mr. Porter, of Whitchurch, was the leading man, of whom Mr. Baxter[u] gives so high a character in his Life, part 3, page 94, and who was one of those whom he recommended to the Lord Chancellor, as fit to be made a Bishop, part 2, page 283. This class was constituted by ordinance of parliament, in April, 1647; the members of it then, were the aforesaid Mr. Porter, Mr. Boughy, of Hodnet, Mr. Houghton, of Prees, Mr. Parsons,[v] of Wem, and Mr. John Bisby;[w] and afterwards Mr. Malden,[x] of Newport, Mr. Binney, of Ightfield, and Mr. Steel, of Hanmer, though in Flintshire, were taken in to them, and acted with them. This class in twelve years' time publicly ordained sixty-three ministers. Mr. Henry was very desirous to have been ordained at Worthenbury, *plebe præsente*, which he thought most agreeable to the intention, but the ministers were not willing to set such a precedent. However, that was one thing which occasioned the delay, so that he was not ordained till September 16, 1657.

The way and manner of his ordination was according to the known directory of the Assembly of Divines, and the common usage of the Presbyterians; and yet, he having left among his papers a particular account of that solemnity, and some of the workings of his soul towards God in it; I hope it may be of some use both for instruction and quickening to ministers, and for the information of such as are perhaps wholly strangers to such a thing, to give some account of the whole transaction.

He made addresses to the presbytery, in order to his ordination, July 6, at Prees, when he submitted to trial, and inquiry was made, in the first place, concerning his experience of the work of grace in his heart; in answer to which he gave *a reason of*

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q See Dr. Townson's Works, v. i. p. xix. *ut supra*, and Ormerod's Hist. of Cheshire, v. ii. p. 328, &c.

r Mr. Henry has the following notes on this passage:—

The *house*; that is, the family. *Build*; that is, constitute, maintain, preserve, augment. If we would have God to build our houses, we must be careful to build God's house by caring for his worship, ordinances, interests. Hag. i. 9. ii. 18. 2 Sam. vii.—; to aim at his glory in our buildings, not at self, as Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 30;—to build in faith, relying upon the promises, Heb. xi. 9, 10;—in the fear of God, Exod. i. 21; in righteousness and honesty, Prov. x. 25. Hab. ii. 12.—We must fetch in God by prayer, and keep him there by family duties, Josh. xxiv. 15. Ps. ci. Orig. MS.

s "A word, fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of silver;" Prov. xxv. 11. or, as the Hebrew hath it,—"A word spoken *upon his wheels*:" that is, rightly ordered, placed, and circumstanced. Brooks's Arke for all God's Noahs, Ep. Ded. p. 1. duod. 1662. See, also, Jer. xviii. 3.

t See the Noncon. Mem. v. iii. p. 480, &c.

u See Reliquiæ Baxterianæ, or, Mr. R. Baxter's Narrative of the most Memorable Passages of his Life and Times. Fol. 1696.

v See the Noncon. Mem. v. iii. p. 163.

w Minister of Edstaston, in Shropshire. Wood's Ath. Oxon. v. 4. p. 640. *ut supra*. Walker mentions him as a Prebend. of Pipa Minor, *alias* Prees. Suff. of the Clergy, Part II. p. 41.

x See the Noncon. Mem. v. iii. p. 149.

the hope that was in him, with meekness and fear; that the Spirit of grace had been dealing with him when he was young; and, he hoped, had discovered to him his need of Christ, and had bowed his will in some measure to close with him upon his own terms, &c. His skill in the original languages of the Scripture was then tried; and he read and construed two verses in the Hebrew Bible, and two in the Greek Testament. He was then examined in Logic and Natural Philosophy; next in Divinity, what authors he had read, and what knowledge he had, touching the mediation of Christ, &c. And his skill in the Scripture was tried, by propounding to him a difficult text to give his sense of; a case of conscience was also put to him to be resolved, an inquiry made into his acquaintance with church-history. Lastly, a question was given him to provide a thesis upon against next meeting, which was this; *An providentia Divina extendat se ad omnia? Aff.* On this question he exhibited his thesis, August 3, and defended it. Several of the ministers opposed, and Mr. Porter moderated. He then produced two certificates, which he left with the register of the class, one from Oxford, subscribed by Dr. Wilkinson,[y] Dr. Langley,[z] &c. the other from the neighbouring ministers, Mr. Steel, Mr. Fogg, &c. both testifying of his conversation, &c. "The Lord forgive me," saith he, in his diary, upon this, "that it hath not been more exemplary, as it ought, for piety and industry. Amen, Lord in Christ." The day for ordination was appointed to be September 16, at Prees,[a] of which notice was given at Worthenbury by a paper, read in the church, and afterwards affixed to the church door the Lord's day before, signifying also, "That, if any one could produce any just exceptions against the doctrine or life of the said Mr. Henry, or any sufficient reason why he might not be ordained, they should certify the same to the classis, or the scribe, and it should be heard and considered."[b]

On the day of ordination there was a very great assembly gathered together. Mr. Porter began the public work of the day with prayer, then Mr. Parsons preached on 1 Timothy i. 12. *I thank Christ Jesus, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.* Putting men into the ministry is the work of Jesus Christ. After sermon, Mr. Parsons, according to the usual method, required of him a confession of his faith, which he made as follows:

The ground and rule of my faith towards God, is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. I believe they were written by holy men, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost; having found the efficacy of them, in some measure, upon my own heart, I believe they are further able to make me wise to salvation.

2 Pet. i. 21. 2 Tim. iii. 15.

Concerning God, I believe that he is, and that he is the Rewarder of those that diligently seek him.

Heb. xi. 6.

The Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, I receive and own as a truth, I admire and adore as a mystery; though no man hath seen God at any time, yet the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him; and what he hath declared concerning him, that I believe. I believe that God is a Spirit, for the Son hath said, "God is a Spirit." I believe that he hath life in himself, and that he hath given to the Son to have life in himself. I believe all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. I believe by his providence he preserves, guides, and governs, all the creatures, according to the purpose of his own will, to his own glory; for the Father worketh hitherto, and the Son also worketh.

1 John v. 7. John i. 18. John iv. 24. John v. 26. John i. 3. John v. 17.

I believe he made man upright, after his own image and likeness, which image consisted in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness; but man, by sin, lost it.

Eccles. vii. 29. Gen. i. 26. Coloss. iii. 10. Ephes. iv. 24.

I believe we were all in the loins of our first parents, and that they stood and fell as public persons, and upon that account justly, without any colour of wrong, we bear our share, both in the guilt of their disobedience, and also the corruption of nature following thereupon; so that we came into the world children of wrath, and heirs of the curse, one, as well as another; enemies to God, hating him, and hated of him: averse to what is good, and prone to all manner of evil. Though all are born in this condition, yet there are some that do not die in it.

Psalm li. 5. Ephes. ii. 3. Zech. xi. 8. Rom. vii. 18. Gen. vi. 5.

I believe there is a Mediator, and there is but one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. Those whom the Father hath from everlasting pitched his love upon, and given to Christ, not because of works or faith foreseen, but merely of his free grace;

1 Tim. ii. 5. Ephes. i. 4, 5.

y Nat. 1602; ob. June, 1675. Wood's Ath. Oxon. *ut supra*, v. 3. p. 1038.

z Ob. Sept. 1679. Wood's Fasti. *ut supra*, v. 4. pp. 113. 157.

a A small village in the Hundred of North Bradford, Salop, five miles from Whitchurch, and about four from Wem.

b Appendix, No. IV.

Rom. v. 11. Gal. iv. 4. John xvii. 19. Phil. ii. 8. Eph. i. 20, 21. Heb. vii. 25. John xvii. 9. Rom. viii. 30. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

for those I believe Christ was sent forth into the world, made of a woman, made under the law; for their sakes he sanctified himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also highly exalted him; and having raised him from the dead on the third day, set him at his own right hand, where he ever lives to make intercession for those for whom he shed his blood. All these elect redeemed ones, I believe, are, in due time, sooner or later, in their lives, effectually called, washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Rom. v. 1. Ps. cxliii. 2. Jer. xxiii. 6. Matt. iii. 17.

I believe the righteousness of Christ alone, apprehended by faith, is the matter of our justification before God; and that no flesh can stand in his sight upon any other terms, for he is the Lord our Righteousness, and in him only the Father is well pleased.

Rom. xv. 16. Coloss. iii. 11. 1 Cor xiii. 9, 10. 1 Pet. i. 5.

I believe the work of sanctification, managed by the Spirit, who dwelleth in us, though, in respect of parts, it be complete, for the whole man is renewed; yet, in respect of degrees, it is not fully perfected till we come to glory; and I believe all that are justified shall be glorified; for we are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.

Ephes. iv. 11. Matt. xxviii. 20.

I believe the gathering in, and building up, of saints, is the special end why pastors and teachers are appointed in the church; and that Jesus Christ, according to his promise, will be with them, in that work, to the end of the world.

Rom. iv. 11. Matt. xxviii. 19. Rom. vi. 7. Acts ii. 39. Matt. xxvi. 26.

The two Sacraments of the New Testament, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, I receive and own as signs and seals of the covenant of grace; the former instituted by our Lord Jesus, as a sign and seal of our ingrafting into him, due of right, to all the infants of believing parents, and but once to be administered; the other instituted by our Lord Jesus in the night wherein he was betrayed, to show forth his death, and to seal the benefits purchased thereby to his church and people, and to be often repeated. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

When the body returns to the dust, I believe the soul returns to God that gave it; and that immediately it receives from him the sentence, according to what hath been done in the flesh, either, "Come, inherit the kingdom;" or, "Depart, accursed, into everlasting fire." Eccles. xii. 7. Matt. xxv. 34, 41.

I believe, besides this, a day of general judgment in the end of the world, wherein we must all appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ; and that our bodies being raised, by an almighty power, from the dust, shall be united to the same souls again, and shall partake with them, in the same condition, either of happiness or misery, to all eternity. Those that have done good, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. Acts xvii. 31. 2 Cor. v. 10. 1 Cor. xv. 42. John v. 20.

This is the sum and substance of my faith, into which I was baptized, and in which, by the grace of God, I will live and die.[c]

Mr. Parsons then proposed certain questions to him, according to the instructions in the Directory, to which he returned answer, as followeth:

Question 1. *What are your ends in undertaking the work and calling of a minister?*

Answer. As far as upon search and inquiry I can hitherto find, though there be that within me that would seek great things for myself, (if indeed they were to be found in this calling,) yet with my mind I seek them not. But the improvement of the talent which I have received in the service of the gospel, for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, I hope, is in my eye; if there be any thing else, I own it not, I allow it not. While so many seek their own, it is my desire, and shall be my endeavour, to seek the things of Jesus Christ.

Question 2. *What are your purposes, as to diligence and industry, in this calling?*

Answer. I do purpose and resolve, by the help of

c This confession Mr. Orton recommends as a "good model." See his Letters to Dissenting Ministers, v. 2. p. 37.

The History of Mr. Henry's Ordination can scarcely be dismissed without adverting to an edition of his Life, of recent date, and, professedly, "corrected and improved," by Samuel Taylor; printed by T. Cordeux, 1818; in which performance a considerable part of his confession of faith is omitted, or misstated. The following explanation of the liberty thus taken is indeed given; "It is but an act of common justice to acknowledge that Mr. Henry was, in theory, a Calvinist, and that he subscribed the doctrine of election,' &c. in the Calvinistic sense. The editor, however, has left out that part of the confession, believing the omission will prove no injury to the cause of vital Christianity." p. 36.

How the concluding sentence of the confession could still obtain a place, is submitted to the reader's judgment. — *This is the sum and substance of my faith.*

In attempts of this description, there is, to say the least, a manifest want of candour, and editorial fidelity.

God, to give myself "wholly" to these things; to prayer, reading, meditation, instant preaching, in season and out of season, wherein I shall very gladly spend and be spent, if by any means I may both save myself and them that hear me. And when at any time I fail herein, I desire God, by his Spirit, and my Christian friends, neighbours, and brethren, by seasonable reproof and admonition, to put me in mind of this engagement now made, in the presence of this great congregation.

Question 3. *Do you mean to be zealous and faithful in the defence of truth and unity, against error and schism?*

Answer. I believe what the Spirit hath foretold, that, in the last days, perilous times shall come, wherein men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap unto themselves teachers. It is my resolution, by the grace of Christ, to watch in all things; to contend earnestly for the faith, to hold fast the form of sound and wholesome words, even "the words of our Lord Jesus, and the doctrine which is according to godliness;" in meekness, as I am able, instructing those that oppose themselves. And for peace and unity, if my heart deceive me not, I shall rather choose to hazard the loss of any thing that is most dear to me, than be any way knowingly accessary to the disturbance of these in the churches of Christ.

Question 4. *What is your persuasion of the truth of the Reformed Religion?*

Answer. My persuasion is, that the Bishop of Rome is that man of sin, and son of perdition, whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and whom he will destroy by the brightness of his coming.[d] And the separation which our first Reformers made, I do heartily rejoice in, and bless God for; for had we still continued to partake with him in his sins, we should, in the end, have partaken with him also in his plagues.

Question 5. *What do you intend to do when the Lord shall alter your condition, and bring a family under your charge?*

Answer. When the Lord shall please, in his Providence, to bring me into new relations, I hope he will give me grace to fill them up with duty; it is my purpose to wait upon him, and to keep his way, to endeavour, in the use of means, that all that are mine, may be the Lord's.

Question 6. *Will you, in humility and meekness, submit to admonition and discipline?*

Answer. I believe it to be a duty incumbent upon all that profess the name of Christ, to watch over one another, and that when any is "overtaken in a fault," those that are spiritual are to *set him in joint*[e] again "with the spirit of meekness." It shall be my endeavour, in the strength of Jesus Christ, to walk without rebuke, and when, at any time, I step aside, (for who is there that lives and sins not,) I shall account the smitings of my brethren kindness, and their wounds faithful.

Question 7. *What, if troubles, persecutions, and discouragements, arise, will you hold out to the end notwithstanding?*

Answer. Concerning this I am very jealous over my own heart; and there is cause; I find a great want of that zeal and courage for God, which I know is required in a minister of the gospel; nevertheless, I persuade myself, that "no temptation shall befall me, but such as is common to man; and that God, who is faithful, will not suffer me to be tempted above that which I am able, but that with the temptation he will also make a way to escape, that I may be able to bear it." I promise faithfulness to the death, but I rest not at all in my promise to God, but in his to me; "When thou goest through the fire, and through the water, I will be with thee."

When this was done, Mr. Parsons prayed; and in prayer he and the rest of the Presbyters, Mr. Porter, Mr. Houghton, Mr. Malden, and Mr. Steel, laid their hands upon him, with words to this purpose, "Whom we do thus in thy name set apart to the work and office of the ministry." After him, there were five more,[f] after the like previous examinations and trials, professions and promises, at the same time, in like manner, set apart to the ministry.

Then Mr. Malden, of Newport, closed with an exhortation, directed to the newly ordained ministers, in which, saith Mr. Henry in his diary, this word went near my heart.—As the nurse puts the meat first into her own mouth, and chews it, and then feeds the child with it, so should ministers do by the word, preach it over beforehand to their own hearts; it loses none of the virtue thereby, but rather, probably, gains. As that milk nourisheth most which comes warm from the breast, so that sermon which comes warm from a warm heart. Lord, quicken me to do thy will in this thing.

The classis gave him, and the rest, instruments in parchment, certifying this, which it may satisfy the curiosity of some to read the form of.

"Whereas, Mr. Philip Henry of Worthenbury, in the County of Flint, Master of Arts, hath addressed himself unto us, authorized by an ordinance of both Houses of Parliament, of the 29th of August,

[d] 1686. Nov. 28. I was indisposed, yet refreshed with the exposition of Rev. xi. concerning the slaying and reviving of the two witnesses; nay, more than that, my father told us in discourse, at dinner, he believed some of us young ones might live to see the antichrist fall; for he thinks it is not far off. If I may not see that happy day, however, I believe it shall be. Mrs. Savage. Diary. Orig. MS.

[e] Gal. vi. 1. Vid. Pol. Synop. *in loc.*

[f] Mr. Jones, of Llanarmon; Mr. Dickins, of Morton Say; Mr. Bradley, of Ness; Mr. Hall, of Newcastle; Mr. Hanmer, of White-

1648, for the ordination of ministers, desiring to be ordained a Presbyter, for that he is chosen and appointed for the work of the ministry at Worthenbury, in the county of Flint, as by a certificate now remaining with us, touching that his election and appointment, appeareth. And he having likewise exhibited a sufficient testimonial of his diligence and proficiency in his studies, and unblamableness of his life and conversation, he hath been examined according to the rules for examination in the said ordinance expressed; and thereupon approved, there being no just exception made, nor put in, against his ordination and admission. These may therefore testify to all whom it may concern, that upon the 16th day of September, 1657, we have proceeded solemnly to set him apart for the office of a Presbyter, and work of the ministry of the gospel, by laying on of our hands with fasting and prayer. By virtue whereof we do declare him to be a lawful and sufficiently authorized minister of Jesus Christ. And having good evidence of his lawful and fair calling, not only to the work of the ministry, but to the exercise thereof at the chapel of Worthenbury, in the county of Flint, we do hereby send him thither, and actually admit him to the said charge, to perform all the offices and duties of a faithful pastor there; exhorting the people, in the name of Jesus Christ, willingly to receive and acknowledge him as the minister of Christ, and to maintain and encourage him in the execution of his office, that he may be able to give up such an account to Christ of their obedience to his ministry, as may be to his joy, and their everlasting comfort. In witness whereof, we the Presbyters of the Fourth Class, in the County of Salop, commonly called Bradford-North Class, have hereunto set our hands, this 16th day of September, in the year of our Lord God, 1657.

Thomas Porter, *Moderator for the time.*
Andrew Parsons, *Minister of Wem.*
Aylmar Haughton, *Minister of Prees.*
John Malden, *Minister of Newport.*
Richard Steel, *Minister of Hanmer.*" [g]

I have heard it said, by those who were present at this solemnity, that Mr. Henry did in his countenance, carriage, and expression, discover such an extraordinary seriousness and gravity, and such deep impressions made upon his spirit, as greatly affected the auditory, and even struck an awe upon them.

Read his reflection upon it in his diary.—"Methoughts I saw much of God in carrying on of the work of this day. Oh, how good is the Lord! he is good, and doth good; the remembrance of it I shall never lose; to him be glory. I made many promises of diligence, faithfulness, &c. but I lay no stress at all on them, but on God's promise to me, that he will be with his ministers always to the end of the world. Amen, Lord, so be it. Make good thy word unto thy servant, wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust." And in another place,—"I did this day receive as much honour and work, as ever I shall be able to know what to do with; Lord Jesus, proportion supplies according." Two Scriptures he desired might be written in his heart, 2 Corinthians vi. 4, 5, &c. and 2 Chronicles xxix. 11.

Two years after, upon occasion of his being present at an ordination at Whitchurch, he thus writes:—"This day my ordination covenants were in a special manner renewed, as to diligence in reading, prayer, meditation, faithfulness in preaching, admonition, catechizing, sacraments, zeal against error and profaneness, care to preserve and promote the unity and purity of the church, notwithstanding opposition and persecution, though to death. Lord, thou hast filled my hands with work, fill my heart with wisdom and grace, that I may discharge my duty to thy glory, and my own salvation, and the salvation of those that hear me." Amen.

Let us now see how he applied himself to his work at Worthenbury. The sphere was narrow, too narrow for such a burning and shining light. There were but forty-one communicants in that parish, when he first set up the ordinance of the Lord's Supper; and they were never doubled. Yet he had such low thoughts of himself, that he not only never sought for a larger sphere, but would never hearken to any overtures of that kind made to him. And withal, he had such high thoughts of his work, and the worth of souls, that he laid out himself with as much diligence and vigour here, as if he had the oversight of the greatest and most considerable parish in the country.

The greatest part of the parish were poor tenants and labouring husbandmen; but the souls of such, he used to say, are as precious as the souls of the rich, and to be looked after accordingly. His prayer for them was,—"Lord, despise not the day of small things in this place, where there is some willingness, but much weakness." And thus he writes upon the Judge's settling a handsome maintenance upon him,

well Chapel. P. Henry. Diary. Orig. MS. As to Mr. Hall, see the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 228.

[g] Mr. Orton, in his edition of the Life, p. 51. has here introduced the following note.

It is remarkable, that Mr. Steel should be likewise engaged in the ordination of his son, Mr. Matthew Henry, almost thirty years after this; viz. May 9, 1687. It was the honour of his younger days to be appointed by the classis of Ministers, one of those who should lay hands on Mr. Philip Henry; and it must be the comfort of his advanced years, that he had the opportunity of doing the same office for the son. This circumstance must be very pleasing both to father and son; and it could not be less pleasing to Mr. Steel, that he should be employed, under Christ, in sending out two such ministers into the church; such a father, and such a son. See Tong's Life of Matth. Henry, p. 93. *ut supra.*

—Lord, thou knowest I seek not theirs but them.[h] Give me the souls."[i]

[An edifying instance is preserved in the following letter. It has no date.

My dear Friend;

I am glad to hear by your father, that God hath been, of late, at work with your soul; and, I hope, it will prove the good work, which, where he once begins, he will be sure to perform, until the day of Jesus Christ. Now I send these few lines to you from my affectionate love, and from the true desire which I have of your spiritual and everlasting welfare, to be your remembrancer, that you be sure, by all means, to lay a good foundation, for want of which multitudes miscarry and come to nothing. Now that foundation must be laid in sound convictions of, and hearty contrition for, sin;[k] you must bethink yourself of the error of your way, in how many things you have offended; and who can tell, in how many? You must lay before you the pure, and holy, and spiritual law of God; and if the commandment came to you by the Spirit of God working with it, as it came to Paul, Romans vii. 9. it will make sin to revive; and the reviving of sin, in that manner, will be the death of all your vain hopes and carnal confidences; you will then change your note, and from the Pharisee's, God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are; you will cry out with the poor Publican, *God, be merciful to me a sinner!* Oh, the numberless numbers of vain thoughts, idle words, unprofitable communications, that have past you in any one day, the best of your days! the multitudes of omissions of duty to God, to man in general, in particular relations! the multitudes of commissions, whereby from time to time you have transgressed and turned aside, in the several ages and stages of your life, through which you have passed! Though you are but young, and, therefore, free from much of that guilt which others lie under, yet conclude, I say conclude, you have enough and enough again, if God should enter into judgment with you, to sink you into the bottomless pit of hell; and, therefore, you must enter into judgment with yourself, and condemn yourself, and if you do it aright, you shall not be judged of the Lord, nor condemned with the world. Be free and full in your confessions, and after all you must close with David's, &c. Psalm xix. 12. "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults." Let the streams lead you to the Fountain; see a root, a root of bitterness in your nature, bearing gall and wormwood in your life and actions; and be sure lay the axe to that, and bewail that, and see an absolute necessity of a change; for except you be born again and become a new creature, that is, except a contrary principle of grace be wrought in you to work out that naughty principle of corruption by degrees, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God. And here all the creatures in heaven and earth cannot help you; they must each of them say, it is not in me, it is not in me; they have neither a righteousness for you wherein to stand before God for justification, nor the power to give you for the mortifying of one vicious habit, or for the performing of any one act of acceptable obedience; but, blessed be God, help is laid for us upon one that is mighty, able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, the only Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus;[l] and, therefore, by him you must go to God. I say must, or you are undone, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we can be saved; you must in the sight and sense of your own lost and undone condition in yourself, by reason of the guilt which lies upon you, resolve to cast yourself upon the free grace of the gospel; making this your only plea at the bar of his offended justice, I have sinned, but Christ Jesus hath died, yea, rather is risen again, and in him mercy is promised to the penitent, and therefore to me. Do not suffer the tempter, nor your own belief, to beat you from this plea. These will tell you, you are a great sinner, it may be a backslider after convictions, and that often, and, therefore, it is to no purpose; but do not hearken to them; say, faithful is he that hath promised, and hold fast there; say, the worse I am, the more need I have of a Saviour, the more his mercy will be magnified in saving me; remember David's argument, Psalm xxv. 11. And when you have in this manner by faith applied Christ crucified to your soul, you are bound to believe that God doth accept of you, that your sins are pardoned, and that you shall not come into condemnation. And then your next work must be to study what you shall render, to love him that hath loved you first, and out of love to him to forsake all sin, and to buckle to all duty; to read, hear, and meditate, in the word of God, that you may know what the will of God is concerning you, and what you ought to do; and when you know it, resolve to do it. You will say, I cannot. I know you cannot, but in this also help is laid up for you in Jesus Christ; if you come to him daily, as you have occasion, in the sense of your own impotency, he will strengthen you with all might by his Spirit in the inner man; he will plant grace, and water his own planting, and make it to grow

h See 2 Cor. xii. 14.

The welfare of his people was very dear to him, and lay near his heart; *he sought not theirs, but them;* nor was his care so much to gather in tithes as soules. The Life of Dr. Thomas Taylor, who died A. D. 1632, prefixed to his Works, fol. 1653.

i See Gen. xiv. 21.

k See P. Henry's Eighteen Sermons, *ut supra*, p. 209. where sin is considered as an abomination; and also, *ib.* 277. where the poor in spirit are proved to be blessed.

l Appendix, No. V.

and bring forth fruit. I can do all things, saith Paul, through Christ strengthening me, and without him we can do nothing. The terms of that blessed covenant that we are under, are, that we endeavour to do as well as we can, aiming at perfection; and wherein we come short, that we may be humbled for it, but not discouraged, as if there were no hope ——for *we are not under the law, but under grace.*[m] I am glad to hear you have those servants of the Lord with you, who are better able than I to be the directors of your way in this main matter, and that God hath given you acquaintance with them, and an interest in their love and prayers, which I hope you do prize at a very high rate, and be sure you do upon all occasions make use of them, and be guided by them. If you have not joined in the fellowship of the holy supper, I would you should not by any means delay to do it. It is not privilege only, but duty, commanded duty, and if you love the Lord Jesus, how can you answer for your neglect so long of such a gracious appointment of his, when you have opportunity for it? Behold, he calls you. It is one thing to be unworthy to come, and another thing to come unworthily. He that is not fit to-day, will be less fit to-morrow. I know those that can witness, though there were treaties before between their souls and the Lord Jesus, in order to that blessed match, yet the matter was never consummated, nor the knot fully tied,[n] till they came to that ordinance: it is a sealing ordinance; God is there sealing to us, and we sealing to him in a precious Mediator. You cannot imagine the benefits of it, and, therefore, put not off. So, commending you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, I rest,

Your truly affectionate and well-wishing friend,

PHILIP HENRY.[o]]

He was in labours more abundant to win souls; besides preaching he expounded the Scriptures in order;[p] catechised, and explained the catechism. At first he took into the number of his catechumens some that were adult, who, he found, wanted instruction; and when he had taken what pains he thought needful with them, he dismissed them from further attendance, with commendation of their proficiency, and counsel, "to hold fast the form of sound words;" to be watchful against the sins of their age, and to apply themselves to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and make ready for it; afterwards he catechised none above seventeen or eighteen years of age.

He set up a monthly lecture there of two sermons, one he himself preached, and the other his friend Mr. Ambrose Lewis, of Wrexham, for some years. He also kept up a monthly conference,[q] in private, from house to house, in which he met with the more knowing and judicious of the parish; and they discoursed familiarly together of the things of God, to their mutual edification, according to the example of the apostles, who, though they had the liberty of public places, yet *taught also from house to house*, Acts v. 42; xx. 20. That which induced him to set and keep up this exercise as long as he durst, which was till August, 1660, was, that by this means he came better to understand the state of his flock, and so knew the better how to preach to them, and pray for them, and they to pray one for another. If they were in doubt about any thing relating to their souls, that was an opportunity of getting satisfaction. It was likewise a means of increasing knowledge,[r] and love, and other graces; and thus it abounded to a good account.[s]

He was very industrious in visiting the sick, instructing them, and praying with them; and in this he would say, he aimed at the good, not only of those that were sick, but also of their friends and relations that were about them.

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m Rom. vi. 4. My soul hath oft been refreshed with that sweet word,—"We are not under the law, but under grace;"—and, I may say concerning it,—It is "all my salvation, and all my desire, although he should not make my house to grow." P. Henry. Orig. MS.

A believer, says Mr. Mead, is under the law for conduct, but not for judgment; it is the guide of his path, but not the judge of his state. The good of early obedience. p. 307. duod. 1683.

n See ante, p. 14.

o Orig. MS.

p Appendix, No. VI.

q For a full account of the conduct of such interviews, and a summary of their advantages, see Clark's Lives of Eminent Divines, *ut supra*. Pref. pp. 4, 5.

r On one occasion the question being proposed, What means are we to use that we may get knowledge, particularly that which is divine? Mr. Henry gave the following answer, which furnishes a corroboration of many statements in the volume, and will be a directory to others who are seeking instruction:

Be convinced that knowledge is not a matter of indifference. See John xvii. 3; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. Hos. iv. 6. Isa. xxvi. 11. Without knowledge there is no faith; ignorant believing is but presumption, Isa. liii. 11. Labour to see thy want of knowledge, Prov. xxvi. 12. 1 Cor. viii. 2. Isa. xxviii. 9. It is certain you can never know too much.—Be diligent and constant in the use of ordinances. *Public;*—Hear the word preached. In hearing, be sure observe the doctrine, which, for the most part, is very short; and, for the help of such whose memories are weak, given usually in the very words of Scripture, which is taken for the text. If you can carry away nothing else, fail not to carry away that. But should I be speaking to you an hour about any worldly business, you would remember a great deal more than one sentence. Turn to proof afterwards. *Private;*—Read the scriptures, or get others to read them to you, in your families. Read those that are most for edification. Regard not so much how many chapters you read, as how many truths you can make up to yourselves from what you read. Unless where continuance of story requires, let, ordinarily, one or two chapters at a time suffice; and let them be read once and again. Also, get some good books, catechisms, &c. that contain the principles of religion. If thou canst not buy, borrow.—Keep knowing company; and, when you are with such, be inquiring,—What means this?—not out of curiosity, but for edification. You, who have knowledge, be willing to communicate. You will lose nothing by it. Pray much; especially before hearing, reading, &c. See James i. 5. Prov. ii. 3, &c. Use some short ejaculation. Psalm cxix. is full of such. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

s Appendix, No. VII.

He preached funeral sermons for all that were buried there, rich and poor, old or young, or little children; for he looked upon it as an opportunity of doing good. He called it,—setting in the plow of the word, when the Providence had softened and prepared the ground. He never took any money for that or any other ministerial performance, besides his stated salary, for which he thought himself obliged to do his whole duty to them as a minister.

When he first set up the ordinance of the Lord's Supper there, he did it with very great solemnity. After he had endeavoured to instruct them in his public preaching, touching the nature of that ordinance, he discoursed personally with all that gave up their names to the Lord in it, touching their knowledge, experience, and conversation, obliged them to observe the law of Christ, touching brotherly admonition in case of scandal; and gave notice to the congregation who they were that were admitted; adding this: "Concerning these, and myself, I have two things to say. 1. As to what is past, we have sinned. If we should say, we have not, we should deceive ourselves, and the truth were not in us; and yet this withal we can say, and have said it, some of us with tears,—We are grieved that we have sinned. 2. For time to come we are resolved by God's grace to walk in new obedience; and yet seeing we are not angels, but men and women, compassed about with infirmities and temptations, it is possible we may fall; but if we do, it is our declared resolution to submit to admonition and censure, according to the rule of the gospel." And all along he took care so to manage his admissions to that ordinance, as that the weak might not be discouraged, and yet the ordinance might not be profaned.[t] He would tell those whom he was necessitated to debar from the ordinance for ignorance, that he would undertake, if they were but truly willing, they might in a week's time, by the blessing of God upon their diligent use of means, reading, prayer, and conference, get such a competent measure of knowledge, as to be able to discern the Lord's body. And those that had been scandalous, if they would but come in and declare their repentance, and resolutions of new obedience, they should no longer be excluded.

To give a specimen of his lively administrations of that ordinance, let me transcribe the notes of his exhortation at the first sacrament that ever he administered, November 27, 1659.[u] I suppose they are but the hints of what he enlarged more upon, for he had always a great fluency upon such occasions.

"Dearly beloved in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we are met together this day about the most solemn, weighty service under heaven; we are come to a feast, where the feast-maker is God the Father, the provision, God the Son, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed; the guests, a company of poor sinners, unworthy such an honour; the crumbs under the table were too good for us, and yet we are admitted to taste of the provision upon the table; and that which makes the feast is hearty welcome. God the Father bids you welcome; and ten thousand welcomes this day, to the flesh and blood of his Son. Think you hear him saying it to you, O believing souls, Cant. v. 1.—*Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.* The end of this feast is to keep in remembrance the death of Christ, and our deliverance by it, and thereby to convey spiritual nourishment and refreshment to our souls. But withal, give me leave to ask you one question,—What appetite have you to this feast? Are you come hungering and thirsting? Such as have the promise, they shall be filled. *He filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich are sent empty away;* a honey-comb to a full soul is no honey-comb. Canst thou say as Christ said,—*With desire I have desired to eat this?* In this ordinance here is Christ and all his benefits exhibited to thee. Art thou weak? here is bread to strengthen thee. Art thou sad? here is wine to comfort thee. What is it thou standest in need of? a pardon? here it is, sealed in blood, take it by faith, as I offer it to you in the name of the Lord Jesus; *though thy sins have been as scarlet, they shall be as wool, if thou be willing and obedient.* It may be, here are some that have been drunkards, swearers, scoffers at godliness, sabbath-breakers, and what not;—and God hath put it into your hearts to humble yourselves, to mourn for and turn from all your abominations. Oh, come hither, here is forgiveness for thee. What else is it thou wantest? Oh, saith the poor soul, I would have more of the spirit of grace, more power against sin, especially my own iniquity. Why, here it is for thee: 'from the fulness that is in Jesus Christ, we receive, and grace for grace.' John i. 16. We may say as David did, Psalm cviii. 7, 8. *God hath spoken in his holiness, and then Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine.* So God hath spoken in his word sealed in his sacrament, and then Christ is mine, pardon is mine, grace is mine, comfort mine, glory mine; here I have his bond to show for it. This is to those among you, that have engaged their hearts to approach unto God this day.

"But if there be any come hither with a false, unbelieving, filthy, hard heart, I do warn you seriously, and with authority, in the name of Jesus Christ, presume not to come any nearer to this sacred ordinance.[v] You that live in the practice of any sin,

[t] Some important observations on this subject, in connexion with the Test Act, occur in the Hist. of Dissenters, v. 4. p. 181—186.

[u] Is it not probable, this was 1657? Mr. Henry's ordination was September 16, in that year.

[v] The one great cause of the great flourishing of religion in the

or the omission of any duty against your knowledge and conscience; you that have any malice or grudge to any of your neighbours, leave your gift and go your ways; be reconciled to God, be reconciled to your brother, and then come——! Better shame thyself for coming so near, than damn thyself by coming nearer. I testify to those, who say they shall have peace, though they go on still in their trespasses, that there is poison in the bread; take it and eat it at your own peril; there is poison in the cup too, you drink your own damnation. I wash my hands from the guilt of your blood. Look you to it, on the other hand, you poor penitent souls that are lost in yourselves, here is a Christ to save you. Come, O *come, ye that are weary and heavy laden,*"&c.

It may not be amiss to transcribe also some hints of preparation for the administering of the ordinance of baptism,[w] which I find under his hand, at his first setting out in the ministry, as follows:

"It is a real manifestation of the goodness and love of God to believers, that he hath not only taken them into covenant with himself, but their seed also; saying, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed.* Though to be born of such, does not necessarily entitle infants to the spiritual mercies of the covenant, for grace doth not run in the blood. We see the contrary many times, even godly parents have wicked children; Abraham had his Ishmael, and Isaac his Esau; yet, questionless, it doth entitle them to the external privileges of the covenant. *The like figure unto Noah's ark, even baptism doth also now save us.* Noah, and all that were his, entered into the ark, though we have cause to doubt whether they all entered into heaven. While our Lord Jesus was here upon the earth, they *brought little children* to him, and he *laid his hands on them, and blessed them;* and said, moreover, *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not,* (there are many at this day, that forbid little children to come to Christ,) he adds the reason,—for *of such is the kingdom of heaven.* Whether it be meant of the visible church, often so called in the gospel, or of the state of glory in another world; either way it affords an argument for proof of infant baptism. When either parent is in covenant with God, their children also are in covenant with him; and being in covenant, they have an undoubted right and title to this ordinance of baptism, which is the seal of the covenant. So that in the administration of this ordinance, this day, according to the institution of Jesus Christ, we look upon you who are the father of this child, as a person in covenant with God. How far you have dealt unfaithfully in the covenant, is known to God and your own conscience; but this we know, the vows of God are upon you; and *let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.* But before we baptize your child, I am to acquaint you, in a few words, what we expect from you.

"Q. (1.) Do you avouch God in Jesus Christ this day to be your God?——See to it that this be done in truth, and with a perfect heart. You may tell us you do so, and you may deceive us, but God is not mocked. Q. (2.) And is it your desire, that your children also may be received into covenant with the Lord, and that the Lord's broad-seal of baptism may be set to it? Q. (3.) And do you promise in the presence of God, and of this congregation, that you will do your endeavour towards the training of it up in the way of godliness, that as it is by you, through mercy, that it lives the life of nature, so it may by you also, through the same mercy, live the life of grace? Else I must tell you, if you be wanting herein, there will be a sad appearance one day, when you shall meet together before the judgment-seat of Christ, and this solemn engagement of yours will be brought in to witness against you."

These were but the first instances of his skilfulness in dispensing the mysteries of the kingdom of God. He declined the private administration of the Lord's Supper to sick persons, as judging it not consonant to the rule and intention of the ordinance. He very rarely, if ever, baptized in private; but would have children brought to the solemn assembly upon the Lord's day, that the parent's engagement might have the more witnesses to it, and the child the more prayers put up for it, and that the congregation might be edified. And yet he would say, there was some inconvenience in it too, unless people would agree to put off the feasting part of the solemnity to some other time, which he very much persuaded his friends to; and observed, that Abraham made a great feast the same day that *Isaac was weaned,* (Genesis xxi. 8.) not the same day that he was circumcised.

His carriage towards the people of his parish was very exemplary; condescending to the meanest, and conversing familiarly with them: bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and becoming all things to all men.

[Weak Christians, he remarks, have infirmities: but infirmity supposes life, and all who are alive to God have an inward sense of sin, and their own lost condition, by reason of it,—they heartily close with Christ upon gospel terms for pardon and peace,—

primitive times, was, certainly, the strictness used by them in their admission of members into church societies, which is fully described by Origen, against Celsus; who tells us, they did inquire into their lives and carriages, to discern their seriousness in the profession of Christianity during their being catechumens; who after tells us, they did require true repentance and reformation of life, then we admit them to the participation of our mysteries. Irenicum, by Edward Stillingfleet, afterwards Bishop of Worcester. 4to. 1661. pp. 134, 135.

w Mr. Matthew Henry left in manuscript a Treatise on Baptism. It was abridged and published by the Rev. Thomas Robins in 1783. The reader will find many extracts from it in "Antipædobaptism Examined," by the late Dr. Edward Williams, vol. ii. ch. vi. ed. 1789. See also Orton's Letters to Dissenting Ministers, v. ii. p. 67.

and have unfeigned desires and endeavours to walk in the way of God's commandments. But such are, oftentimes, very dull of apprehension in spiritual things, Matthew xv. 16. Hebrews v. 11, 12. They are often peevish and froward, inexpert, unskilful in duty, and apt to envy, and judge, and censure, being unacquainted with the extent of Christian liberty in indifferent things. They are often fainting in adversity, much taken with earthly things, easily disquieted and cast down, and frequently questioning the love of God. We must not, however, despise them, Romans xiv. 3. Zechariah iv. 10.—not in heart, word, or carriage. We must rather deny ourselves than offend them. Romans xiv. 21. Romans xv. 1, 2. 1 Corinthians viii. 9, 13. We must *support* them,—bear them as pillars,—bear the house as the shoulders a burthen, as the wall the vine, as parents their children, as the oak the ivy. And this, because they are *brethren*. Are they not of the same body? Shall the hand cut off the little finger because it is not as large as the thumb? Do men throw away their corn, because it comes into the barn with chaff? They are weak. Bear with them out of pity. In a family, if one of the little ones be sick, all the larger children are ready to attend it, which they need not do if it were well. It should be done, likewise, because Jesus Christ does so. *Bear ye one another's burthens, and so fulfil the law of Christ*, the law of his command, and the law of his example. He takes special care of his lambs, will not quench the smoking flax, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Hebrews iv. 15.[x]

To return,] he was exceeding tender of giving offence, or occasion of grief, to any body, minding himself in his diary upon such occasions, that the wisdom that is from above, is *pure, and peaceable, and gentle*, &c. Yet he plainly and faithfully reproved what he saw amiss in any, and would not suffer sin upon them; mourning also for that which he could not mend. There were some untractable people in the parish, who sometimes caused grief to him, and exercised his boldness and zeal in reproving. Once hearing of a merry meeting at an ale-house, on a Saturday night, he went himself and broke it up, and scattered them. At another time, he publicly witnessed against a frolic of some vain people, that on a Saturday night came to the church with a fiddler before them, and dressed it up with flowers and garlands, making it, as he told them, more like a play-house; and was this their preparation for the Lord's day, and the duties of it? &c. He minded them of Ecclesiastes xi. 9. *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, but know thou*——.

Many out of the neighbouring parishes attended upon his ministry, and some came from far, though sometimes he signified his dislike of their so doing, so far was he from glorying in it. But they who had *spiritual senses exercised to discern things that differ*, would attend upon that ministry which they found to be most edifying.

He was about eight years, from first to last, labouring in the word and doctrine at Worthenbury, and his labour was not altogether in vain. He saw in many of the travail of his own soul to the rejoicing of his heart, but with this particular dispensation, which I have heard him sometimes speak of, that most or all of those in that parish, whom he was, through grace, instrumental of good to, died before he left the parish, or quickly after; so that within a few years after his removal thence, there were very few of the visible fruits of his ministry there; and a new generation sprung up there, who knew not Joseph. Yet the opportunity he found there was of doing the more good, by having those that were his charge near about him, made him all his days bear his testimony to parish order, where it may be had upon good terms, as much more eligible, and more likely to answer the end, than the congregational way of gathering churches from places far distant, which could not ordinarily meet to worship God together.[y] From this experience here, though he would say, we must do what we can, when we cannot do what we would,[z] he often wished and prayed for the opening of a door, by which to return to that order again.

He had not been long at Worthenbury, but he began to be taken notice of by the neighbouring ministers, as likely to be a considerable man. Though his extraordinary modesty and humility, which even in his youth he was remarkable for, made him to sit down with silence in the lowest room, and to say, as Elihu, *Days shall speak;* yet his eminent gifts and graces could not long be hid; the ointment of the right hand will betray itself, and a person of his merits could not but meet with those quickly, who said, *Friend, go up higher;* and so that Scripture was fulfilled, Luke xiv. 10. He was often called upon to preach the week-day lectures,

x P. Henry. Orig. MS.

y This statement is now inapplicable to congregational assemblies. Considering the aspect of the times, educational predilections, and official custom, it cannot be surprising that such a man as Mr. Henry should have felt sensibly on the subject. The sentiment was, indeed, common, and for similar reasons, to the body of Presbyterian Ministers. The experience, however, which resulted from the Act of Uniformity in 1662, and other subsequent statutes, evidently lessened their objections, and showed that the difficulties were rather imaginary than real.

z Ut quimus, aiunt; quando, ut volumus, non licet. Terence. Andria, Act. IV. Sc. VI.

In a valuable little Treatise, "Of the Power of Godlinesse," by Thomas White, duod. 1658. The author states, that one great impediment "whereby wee are hindered in the wayes of God,"—"not to do what wee can, because we cannot do what wee would, or should." *Ib.* p. 139.

So, Mr. Bereman,—"If you cannot do the good you would, then do the good you can." Farewell Sermons, p. 324. 4to. 1663.

which were set up plentifully, and diligently attended upon in those parts, and his labours were generally very acceptable and successful. The *vox populi* fastened upon him the epithet of Heavenly Henry,[a] by which title he was commonly known all the country over; and his advice was sought for by many neighbouring ministers and Christians, for he was one of those that found favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. He was noted at his first setting out, (as I have been told by one who was then intimately acquainted with him, and with his character and conversation,) for three things: 1. Great piety and devotion, and a mighty savour of godliness in all his converse. 2. Great industry in the pursuit of useful knowledge; he was particularly observed to be very inquisitive when he was among the aged and intelligent, hearing them, and asking them questions; a good example to young men, especially young ministers. 3. Great self-denial, self-diffidence, and self-abasement; this eminent humility put a lustre upon all his other graces. This character of him reminds me of a passage I have sometimes heard him tell, as a check to the forwardness and confidence of young men, that once at a meeting of ministers, a question of moment was started, to be debated among them; upon the first proposal of it, a confident young man shoots his bolt[b] presently, "Truly," saith he, "I hold it so;" "You hold, Sir," saith a grave minister, "it becomes you to hold your peace."

Besides his frequent preaching of the lectures about him, he was a constant and diligent attendant upon those within his reach, as a hearer; and not only wrote the sermons he heard, but afterwards recorded in his diary, what, in each sermon, reached his heart, affected him, and did him good; adding some proper, pious ejaculations, which were the breathings of his heart, when he meditated upon and prayed over the sermons.

[The following instances will illustrate the foregoing statement, and preserve, at the same time, some pleasing specimens of the pulpit excellences of various of Mr. Henry's friends and fellow-labourers.

1657, January 7. I heard two sermons at Bangor; the one from Acts xvii. 31. *He hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world.* My heart was very dead in hearing; the Lord in mercy forgive it; but the truth made up to myself is this,—I would fain be certified,—Am I ready for that day? It will be terrible to sinners; it will be comfortable to the godly; it is not long to it. Where shall I then appear? O Lord, let me be found in Christ!—At his right, not at his left, hand;—among the sheep, not among the goats! I have been a wandering sheep, if yet a sheep. Oh, save me for thy mercies' sake!

The other from Acts xxiv. 25. *Felix trembled.* Much was spoken that reached my heart and present condition, as if the Lord had sent the minister to preach purposely to me. Blessed be God! It is a dreadful thing to sin against conviction; and that I have done many a time. Father, forgive me! A convinced person finds a great deal less pleasure in sin than others do. I can set my seal to that truth, and acknowledge myself, therefore, so much the more a fool to transgress without a cause. Sure, my sin is the greater. Sins against conviction border upon the sin against the Holy Ghost. Oh, how near then have I been to ruin! There hath been but a step between me and death; but God hath had mercy.

Saving convictions melt the heart, set the soul a praying, subdue the will to live according to them. Mine, this day, produced the two former effects, with hearty unfeigned resolutions touching the latter. Lord, undertake for me!

I was told that I must not stay till some remarkable time from which to date my conversion to God, as many do, but I must make this day remarkable by doing it now. After dangerous backsliding, lo, I come to Thee, for thou art the Lord my God!—My God in Christ!

April 1. I heard two sermons at Bangor. The one from Psalm cxix. 37. *Quicken thou me in thy way.* In the prayer before sermon, this confession was put up, which my heart closed with; *Lord, we want wisdom to carry ourselves as we ought in the world, by reason whereof the work of the gospel in our hands is much hindered!* Oh, my God, bestow upon me a wise and an understanding heart. The doctrine was,—that God's people often want quickening in God's *way*. I am sure I do. Oh, when had I cause to complain, my heart is dead to the world, creatures, pleasures, sin? But to duty, praying, preaching, when, almost, is it otherwise? Lord, thou gavest life at first; give more life!

May 6. At Thistleworth. From Matt. vi. 10. *Thy will be done.* In this petition we pray that the secret will of God, which is always wise, may be done upon us, and that the revealed will of God, which is always righteous, may be done by us; the will of his purpose, and the will of his command. *In earth as in heaven*—A true Christian hath perfection in his eye, though he cannot reach it; (Phil. iii.) that, if possible, he *might attain the resurrection of the dead.* O Lord, when shall I be perfect; when shall that that is in part be done away?

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[a] The authors of the Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne, Tome Vingtieme, oct. 1817. tit. Henry Mathieu, say,—that he published a Life "de M. Philippe Henry, (père de l'auteur,) l'un des premiers nonconformistes, en 1696, et appelé par ses admirateurs, *le bon, le celeste M. Henry.*"

[b] An allusion, probably, to the old proverb, *A rash man's bolt is soon shot.* "The hypocrite will rashly and suddenly *shoot the bolt* of his censure against any that comes in his way." Divine Characters, by Samuel Crook, B. D. p. 126. fol. 1658. See Clark's Lives annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 214. *ut supra.*

May 10. At Thistleworth. From Matt. xii. 36. The doctrine was,—Idle words must be accounted for. Words that are unprofitable bring no glory to God, no real good to ourselves or others, are very sinful,—because they are an abuse of our best member, our tongue, which is our glory. We are guilty of very many, every day, in every company. From hence was inferred what need there is for us to reckon with ourselves every night for the idle words and other failings of the day before. It is no wisdom to defer. If we reflect not quickly, we shall forget. My heart accuses me of much guilt in this respect. I have formerly been very talkative, and in multitude of words there wants not sin. Lord, cleanse my soul in the blood of Christ, and mortify that corruption for me, by thy Spirit, every day, more and more!

From 1 Pet. iv. 18. it was urged that it is no easy matter to be saved. It was difficult work to Jesus Christ to work redemption for us. It is difficult work to the Spirit to work grace in us, and to carry it on against corruptions, temptations, distractions. I was exhorted to inquire, 1. Can I choose to undergo the greatest suffering rather than commit the least sin? 2. Can I embrace Christ with his cross? 3. Can I work for God though there were no wages? 4. Can I swim against the stream; be good in bad times, and places? 5. Can I pull out right eyes for Christ, and cut off right hands, &c.? I can do all this, and much more, through Christ's strengthening me.

June 3. At Bangor, from Phil. i. 27. The doctrine was,—It is the great duty of Christians to have their conversation as becomes the gospel; that is, clothed with the graces of the gospel, faith, love, humility, meekness, self-denial, patience; and in these to abound, and grow. It is an uncomely sight to see an old professor a young saint. We discredit our keeping. Lord, water me every moment; keep me night and day, that I may thrive to thy praise, having my conversation, not only as becomes the gospel, but, which is more, as becomes a minister of the gospel.

June 10. At Ellesmere. From Matt. v. 6. The doctrine was,—Hungry, thirsty souls shall be filled, partly here, perfectly hereafter, with grace, comfort, glory. Such put a great value upon Christ. Men will part with any thing for food; they will go far for it; take pains to get it. Lord, evermore fill my soul with thyself! Creatures will not satisfy.

July 1. At Bangor. From Matt. xiii. 44. The observation was,—Those who have found Christ ought to hide him;—not from others, but within themselves in the safest, inmost room of their hearts. This is done by faith, love, humility, obedience, entertainment. There is all the reason in the world for it; he is treasure worth hiding; there are great endeavours to rob us of him; if once lost, he is not easily found again; till he can be found again, there can be no true peace. Some lodge Christ, as they do beggars, in their out-houses, by making a visible profession, but sin dwells in the heart. The Lord grant that I be not one of those!

From Eccles. i. 2. it was stated,—That there is nothing under the sun but what is full of the vainest vanity,—unsatisfying, unprofitable, unsuitable, uncertain, not worthy our affections when we have them, nor our afflicting ourselves when we want them. The saints have always thought so; dying men will not fail to tell us so. Oh, what cause have we to bless God, who hath revealed this unto us, to take us from things here below, which otherwise we might have ventured our souls for, and so have perished for ever! I bless God, it is as if a friend had stopt me from giving all I have for a counterfeit pearl,—Oh, do not venture; it is but counterfeit!

From James v. 9. the solemn truth was enforced, *Behold, the Judge standeth before the door;* that is, very near. There is but a hair's breadth of time between us and our account. This we ought to behold with an eye of faith, thereby to bring it near to us, and make it as present. We must not think, in the mean time, that forbearance is payment. Patience doth not take away sin; only the pardoning grace of God doth that. The time to come will be as swift as that which hath been, and concerning which we usually say, It was but the other day, &c. though it may be it was thirty or forty years ago. This should quicken us to ply time.[c] The Lord write this truth in my heart, and help me to see the Judge,—not sitting, but *standing*, before the door, in a moving posture, that I may study, and preach, and pray, and live, accordingly. Amen, for Christ's sake!

Oct. 5. At Welsh-Hampton,[d] from Col. iii. 8. The doctrine was,—It is the great duty of all Christians to put off anger. It unfits for duty. A little jogging puts a clock or watch out of frame, so a little passion the heart. A man cannot wrestle with God and wrangle with his neighbour at the same time. Short sins often cost us long and sad sorrows. An angry man is like one in a crowd who hath a sore boil, every one thrusts him, and troubles him. *With the froward thou wilt show thyself froward;*—a dreadful Scripture to a peevish, froward man. Those who are too merry when pleased, are commonly too angry when crossed. Blessed Lord, subdue this lust in my heart! I am very weak there. Turn the stream of my anger against self, and sin![e]

What a wonderful degree of piety and humility

c Mr. Pomfret "would exhort people from the pulpit, that, next to the blood of Christ, they would prize *time* and thoughts." Life, by Thomas Reynolds, p. 72. oct. 1722.

d A parish in Salop, about three miles from Ellesmere.

e P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

doth it evidence, for one of so great acquaintance with the things of God to write,—This I learnt out of such a sermon, and This was the truth I made up to myself out of such a sermon! And, indeed, something out of every sermon. His diligent improvement of the word preached contributed, more than any one thing, as a means to his great attainments in knowledge and grace. He would say sometimes, that one great use of week-day lectures was, that it gave ministers an opportunity of hearing one another preach, by which they are likely to profit, when they hear not as masters, but as scholars; not as censors, but as learners.

His great friend and companion, and fellow-labourer in the work of the Lord, was the worthy Mr. Richard Steel,[f] Minister of Hanmer,[g] one of the next parishes to Worthenbury, whose praise is in the churches of Christ, for his excellent and useful treatises, "The Husbandman's Calling,"[h] "An Antidote against Distractions,"[i] and several others. He was Mr. Henry's *alter idem*, the man of his counsel; with him he joined frequently at Hanmer and elsewhere in Christian conference, and in days of humiliation and prayer: besides their meetings with other ministers at public lectures; after which it was usual for them to spend some time among themselves in set disputations in Latin. This was the work that in those days was carried on among ministers, who made it their business, as iron sharpens iron, to provoke one another to love and good works. What was done of this kind in Worcestershire, Mr. Baxter tells us in his Life.[k]

In the beginning of his days he often laboured under bodily distempers; it was feared that he was in a consumption; and some blamed him for taking so much pains in his ministerial work, suggesting to him, Master, spare thyself. One of his friends told him, he lighted up all his pound of candles together;[l] and that he could not hold out long at that rate; and wished him to be a better husband of his strength. But he often reflected upon it with comfort afterwards, that he was not influenced by such suggestions.—The more we do, the more we may do, so he would sometimes say, in the service of God. When his work was sometimes more than ordinary, and bore hard upon him, he thus appealed to God;—Thou knowest, Lord, how well contented I am to spend and to be spent in thy service; and if the outward man decay, O let the inward man be renewed! Upon the returns of his indisposition he expresseth a great concern how to get spiritual good by it,—to come out of the furnace, and leave some dross behind; for it is a great loss to lose an affliction. He mentions it as that which he hoped did him good, that he was ready to look upon every return of distemper as a summons to the grave; thus he learned to die daily.—I find, saith he, my earthly tabernacle tottering, and when it is taken down I shall have a building in heaven, that shall never fail. Blessed be God the Father, and my Lord Jesus Christ, and the good Spirit of grace. Even so, *Amen*. This was both his strength and his song, under his bodily infirmities.

While he was at Worthenbury he constantly laid by the tenth of his income for the poor, which he carefully and faithfully disposed of, in the liberal things which he devised, especially the teaching of poor children. And he would recommend it as a good rule to lay by for charity in some proportion, according as the circumstances are, and then it will be the easier to lay out in charity. We shall be the more apt to seek for opportunities of doing good, when we have money lying by us, of which we have said,—This is not our own, but the poor's. To encourage himself and others to works of charity, he would say,—He is no fool who parts with that which he cannot keep, when he is sure to be recompensed with that which he cannot lose. And yet to prove alms to be righteousness, and to exclude all boasting of them, he often expressed himself in those words of David,—*Of thine own, Lord, have we given thee.*[m]

In the year 1658, the ministers of that neighbourhood began to enlarge their correspondence with the ministers of North Wales; and several meetings they had at Ruthin and other places that year, for the settling of a correspondence, and the promoting of unity and love, and good understanding among themselves, by entering into an Association, like those some years before of Worcestershire[n] and Cumberland,[o] to which, as their pattern, those two having been published, they did refer themselves. They appointed particular Associations; and, notwithstanding the differences of apprehension that were among them, (some being in their judgments episcopal, others congregational, and others classical,) they agreed to lay aside the thoughts of matters in variance, and to give to each other the right hand of fellowship; that with one shoulder, and with one

f Nat. 10th May, 1629: Ob. 16th Nov. 1692. See Wilson's Hist. of Dissenting Churches, v. 2. p. 448.

g See Leland, *ut supra*, v. 5. pp. 30, 31.

h 8vo. 1668.

i 8vo. 1673.

k Reliq. Baxter. Lib. I. Part I. p. 90. *ut supra.*

l In Siderfin's Reports, the phrase is thus used; "Et si terme soit devise al un pur vie remainder al auter pur vie remainder al tierre pur vie, &c. Et issint al 20 l'un apres l'auter que ces est bone devise al ceux touts nient obstant les objections de possibilities sur possibilities si touts les psons fuer in esse al temps del devise quia touts *les candels are lighted at once.*" p. 451. fol. 1683.

m 1 Chron. xxix. 14. Mr. Fairclough would often say,—that we read not of any good man in all the history of Scripture, or of the primitive times, that was covetous. Clark's Lives of Eminent Persons, p. 182. *ut supra.*

n See Christian Concord; or, The Agreement of the Associated Pastors and Churches of Worcestershire, with its Explication and Defence, by R. Baxter, 4to. 1653.

o See the Agreement of the Associated Ministers and Churches

consent, they might study, each in their places, to promote the common interests of Christ's kingdom, and common salvation of precious souls. He observed that this year, after the death of Oliver Cromwell,[p] there was generally, throughout the nation, a great change[q] in the temper of God's people, and a mighty tendency towards peace and unity, as if they were, by consent, weary of their long clashings; which, in his diary, he expresseth his great rejoicing in, and his hopes that the time was at hand, when *Judah should no longer vex Ephraim, nor Ephraim envy Judah, neither should they learn war any more.*[r] And though these hopes were soon disappointed by the change of the scene, yet he would often speak of the experience of that and the following year in those parts, as a specimen of what may yet be expected, and, therefore, in faith prayed for, when the Spirit shall be poured out upon us from on high. But, alas! *Who shall live when God doth this?* From this experience he likewise gathered this observation,—that it is not so much our difference of opinion that doth us the mischief; (for we may as soon expect all the clocks in the town to strike together, as to see all good people of a mind in every thing on this side heaven;) but the mismanagement of that difference.

In the Association of the Ministers it was referred to Mr. Henry to draw up that part of their agreement which concerned the worship of God, which task he performed to their satisfaction. His preface to what he drew up begins thus:—"Though the main of our desires and endeavours be after unity in the greater things of God; yet we judge uniformity in the circumstances of worship, a thing not to be altogether neglected by us, not only in regard of that influence, which external visible order hath upon the beauty and comeliness of the churches of Christ; but also as it hath a direct tendency to the strengthening of our hands in ministerial services, and withal to the removing of those prejudices which many people have conceived, even against religion and worship itself. We bless God, from our very souls, for that whereunto we have already attained; and yet we hope some further thing may be done, in reference to our closer walking by the same rule, and minding the same things. The word of God is the rule which we desire and resolve to walk by in the administration of ordinances; and for those things wherein the word is silent, we think we may, and ought to, have recourse to Christian prudence, and the practice of the reformed churches, agreeing with the general rules of the word: and, therefore, we have had, as we think we ought, in our present agreement, a special eye to the Directory," &c.

These agreements of theirs were the more likely to be for good, for that here, as in Worcestershire, when they were in agitation, the ministers set apart a day of fasting and prayer among themselves, to bewail ministerial neglects, and to seek to God for direction and success in their ministerial work. They met sometimes for this purpose at Mr. Henry's house at Worthenbury.

One passage may not improperly be inserted here, that once at a meeting of the ministers, being desired to subscribe a certificate concerning one whom he had not sufficient acquaintance with; he refused, giving this reason,—that he preferred the peace of his conscience before the friendship of all the men in the world.[s]

Sept. 29, 1658, the Lady Puleston died.—She was, saith he, the best friend I had on earth, but my Friend in heaven is still where he was, and he will never leave me nor forsake me. He preached her funeral sermon from Isaiah iii. last verse; *Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils.* He hath noted this expression of hers not long before she died: "My soul leans to Jesus Christ; lean to me, sweet Saviour." About this time he writes,—A dark cloud is over my concernments in this family, but my desire is, that, whatever becomes of me and my interest, the interest of Christ may still be kept on foot in this place. Amen, so be it. But he adds soon after, that saying of Athanasius, which he was used often to quote and take comfort from; *Nubecula est et cito pertransibit.* It is a little cloud, and will soon blow over.

About a year after, Sept. 5, 1659, Judge Puleston died, and all Mr. Henry's interest in the Emeral family was buried in his grave. He preached the Judge's funeral sermon, from Nehemiah xiii. 14. *Wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.* The design of which sermon was not to applaud his deceased friend. I find not a word in the sermon to that purpose. But he took occasion from the instance of so great a benefactor to the ministry as the Judge was, to show that deeds done for the house of God, and the offices thereof, are good deeds: and to press people, according as their ability and opportunity was, to do such deeds.

[Thus he enlarged,—They are acts of piety. Such acts as have immediate relation to God. That which is given to the poor members of Jesus Christ to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, is charity.—

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of the Counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland, with something for Explication and Exhortation annexed, 4to. 1656.

p Sept. 3, 1658.

q Reliq. Baxter. Lib. Part I. p. 100, &c. *ut supra.*

r Isa. xi. 13. transposed; and Isa. ii. 4.

s One of the doctors who visited Huss, said to him,—"If the Council (of Constance, A. D. 1414) should tell you, that you have but one eye, though you have really two, you would be obliged to agree with the Council." "While God keeps me in my senses, replied Huss, "I would not say such a thing against my conscience, on the entreaty or command of the whole world." Milner's Church Hist. v. 4. p. 244.

That which is given to, or done for, the house of our God, is piety.

They are acts of justice. Alms in Hebrew are called justice. When bestowed upon the house of God, they are as a rent-penny for what we enjoy.

They have a tendency to the good of souls. The minister's success will further the patron's account. To be an instrument to bring and keep the means of grace among a people, is indeed a good deed.

They tend very much to the credit of religion. It is often cast in our teeth by the Papists, What good deeds are done among you for the house of the Lord since the Reformation? *Pater noster* built churches, and our Father pulls them down; whereas, probably, most of their good deeds were mulcts improved for penance.

Wipe them not out. This implies that God notes them as in a table-book; as every sin, so every good deed. Allusion to Esther vi. 1. And it is in order to a requital, Malachi i. 10.

Indeed the work itself is its own wages. Church-work is honourable work: it is an honour to be permitted to do any good deed for the house of God.

Let us be ashamed of our barrenness in good deeds for the house of our God. Especially those that have wherewithal; estates, opportunities. How much of our rent are we behind with God! We can be liberal and bountiful upon other occasions, in housekeeping, but what is done for the Lord's house? Are we not as an almanack, on one side full of red and black letters and figures, on the other side blank? God takes it very unkindly, Haggai i. 4.

Let the subject stir us up to do what good we can for the house of our God: where much is given, much will be required. It is not building of churches that I am persuading you to, but to do something to promote religion. Sit down and consider,—Can I do nothing for the house of my God?

And what you do, do quickly, Eccles. ix. 10. Do self-denyingly, 1 Chron. xxix. 14. Do believingly, Heb. xi. 6. Sprinkle it with faith.[t]

Another] passage I find in that sermon which ought to be recorded; that it had been for several years the practice of a worthy gentleman in the neighbouring county, in renewing his leases, instead of making it a condition that his tenants should keep a hawk or a dog for him, to oblige them that they should keep a Bible in their houses for themselves, and should bring up their children to learn to read, and to be catechized. This, saith he, would be no charge to you, and it might oblige them to that which otherwise they would neglect.—Some wished, saith he, in his diary, that I had chosen some other subject for that sermon, but I approved myself to God, and if I please men, I am not the servant of Christ.[u]

What personal affronts he received from some of the branches of that family at that time, need not be mentioned, but with what exemplary patience he bore them, ought not to be forgotten.

In March, 1658-9, he was very much solicited to leave Worthenbury, and to accept of the Vicarage of Wrexham,[v] which was a place that he had both a great interest in, and a great kindness for, but he could not see his call clear from Worthenbury, so he declined it. The same year he had an offer made him of a considerable living near London; but he was not of them that are given to change, nor did he consult with flesh and blood, nor seek great things to himself.[w]

That year he had some disturbance from the Quakers,[x] who were set on by some others who wished ill to his ministry. They challenged him to dispute with them; and that which he was to prove against them, was, that the God he worshipped was not an idol; that John Baddely (a blacksmith in Malpas, and the ringleader of the Quakers in that country) was not infallible, nor without sin; that baptism with water and the Lord's supper are gospel-ordinances; that the Scriptures are the word of God; and that Jesus Christ will come to judge the world at the last day. But he never had any public disputes with them, nor so much disturbance from them in public worship, as some other ministers had elsewhere about that time. He had some apprehensions at that time, that God would make the Quakers a scourge to this nation; but had comfort in this assurance, that God would in due time vindicate his own honour, and the honour of his ordinances, and those of them who will not repent to give him glory, will be cast into the fire.

One passage I cannot omit, because it discovers what kind of spirit the Quakers were of. A debauched gentleman being in his revels at Malpas, drinking and swearing, was, after a sort, reproved for it by Baddely the Quaker, who was in his company. "Why," saith the gentleman, "I'll ask thee one question, Whether is it better for me to follow drinking and swearing, or to go and hear Henry?" He answered, "Of the two, rather follow thy drinking and swearing."

The Cheshire rising this year, in opposition to the irregular powers that then were uppermost, under Sir George Booth, afterwards Lord Delamere, and that of North Wales under Sir Thomas Middleton,[y] could not affect Worthenbury, and the

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[t] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[u] See 2 Tim. ii. 15. Gal. i. 10.

[v] In the gift of the Bishop of St. Asaph. Ecton's Thesaur. by Dr. Willis, p. 491. That See was then vacant. Le Neve, p. 22.

[w] See Prov. xxiv. 21. Gal. i. 10. Jer. xlv. 5.

[x] See Reliq. Baxter. Lib. I. Part I. p. 77. *ut supra*, and Mather's Hist. of New England, Book VII. p. 21, &c. fol. 1702. It would be manifestly unjust to class with their forefathers the societies now so designated.

[y] See the Declaration of Sir Thomas Middleton, Serjeant-Major.

country thereabouts. Mr Henry's prayer for them in his Diary, the day of their first appearing, is,—Lord, own them, if they truly own thee! He notes, that Lambert's[z] forces which came down to suppress them, did in that neighbourhood espouse the Quakers' cause, and offer injury to some ministers; and, therefore, saith he, unless God intend the ruin of the nation by them, they cannot prosper. Nor did they long, though in that expedition they had success. In their return, some of Lambert's soldiers were at Worthenbury Church, hearing Mr. Henry, upon a Lord's day; and one of them sat with his hat on, while they were singing psalms, for which he publicly admonished him: and there being many Anabaptists among them, he hath recorded it as a good providence, that those questions in the catechism, which are concerning baptism, came in course to be expounded that day. The first rising of the Cheshire forces was August 1, 1659, and the 19th following they were worsted and scattered by Lambert's forces, near Northwich; a strange spirit of fear being upon them, which quite took off their chariot-wheels.[a] The country called it not the Cheshire Rising, but the Cheshire Race. Some blamed him that he did not give God thanks publicly for the defeat of Sir George Booth; to whom he answered, with his usual mildness, that his apprehensions concerning that affair were not the same with theirs. We are now, saith he, much in the dark, never more. He preached the lecture at Chester soon after, just at the time when Mr. Cook, an eminent minister in Chester, and several others, were carried prisoners to London, for their agency in the late attempt; and the city was threatened to have their charter taken away, &c. The text in course that day, (for they preached over the latter part of that epistle, if not the whole, at that lecture,) happened to be Hebrews xiii. 14. *We have here no continuing city*, which he thought a word upon the wheels at that time. He notes in his Diary, that when, after that, the army ruled, disturbed the Parliament, and carried all before them with a high hand, there were great grounds to fear sad times approaching; and his prayer is,—Lord, fit thy people for the fiery trial.

He was a hearty well-wisher[b] to the return of the King, the spring following, April, 1660, and was much affected with the mercy of it.—While others rejoice carnally, saith he, Lord, help thy people to rejoice spiritually, in our public national mercies. It was upon that occasion that Mr. Baxter preached his sermon of right rejoicing,[c] on Luke x. 20. But he and others soon saw cause to rejoice with trembling, and to sing both of mercy and judgment; for about that time he hath this melancholy remark,—Religion loses ground exceedingly, and profaneness gets it. Help, Lord! However, he was very industrious to quiet the minds of some who were uneasy at that great revolution; and that scripture yielded him much satisfaction, John iii. 35. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands.* If Christ be not only the Head of the church, but *Head over all things* to the church, we may be assured, that all things shall be made to work together for good to it.[d] The text also which the Lord put into his heart to preach upon on the day of public thanksgiving for the King's restoration, was very comfortable to him, Proverbs xxi. 1. *The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord.*[e] His sense of that great mercy of God to the nation, in the unbloody, peaceable, and legal settlement of King Charles II. upon the throne, was the same with that of multitudes besides, both ministers and others, that were of the *quiet in the land*, who yet, not long after, suffered very hard things under him. Soon after the return of the King, he notes how industrious some were to remove him from Worthenbury, on which he writes this as the breathing of his soul towards God; Lord, if it please thee, fasten me here *as a nail in a sure place;* if otherwise, I will take nothing ill which thou dost with me. And when pressed by his friends more earnestly than before, to accept of some other place,—Lord, saith he, mine eye is up unto thee; I am wholly at thy disposal; make my way plain before my face, because of mine enemies; my resolution is, to deny myself if thou callest me. Here, or any where, it is no great matter where, I am. Many years after the King's return, he dated a letter, May 29. Τῇ ἡμέρᾳ αὐτῇ τῇ γλυκυπικρᾳ.

There are two things further which I think it may be of use to give some account of in the close of this chapter. 1. Of the course of his ministry at Worthenbury; and, 2. of the state of his soul, and the communion he had with God, in those years.

As to the subjects he preached upon, he did not use to dwell long upon a text.—Better one sermon upon many texts, *viz.* many scriptures opened and applied, than many sermons upon one text. To that purpose he would sometimes speak.[f]

General and Vice-Admiral for the Six Counties of North Wales, 1645. 4to.

z John Lambert, one of the Parliamentarian Generals. See Aikin's General Biography, v. 6. p. 100. There are several curious letters concerning him in Lord Clarendon's State Papers, v. 3. pp. 329, &c.

a See Exod. xiv. 25.

b "The King himself told the Ministers of London, on the day of his happy return, when the Rev. Mr. A. Jackson presented him with a Bible in their behalf, as he passed through St. Paul's Church-yard, to this effect;—*That he must attribute his restauration, under God, to their prayers and endeavours.*" The Conformists' Fourth Plea for the Nonconformists, 4to. 1683. p. 69.

c Quarto, 1660.

d See Eph. v. 23. Col. i. 18. Ephes. i. 22. Rom. viii. 28.

e See the plan of the Sermon in the Evan. Mag. v. xxvii. p. 399.

f The Synod of St. Foy, in France, A. D. 1578, witnesseth against ministers dwelling long upon a text, and would have them expound

He used to preach in a fixed method, and linked his subjects in a sort of chain.[g] He adapted his method and style to the capacity of his hearers, fetching his similitudes for illustration from those things which were familiar to them. He did not shoot the arrow of the word over their heads in high notions, or the flourishes of affected rhetoric, nor under their feet, by blunt and homely expressions, as many do[h] under pretence of plainness, but to their hearts, in close and lively applications. His delivery was very graceful and agreeable, far from being either noisy and precipitate on the one hand, or dull and slow on the other. His doctrine did drop as the dew, and distil as the soaking rain, and came with a charming, pleasing power, such as many will bear witness to, that have wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.[i]

He wrote the notes of his sermons pretty large for the most part, and always very legible. But even when he had put his last hand to them, he commonly left many imperfect hints, which gave room for enlargement in preaching, wherein he had a great felicity. And he would often advise ministers not to tie themselves too strictly to their notes, but, having well digested the matter before, to allow themselves a liberty of expression, such as a man's affections, if they be well raised, will be apt to furnish him with. But for this no certain rule can be given, there are diversities of gifts, and each to profit withal.

He kept his sermon-notes in very neat and exact order; sermons in course, according to the order of the subject; and occasional sermons according to the scripture-order of the texts; so that he could readily turn to any of them. And yet, though afterwards he was removed to a place far enough distant from any of that auditory, yet, though some have desired it, he seldom preached any of those hundreds of sermons which he had preached at Worthenbury; no not when he preached never so privately, but to the last he studied new sermons, and wrote them as elaborately as ever; for he thought a sermon best preached when it was newly meditated. Nay, if sometimes he had occasion to preach upon the same text, yet he would make and write the sermon anew; and he never offered that to God which cost him nothing.[k]

When he went to Oxford, and preached there before the University in Christ-church, as he did several times, his labours were not only very acceptable, but successful too; particularly one sermon which he preached there, on Proverbs xiv. 9. *Fools make a mock at sin;* for which sermon a young Master of Arts came to his chamber afterwards to return him thanks, and to acknowledge the good impressions which divine grace, by that sermon, had made upon his soul, which he hoped he should never forget.

In his Diary he frequently records the frame of his spirit in studying and preaching. Sometimes blessing God for signal help vouchsafed, and owning him the Lord God of all his enlargements; at other times, complaining of great deadness and straitness. —It is a wonder, saith he, that I can speak of eternal things with so little sense of the reality of them. Lord, strengthen that which remains, which is ready to die! And he once writes thus, upon a studying day,—I forgot explicitly and expressly, when I began, to crave help from God,[l] and the chariot-wheels drove[m] accordingly. Lord, forgive my omissions, and keep me in the way of duty.

[In June, 1657, he writes,—This month I had the remembrance of much guilt set home upon my conscience in reference to the sabbath day. I used to lie longer in bed than I ought, which hath been occasioned by sitting up over late the night before, and that by neglecting to make preparations for preaching sooner in the week.[n] I am often put to it to hurry over truths. So that two sermons were provided, I have not cared how poorly. Lord, I confess it to thee with shame, and beg thy grace that it may be so no more.[o]]

As to the state of his soul in these years, it should seem by his Diary, that he was exercised with some doubts and fears respecting it.—I think, saith he, never did any poor creature pass through such a mixture of hope and fear, joy and sadness, assurance and doubting, down and up, as I have done these years past ———. The notice of this may be of use to poor drooping Christians, that they may know their case is not singular; and that, if God for a small moment hide his face from them, he deals with them no otherwise than as he useth sometimes to deal with the dearest of his servants. It would

and treat of as many in their ministry as they can, fleeing all ostentation and long digressions. Quick's Synodic. v. I. p. 117. Life of P. Henry by Matthew Henry. Orig. MS.

g Appendix, No. VIII.

h A like testimony is borne of another contemporary.—"He did not soar aloft in high expressions, shooting over his hearers, but did condescend to the capacities of the meanest, which is an excellence in any." Works of Mr. John Murcot, 4to. 1657. Ep. Ded. by Dr. Samuel Winter, p. 3. See also Clark's Lives annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 176. *ut supra.*

i See Deut. xxxii. 2. Luke iv. 22.

k See the Lives of Dr. Staunton, p. 36. duod. 1673. and Dr. Rob. Harris, p. 88. *ut supra.* Also the Life of Demosthenes, Plutarch, v. 5. p. 273. *ut supra.*

l He that prays most will preach best. Spiritual beggars are special preachers. Mr. Porter; from a MS. in P. Henry's handwriting.

m See Exod. xiv. 25.

n Mr. Shephard, of New England, usually had his sermons finished upon Friday night. "He hath sometimes exprest himself thus in publicke:—God will curse that man's labours that lumbers up and down in the world all the week, and then upon Saturday, in the afternoon, goes to his study, when, as God knows, that time were little enough to pray and weep in, and to get his heart in frame." Address to the Reader, signed William Greenhill and Samuel Mather, and prefixed to Mr. Shephard's Subjection to Christ in all his Ordinances and Appointments, duod. 1652.

o P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

affect one, to hear one that lived a life of communion with God, complaining of great straitness in prayer.—No life at all in the duty, many wanderings; if my prayers were written down, and my vain thoughts interlined, what incoherent nonsense would there be! I am ashamed, Lord, I am ashamed! Oh, pity, and pardon!

[I find in nothing more of the deceitfulness of my heart than in secret worship. Oh, how hardly am I brought to it, and how little sweetness and delight do I for the most part find in it! I blush, and am ashamed. Lord, pity, and pardon, and help; for, *with my mind, I serve the law of God, though, with my flesh, the law of sin.*

I have a froward peevish spirit unto this day, impatient of contradiction. Oh, that it were mortified, that the grace of meekness might abound in me more and more.[p]]

To hear him suspecting the workings of pride of heart, when he gave an account to a friend, who inquired of him, touching the success of his ministry, and that he should record this concerning himself, with this ejaculation annexed,—The Lord pardon and subdue! It was a sign that he kept a very watchful eye upon the motions of his own heart.

[At another time he writes;—These following sins were set home with power upon my conscience:

1. Omissions innumerable. I fall short of duty in every relation.

2. Much frowardness upon every occasion, which fills my way with thorns and snares.

3. Pride; a vein of it runs through all my conversation.

4. Self-seeking. Corrupt ends in all I do. Applause of men oftentimes regarded more than the glory of God.

5. My own iniquity. Many bubblings up of heart-corruption, and breakings forth too. O Lord, shame hath covered my face. Pardon, and purge for Jesu's sake![q]]

To hear him charging it upon himself, that he was present at such a duty in the midst of many distractions, not tasting sweetness in it, &c. When a fire is first kindled, saith he, there is a deal of smoke and smother, that afterwards wear away; so, in young converts, much peevishness, frowardness, darkness; so it hath been with my soul, and so it is yet in a great measure. Lord, pity, and do not quench the smoking flax; though as yet it doth but smoke, let these sparks be blown up into a flame!

Great mercies, but poor returns; signal opportunities, but small improvements; such are his complaints frequently concerning himself. And though few or none excelled him in profitable discourse, yet in that he often bewails his barrenness and unprofitableness.—Little good done or gotten such a day, for want of a heart; it is my sin and shame. *O that I had wings like a dove!* [Lord, cleanse me from my omissions. The world thinks better of me than I do of myself, God knows. At another time he writes,—Nothing troubles me so much as that I am so unprofitable in my generation. Lord, give me wisdom, that I may preach in all my discourses![r]]

Yet when he wanted a faith of assurance, he lived by a faith of adherence.—Such a day, saith he, a full resignation was made of all my concernments into the hands of my Heavenly Father; let him deal with me as seemeth good in his eyes. I am learning and labouring to live by faith. Lord, help my unbelief![s] Another time he notes that many perplexing fears being upon his spirit, they were all silenced with that sweet word, which was seasonably brought to his remembrance,—*Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer.*

[There is no living by a dead faith, he observes; no, nor by a living faith, unless lively. Help, Lord, thy poor servant, that my faith fail not! I do not know that I ever saw my way clearer. Then, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul?*[t]

At the commencement of a new year he thus writes, and it is only a specimen of his usual devotion at such seasons:—

1671. January 1. Covenants of new obedience solemnly renewed with God, and sealed, this new year's day, in the blood of Jesus Christ. *Amen!* Lord, be Surety for thy servant for good! I yield myself, and all my concerns, to be at thy disposal; and I am heartily glad that my times are in thy hand, and not my own. Do with me, and mine, this year, as seemeth good in thine eyes! So be it![u]

Again, he says,—I met with a friendly, seasonable admonition. Blessed be God! My heart was then somewhat in a better frame than ordinary for the receiving of it, and I hope it hath done me good. The Lord is very gracious, in that he follows me thus from time to time.

The eyes of many are upon me; some for one end, some for another; some for good, some for evil. I had need to be watchful. Lord, *hold up my goings in thy path, that my footsteps slip not!* Thou tellest all my wanderings. For Jesu's sake, let them be forgotten![v]]

He very frequently kept days of fasting and humiliation in secret, which he calls his days of atonement. Sometimes he observed these monthly, and sometimes only upon special occasions; but the memorandums in his Diary, not only while he was at Worthenbury, but often after, show what sweet

p P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.
q Palmer's Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 489. stated to be from Mr. Henry's Diary.
r P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.
s Appendix, No. IX.
t P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS
u Ibid.
v Ibid.

communion he had with God in those solemn duties, which no eye was witness to, but his who *seeth in secret*, and will *reward openly*. Remember, O my soul, such a day, as a day of more than ordinary engagements entered into, and strong resolutions taken up of closer walking, and more watchfulness! O my God, undertake for me! And upon another of those days of secret prayer and humiliation, he notes,—If sowing in tears be so sweet, what then will the harvest be, when I shall reap in joy. Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and will, in due time, heal all thy diseases.

[It is good for me to draw near to God. The oftener and the nearer the better. How sweet is heaven indeed, if heaven upon earth has so much sweetness in it![w]]

CHAPTER IV.

HIS MARRIAGE. FAMILY, FAMILY RELIGION, AND THE EDUCATION OF HIS CHILDREN.

He removed from Emeral, to the house in Worthenbury which the Judge had built for him, in February, 1658-9; and then had one of his sisters with him to keep his house. No sooner had he a tent, but God had an altar in it, and that a smoking altar. There he set up repetition on sabbath evenings, and welcomed his neighbours to it.

His Christian friends often, and sometimes his brethren in the ministry, kept days of fasting and prayer at his house. He used to tell people when they had built new houses, they must dedicate them, (referring to Deuteronomy xx. 5. and Psalm xxx. *ult.*) that is, they must invite God to their houses, and devote them to his service.

Providence having thus brought him into a house of his own, soon after provided him a help-meet for him. After long agitation, and some discouragement and opposition from the father, he married Katherine, the only daughter and heir of Mr. Daniel Matthews, of Broad Oak, in the township of Iscoyd,[a] in Flintshire, but in the parish of Malpas, which is in Cheshire, and about two miles distant from Whitchurch, a considerable market-town in Shropshire. Mr. Matthews[b] was a gentleman of a very competent estate; such an one as King James the First used to say was the happiest lot of all others, which set a man below the office of a Justice of Peace, and above that of a petty Constable. This was his only child: very fair and honourable overtures had been made for her disposal; but it pleased God so to order events, and to overrule the spirits of those concerned, that she was reserved to be a blessing to this good man, in things pertaining both to life and godliness.

[The following anecdote is traditionary. After Mr. Philip Henry, who came to Worthenbury a stranger, had been in the country for some time, his attachment to Miss Matthews, afterwards his wife, became manifest; and it was mutual. Among the other objections urged by her friends against the connexion was this,—that, although Mr. Henry was a gentleman, and a scholar, and an excellent preacher, he was quite a stranger, and they did not even know where he came from. "True," replied Miss Matthews, "but I know where he is going, and I should like to go with him."

The opposition of Mr. Matthews to the marriage, and the imposition of inequitable terms, with a view to breaking off the acquaintance, was, for a considerable time, a severe trial, to the faith and patience of Mr. Henry. In this affair the influence of the holy religion he professed was exceedingly conspicuous. Nor will the reader disapprove of a momentary interruption of the narrative by the introduction of the following letters.

To Mr. Matthews.

Sir,

I have received, by my friend, your answer to what I proposed in my last, concerning your lands at Brunnington, with which I am satisfied. I understand from him, also, that for your other lands, which are at Broad-Oke, your demand is £800. which sum being, as I am informed, according to the present rate of lands, near their full value, makes it, in effect, no portion, but a purchase. I do therefore hope, Sir, it is but your demand, and that room is left for some abatement, so far, at least, that there may be equality, and, withal, that provision may be made for my just security in case your daughter should die without issue. Concerning both which I shall desire the interposure of no other arbitrator than your own self, to whom I would refer it. I have had many occasions for laying out of monies this last year in furnishing my house and other ways; nevertheless I have £200, or thereabouts, which I am willing to disburse to you for the present, and shall give you sufficient bond for more to be paid within reasonable time, on the considerations before mentioned. Or, if you please to give your consent that I may match with your daughter, I shall be as willing to dispose of those monies elsewhere to her use, and you may do with your own as you think good. I assure you, Sir, though you will not believe me, the Lord knows, I eye it not, having learned,

[w] P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

[a] See Ormerod's Hist. of Cheshire, v. 2. p. 347.

[b] Descended, as is the tradition of the family, from Matthew Gough, (from whom came the name of Matthews,) a noted Commander in the wars of France, under Henry V. and killed upon London bridge, in Henry the Sixth's time, in the suppressing of Wat Tyler's Rebellion. Life of P. Henry by Matthew Henry. Orig. MS.

in that estate wherein I am, to be content. Sir, I beseech you, have some respect in this matter to honest, innocent affections; though not to mine, who am but a stranger; yet, however, to hers who is your own flesh; and be pleased to consider, the same God, who bids your child obey you, bids you also, in the same breath, not to provoke her, lest she be discouraged. I should much rejoice if I might hear that you are inclined, yet, at last, to entertain more charitable, favourable thoughts concerning me, who do really desire to approve myself,

Sir,

Your servant in the Lord,

Worthenbury, 16, 1659. PHILIP HENRY.[c]

To Mr. Matthews.

Sir,

It hath been all along my desire and care, as far as I have known myself, to walk in the highway in this affair concerning your daughter. I can truly say your dislike of it, hitherto, hath been one of the greatest afflictions that hath befallen me; as, on the other hand, your approbation would be one of my greatest outward mercies. And I do bless the Lord, who hath been pleased thus far to incline your heart towards me, hoping he will finish what he hath begun. It falls out, Sir, that I am engaged upon the service of my calling to-morrow in the work of the Lord; but, upon Wednesday morning, at nine o'clock, God willing, I shall not fail to be at your tenant's house, if your occasions will permit your presence there, at that time, or when else you shall appoint. This, with my service to yourself, and love unfeigned to your daughter, is all at present from him who is, and desires to be thought to be,

Sir,

Worthenbury, Feb. 27, 1659. Yours, to serve you, PHILIP HENRY.[d]

The Articles[e] preliminary to the marriage bear date March 20, 1659, and stipulate for the solemnization "at or before the first day of May next ensuing." Circumstances, however, arose which seemed to render procrastination expedient,[f] and a fresh difficulty having presented itself to the mind of Mr. Matthews, it is, in a letter dated Worthenbury, June 13, 1659, thus amiably referred to. "Far be it from me to blame your due paternal care; but truly, Sir, my condition being such as, blessed be God, it is, and my desires and expectations being proportioned accordingly, and no way exceeding, I am apt to think it might be an easy matter to remove that obstruction. For my own part I am willing to refer it to yourself. You may deal in it as you see cause, and I shall acquiesce in your pleasure,—only favour me in her towards whom my affections are, which is the great request and sole ambition, in this present address, of, Sir, your friend and servant in the Lord, Philip Henry."[g]]

His purpose of marriage was published[h] in the church three Lord's days before; a laudable practice, which he greatly approved, and persuaded others to.

The day before his marriage, [which took place April 26, 1660,] he kept as a day of secret prayer and fasting.[i]

He used to say, those who would have comfort in that change of their condition, must see to it, that they bring none of the guilt of the sins of their single state with them into the married state. And, —the presence of Christ at a wedding will turn the water into wine; and he will come if he be invited by prayer.

[The first letter I find addressed to Mrs. Henry after their marriage, is dated London. It well exhibits the affection, the happiness, and the piety of the writer.

London, Oct. 9, 1660.

Dear heart;

I bless God, I am safe and well at London. I came from Oxford yesterday morning alone, but the Lord was with me; it was a long journey, but I was stirring betimes. I was nine miles on my way before eight o'clock, and came an hour or two before sun-set to Thistleworth. Towards the end of my journey, for three or four miles, where was most danger, it pleased God I had company, which was a great mercy. I met many soldiers upon the way, going homewards upon their disbanding, towards their several countries, and I was sometimes afraid of them. They were by two and three in a company, but the Lord preserved me. This morning I came to Chelsea, where I saw my sisters, in health, blessed be God, and overjoyed to see me; from thence, this afternoon, to London. I have been with cousin Thomas Hotchkis, from whom I received a letter to Sir Orlando Bridgman[k] from Mr. Eddow; and, to-morrow I purpose, God willing, to wait upon his lordship, expecting a charge from him, in the first place, about conformity, wherein yet I shall do as I see cause, in case I should be continued at Worthenbury. The ministers here are generally unan-

c Orig. MS.
d Ibid.
e Original, in Mr. Henry's hand-writing. Penes me.
f P. Henry. Orig. MS.
g Orig. MS.
h See Gibson's Codex. v. 1. p. 424. fol. 1761

i Appendix, No. X.
k Sir O. Bridgman, made Lord Keeper in 1667. See Granger's Biog. Hist. of England, v. 3. p. 361. ed. 1779; and Mr. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 6. p. 509. Mr. Henry styles him, "His lordship," he being then Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

imous, and resolved. Dr. Sheldon was installed Bishop of London to-day. The King is gone into the country for a fortnight, during the trial of his father's judges, to prevent petitions. I sleep to-night at Mrs. Kingston's, who desires to be remembered to you, and to Mr. Puleston, and his wife. I wrote to you, by the last post, from Oxford. Commend me to sister Mary, and all that ask of me. Dear heart, make much of thyself, and love me; and the Lord everlasting be thy Sun and Shield! So prayeth,

Thine, in all affection,

PHILIP HENRY. [l]]

He took all occasions while he lived, to express his thankfulness to God for the great comfort he had in this relation. A day of mercy, so he writes on his marriage day, never to be forgotten. God had given him one, as he writes afterwards, every way his helper, in whom he had much comfort, and for whom he thanked God with all his heart. He writes in his Diary, April 26, 1680, This day we have been married twenty years, in which time we have received of the Lord more than twenty thousand mercies; to God be glory. Sometimes he writes,—We have been so long married, and never reconciled; that is, there never was any occasion for it.[m] His usual prayer for his friends in the married state, was according to his own practice in that state;—that they might be mutually serviceable to each other's faith and holiness, and jointly serviceable to God's honour and glory.

Her father, though he put some hardships upon him in the terms, and had been somewhat averse to the match, yet, by Mr. Henry's great prudence, and God's good providence, was influenced to give a free consent to it; and he himself, with his own hand, gave her in marriage. From this, as from other experiences, Mr. Henry had learned to say with assurance,—It is not in vain to wait upon God, and to keep his way. Mr. Matthews settled part of his estate before marriage upon them and theirs; he lived about seven years after; and when he died, the remainder of it came to them. This competent estate, which the divine Providence brought into his hand, was not only a comfortable support to him when he was turned out of his living, and when many faithful ministers of Christ were reduced to great poverty and straits; but it enabled him likewise, as he had opportunity, to preach the gospel freely, which he did to his dying day; and not only so, but to give for the relief of others that were in want, in which he sowed plentifully to a very large proportion of his income: and often blessed God that he had wherewithal, remembering the words of the Lord, how he said,—*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

Such was his house, and such the vine which God graciously planted by the side of his house. By her God gave him six children, all born within less than eight years; the two eldest,—sons, John and Matthew; the other four,—daughters, Sarah, Katharine, Eleanor, and Ann. His eldest son John died of the measles in the sixth year of his age; and the rest were in mercy continued to him.

The Lord having built him up into a family, he was careful and faithful in making good his solemn vow at his ordination, that *he and his house would serve the Lord.* He would often say,—That we are really, which we are relatively.[n] It is not so much what we are at church, as what we are in our families. Religion in the power of it will be family religion. In this his practice was very exemplary; he was one that walked before his house in a perfect way, with a perfect heart, and therein behaved himself wisely. His constant care and prudent endeavour, was not only to put away iniquity far from his tabernacle, but that where he dwelt the word of Christ might dwell richly. If he might have no other church, yet he had a *church in his house.*[o]

He made conscience of closet worship, and did abound in it, not making his family worship to excuse for that. He hath this affecting note in his Diary, upon the removing of his closet but from one room in the house to another;—This day, saith he, my new closet was consecrated, if I may so say, with this prayer,—That all the prayers that ever should be made in it according to the will of God, morning, evening, and at noon-day, ordinary or extraordinary, might be accepted of God, and obtain a gracious answer. *Amen* and *Amen.* It was the caution and advice which he frequently gave to his children and friends,—be sure you look to your secret duty; keep that up whatever you do. The soul cannot prosper in the neglect of it. He observed, that apostasy generally begins at the closet door. Secret prayer is first neglected, and carelessly performed, then frequently omitted, and after a while wholly cast off; and then farewell God, and Christ, and all religion.[p]

[In reference to this duty, the following important observations occur.

Besides the deadness, and coldness, the distrac-

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l Orig MS.

m Pomponius Atticus, making the funeral oration at the death of his mother, did protest, that, living with her threescore and seven years, he was never reconciled unto her, Se nunquam cum matre in gratiam rediisse; because there never happened between them the least jar which needed reconciliation. Cited in Fuller's Holy State, p. 15. fol. 1663.

n Exalt godliness in thy family. That thou art really, which thou art relatively. Swinnock's Heaven and Hell Epitomized, &c. 4to. 1663. Ep. to the Reader.

o 1 Cor. xvi. 19.

p Be much in secret fellowship with God in duty. It is secret trading that enriches a Christian. P. Henry. Orig. MS. See the Life of Mr. Tapper. Noncon. Mem. v. 1. p. 359. *ut supra.*

Judge yourselves by secret acts; follow yourselves into your closets and retiring places, and observe your diligence, endevour,

tions, and wanderings, which the people of God often find cause to complain of, there is, also, a kind of weariness which many times seizes their spirits. Something from within calls upon them to have done,—'enough for this time,—you may conclude now,'—before a quarter, or, perhaps, half a quarter, of an hour be fully spent. Against this we have great need to watch. If the devil cannot keep us *from* God, he will try to work a lothness to *tarry* with him. We are to look upon it as a cursed member of that body of death which we carry about with us; one of the Canaanites left behind, to be a thorn in our eyes, and a goad in our sides. We are to be really and deeply sensible of it, and affected with it, and to mourn under it as our burthen. A few formal, customary complaints to one another, that so it is with us, will not serve. We should be humbled in secret before the Lord, and take shame to ourselves. It is a sign we are very unfit for heaven. We should consider that prayer is not only our duty but our privilege. We should get our hearts filled with love to God, and look up to the Spirit, and put that sweet promise in suit, Isa. xl. 29, &c. *He giveth power to the faint, &c.* We should go on against the temptation. When we think we shall be heard the sooner for long praying, we are like the heathen, Matthew vi. 7. When we use long praying for a pretence, we are like the Pharisees, Matthew xxiii. 14. Yet neither instance condemns a long prayer as in itself a sin; see Luke vi. 12. One being oppressed with this corruption, and drooping under it, a godly friend, who was acquainted with his condition, meeting him suddenly, said, 'I will tell you good news, the best that ever you heard. As soon as you are in heaven, you shall serve the Lord Jesus, without being weary,' which much revived him.[q]

In continuation of the same subject, Mr. Henry thus writes;—The spirit deals not with us as stocks and stones, but as rational creatures, Hosea xi. 4. He expects, and requires, that we should put forth ourselves to the utmost towards the working our hearts into a fervent frame, and where we are weak, and wanting, he comes with help. Thus much seems to be implied in that expression,—*the Spirit helpeth our infirmities,—particula σὺν ad nos laborantes refertur. Beza.* It is an allusion to a man who has a great burthen, suppose a heavy log of wood, to carry, and he cannot manage it unless some one will come, and lay a shoulder under one end.[r] But if that help be offered, he is not altogether excused. He must lay his shoulder under the other end. If we find our hearts dead, and dull, and indisposed to prayer, we are ready, presently, to cast the blame upon the Spirit,—All our life is from him. That is true; but he conveys life in the use of the means. And, commonly, the fault, that we do not receive more life and quickening from him, is in ourselves. We are wanting in stirring up our affections, in labouring with our hearts, by meditation, which is a special means. The Spirit *meeteth* him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness. Sometimes, however, a cause of deadness may be overmuch confidence in ourselves; when we set about duties in our own strength, and have no eye to the Spirit, but rely altogether upon self, Philippians iii. 3. This is as bad as the other. The true mean between both is this;—so to labour with our hearts as if we were to expect no assistance from the Spirit, and yet so to rely upon his aid, as if with our own hearts we had laboured nothing.[s]

Again: In reply to the inquiry, When we are called to duty, may we be sure it is always from the Spirit? Is it not possible that Satan may have a hand in the stirring of us up to prayer?[t] Mr. Henry writes as follows:—

It is possible he may. The devil transforms himself into *an angel of light*. This is one of his extraordinary devices. Where he moves us once to prayer, he moves ten thousand times to sin; where he moves once to perform duty, he moves ten thousand times to neglect it. When he doth so, it is always with a *design*. You may be sure it is neither out of love to us, nor out of love to prayer, for there is no duty he is so much an enemy to. His object is ever some advantage *against* us; and usually this;—he observes a time when the soul is most dead, and heavy, and unfit for prayer, and then he spurs on to it with as much eagerness as if it were the very spirit of grace. Now when deadness and distraction mark our performance, he takes occasion to trouble and disquiet us. Thus he often tires out young converts. This is one of *the depths of Satan*, which believers ought to know and study, that they may be armed against it. Besides, in general, when the *Spirit* calls, he helps and enlarges; so doth not Satan.[u]

Further, he remarks;—If we find ourselves at any time indisposed and unfit for prayer, is it not best to let it quite alone?[v] We are not to choose rather to omit a duty than not to perform it in a right manner. It is incumbent on Christians, ordinarily, to set apart that time for prayer, both by themselves and in their families, wherein they are most likely to be at liberty from diversions and distractions. And, when duty is required of us, and we find ourselves unfit for it, we are to take pains beforehand, with our own hearts, to see if it may not be possible,

and spirit, in your hidden wayes, and secret duties; for what you are in them, that you are indeed. The Case and Cure of a Deserted Soule, by Jos. Symonds, p. 55. duod. 1641.

q P. Henry. Orig. MS.

r See Bishop Wilkin's Disc. concerning the Gift of Prayer, p. 8. duod. 1690.

s P. Henry. Orig. MS.

t Ibid.

u Ibid.

v When thou feelest thyself most indisposed to prayer, yield not to it, but strive and endeavour to pray, even when thou thinkest thou canst not pray. Hildersam's Lect. on Ps. li. p. 64. fol. 1642.

in the use of means, to shake it off. So that if, after all our pains taken with ourselves, we yet continue unfit, we are, notwithstanding, to perform the duty, though with grief of heart at our unpreparedness for it.[w]

To return.] He advised,—That secret duty be performed secretly; which was the admonition he gave sometimes to those who caused their voice to be heard on high in that duty.

[There are two doors, he would say, to be shut when we go to prayer; the door of our closet, that we may be secret; the door of our hearts, that we may be serious.[x]]

Besides this, he and his wife constantly prayed together morning and evening; and never, if they were together, at home or abroad, was it intermitted: and from his own experience of the benefit of this practice, he would take all opportunities to recommend it to those in that relation, as conducing very much to the comfort of it, and to their furtherance in that which, he would often say, is the great duty of yoke-fellows; and that is, to do all they can to help one another to heaven. He would say, that this duty of husbands and wives praying together, is intimated in that of the apostle, 1 Peter iii. 7. where they are exhorted to *live as heirs together of the grace of life, that their prayers*, especially their prayers together, *be not hindered:* that nothing may be done to hinder them from praying together, nor to hinder them in it, nor to spoil the success of those prayers. This sanctifies the relation, and fetcheth in a blessing upon it, makes the comforts of it the more sweet, and the cares and crosses of it the more easy, and is an excellent means of preserving and increasing love in the relation. Many to whom he hath recommended the practice of this duty, have blessed God for him, and for his advice concerning it. When he was abroad, and lay with any of his friends, he would mind them of his rule,—That they who lie together, must pray together. In the performance of this part of his daily worship he was usually short, but often much affected.

[He recommended it to others, that the wife should be sometimes called upon to pray with the husband, that she might learn to perform duty in the family in the husband's absence, or in case he be removed by death, which he hath sometimes pressed upon his friends, who have had much comfort in taking his counsel. It is comfortable if the moon rises when the sun sets.[y]

Besides these, he made conscience, and made a business, of family worship, in all the parts of it; and in it he was uniform, steady, and constant, from the time that he was first called to the charge of a family to his dying day; and, according to his own practice, he took all occasions to press it upon others. His doctrine once, from Joshua xxiv. 15. was,—That family worship is family duty. He would say, sometimes, if the worship of God be not in the house, write,—Lord, have mercy upon us, on the door; for there is a plague, a curse, in it. It is the judgment of Archbishop Tillotson,[z] in that excellent book,[a] which he published a little before his death, upon this subject,—That constant family worship is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God and religion in the minds of men, that he sees not how any family that neglects it can in reason be esteemed a family of Christians, or indeed to have any religion at all. How earnestly would Mr. Henry reason with people sometimes about this matter, and tell them what a blessing it would bring upon them and their houses, and all that they had! He that makes his house a little church, shall find that God will make it a little sanctuary. It may be of use to give a particular account of his practice in this matter, because it was very exemplary. As to the time of it, his rule was, commonly, the earlier the better, both morning and evening; in the morning, before worldly business crowded in,—*Early will I seek thee.* He that is the first, should have the first. Nor is it fit that the worship of God should stand by and wait while the world's turn is served. And early in the evening, before the children and servants began to be sleepy; and therefore, if it might be, he would have prayer at night before supper, that the body might be the more fit to serve the soul in that service of God. And indeed he did industriously contrive all the circumstances of his family worship, so as to make it most solemn, and most likely to answer the end. He always made it the business of every day, and not, as too many make it, a bye-business. This being his fixed principle, all other affairs must be sure to give way to this.[b] And he would tell those who objected against family-worship, that they could not

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w P. Henry. Orig MS.

x P. Henry. Orig. MS. "Pray alone. Let prayer be the key of the morning, and the bolt of the night." P. Henry. See Memoirs of Mrs. Savage, 3d ed. p. 8. Bishop Taylor says, that, "with them that are not stark irreligious, prayer *is* the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night." Works, v. 1. p. 145. oct. ed. *ut supra.* And of Bishop Ridley it is affirmed, that "he used to make his religious addresses unto God, both as a key to open the door in the morning to his daily employments, and as a bolt, to shut and close them up all at evening again." Fuller's Abel Redivivus, p. 195. 4to. 1652.

y Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

z Nat. A. D. 1630. ob. Nov. 23, 1694. Life by Dr. Birch, oct. 1753. An interesting occurrence between the Archbishop, when Dean of St. Paul's, and his father, is recorded by Dr. Fawcett, in the Life of Oliver Heywood, p. 139. A similar anecdote is also related of Sir Thomas More, when Lord Chancellor. See his Life by Cayley, v. 1. p. 112.

a Archbishop Tillotson's Works, v. 3. p. 422. oct. 1742.

b It was the observation of an excellent man, that, when he did hasten over holy duties, out of an over eager desire to follow his worldly business, he did many times meet with a cross in his business; but, when he did take his ordinary time, God did make his other business to succeed the better, or else his mind was brought to submit to the will of God. The Life of Mr. John Rowe, duod. 1673, p. 45.

get time for it; that, if they would but put on Christian resolution at first, they would not find the difficulty so great as they imagined; but, after a while, their other affairs would fall in easily and naturally with this, especially where there is that *wisdom* which is *profitable to direct*. Nay, they would find it to be a great preserver of order and decency in a family, and it would be like a hem to all their other business, to keep it from ravelling. He was ever careful to have all his family present at family-worship; though sometimes, living in the country, he had a great household; yet he would have not only his children and sojourners, if he had any, and domestic servants, but his workmen and day-labourers, and all that were employed for him, if they were within call, to be present, to join with him in this service; and, as it was an act of his charity many times to set them to work for him, so to that he added this act of piety, to set them to work for God. And usually, when he paid his workmen their wages, he gave them some good counsel about their souls. Yet, if any that should come to family worship, were at a distance, and must be stayed for long, he would rather want them, than put the duty much out of time; and would sometimes say, at night,—Better one away, than all sleepy.

The performances of his family worship [c] were the same morning and evening. He observed that, under the law, the morning and the evening lamb had the same meat-offering and drink-offering, Exodus xxix. 38—41. He always began with a short, but very solemn, prayer, imploring the divine presence and grace, assistance and acceptance; particularly begging a blessing upon the word to be read, in reference to which he often put up this petition,—That the same Spirit that indited the Scripture, would enable us to understand the Scripture, and to make up something to ourselves out of it that may do us good. And, esteeming the word of God as his necessary food, he would sometimes pray in a morning, that our souls might have a good meal out of it. He commonly concluded even this short prayer, as he did also his blessings before and after meat,[d] with a doxology, as Paul, upon all occasions, —To him be glory, &c. which is properly adoration, and is an essential part of prayer.

He next sung a psalm, and commonly he sung David's Psalms in order, throughout; sometimes using the old translation, but generally Mr. Barton's:[e] and his usual way was to sing a whole psalm throughout, though perhaps a long one, and to sing quick, yet with a good variety of proper and pleasant tunes; and, that he might do so, usually the psalm was sung without reading the line betwixt, every one in the family having a book, which he preferred much before the common way of singing, where it might conveniently be done, as more agreeable to the practice of the primitive church, and the reformed churches abroad; and by this means he thought the duty more likely to be performed *in the spirit, and with the understanding;* the sense being not so broken, nor the affections interrupted, as in reading the line betwixt. He would say, that the scripture ground for singing psalms in families might be taken from Psalm cxviii. 15;—*The voice of rejoicing and of salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous;* and that it is a way to hold forth godliness, like Rahab's scarlet thread, Joshua ii. 17. to such as pass by our windows.

He next read a portion of Scripture, taking the Bible in order; he would sometimes blame those who only pray in their families, and do not read the Scripture. In prayer, we speak to God; by the word, he speaks to us;—and is there any reason, saith he, that we should speak all? In the tabernacle the priests were every day to *burn incense* and to *light the lamps;* the former, figuring the duty of prayer, the latter the duty of reading the word. Sometimes he would say,—Those do well that pray morning and evening in their families; those do better that pray and read the Scriptures; but those do best of all that pray, and read, and sing psalms; and Christians should *covet earnestly the best gifts*.

He advised the reading of the Scripture in order, for, though one star in the firmament of the Scripture differ from another star in glory, yet, whereve God hath a mouth to speak, we should have an ea to hear; and the diligent searcher [f] may find muc excellent matter in those parts of Scripture, whic we are sometimes tempted to think might have bee spared. How affectionately would he sometime bless God for every book, and chapter, and vers and line, in the Bible!

[*Every word of God*, he would say, is *good*, bu especially *God*, the *Word*. How sweet is it to a los undone sinner, to be acquainted with a Saviour! [g]]

What he read in his family, he always expounded

c See Tong's Life of Matt. Henry, *ut supra*, p. 124. &c. Mr. Wesley, recommending P Henry's Life, pointed out his mode of performing family worship as a pattern. Minutes of Conference, v. I. p. 76.

d Bishop Butler, after pressing the habitual exercise of secret prayer, observes, that "A duty of the like kind, and serving to the same purpose, is the particular acknowledgment of God when we are partaking of his bounty at our meals. The neglect of this is said to have been scandalous to a proverb in the heathen world; but it is without shame laid aside at the tables of the highest and the lowest rank among us." Charge to the Clergy of Durham, 1751. Works, v. 2. p. 48. See the Spectator, No. 458.

e See Wood's Ath. Oxon. *ut supra*, vol. 3. p. 303. The Psalm and Hymns were first printed by act of Parliament, Oct. 164 Ibid.

f Beloved, if you doe but take any piece of this word, and sta upon it, as the bee doth upon the flower, and will not off till yo have got somewhat out of it; if you be still digging in this min this would make you rich in knowledge; and, if you be rich knowledge, it will make you rich in grace likewise. The Ne Covenant, by Dr. Preston, pp. 454, 455. 4to. 1630.

g P. Henry. Orig. MS.

and exhorted all ministers to do so, as an excellent means of increasing their acquaintance with the Scripture. His expositions were not so much critical as plain, and practical, and useful; and such as tended to edification, and to answer the end for which the Scriptures were written, which is to make us wise to salvation. And herein he had a peculiar excellence, performing that daily exercise with so much judgment, and at the same time with such facility and clearness, as if every exposition had been premeditated; and very instructive they were, as well as affecting to the auditors. His observations were many times very pretty and surprising, and such as one shall not ordinarily meet with. Commonly, in his expositions, he reduced the matter of the chapter or psalm read to some heads; not by a logical analysis, which often minceth it too small, and confounds the sense with the terms; but by such a distribution as the matter did most easily and unforcedly fall into. He often mentioned that saying of Tertullian's, "I adore the fulness of the Scriptures;" and sometimes that,—*Scriptura semper habet aliquid relegentibus.* When sometimes he had hit upon some useful observation that was new to him, he would say afterwards to those about him,—How often have I read this chapter, and never before now took notice of such a thing in it![h] He put his children, while they were with him, to write these expositions; and when they were gone from him, the strangers that sojourned with him did the same. What collections his children had, though but broken and very imperfect hints, yet, when afterwards they were disposed of in the world, were of good use to them and their families. Some expositions of this nature, that is, plain and practical, and helping to raise the affections and guide the conversation by the word, he often wished were published by some good hand for the benefit of families; but such was his great modesty and self-diffidence, though few more able for it, that he would never be persuaded to attempt any thing of that kind himself. As an evidence how much his heart was upon it, to have the word of God read and understood in families, take this passage out of his last will and testament;—I give and bequeath to each of my four daughters, Mr. Poole's[i] English Annotations upon the Bible, in two volumes, of the last and best edition that shall be to be had at the time of my decease, together with Mr. Barton's last and best translation of the Singing Psalms, one to each of them; requiring and requesting them to make daily use of the same, for the instruction, edification, and comfort of themselves and their families.

But it is time we proceed to the method of his family worship.

The chapter or psalm being read and expounded, he required from his children some account of what they could remember of it; and sometimes would discourse with them plainly and familiarly about it, that he might lead them into an acquaintance with it; and, if it might be, impress something of it upon their hearts.

He then prayed, and always kneeling, which he looked upon as the fittest and most proper gesture for prayer; and he took care that his family should address themselves to the duty, with the outward expressions of reverence and composedness. He usually fetched his matter and expressions in prayer, from the chapter that was read, and the psalm that was sung, which was often very affecting, and helped much to stir up and excite praying graces.[k] He sometimes observed in those Psalms, where reference is had to the Scripture stories, as Psalm lxxxiii. and many others, that those who are well acquainted with the Scriptures, would not need to make use of the help of prescribed forms, which are very necessary for those that cannot do the duty without them, but unbecoming those that can; as a go-cart is needful to a child, or crutches to one that is lame,[l] but neither of them agreeable to one that needs them not. It was the comparison he commonly used in this matter.

[In recommending the use of free prayer, he would sometimes say,—Consider, whether it be possible to draw up a form that shall reach to all a man's particular occasions; that shall serve in adversity, as well as prosperity; when sick, as when in health. We are to pray always, in every thing. The Lord's Prayer is the most complete, and perfect, and comprehensive, that can be, yet we never find either Christ himself, or his apostles, making use of it, but still varying, according to their present occasion. True, all petitions may be reduced to it; see John xvii. and Acts iv. But, what folly were it, if a man

h See a like testimony of the Rev. Geo. Philips. Mathers Hist. of New England, Book III. p. 83.

i The author of the Synopsis Criticorum. Nat. 1624, ob. 1679. Of that elaborate work the following notices appear in Mr. Henry's diary:—

1669, Dec. 18. I sent 20*s.* to Mr. Talents, with Mr. Down's acquittance for the 30*s.* formerly paid upon Mr. Poole's propositions, and am now to receive the first volume, and the second hereafter, when finished. Orig. MS.

1676, Oct. 31. I have received the five volumes of Mr. Poole's Synopsis, and do acknowledge myself therewith superabundantly satisfied, returning hearty thanks to him for his worthy pains, and hearty praise to God for his gracious assistance, without which it could not have been brought to pass. P. H. Orig. MS. See Mr. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 25. p. 154, &c. There the particulars relative to the publication of the Synopsis are preserved.

k See a like statement as to Mr. Wheatley. Fuller's Abel Redivivus, p. 594. *ut supra.*

l A Christian, in the want of gifts, may lawfully use a set forme of prayer, as a man that hath a weake backe, or a lame legge, may lean upon a *crutch.* Perkins's Works, v. 2. p. 67. fol. 1617.

A prescribed forme, eyther conned by heart, or read out of a booke, is very helpefull; as a *crutch*, for one that is lame in his limbes. Yet let me give this caution,—that wee doe not alwaies tye ourselves to a forme of words. An Expos. on the Parable of the Prodigal Son, by Nehemiah Rogers, pp. 165, 166. 4to. 1632.

should get a petition drawn up, and then resolve, whatever be his straits, to deliver only that petition. —Consider, whether you do not find forms deadening things. If a preacher should preach the same sermon over, in the same congregation, twenty times, or oftener, in a year, would it not quite weary and tire out his hearers? Were it not the ready way to preach them all asleep? It is one considerable prejudice that is in the hearts of some against praying by the Spirit,[m] that many times the same thing is repeated. Supposing it to be so, yet, whether is worse,—always to repeat the same prayer, or, now and then, to repeat one and the same expression in prayer?—Consider, whether forms do not pervert the very nature of prayer. In prayer there should be, first, desires, and then words to express those desires. But in forms, first, words are prescribed, and then desires are to be stirred up to answer to those words.

It may be objected;—'I am not learned, as others are; neither have I such parts as others have; therefore, it is best for me to pray out of a book.' This is grounded upon a mistake; it is not learning and parts, but grace, that doth it;—it is the Spirit of *grace* and supplication; not of *learning* and supplication. I deny not, but where grace and natural abilities are together in the same person, there, ordinarily, a man is the more powerful in prayer; I mean, in affecting others who join; and yet, another, who wants those abilities, and is truly godly, may pray as acceptably, and speed as well in prayer, as he.

But it is said,—'I distrust myself, I dare not go to God with a prayer of my own inditing; it is, therefore, best for me to borrow one that may have some method and elegance in it.' This also is grounded upon a mistake. God regards not elegancy in prayer.[n] He cares not how little there is of the head in the duty, so there be a great deal of the *heart*. We must be well acquainted with that boldness of access which we have to God, upon all occasions, by Jesus Christ, else we shall never do any thing this way. Hebrews iv. 14—16. We must approach God in prayer as children to a father. Ignorance of this causes formality and ceremony. Is not a tender-hearted father far more delighted with the lispings and stammerings of his little child, when it first begins to speak, than with the neatest, finest speech that he can hear from another? And what is the reason? Why, it is his *child*. Take a nobleman's child, and what doth he do when he wants clothes, or other necessaries? Go to a scrivener and get a petition drawn, to present it to his father! No; he comes with boldness,—'Father, I want clothes; will you please to give me them?' Whereas, another must observe ceremonies, and circumstances, or else have no hopes of success.[o]]

In family prayer he was usually most full in giving thanks for family mercies, confessing family sins, and begging family blessings. Very particular he would sometimes be in prayer for his family; if any were absent, they were sure to have an express petition put up for them. He used to observe, concerning Job i. 5. that he offered burnt-offerings for his children, *according to the number of them all*, an offering for each child; and so would he sometimes in praying for his children, put up a petition for each child. He always observed, at the annual return of the birth-day of each of his children, to bless God for his mercy to him and his wife in that child; the giving of it, the continuance of it, the comfort they had in it, &c. with some special request to God for that child. Every servant and sojourner, at their coming into his family, and their going out, besides the daily remembrances of them, had a particular petition put up for them, according as their circumstances were. The strangers, that were at any time within his gates, he was wont particularly to recommend to God in prayer, with much affection and Christian concern for them and their concernments. He was daily mindful of those that desired his prayers[p] for them, and would say, sometimes,—It is a great comfort that God knows who we mean in prayer, though we do not name them. Particularly providences concerning the country, as to health or sickness, good or bad weather, or the like, he commonly took notice of in prayer, as there was occasion; and would often beg of God to fit us for the next providence, whatever it might be. Nor did he ever forget to pray for the *peace of Jerusalem*.

[He maintained, that supplication must be made for all saints; for those you do not know, as well as for those you do; for those that differ from you, as well as for those with whom you agree; for those who are in prosperity, as well as in adversity. For *all saints*, because all are alike related to Jesus Christ because all are alike related to you, as fellow-members; and it will be an evidence you love them, as brethren, when you love them all, and pray for them all. When you have nearest communion with God then remember me, said Bernard[q] to a friend; then speak, say I, for the church.[r]]

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m They, says Bishop Hopkins, who use prescribed and set forms of prayer, *pray by the Spirit*, when their petitions are accompanied with fervent affections, stirred in them by the Holy Ghost. Works, vol. I. p. 257. oct. ed.

n Though it be the duty of every person to labour for fit words of prayer, yet God doth not hear prayer for the elegancy of phrase, but for the heavenliness, and spiritualness, and brokenness of heart of him that prayes. The Christian compleatly Armed, by Mr. Ralph Robinson, p. 172. duod. 1656.

o P. Henry. Orig. MS. See Dr. Owen's Works, vol. 4. p. 1, &c. oct. 1823. Treatise on the Work of the Holy Spirit in Prayer.

p Not to care for the prayers of others is pride: not to put up prayers for others is uncharitableness. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

q See Flavel's Seaman's Farewell. Works, vol. 6. p. 395. oct. 1770; and Milner's Church Hist. v. 3. p. 330, &c. *ut supra*. Bernard died, A. D. 1153. æt. about 63.

r P. Henry. Orig. MS.

He always concluded family prayer, both morning and evening, with a solemn benediction, after the doxology;—The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be with us, &c. Thus did he daily *bless his household.*

Immediately after the prayer was ended, his children together, with bended knee, asked blessing of him and their mother; that is, desired of them to pray to God to bless them: which blessing[s] was given with great solemnity and affection; and if any of them were absent, they were remembered,—The Lord bless you and your brother, or,—you and your sister, that is absent.

This was his daily worship, which he never altered, unless, as is after mentioned, nor ever omitted any part of, though he went from home never so early, or returned never so late, or had never so much business for his servants to do. He would say, that sometimes he saw cause to shorten them; but he would never omit any of them; for, if an excuse be once admitted for an omission, it will be often returning. He was not willing, unless the necessity were urgent, that any should go from his house in a morning before family worship; but, upon such an occasion, would mind his friends, that,—prayer and provender never hinder a journey.[t]

He managed his daily family worship so as to make it a pleasure, and not a task, to his children and servants; for he was seldom long, and never tedious in the service; the variety of the duties made it the more pleasant; so that none who joined with him had ever any reason to say, *Behold, what a weariness is it!* Such an excellent faculty he had of rendering religion the most sweet and amiable employment in the world; and so careful was he, like Jacob, *to drive as the children could go,* not putting *new wine into old bottles.* If some good people, that mean well, would do likewise, it might prevent many of those prejudices which young persons are apt to conceive against religion, when the services of it are made a toil and a terror to them.

On Thursday evenings, instead of reading, he catechized his children and servants in the Assembly's Catechism, with the Proofs; or, sometimes, in a little Catechism, concerning the matter of prayer, published in the year 1674, and said to be written by Dr. Collins,[u] which they learned for their help in the gift of prayer, and he explained it to them. Or else they read, and he examined them, in some other useful book, as Mr. Poole's Dialogues against the Papists,[v] the Assembly's Confession of Faith with the Scriptures, or the like.

On Saturday evenings, his children and servants gave him an account what they could remember of the chapters that had been expounded all the week before, in order, each a several part, helping one another's memories for the recollecting of it. This he called,—*gathering up the fragments which remained, that nothing might be lost.* He would say to them sometimes, as Christ to his disciples,—*Have ye understood all these things?* If not, he took that occasion to explain them more fully. This exercise, which he constantly kept up all along, was both delightful and profitable, and, being managed by him with so much prudence and sweetness, helped to instil into those about him betimes the knowledge and love of the Holy Scriptures.

When he had sojourners in his family, who were able to bear a part in such a service, he had commonly in the winter time, set weekly conferences, on questions proposed, for their mutual edification and comfort in the fear of God; the substance of what was said, he himself took, and kept an account of, in writing.[w]

But the Lord's day[x] he called and counted the queen of days, the pearl of the week,[y] and observed it accordingly. The Fourth Commandment intimates a special regard to be had to the sabbath in families; *Thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, &c. it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.* In this, therefore, he was very exact, and abounded in the work of the Lord in his family on that day. Whatever were the circumstances of his public opportunities, which varied, as we shall find afterwards, his family religion on that day was the same. Extraordinary sacrifices must never supersede the

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s See the Eccl. Biog. v. 5. p. 165. n. Also the Supplement to the Morning Exercise, p. 179. 4to. 1674.

t It is a true proverb,—Prayer and provender hinder no man. The Suppl to the Morn. Exerc. *ut supra.* p. 287.

u Mr. Alexander Chalmers suggests that Collins may be a misspelling for Collinges. Dr. Collinges was a voluminous writer; see the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 9. No Catechism, however, appears in the list of his Works; and every effort to obtain further information on the subject has been ineffectual. It may be observed, that it is "*said to be written* by Dr. Collins."

The supposition, as to Dr. Collinges being the author, is the more likely, inasmuch as he was usually styled Collins, or rather Collings. Thus, on his Portrait, by White, 4to. 1678, we read,—Vera Effigies Johannis *Collings*, S. T. P. Anno Dom. 1678. ætatis 55.

v 8vo. 1667.

w Appendix, No. XI.

x 1669. Sab. Apr. 30th. I have long since been taught the sabbath is a sign;* the institution a sign of God's love to us; the sanctification, a sign of our love to him. Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS.

The opinion of Sir Edward Turner, Speaker of the House of Commons, at the Prorogation, July 27, 1663, is worth preserving:—"He that remembers not to keep the Christian Sabbath, at the beginning of the week, will be in danger to forget, before the end of the week, that he is a Christian." P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

A statement, like the one last mentioned, is the more observable, because early associations were then generally of another cast, and repugnant alike to good taste and devotional feeling. See Alleine's Vindiciæ Pietatis, p. 129. duod. 1663.

y The Jews were wont to call it the *queen of days.* One of ours, now translated into his glorious rest, honours it thus, calling it,—The map of heaven, the *golden spot of the week*, the market day of the soul, the *queen of days*, &c. Mr. Geo. Swinnock, in his Good

* See Exod. xxxi. 13, 17. Ezek. xx. 12, 20.

continual burnt-offering and his meat-offering, Numb. xxviii. 15. His common salutation of his family or friends, on the Lord's day in the morning, was that of the primitive Christians;—*The Lord is risen; he is risen indeed;* making it his chief business on that day to celebrate the memory of Christ's resurrection; and he would say, sometimes,—Every Lord's day is a true Christian's Easter day. He took care to have his family ready early on that day, and was larger in exposition and prayer on sabbath mornings than on other days. He would often remember, that, under the law, the daily sacrifice was doubled on sabbath days; two lambs in the morning, and two in the evening. He had always a particular subject for his expositions on sabbath mornings; the harmony of the evangelists several times over, the Scripture prayers, Old-Testament prophecies of Christ;—Christ, the true Treasure, so he entitled that subject, sought and found in the field of the Old Testament. He constantly sung a psalm after dinner, and another after supper, on the Lord's days. And in the evening of the day his children and servants were catechized and examined in the sense and meaning of the answers in the Catechism; that they might not say it, as he used to tell them, like a parrot,—by rote. Then the day's sermons were repeated, commonly by one of his children, when they were grown up, and while they were with him; and the family gave an account of what they could remember of the word of the day, which he endeavoured to fasten upon them, *as a nail in a sure place*. In his prayers on the evening of the sabbath, he was often more than ordinarily enlarged; as one that found not only God's service *perfect freedom*, but his work its own wages, and a *great reward*, not only after keeping, but, as he used to observe, from Psalm xix. 11. *in keeping, God's commandments*. A present reward of obedience *in* obedience. In that prayer he was usually very particular, in praying for his family, and all that belonged to it. It was a prayer he often put up,—That we might have grace to carry it as a minister, and a minister's wife, and a minister's children, and a minister's servants, should carry it, *that the ministry might in nothing be blamed*. He would sometimes be a particular intercessor for the towns and parishes adjacent. How have I heard him, when he hath been in the mount with God, in a sabbath-evening prayer, wrestle with the Lord for Chester, and Shrewsbury, and Nantwich, and Wrexham, and Whitchurch, &c. those nests of souls, wherein there are so many, that cannot discern between their right hand and their left in spiritual things, &c. He closed his sabbath work in his family with singing Psalm cxxxiv. and, after it, a solemn blessing of his family.

[He frequently observed days of humiliation in his family. Some of those occasions are noted in his Diary. The following are instances:

1661. July 10. A day of family humiliation. The Lord was sweetly seen in the midst of us, and I trust it was a day of atonement. Sin pardoned, requests made, covenants renewed, in Jesus Christ.

October 10. We kept a day of private prayer, and humiliation, in the family, and the Lord was with us. This confession much affected me, that things are not so among us as they should be among those who are the relations of a minister of Jesus Christ. Lord, pardon, and grant for time to come it may be better![z]]

Thus was he prophet and priest in his own house; and he was king there too, ruling in the fear of God, and not suffering sin upon any under his roof.

He had many years ago a man servant, that was once overtaken in drink abroad; for which, the next morning, at family worship, he solemnly reproved him, admonished him, and prayed for him, with a spirit of meekness, and soon after parted with him. But there were many that were his servants, who, by the blessing of God upon his endeavours, got those good impressions upon their souls which they retained ever after; and blessed God, with all their hearts, that ever they came under his roof. Few went from his service till they were married, and went to families of their own; and some, after they had been married, and had buried their yoke-fellows, returned to his service again, saying,—*Master, it is good to be here.*

He brought up his children in the fear of God, with a great deal of care and tenderness, and did, by his practice, as well as upon all occasions in discourses, condemn the indiscretion of those parents who are partial in their affections to their children, making a difference between them, which he observed did often prove of ill consequence in families; and lay a foundation of envy, contempt, and discord, which turns to their shame and ruin. His carriage towards his children was with great mildness and gentleness, as one who desired rather to be loved than feared by them. He was as careful not to *provoke them to wrath*, nor to *discourage them*, as he was to *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*. He ruled indeed, and kept up his authority, but it was with wisdom and love, and not with a high hand. He allowed his children a great degree of freedom with him, which gave him the opportunity of reasoning them, not frightening them, into that which is good. He did much towards the instruction of his children in the way of familiar discourse, according to that excellent directory for religious education, Deuteronomy vi. 7.—*Thou shalt whet these*

Wish to the Lord's Day. Supplement to the Morning Exercise at Cripplegate, p. 141, *ut supra*. Serm. 6.

[z] P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

things (so the word is, which, he said, noted *frequent repetition* of the same things) *upon thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, &c.* which made them love home, and delight in his company, and greatly endeared religion to them.

[He would observe, sometimes, that there are five good lessons, which they are blessed who learn in the days of their youth.

1. To *remember their Creator.* Not only remember that you have a Creator, but remember him to love him, and fear him, and serve him.

2. To come to Jesus Christ. *Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* Behold, he calls you; he encourages you to come to him. He *will in no wise cast* you *out.*

3. To bear the yoke in youth. The yoke is that which young ones cannot endure. But it is good for them to bear it.[a] The yoke of the cross. If God lay affliction on you when young, do not murmur, but bear that cross. It is good to be trained up in the school of affliction. The yoke of Christ. *Take* MY *yoke.* It is an easy yoke; *his commandments are not grievous.*

4. To *flee youthful lusts.* Those who are taught of God have learned this. See that you do not love your pleasures more than the sanctifying of the sabbath. *This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day.*

5. To *cleanse their way.* How? *By taking heed thereto according to thy word.* Love your Bibles. Meditate in them day and night. And, if you do thus, you are taught of God.[b]]

He did not burthen his children's memories by imposing upon them the getting of chapters and psalms without book; but endeavoured to make the whole word of God familiar to them, especially the scripture stories, and to bring them to understand it and love it, and then they would easily remember it. He used to observe, from Psalm cxix. 93.—*I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me;*—that we are then likely to remember the word of God when it doth us good.[c]

He taught all his children to write himself, and set them betimes to write sermons, and other things that might be of use to them. He taught his eldest daughter the Hebrew tongue when she was about six or seven years old, by an English Hebrew Grammar, which he made on purpose for her; and she went so far in it, as to be able readily to read and construe a Hebrew Psalm.

He drew up a short form of the baptismal covenant for the use of his children. It was this;—

I take God the Father to be my chiefest good and highest end.
I take God the Son to be my Prince and Saviour.[d]
I take God the Holy Ghost to be my Sanctifier, Teacher, Guide, and Comforter.
I take the word of God to be my rule in all my actions.[e]
And the people of God to be my people in all conditions.
I do likewise devote and dedicate unto the Lord, my whole self, all I am, all I have, and all I can do.
And this I do deliberately, sincerely, freely, and for ever.

This he taught his children; and they each of them solemnly repeated it every Lord's day in the evening, after they were catechised, he putting his *Amen* to it, and sometimes adding,—So say, and so do, and you are made for ever.

He also took pains with them to lead them into the understanding of it, and to persuade them to a free and cheerful consent to it. And, when they grew up, he made them all write it over severally with their own hands, and very solemnly set their names to it, which he told them he would keep by him, and it should be produced as a testimony against them, in case they should afterwards depart from God, and turn from following after him.

He was careful to bring his children betimes (when they were about sixteen years of age) to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, to take the covenant of God upon themselves, and to make their dedication to God their own act and deed; and a great deal of pains he took with them, to prepare them for that great ordinance, and so to translate them into the state of adult church-membership. And he would often blame parents, who would think themselves undone if they had not their children baptized, and yet took no care when they grew up and made a profession of the Christian religion, to persuade them to the Lord's supper.—It is true, he would say, buds and blossoms are not fruit, but they give hopes of fruit; and parents may, and should, take hold of the good beginnings of grace which they see in their children, by those to bind them so much the closer to, and lead them so much the faster in, the *way* that is *called holy.* By this solemn engagement, the door, which stood half open before, and invited the thief, is shut and bolted against temptation. And, to those who pleaded that they were not fit, he would say,—

[a] Those that have not been inured to the yoke of obedience will never endure the yoke of suffering. P. Henry. Com. Place Book. Orig. MS.

[b] P. Henry. From a MS. in the hand-writing of Mrs. Savage.

[c] "Those that have received comfort, life, and quickening, by the word of God, find themselves obliged to remember it for ever." Dr. Manton. Works, vol. i. p. 597. Fol. 1681.

[d] To choose Christ, is, freely and deliberately, upon advice and consultation with ourselves, being thoroughly convinced of his excellency, and our own need of him, to accept him as our only Portion, our Lord and Saviour, renouncing every thing else, be what it will, that may stand in competition with him. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[e] It is our principle, that we must make *the word the rule of all our actions.* Burroughs's Moses's Choice, p. 212. 4to. 1660.

That the further they went into the world, the less fit they would be. *Qui non est hodie cras minus aptus erit.* Not that children should be compelled to it, nor those that are wilfully ignorant, untoward, and perverse, admitted to it, but those children that are hopeful and well inclined to the things of God, and appear to be concerned in other duties of religion, when they begin to put away childish things, should be incited, and encouraged, and persuaded to this, that the matter may be brought to an issue, —*Nay, but we will serve the Lord;* fast bind, fast find. Abundant thanksgivings have been rendered to God by many of his friends for his advice and assistance hercin.

In dealing with his children about their spiritual state, he took hold of them very much by the handle of their infant baptism, and frequently inculcated that upon them, that they were born in God's house, and were betimes dedicated and given up to him, and, therefore, were obliged to be his servants. Psalm cxvi. 16. *I am thy servant*, because *the son of thine handmaid.* This he was wont to illustrate to them by the comparison of taking a lease of a fair estate for a child in the cradle, and putting his life into it. The child then knows nothing of the matter, nor is he capable of consenting; however, then he is maintained out of it, and hath an interest in it; and when he grows up, and becomes able to choose, and refuse, for himself, if he go to his landlord, and claim the benefit of the lease, and promise to pay the rent, and do the services, well and good, he hath the benefit of it, if otherwise it is at his peril. Now, children, he would say, our great Landlord was willing that our lives should be put into the lease of heaven and happiness, and it was done accordingly, by your baptism, which is *the seal of the righteousness that is by faith;* and by that it was assured to you, that if you would pay the rent and do the service, that is, live a life of faith and repentance, and sincere obedience, you shall never be turned off the tenement; but if now you dislike the terms, and refuse to pay this rent, (this chief rent, so he would call it, for it is no rack,) you forfeit the lease. However, you cannot but say, that you had a kindness done you, to have your lives put into it. Thus did he frequently deal with his children, and even travail in birth again to see Christ formed in them, and from this topic he generally argued; and he would often say,—If infant baptism were more improved, it would be less disputed.

He not only taught his children betimes to pray, (which he did especially by his own pattern, his method and expressions in prayer being very easy and plain,) but when they were young he put them upon it, to pray together, and appointed them on Saturdays in the afternoon[f] to spend some time together,—none but they, and such of their age as might occasionally be with them,—in reading good books, especially those for children, and in singing and praying; and would sometimes tell them for their encouragement, that the God with whom we have to do, understands broken language. And, if we do as well as we can in the sincerity of our hearts, we shall not only be accepted, but taught to do better. *To him that hath shall be given.*

He sometimes set his children, in their own reading of the Scriptures, to gather out such passages as they took most notice of, and thought most considerable, and write them down. Though this performance was very small, yet the endeavour was of good use. He also directed them to insert in a paper book, which each of them had for the purpose, remarkable sayings and stories, which they met with in reading such other good books as he put into their hands.

He took a pleasure in relating to them the remarkable providences of God, both in *his own time*, and *in the days of old*, which, he said, parents were taught to do by that appointment, Exodus xii. 26, 27.—*Your children shall ask you in time to come, What mean you by this service, and you shall* tell them so and so.

What his pious care was concerning his children, and with what a godly jealousy he was jealous over them, take in one instance. When they had been for a week or a fortnight kindly entertained at B———,[g] as they were often, he thus writes in his Diary upon their return home;—My care and fear is, lest converse with such so far above them, though of the best, should have influence upon them to lift them up, when I had rather they should be kept low. For, as he did not himself, so he was very solicitous to teach his children, not to mind *high things;* not to desire them, not to expect them in this world.[h]

We shall conclude this chapter with another passage out of his Diary:—

April 12, 1681. This day fourteen years the Lord took my first-born son from me, the beginning of my strength with a stroke. In the remembrance whereof my heart melted this evening. I begged pardon for the Jonah that raised the storm. I blessed the Lord, that hath spared the rest. I begged mercy,—mercy for every one of them; and absolutely and unreservedly devoted and dedicated them, myself, my whole self, estate, interest, life, to the will and service of that God from whom I received all. *Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, &c.*

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f See Tong's Life of Matt. Henry, p. 18, *ut supra.*

g Boreatton, near Baschurch, in Shropshire. See Letters to a Young Clergyman, v. i. pp. 145, 146.

h Appendix, No. XII.

CHAPTER V.

HIS EJECTMENT FROM WORTHENBURY; HIS NONCONFORMITY; HIS REMOVES TO BROAD OAK; AND THE PROVIDENCES THAT WERE CONCERNING HIM TO THE YEAR 1672.

HAVING thus laid together the instances of his family religion, we must now return to the history of events that were concerning him, and are obliged to look back to the first year after his marriage, which was the year that king Charles the Second came in; a year of great changes and struggles in the land, which Mr. Baxter, in his Life,[a] gives a full, and clear, and impartial idea of; by which it may easily be guessed how it went with Mr. Henry in his low and narrow sphere, whose sentiments in those things were very much the same with Mr. Baxter's.

Many of his best friends in Worthenbury parish were lately removed by death; Emeral family contrary to what it had been; and the same spirit, which that year revived all the nation over, was working violently in that country, *viz.* a spirit of great enmity to such men as Mr. Henry was. Worthenbury, upon the King's coming in, returned into its former relation to Bangor, and was looked upon as a chapelry dependent upon that. Mr. Robert Fogg had, for many years, held the sequestered Rectory of Bangor, which now Dr. Henry Bridgman,[b] (son to John, Bishop of Chester,[c] and brother to the Lord Keeper Bridgman,[d]) returned to the possession of. By which Mr. Henry was soon apprehensive that his interest at Worthenbury was shaken; but thus he writes:—The will of the Lord be done. Lord, if my work be done here, provide some other for this people, that may be more skilful, and more successful, and cut out work for me elsewhere; however, I will take nothing ill which God doth with me.

He laboured what he could to make Dr. Bridgman his friend,[e] who gave him good words, and was very civil to him, and assured him that he would never remove him till the law did. But he must look upon himself as the Doctor's Curate, and depending upon his will, which kept him in continual expectations of a removal; however, he continued in his liberty there above a year, though in very fickle and precarious circumstances.

The grand question now on foot was, whether to conform, or no. He used all means possible to satisfy himself concerning it, by reading and discourse, particularly at Oxford, with Dr. Fell, afterwards Bishop of Oxford, but in vain; his dissatisfaction remained;—however, saith he, I dare not judge those that do conform; for, who am I, that I should judge my brother?

[Addressing Dr. Bridgman about this period, his views are thus expressed:—

I think I am none of those who are in the extremes; nevertheless, my resolution is, if those things be indispensably imposed which I cannot practise without sinning against my conscience, I shall choose rather to lose all, yet not violating, by my good will, the public peace of the church. And herein, I presume, you will not blame me. But, if moderation be used, wherein it will be your honour to be instrumental, if my poor talent may contribute any thing to the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, I trust I shall never be found guilty of wilfully burying it, lest I fall under the *woe, if I preach not the gospel.* God, of his infinite mercy, direct you, and all who are called to consult in the affairs of religion, that you may do nothing *against* the truth and peace, but *for* it, which is the hearty prayer of,

Sir,

Your servant in the gospel,

P. HENRY.[f]]

He hath noted, that being at Chester, in discourse with the Dean and Chancellor and others, about this time, the great argument they used with him to persuade him to conform was, that else he would lose his preferment; and what, said they, you are a young man, and are you wiser than the King and Bishops?[g] But this is his reflection upon it afterwards;—God grant that I may never be left to consult with flesh and blood in such matters!

In September, 1660, Mr. Fogg, and Mr. Steel, and Mr. Henry, were presented at Flint Assizes, for not reading the Common Prayer, though as yet it was not enjoined, but there were some busy people that would outrun the law. They entered their appearance, and it fell; for, soon after the King's Declaration,[h] touching Ecclesiastical Affairs, came out, which promised liberty, and gave hopes of settlement; but the spring assizes afterwards, Mr. Steel and Mr. Henry were presented again. On this he writes,—Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up! The Lord show me what he would have me to do, for I am afraid of nothing but sin.[i]

It appears by the hints of his Diary, that he had

a See Reliq. Baxter. Lib. I. Part. II. p. 229, &c. *ut supra.*

b Ob. 15th May, 1682. Wood's Ath. Oxon. *ut supra.* v. 4. p. 863.

c He died at Morton, near Oswestry, in Shropshire, and was buried at Kinnerley. He was the author of the "Leger," now deposited in the Episcopal Registry. Ormerod's Hist. of Cheshire, v. i. p. 76. See also Prince's Worthies of Devon. p. 133. 4to ed. 1810.

d See p. 42. *ante.*

e Appendix, No. XIII.

f Orig MS.

g See Dr. Ames's Fresh Suit. 4to. 1633. Preface, p. 10.

h See it in Tracts selected from Lord Somers's Collections. 4to. 1795. p. 349, &c.

i When Chrysostom had offended the Empress Eudoxia, and she thereupon sent him a threatening message, he answered,—Go, tell her, *Nil nisi peccatum timeo;* I fear nothing but sin. The Marrow of Eccl. Hist. by Samuel Clark, p. 145. *ut supra.*

melancholy apprehensions at this time about public affairs, seeing and hearing of so many faithful ministers disturbed, silenced, and insnared; the ways of Sion mourning, and the quiet in the land treated as the troublers of it; his soul wept in secret for it. [What to think, I know not, concerning the affairs of the nation; a cloud rises; but, Lord, mine eyes are unto thee![k]] And yet he joined in the annual commemoration of the King's Restoration, and preached, on Mark xii. 17. *Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;* considering, saith he, that this was his right; also, the sad posture of the civil government, through usurpers, and the manner of his coming in without bloodshed. This he would all his days speak of as a national mercy, but what he rejoiced in with a great deal of trembling for *the ark of God;* and he would sometimes say,—That, during those years between forty and sixty, though on civil accounts there were great disorders, and *the foundations were out of course*, yet, in the matters of God's worship, things went well; there was freedom,[l] and reformation, and a face of godliness was upon the nation, though there were those that made but a mask of it. Ordinances were administered in power and purity; and, though there was much amiss, yet religion, at least in the profession of it, did prevail. This, saith he, we know very well, let men say what they will of those times.

In November, 1660, he took the oath of allegiance at Orton,[m] before Sir Thomas Hanmer,[n] and two other Justices, of which he hath left a memorandum in his Diary, with this added;—God so help me, as I purpose in my heart, to do accordingly. Nor could any more conscientiously observe that oath of God than he did, nor more sincerely promote the ends of it.

That year, according to an agreement with some of his brethren in the ministry, who hoped thereby to oblige some people, he preached upon Christmas day. The sabbath before, it happened, that the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus, which treats entirely of the Jewish feasts, called there the *feasts of the Lord*, came in course to be expounded, which gave him occasion to distinguish of feasts into divine and ecclesiastical; the divine feasts that the Jews had were those there appointed; their ecclesiastical feasts were those of Purim[o] and of Dedication.[p] And, in the application of it, he said,—He knew no divine feast we have under the gospel but the Lord's day, intended for the commemoration of the whole mercy of our redemption. And the most that could be said for Christmas was, that it is an ecclesiastical feast; and it is questionable with some, whether church or state, though they might make a good day, Esther ix. 19. could make a holy day. Nevertheless, forasmuch as we find our Lord Jesus, John x. 22. so far complying with the church feast of dedication, as to take occasion from the people's coming together, to preach to them, he purposed to preach upon Christmas day, knowing it to be his duty, in season and out of season. He preached on 1 John iii. 8.—*For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.* And he minded his people, that it is double dishonour to Jesus Christ, to practise the works of the devil then, when we keep a feast in memory of his manifestation.

His annuity from Emeral was now withheld, because he did not read the Common Prayer, though, as yet, there was no law for reading of it: hereby he was disabled to do what he had been wont for the help and relief of others; and this he has recorded as that which troubled him most under that disappointment. But he blessed God,—That he had a heart to do good, even when his hand was empty.

When the Emeral family was unkind to him, he reckoned it a great mercy, which he gave God thanks for, (who makes every creature to be that to us that it is,) that Mr. Broughton and his family, which is of considerable figure in the parish,[q] continued their kindness and respects to him, and their countenance of his ministry, which he makes a grateful mention of more than once in his Diary.

Many attempts were made in the year 1661 to disturb and insnare him, and it was still expected that he would have been hindered.—Methinks, saith he, sabbaths were never so sweet as they are, now we are kept at such uncertainties; now, *a day in thy courts is better than a thousand;* such a day as this, saith he of a sacrament-day that year, better than ten thousand. Oh, that we might yet see many such days!

[Some extracts from his Diary, at this period, clearly evince the elevated piety and holy meekness of the writer, and should excite gratitude for present privileges, civil and religious.

1661. January, 24, 25. A time of trouble in the nation. Many good men imprisoned and restrained:

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k P. Henry. Orig. MS.

l Let it not be imagined that this superior religious freedom was a privilege at all peculiar to the Commonwealth, or to the Protectorship; for, the most perfect religious emancipation may be equally guaranteed and enjoyed under a King, Lords, and Commons, as under any other form of government in the world. Brook's Hist. of Rel. Lib. v. i. p. 536.

m Overton. Orton is a corruption. See Camden's Brit. Gough's ed. v. 2. p. 155.

n See Pennant's Tours in Wales, v. 1. p. 292.

o The Feast of Lots, in commemoration of the providential deliverance of the Jews from the cruel machinations of Haman. See Horne's Introd. to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, v. 3. p. 314. 4th ed.

p A grateful memorial of the cleansing of the second temple and altar, after they had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes. Horne's Introd. v. 3. p. 315. *ut supra.*

q John Broughton dwelleth yn Worthembre Paroche, at Broughton. Leland, *ut supra*, p. 31.

some with, some without, cause. I am yet in peace, blessed be God, but expect suffering. Lord, prepare me for it, and grant that I may never suffer as an evil-doer, but as a Christian!

31. Things are low with me in the world; but three-pence[r] left. My hope is yet in the Lord, that in due time he will supply me. *Amen.*

April 3. Hanmer exercise.[s] Mr. Porter and Mr. Steel taught. I was designed to it, but it was much better as it was. Sir Thomas Hanmer signified his dislike of it, which made it doubtful whether we should have any more, but at parting I never saw such a face of sadness as was upon those who were present. Sure, God hears the sighs, and sees the tears, of his poor people.

June 16. Common-Prayer Book tendered again; why, I know not. Lord, they devise devices against me, but in thee do I put my trust. *Father, forgive them!* My hands are yet clean from the pollutions of the times. Lord, keep them, and *let no iniquity prevail against me.*

23. Strong reports I should not be suffered to preach to-day; but I did; and no disturbance. Blessed be God, who hath my enemies in a chain.

July 4. News from London of speedy severity intended against nonconformists. The Lord can yet, if he will, break the snare. If not, welcome the will of God.

7. In despite of enemies, the Lord hath granted the liberty of one sabbath more. To him be praise.

8. I received a letter from Dr. Bridgman, wherein he informed me, if I did not speedily conform, his power would no longer protect me; to which I wrote a dilatory answer, hoping, yet, my God may find out some way to break the snare. However, I had rather lose all, and save my conscience, than *contra.*

9. I advised with friends; R. B. told me, though he desired my stay above any outward thing in the world, yet he could wish rather I would be gone, than conform. I was with Mr. Steel, with whom I spent two or three hours in discourse about it, and returned home strengthened.

24. Great expectation of a severe act about imposing the Common-Prayer and ceremonies. It passed both Houses of Parliament, but is not signed by the King. Lord, his heart is in thy hand; if it be thy will, turn it; if otherwise, fit thy people to suffer, and cut short the work in righteousness!

August 11. One sabbath's liberty more. Oh, how good is the Lord! Many hearers from Wrexham are forced to wander for bread. Lord, pity them, and provide for them!

22. Mr. Steel came to see us. We are in doubt what to do in point of conformity. Lord, say unto us, This, or that, is the way, and we will walk in it!

25. Common-Prayer tendered. God knows how loth I am to go off my station; but I must not sin against my conscience.

27. I went to Wrexham, and thence to Ash,[t] where I stayed all night, and was much made of. Offence taken at Mr. Hanmer saying more than needed about conformity. He shall be Lot's wife[u] to me.

September 1. The Lord hath been good this day, in giving liberty for public ordinances; on which score we are indebted to him for ever; we of this place, above many other places.

8. This morning I verily thought I should have been hindered from preaching, but was not. The Lord heard prayers. Dr. Bridgman sent me a Prohibition from the Chancellor to peruse, upon complaint from Sir Thomas Hanmer. It was not published. Mr. Taylor[v] hindered at Holt. Mr. Adams at Penley. Lord, think of thy vineyard! They took the cushion from me, but the pulpit was left. Blessed be God.

29. Liberty yet continued; an order was brought to me to be published, prohibiting strangers from coming hither to church, but I published it not. Lord, provide for poor congregations, that are as sheep without a shepherd!

October 17. I was cited to appear at the Bishop's Court, as upon this day, but went not. My fault was,—hindering the publishing of the Dean's Order as to strangers. If I had hindered it, it *had* been a *small* fault; but I did not; I only refused to publish it *myself.*

19. Day of preparation for the sacrament. I preached from 2 Chronicles xxx. 18, &c. The good Lord pardon! Full of fears lest we be hindered, and lest something fall between the cup and the lip, for our adversaries bite the lip at us.

20. Through the good hand of our God upon us,

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[r] See the Life of Thomas Perkins. Palmer's Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 133.

[s] In the year 1576 Archbishop Grindal "encouraged a practice which was taken up in divers places of the nation: the manner whereof was, that the ministers of such a division, at a set time, met together in some church; and there, each in their order, explained, according to their ability, some particular portion of scripture allotted them before, &c. At these assemblies there were great confluxes of people to hear and learn." These were commonly called *Exercises*, or Prophesyings. However, the Queen (Elizabeth) "liked not of them," nor would she have them continued. "The Archbishop being at court, she required him to abridge the number of preachers, and to put down the religious exercises." "This did not a little afflict the grave man." "He thought the Queen made some infringement upon his office, nor could he in conscience comply with her commands." He, therefore, wrote to Her Majesty, and the whole of his "excellent and memorable letter" is preserved in the Appendix to his Life and Acts, by Strype, Book II. No. IX. Her Majesty, however, was immovable, and sent her own commandment, May, 1577, to the "Bishops throughout England for suppressing" these Exercises, they being an "offence" to her quiet subjects, who desired "to live and to serve God according to the uniform orders established in the church." Nor was this all: the venerable Archbishop was both confined and sequestered. Life, *ut supra*, B. II. ch. viii. ix. See also, Dr. M'Crie's Life of Knox, v. 2. p. 285. 4th ed.

[t] Near Prees.

[u] A saying of Bishop Latimer's. See his Sermons, p. 83. *ut supra.*

[v] See the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 478.

we have this day enjoyed one sweet sacrament more. They did us all the hinderance they could, but, notwithstanding, afterwards, we proceeded."

He was advised by Mr. Ratcliff[x] of Chester, and others of his friends, to enter an action against Mr. P. for his annuity, and did so;—but, concerning the success of it, saith he, I am not over solicitous; for, though it be my due, (Luke x. 7.) yet it was not that which I preached for; and, God knows, I would much rather preach for nothing, than not at all; and besides, I know assuredly, if I should be cast, God would make it up to me some other way. After some proceedings he not only moved, but solicited, Mr. P. to refer it;—having learned, saith he, that it is no disparagement, but an honour, for the party wronged to be first in seeking reconciliation. The Lord, if it be his will, incline his heart to peace. I have now, saith he, two great concerns upon the wheel, one in reference to my maintenance for time past; the other, as to my continuance for the future; the Lord be my friend in both; but, of the two, rather in the latter. But, saith he, many of greater gifts and graces than I are laid aside already, and when my turn comes, I know not; the will of God be done. He can do his work without us.

[The process by which he arrived at the conclusion stated, is apparent from the following document. As an instance of cautious deliberation and foresight, it is worth preserving. It exhibits a fine specimen of a well-disciplined mind, and is a practical illustration of self-cultivation and Christian prudence:—

Reasons,

Why I should not yield to a Composition with Mr. P.

1. Because I have so much probability to recover, by law, that which is my due for the time past: and not only so, but also for time to come, whilst I continue unpreferred; which, as the case stands, may be long enough. I have Mr. Ratcliff's and Sir Orl. Bridgman's opinion upon my deed.

2. Now is a bad time to treat with Mr. P. for composition, because those about him, come what will, care not for parting with any thing.

3. Lest it should hinder my return hither again, if the door should yet be open; and who knows but it may?[y]]

Why I should.

1. Law is chargeable and troublesome, and the issue tedious, and uncertain.

2. Besides, the times favour me not; judges and juries may be partial.

3. I have a potent adversary in respect of purse and greatness.

4. If I should have a trial this next Assize, which yet is doubtful, and should have a verdict, which yet is more doubtful, he, being plaintiff, may, for ought I know, remove it: and so, from time to time, to the Court of Exchequer, which, of all other, is most chargeable and tedious.

5. My present occasions for money to discharge my debt to my father. Considering, withal, besides the misery of debt, how hard it is to procure it; as, upon trial, I have found.

6. He being taken off, I may be in the less danger of confinements, and other troubles, upon public accounts.[y]]

Why Mr. P. should yield to a Composition with me.

1. In point of equity: the labourer being worthy of his hire; especially, considering the labourer's wages detained cries loud in heaven, and brings a curse.

2. In point of advantage. If I should recover, as there is hope I may, it will be bad for him, especially having parted with the tithes which he might have kept.

3. In point of honour. I came hither upon the invitation of his family; left my place in the University, where, he knows, I had encouragement to have stayed. Also the relation wherein I stood to him as Tutor. Also, his promise. If there was any occasion of his anger given, it was when he was a child, and under my tuition, and it was my duty to complain; though, he knows, how sparing I was that way. And for persuading his father to disinherit him, he hath acknowledged he did believe it was not so; and I know it was not.[y]]

The issue of this affair was, that, there having been some disputes between Mr. P. and Dr. Bridgman, about the tithe of Worthenbury, wherein Mr. P. had clearly the better claim to make, yea, by the mediation of Sir Thomas Hanmer, they came to this agreement, September 11, 1661, that Dr. Bridgman and his successors, Parsons of Bangor, should have and receive all the tithe corn and hay of Worthenbury, without the disturbance of the said Mr. P. or his heirs, except the tithe hay of Emeral demesne, upon condition that Dr. Bridgman should, before the first of November following, avoid and discharge the present minister or curate, Philip Henry, from the chapel of Worthenbury, and not hereafter, at any time, re-admit the said minister, Philip Henry, to officiate in the said cure. This is the substance of the Articles agreed upon between them, pursuant to which Dr. Bridgman soon after dismissed Mr.

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w P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

x Probably of the same family as the husband of Mrs. Ratcliff, whose life is recorded in the Memoirs of Eminently Pious Women, v. I. p. 280. ed. 1815.

y P. Henry. Orig. MS.

Henry;[a] and, by a writing under his hand, which was published in the church of Worthenbury, by one of Mr. Puleston's servants, October the 27th following, notice was given to the parish of that dismission. That day, he preached his farewell[a] sermon on Philippians i. 27.—*Only let your conversation be as becomes the gospel of Christ.* In which, as he saith in his Diary, his desire and design was rather to *profit* than to *affect.*—It matters not what becomes of *me,—whether I come unto you, or else be absent,*—but *let your conversation be as becomes the gospel.* His parting prayer for them was,—*The Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation.* Thus he ceased to preach to his people there, but he ceased not to love them, and pray for them; and could not but think there remained some dormant relation betwixt him and them.[b]

As to the arrears of his annuity with Mr. P. when he was displaced, after some time Mr. P. was willing to give him £100, which was a good deal less than what was due, upon condition that he would surrender his deed of annuity, and his lease of the house, which he, for peace sake, was willing to do; and so he lost all the benefit of Judge Puleston's great kindness to him. This was not completed till September, 1662, until which time he continued in the house at Worthenbury, but never preached so much as once in the church, though there were vacancies several times.

Mr. Richard Hilton was immediately put into the curacy of Worthenbury, by Dr. Bridgman. Mr. Henry went to hear him while he was at Worthenbury, and joined in all the parts of the public worship, particularly attending upon the sacrament of baptism;—not daring, saith he, to turn my back upon God's ordinance, while the essentials of it are retained, though corrupted, circumstantially, in the administration of it, which, God amend! Once, being allowed the liberty of his gesture, he joined in the Lord's supper. He kept up his correspondence with Mr. Hilton, and, as he saith in his Diary, endeavoured to possess him with right thoughts of his work, and advised him the best he could in the soul affairs of that people;—which, saith he, he seemed to take well. I am sure I meant it so; and the Lord make him faithful!

Immediately after he was removed and silenced at Worthenbury, he was solicited to preach at Bangor, and Dr. Bridgman was willing to permit it, occasionally; and intimated to his curate there, that he should never hinder it; but Mr. Henry declined it. Though his silence was his great grief, yet, such was his tenderness, that he was not willing so far to discourage Mr. Hilton at Worthenbury, nor to draw so many of the people from him, as would certainly have followed him to Bangor.—But, saith he, I cannot get my heart into such a spiritual frame on sabbath days now, as formerly; which is both my sin and my affliction. Lord, quicken me with quickening grace!

When the King came in first, and showed so good a temper, as many thought, some of his friends were very earnest with him to revive his acquaintance and interest at court, which it was thought he might easily do. It was reported in the country, that the Duke of York[c] had inquired after him; but he heeded not the report, nor would he be persuaded to make any addresses that way.—For, saith he, my friends do not know, so well as I, the strength of temptation, and my own inability to deal with it. *Qui bene latuit, bene vixit.* Lord, lead me not into temptation!

He was greatly affected with the temptations and afflictions of many faithful ministers of Christ at this time, by the pressing of conformity; and kept many private days of fasting and prayer in his own house at Worthenbury, seeking to turn away the wrath of God from the land. He greatly pitied some, who, by the urgency of friends, and the fear of want, were over-persuaded to put a force upon themselves in their conformity.—The Lord keep me, saith he, in the critical time!

He preached sometimes occasionally in divers neighbouring places, till Bartholomew day,[d] 1662;—the day, saith he, which our sins have made one of the saddest days to England, since the death of Edward the Sixth;[e] but, even this for good, though we know not how, nor which way. He was invited to preach at Bangor on the black[f] Bartholomew day, and prepared a sermon on John vii. 37.—*In the last day, that great day of the feast, &c.* but was prevented from preaching it; and was loth to strive against so strong a stream.

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[a] 1661, October 24. Dr. Bridgman came to Worthenbury, and before a rabble there, again repeated and read over my discharge. The circumstances whereof, place, manner, witnesses, somewhat grieved me. He called it peevishness. I justify not myself! Lord, lay not my sin to my charge, nor his sin to his! P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

[a] See a Complete Collection of Farewell Sermons by many Eminent Divines who were ejected by the Act of Uniformity, 4to 1663.

[b] 1663, January 5. In the afternoon I went to Captain Heneage, where was Mr. Tallents, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Steel; we discoursed all night, especially upon this query,—Whether our relation do yet remain to our people? In the close, we were, divided in our opinions about it. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

[c] Afterwards King James the Second. See Dr. D'Oyley's Life of Archbishop Sancroft, v. I. p. 162, &c.

[d] August 24. It was a day famous for two remarkable events happening upon it, and both fatal. The one, that day three-score years before, fatal to the Church of France in the massacre of many thousands of Protestants at Paris. The other, fatal to the Dissenting Ministers of England, near upon two thousand, (whereof myself an unworthy one,) who were put to silence on that day, and forbidden to preach the gospel under severe penalties, because they would not, they durst not, sin against God. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[e] July 6, 1553.

[f] My dear father used to call it "the Black Bartholomew." Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS. See the Farewell Sermons, p. 409, *ut supra.*

As to his nonconformity, which some of his worst enemies have said was his only fault, it may not be amiss here to give some account of it.

1. His reasons for his nonconformity were very considerable. It was no rash act, but deliberate, and well weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. He could by no means submit to be re-ordained; so well satisfied was he in his call to the ministry, and his solemn ordination to it, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, which God had graciously owned him in, that he durst not do that which looked like a renunciation of it, as null and sinful, and would be at least a tacit invalidating and condemning of all his administrations. Nor could he truly say, that he thought himself *moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him the office of a deacon.* He was the more confirmed in this objection, because the then Bishop of Chester, Dr. Hall,[g] in whose diocese he was, besides all that was required by law, exacted from those that came to him to be re-ordained, a subscription to this form;—*Ego A. B. prætensas meas ordinationis literas, a quibusdam presbyteris olim obtentas jam penitus renuncio, et dimitto pro vanis;*[h] *humiliter supplicans quatenus Rev. in Christo Pater et Dominus Dominus Georgius permissione divinâ Cestr. Episc. me ad sacrum Diaconatûs ordinem juxta morem et ritus Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ dignaretur admittere.* This, of re-ordination, was the first and great bar to his conformity, and which he mostly insisted on. He would sometimes say,—that, for a presbyter to be ordained a deacon, is at best *suscipere gradum Simeonis.*

Besides this, he was not at all satisfied to give his unfeigned "assent and consent to all and every thing contained in the book of Common Prayer," &c. for he thought that thereby he should receive the book itself, and every part thereof, rubrics and all, both as *true* and *good;* whereas there were several things which he could not think to be so. The exceptions which the ministers made against the Liturgy, at the Savoy Conference, he thought very considerable; and could by no means *submit* to, much less *approve* of, the *impositions* of the *ceremonies.*[i] He often said, that, when Christ came to free us from the yoke of one ceremonial law, he did not leave it in the power of any man, or company of men, in the world, to lay another upon our necks.

Kneeling at the Lord's supper he was much dissatisfied about; and it was for many years his great grief, and which, in his Diary, he doth often most pathetically lament; that, by it, he was debarred from partaking of that ordinance in the solemn assembly. For, to submit to that *imposition,* he thought, whatever it was to others, whom he was far from judging, would be sin to him.

[Take his own statement of the case, as follows:

The reasons why I do not communicate in the public administration of the Lord's supper, are;—

1. I am not satisfied to kneel in the act of receiving.
   (1.) Because it hath no warrant (not in the least) from Scripture, neither by precept nor precedent; whereas, sitting hath: at least by precedent; clearly, in the practice of Christ himself, and the apostles; and, probably, in the practice of the first churches; for it seems the Agapæ, or love feasts, were used together with the Eucharist. See 1 Corinthians xi.
   (2.) Because it doth no way suit with the nature of the ordinance, which is a supper; an ordinance wherein the blessed Jesus calls us to the nearest familiarity and fellowship with himself,—to eat with him; and therefore to sit, not to kneel, with him, at his table.
   (3.) Because it hath been grossly abused, even to idolatry, by the papists, in worshipping the consecrated host, which, in all probability, brought it first into the church; and, moreover, gives them advantage to argue, as Bellarmin[k] expressly states, "We do no more in kneeling before an image than the Protestants do in kneeling at the sacrament; —*ergo,* if we are idolaters, so are they."
   (4.) Because, having made trial myself of both gestures,—kneeling heretofore, and sitting of late,—I dare not sin against my conscience, which tells me, I ought not to quit the liberty wherewith Christ hath made me free.

   I know that which is said, for it is the command of my superiors; to which I oppose the command of my Supreme, saying,—*Be not ye servants of men;* and, *Call no man master;*— which I then do, when I give a blind obedience to their injunctions, for the authority-sake of the enjoiners, rendering me no reason why, or wherefore, but only,—*Sic volo, sic jubeo.*[l] And to do this in the things of God's worship, I conceive to be sinful.

2. If I were satisfied to kneel, yet I should not at the rails,[m] which are used in our parish church of Malpas, because it is an innovation warranted by no law,

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g Dr. George Hall, son of the venerable Bishop of Norwich, was born in 1612; ob. 1668. Mr. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 17. p. 57.

h Mr. Cook, of Chester, told the Bishop, that though his ordination of presbyters was not legal yet it was evangelical. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS

i We see the primitive Christians did not make so much of any uniformity in rites and ceremonies; nay, I scarce think any churches in the primitive times can be produced that did exactly, in all things, observe the same customs; which might, especially, be an argument of moderation in all as to these things. Bishop Stillingfleet's Irenicum, *ut supra,* pp. 66, 67.

k Robert Bellarmin, an Italian Jesuit, and a celebrated controversial writer, was born in 1542. Ob. 1621. Mr. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 4. p. 383, &c.

l See these words singularly associated in the Life of Lord Chief Justice Dyer, prefixed to Mr Vaillant's edition of his Reports, oct 1794.

m In the British Museum, fol. 4275, Plut. III. E. Bibl. Birch. 18

neither divine nor human, civil nor canonical. And, also, it smells rank of popish superstition, yea, of Judaism itself. By Jesus Christ the vail is rent, and all such like walls of partition are broken down.

3. Though, before God, I am the chiefest of sinners, and dare not say to any, *Stand off, for I am holier than thou;* yet, since the Scripture enjoins me with such and such not to eat, and saith withal, that *a little leaven leavens the whole lump*,—while so many are admitted grossly profane, yea, none indeed excluded that will receive, I am afraid, as, on the one hand, of defiling myself; so, on the other hand, of hardening them, by eating and drinking into the same body with them.[n]]

He never took the covenant, nor ever expressed any fondness for it; and yet he could not *think*, and therefore durst not *declare*, that, however unlawfully imposed, it was in itself an unlawful oath, and that no person that took it was under the obligation of it: for, sometimes, *quod fieri non debuit factum valet*. In short, it cannot be wondered at, that he was a nonconformist, when the terms of conformity were so industriously contrived to keep out of the church such men as he; which is manifested by the full account which Mr. Baxter hath left to posterity, of that affair;[o] and it is a passage worth noticing here, which Dr. Bates, in his funeral sermon on Mr. Baxter, relates;[p] that when the Lord Chamberlain Manchester told the King, while the Act of Uniformity was under debate, that he was afraid that the terms were so hard, that many of the ministers would not comply with them. Bishop Sheldon,[q] being present, replied, "I am afraid they will." And it is well known how many of the most sober, pious, and laborious ministers, in all parts of the nation, conformists as well as nonconformists, did dislike those impositions.

He thought it a mercy, since it must be so, that the case of nonconformity was made so clear as it was, abundantly to satisfy him in his silence and sufferings. I have heard that Mr. Anthony Burges,[r] who hesitated before, when he read the Act, blessed God that the matter was put out of doubt. And yet, to make sure work, the printing and publishing of the new Book of Common Prayer was so deferred, that few of the ministers, except those in London, could possibly get a sight of it, much less duly consider of it,[s] before the time prefixed; which Mr Steel took notice of in his Farewell Sermon at Hanmer, August 17, 1662,—that he was silenced and turned out for not declaring his unfeigned *assent and consent* to a book which he *never saw*, nor *could see*.

One thing which he comforted himself with in his nonconformity was, that as to matters of *doubtful disputation* touching church government, ceremonies, and the like, he was *unsworn*, either on one side or the other, and so was free from those *snares* and *bands* in which so many find themselves *tied up* from what they would do, and *entangled* that they know not what to do. He was one of those that *feared an oath*, Ecclesiastes x. 2. and would often say,—Oaths are edged tools, and not to be played with. One passage I find in his papers, which confirmed him in this satisfaction; it is a letter from no less a clergyman than Dr. F.[t] of Whitchurch to one of his parishioners,[u] who desired him to give way that his child might be baptized by another without the cross and godfathers, if he would not do it so himself; both which he refused: it was in the year 1672-3. "For my part, said the Doctor, I freely profess my thoughts, that the strict urging of indifferent ceremonies hath done more harm than good; and, possibly, had all men been left to their liberty therein, there might have been much more unity, and not much less uniformity. But what power have I to dispense with myself, being now under the obligation of a law and an oath?" And he concludes, "I am much grieved at the unhappy condition of myself, and other ministers, who must either lose their parishioners' love, if they do not comply with them, or else break their solemn obligations to please them."

This, he would say, was the mischief of impositions, which ever were, and ever will be, bones of contention. When he was at Worthenbury, though in the Lord's supper he used the gesture of sitting himself, yet he administered it without scruple to some who chose rather to kneel;[v] and he thought that ministers' hands should not, in such things, be

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preserved a MS. containing "Some animadversions on a Letter of the Rev. Dr. M. Fowler, [of Whitchurch,] to Mr. Y[ates, of Danford Hall, near Whitchurch,] concerning kneeling at the rayles in receiving the Lord's Supper." Mr. Yates was the Doctor's parishioner, and had applied for a dispensation to receive the Lord's supper without kneeling at the altar. Dr. Fowler's Letter is copied in the margin; and the animadversions are ably written. It is registered as a MS. of Mr. Henry's,—but it seems doubtful whether it be his hand-writing. Indeed, the editor does not think its internal evidence would justify its introduction as his composition.

This opinion turns out to be correct. The MS. is good old Mr. Steele's. In a letter from Matthew Henry to Ralph Thoresby, Esq. of Leeds, dated Oct. 10, 1698, and in Mr. Upcott's possession, he says,—Meeting among my father's papers with a sheet of his (Mr. Steele's) in answer to Dr. Fowler's arguments for setting up rails about the communion table, written with his own hand, I send it you enclosed. J. B. W. Oct. 5, 1827.

n P. Henry. Orig. MS.

o See Reliq. Baxter. Lib. I. Part. II.

p Dr. Bates's Works, v. 4. p. 330.

q Afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Nat. A. D. 1598, ob. Nov. 9, 1677. Mr. Chalmers' Biog. Dict. v. 27. p. 442.

r See Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 350.

s A curious anecdote illustrative of this statement is recorded by Dr. Calamy in his Defence of Moderate Nonconformity, v. 2. Part II. p. 357.

t Dr. Matthew Fowler was Rector of Whitchurch, and died there in 1683, æt. 66. Wood's Fasti, *ut supra*. Ath. Oxon. v. 4 p. 55.

u A Mr. Morgan. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

v See the Life of Mrs. Jane Ratcliffe, by the Rev. John Ley, p. 143, &c. duod. 1640; and *ante*, p. 56.

tied up; but that he ought, in his place, though he suffered for it, to witness against the making of those things the indispensable terms of communion, which Jesus Christ hath not made to be so. *Where the Spirit of the Lord*, and the spirit of the gospel, *is, there is liberty.*

Such as these were the reasons of his nonconformity, which, as long as he lived, he was more and more confirmed in.

2. His *moderation* in his nonconformity was very exemplary and eminent, and had a great influence upon many, to keep them from running into an uncharitable and schismatical separation; which, upon all occasions, he bore his testimony against, and was very industrious to stem the tide of. In church government, that which he desired and wished for, was Archbishop Usher's reduction of episcopacy.[w] He thought it lawful to join in the Common Prayer in public assemblies, and practised accordingly, and endeavoured to satisfy others concerning it. The spirit he was of was such as made him much afraid of extremes, and solicitous for nothing more than to maintain and keep Christian love and charity among professors. We shall meet with several instances of this in the progress of his story, and therefore wave it here. I have been told of an aged minister[x] of his acquaintance, who, being asked upon his death-bed,—What his thoughts were of his nonconformity, replied, he was well satisfied in it,[y] and should not have conformed so far as he did, *viz.* to join in the Liturgy, if it had not been for Mr. Henry. Thus was his *moderation known unto all men.*

[It were a desirable thing, he would sometimes say, that all who fear God in the land, in the neighbourhood, were at peace among themselves; for, as for peace with wicked men, it will never be while the world stands; the seed of the serpent, of the bond-woman, *will* hate, *will* persecute, the seed of the woman, the free-woman. Fire and water will as soon be reconciled as these two seeds. But how happy were it if all *good* people were at peace; if all their enmities were at an end! The Saviour left this blessing as a legacy, John xiv.; pressed it, John xv.; prayed for it, John xvii.[z]] .

But to proceed in his story. At Michaelmas, 1662, he quite left Worthenbury, and came with his family to Broad Oak, just nine years from his first coming into the country. Being cast by Divine Providence into this new place and state of life, his care and prayer was,—that he might have grace and wisdom to manage it to the glory of God, which, saith he, is my chief end. Within three weeks after his coming hither, his second son was born, which we mention for the sake of the remark he has upon it.—We have no reason, saith he, to call him Benoni, I wish we had none to call him Ichabod. And, on the day of his family-thanksgiving for that mercy, he writes,—We have reason to *rejoice with trembling*, for it goes ill with the church and people of God, and reason to fear worse because of our own sins, and our enemies' wrath.

At the latter end of this year he hath in his Diary this note:— It is observed of many who have conformed of late, and fallen from what they formerly professed, that, since their so doing, from unblamable, orderly, pious men, they are become exceeding dissolute and profane, and instanceth in some. What need have we every day to pray,—Lord, *lead us not into temptation!*

For several years after he came to live at Broad Oak, he went constantly on Lord's days to public worship, with his family, at Whitewell chapel,[a] which is hard by, if there were any supply there, as sometimes there was from Malpas; and if none, then to Tylstock, where Mr. Zachary Thomas continued for about half a year, and the place was a little sanctuary; and, when that string failed, usually to Whitchurch; and did not preach for a great while, unless occasionally, when he visited his friends, or to his own family, on Lord's days, when the weather hindered them from going abroad. He comforted himself, that sometimes in going to public worship, he had an opportunity of instructing and exhorting those that were in company with him, by the way, according as he saw they had need; and in this his *lips fed many*, and his *tongue was as choice silver*; and he acted according to that rule which he often laid down to himself and others,—That, when we cannot do what we would, we must do what we can,[b] and the Lord will accept us in it. He made the best of the sermons he heard in public.[c]—It is a mercy, saith he, we have bread, though it be not as it hath been, of the finest of the wheat. Those are froward children who throw away the meat they have, if it be wholesome, because they have not what they would have. When he met with preaching that was weak, his note is,—That is a poor sermon indeed, out of which no good lesson may be learned. He had often occasion to remember that verse of Mr. Herbert's:—

The worst speaks something good; if all want sense,
God takes the text, and preacheth patience,[d]

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w See Buck's Theol. Dict. vol. i. Tit. Episcopacy. And Reliq. Baxter. Lib. 1. Part II. p. 238.

x Mr. Robert Fogg, sen. See the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 481.

y See the Sel. Noncon. Rem. pp. 48, 49, 340.

z P. Henry. Orig. MS.

a A very small and antique building; it is yet standing. See Ormerod's History of Cheshire, v. 2. p. 347.

b See *ante*, p. 32.

c Mr. Rowe sometimes said,—"When I meet with a sermon that doth not like me, I first look into myself to see if there were nothing amiss there, and, if there were no fault there, I would then scan it over again. We many times blame the minister when the fault is our own; we have not prayed for him as we should have done." Life. pp. 56, 57, *ut supra.*

d The Temple, Sacred Poems, and Private Ejaculations, by Mr George Herbert, late Oratour of the University of Cambridge

Nay, and once he saith, he could not avoid thinking of Eli's sons, who *made the sacrifices of the Lord to be abhorred.* Yet he went, to bear his testimony to public ordinances.—For still, saith he, *the Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob;* and so do I. Such, then, were his sentiments of things, expecting that God would yet open a door of return to former public liberty, which he much desired and prayed for; and in hopes of that, was backward to fall into the stated exercise of his ministry otherwise, as were all the sober nonconformists generally in those parts, but it was his grief and burthen that he had not an opportunity of doing more for God. He had scarce one talent of opportunity, but that one he was very diligent and faithful in the improvement of. When he visited his friends, how did he lay out himself to do them good! Being asked once, where he made a visit, to expound and pray, which his friends returned him thanks for, he thus writes upon it;—They cannot thank me so much for my pains, but I thank them more, and my Lord God especially, for the opportunity. Read his conflict with himself at this time;—I own myself a minister of Christ, yet do nothing as a minister. What will excuse me? Is it enough for me to say, *Behold, I stand in the market-place, and no man hath hired me?* And he comforts himself with this appeal;—Lord, thou knowest what will I have to thy work, public or private, if I had a call and opportunity. And shall this willing mind be accepted? Surely this is a melancholy consideration, and lays a great deal of *blame* somewhere, that such a man as Mr. Henry, so well qualified with gifts and graces for ministerial work, and in the prime of his time for usefulness; so sound and orthodox, so humble and modest, so quiet and peaceable,[e] so pious and blameless; should be so industriously thrust out of the vineyard, as a useless and unprofitable servant, and laid aside as a *despised broken vessel, and a vessel in which there was no pleasure.* This is a *lamentation,* and shall be *for a lamentation;* especially, since it was not his case alone, but the lot of so many hundreds of the same character.

In these circumstances of silence and restraint, he took comfort himself, and administered comfort to others, from that scripture, Isaiah xvi. 4. *Let my out-casts dwell with thee, Moab.* God's people may be an out-cast people, cast out of men's love, their synagogues, their country; but God will own his people when men cast them out; they are *out-casts,* but they are *his,* and somewhere or other he will provide a *dwelling* for them.

[On the return of his birth-day, his Diary contains the following affecting record.—1663, August 24. This day thirty-two years I was born; this day twelve-month I died;—that fatal day to the godly, painful, faithful ministers of England, among whom I am not worthy to be numbered. We mourned and prayed before the Lord at W. B.'s house, *if so be there may be hope,* Zechariah vii. 3. compare Jeremiah i. 3. The Jews, in their captivity, fasted in the fifth month, because in the fifth month Jerusalem was carried away captive; and, in the seventh month, Zechariah vii. 5. because in the seventh month Gedaliah was slain, Jeremiah xli. 1.[f]]

There were many worthy able ministers thereabout turned out, both from work and subsistence, that had not such comfortable support for *the life that now is,* as Mr. Henry had, for whom he was most affectionately concerned, and to whom he showed kindness. There were computed, within a few miles round him, so many ministers turned out to the wide world, stripped of all their maintenance, and exposed to continual hardships, as with their wives and children, having most of them numerous families, made up above a hundred, that lived upon Providence; and, though oft reduced to wants and straits, yet were not *forsaken,* but were enabled to *rejoice in the Lord, and to joy in the God of their salvation,* notwithstanding: to whom the promise was fulfilled, Psalm xxxvii. 3.—*So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.* The world was told long since, by the "Conformist's Plea,"[g] that the worthy Mr. Lawrence,[h] Mr. Henry's intimate friend, when he was turned out of Baschurch,[i] and, if he would have consulted with flesh and blood, having, as was said of one of the martyrs, eleven good arguments against suffering, *viz.* a wife and ten children, was asked how he meant to maintain them all, and cheerfully replied,—They must all live on the sixth of Matthew, *Take no thought for your life, &c.* and he often sung, with his family, Psalm xxxvii. 16. And Mr. Henry hath noted concerning him in his Diary, some time after he was turned out,—That he bore witness to the love and care of our Heavenly Father, providing for him, and his present condition, beyond expectation.

One observation Mr. Henry made not long before he died, when he *had been young and now was old,* That, though many of the ejected ministers were brought very low, had many children, were greatly harassed by persecution, and their friends generally poor and unable to support them; yet, in all his acquaintance, he never knew, nor could remember to

p. 15. ed. 1656. Mr. Herbert was born April 3, 1593, and died in 1635. Lives, by Izaak Walton. Dr. Zouch's ed. v. 2. p. 1. oct.

e Mr. Wesley, after noticing the disputatious temper of some as to opinions and externals, proceeds;—"But I do not include that venerable man, Mr. Philip Henry, nor any that were of his spirit, in this number. I know they abhorred contending about externals. Neither did they separate themselves from the church. They continued therein till they were driven out, whether they would or not." Further Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion. Works. vol. xii. pp. 274, 275.

f P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

g 4to. 1682. See Granger's Hist. v. 3. p. 336. *ut supra.*

h See the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 129.

i A parish in the hund. of Pimhill, Salop, 8 miles from Shrewsbury.

have heard of, any nonconformist minister in prison for debt.

[It is obvious, he writes, to observe at four several times, and upon four several occasions, ministers have been silenced and turned out of their places; and yet still, after a time, more or less restored again.

1. In Queen Mary's days,—because they would not close with popery at the return of it. But that interdict lasted under five years, being taken off upon Queen Elizabeth's coming to the throne.

2. In Queen Elizabeth's, King James's, and King Charles's days,—because they could not conform to the hierarchy and ceremonies; and this interdict lasted long, even till the Long Parliament, A. D. 1640; but it was then taken off.

3. Under the Long Parliament many ministers were sequestered and silenced for malignancy, and not covenanting.

4. Many others, after the King's death, for not engaging to be true to the Commonwealth, as then established; both which restraints, though much remitted before, yet quite ceased at the coming in of the King, A. D. 1660.

And now more ministers are silenced, and with more severity than ever, by the Act of August 24. And who among us can tell for how long? This only I know,—*He who hath delivered, doth deliver.* Script. March 31, 1663.

The Lord is my protection, I shall not fall. What need I fear?

The Lord is my portion, I shall not want. What need I care?[k]]

In October, 1663, Mr. Steel, and Mr. Henry, and some other of their friends,[l] were taken up and brought prisoners to Hanmer,[m] under pretence of some plot said to be on foot against the government: and there they were kept under confinement some days, on which he writes;—It is sweet being in any condition with a clear conscience. *The sting of death is sin,* and so of imprisonment also. It is the first time, saith he, I was ever a prisoner, but perhaps may not be the last. We felt no hardship, but we know not what we may. They were, after some days, examined by the Deputy Lieutenants, charged with they knew not what, and so dismissed, finding verbal security to be forthcoming upon twenty-four hours' notice, whenever they should be called for. Mr. Henry returned to his tabernacle with thanksgivings to God, and a hearty prayer for his enemies, that God would forgive them. The very next day after they were released, a great man in the country, at whose instigation they were brought into that trouble, died, as was said, of a drunken surfeit.[n] *So that a man shall say,—Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.*

In the beginning of the year 1665, when the Act for a Royal Aid, to His Majesty, of two millions and a half, came out, the Commissioners for Flintshire were pleased to nominate Mr. Henry sub-collector of the said tax for the township of Iscoyd, and Mr. Steel for the township of Hanmer. They intended thereby to put an affront and disparagement upon their ministry, and to show that they looked upon them but as laymen.[o] His note upon it is,—It is not a sin which they put us upon, but it is a cross, and a cross in our way, and, therefore, to be taken up and borne with patience. When I had better work to do, I was wanting in my duty about it, and now this is put upon me; the Lord is righteous. He procured the gathering of it by others, only took account of it, and saw it duly done; and deserved, as he said he hoped he should, that inscription mentioned in Suetonius, Καλῶς τελωνήσαντι,—To the memory of an honest publican.[p]

In September, the same year, he was again, by warrant from the Deputy Lieutenant, fetched prisoner to Hanmer, as was also Mr. Steel and others. He was examined about *private meetings.* Some such, but private indeed, he owned he had been present at of late, in Shropshire, but the occasion was extraordinary; the plague was at that time raging in London, and he, and several of his friends, having near relations there, thought it time to seek the Lord for them, and this was imputed to him as his *crime.* He was likewise charged with administering the Lord's supper, which he denied, having never administered it since he was disabled by the Act of Uniformity. After some days' confinement, seeing they could prove nothing upon him, he was discharged upon recognizance of £20, with two sureties, to be forthcoming upon notice, and to live *peaceably.*—But, saith he, our restraint was not strict, for we had liberty of prayer and conference together, to our mutual edification. Thus *out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong sweetness;* and we found *honey in the carcase of the lion.*

[In reference to his own improvement, his Diary, about this period, contains the following interesting record.—Covenants renewed in these particulars. By the Lord's help, I purpose to be more substantial in secret worship; more sparing of precious time;

k P. Henry. Orig. MS.

l Luke Lloyd, Esq. was one of the number. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

m Mr. Steel being removed from Hanmer by the Bartholomew Act, Mr. Hilton was put in there, and left Worthenbury, which continued long after without any stated supply. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

n Sir Evan Lloyd, Governor of Chester, is the person referred to. His death occurred, Oct. 15, 1663. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

o His excellent son notes, on one occasion,—Fell in company with Mr. D——; he told me he looked upon me as a deceived layman. God give me grace to make this good use of the censure,—to be so much the more diligent to approve myself a *good minister of Jesus Christ.* Matthew Henry. Diary, Orig. MS. March 10, 1708-9.

p Sabinus. See Matt. Henry's Expos. Mar. ii. 13—18.

more constant in reading the Scriptures alone, and meditating in them; more careful to improve all opportunities of doing good to souls; not only taking but seeking them; less fearful about events when in a way of duty. In all which I have lately missed it, but the Lord hath pardoned me in Christ Jesus.[q]]

It was but a little before this, that Mr. Steel, setting out for London, was, by a warrant from the justices, under colour of the report of a plot, stopped and searched, and, finding nothing to accuse him of, they seized his almanack,[r] in which he kept his Diary for that year; and, it not being written very legibly, they made what malicious readings and comments they pleased upon it, to his great wrong and reproach; though, to all sober and sensible people, it discovered him to be a man that kept a strict watch over his own heart, and was a great husband of his time, and many said they got good by it, and should love him the better for it. Psalm xxxvii. 5, 6. This event made Mr. Henry somewhat more cautious and sparing in the records of his Diary, when he saw how *evil men dig up mischief.*

At Lady Day, 1666, the Five-mile Act commenced, by which all nonconformist ministers were forbidden, upon pain of six months imprisonment, to come or be within five miles of any corporation, or of any place where they had been ministers, unless they would take an oath; of which Mr. Baxter saith, it was credibly reported, that the Earl of Southampton, then Lord High Treasurer of England, said, No honest man could take it. Mr. Baxter, in his Life, hath set down at large his reasons against taking this Oxford oath, as it was called, part ii. p. 396, &c. part. iii. p. 4, &c. Mr. Henry set his down in short. It was an oath, not at any time to endeavour any alteration of the government, in the church or state. He had already taken an oath of allegiance to the King, and he looked upon this to amount to an oath of allegiance to the bishops, which he was not free to take. Thus he writes, March 22, 1665-6:

This day methoughts it was made more clear to me than ever, by the hand of God upon me, and I note it down, that I may remember it; (1.) That the government of the church of Christ ought to be managed by the ministers of Christ. It appears, Hebrews xiii. 7. that they are to rule us, that speak to us the word of God. (2.) That under prelacy,[s] ministers have not the management of church-government, not in the least, being only the publishers of the prelates' decrees, as in excommunication, and absolution; which decrees sometimes are given forth by lay-chancellors. (3.) That, therefore, prelacy is an usurpation in the church of God, upon the crown and dignity of Jesus Christ, and upon the gospel-rights of his servants the ministers. And therefore, (4.) I ought not to subscribe to it, nor to swear not to endeavour, in all lawful ways, the alteration of it, viz. by praying and persuading, where there is opportunity. But, (5.) That I may safely venture to suffer in the refusal of such an oath, committing my soul, life, estate, liberty, all, to him who judgeth righteously.

And on March 25, the day when that act took place, he thus writes: A sad day among poor ministers up and down this nation; who, by this act of restraint, are forced to remove from among their friends, acquaintance, and relations, and to sojourn among strangers, as it were *in Mesech and in the tents of Kedar.* But there is a God *who tells their wanderings*, and will put *their tears*, and the tears of their wives and children, *into his bottle.* Are they not in his book? The Lord be a little sanctuary to them, and a place of refuge from the storm, and from the tempest, and pity those places from which they are ejected, and come and dwell where they may not.

He wished their removes might not be figurative of evil to these nations, as Ezekiel's were, Ezekiel xii. 1, 2, 3. This severe dispensation forced Mr. Steel and his family from Hanmer, and so he lost the comfort of his neighbourhood; but withal it drove Mr. Lawrence from Baschurch to Whitchurch parish, where he continued till he was driven thence too.

Mr. Henry's house at Broad Oak was but four reputed miles from the utmost limits of Worthenbury parish, but he got it measured, and accounting 1760 yards to a mile, according to the Statute, 35 Eliz. cap. 6, it was found to be just five miles and threescore yards, which one would think might have been his security. But there were those near him who were ready to stretch such laws to the utmost rigour, under pretence of construing them in favour of the King, and, therefore, would have it to be understood of reputed miles. This obliged him for some time to leave his family, and to sojourn among his friends, to whom he endeavoured, wherever he came, to

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q P. Henry. Orig. MS.

r Goldsmith's was used by Mr. Henry. He had it interleaved for the purpose of a Diary. In blank leaves, at the beginning and the end, he often made extracts from books, or recorded remarks which occurred in conversation, &c.

s Dr. Wordsworth has the following annotation connected with the above sentence;—This reasoning seems hardly worth the noting down and remembering. Do not prelates speak to us the word of God? (are not they, too, ministers of Christ?) and are they not entitled, therefore, (if the citation from the apostle be valid,) to rule over us?" Eccl. Biog. v. 6. p. 238. Mr. Henry's language is, however, evidently to be construed in connexion with the existing state of things, and in contrast with those early days of episcopacy, to which reference is thus made in the Homilies:—"They were then preaching bishops, and more often seen in pulpits than princes' palaces; more often occupied in his legacy, who said,—*Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to all men*, than in embassages and affairs of princes in this world." The Homilies appointed to be read in Churches in the time of Queen Elizabeth. p. 214. 4to. 1766.

impart some spiritual gift. At last he ventured home, presuming, among other things, that the warrant by which he was made collector of the Royal Aid, while that continued, would secure him, according to a proviso in the last clause of the act, which, when the gentlemen perceived, they discharged him from that office, before he had served out the time.

[In a document consisting of reasons on the subject, he thus concludes in favour of measured, rather than reputed, miles.

1. Because measured miles are certain; reputed miles uncertain; one reputing more, another less.

2. Because otherwise some would be punished beyond others; viz. those who live where reputed miles are of extraordinary length.

3. Because in penal laws the interpretation should be such as most favours the offender.

4. Upon other statutes the decision of controversies hath been by measuring; *ergo* in this.

5. He who swears against the delinquent must swear, not that it is reputed, but that it *is* five miles. It is not always from one great town to another that the question is like to be, but from a particular house,—as suppose Broad Oak, to an obscure boundary,—suppose the Sarn.

6. The Scripture speaks of measured miles in a law-case, Deuteronomy xxi. 2.[t]]

He was much affected with it, that the burning of London happened so soon after the nonconformists were banished out of it. He thought it was in mercy to them, that they were removed before that desolating judgment came, but that it spoke aloud to our governors,—*Let my people go that they may serve me; and if ye will not, behold thus and thus will I do unto you.* This was the Lord's voice crying in the city.

In the beginning of the year 1667, he removed with his family to Whitchurch,[u] and dwelt there above a year, except that for one quarter of a year, about harvest, he returned again to Broad Oak. His remove to Whitchurch was partly to quiet his adversaries, who were ready to quarrel with him upon the Five-mile act, and partly for the benefit of the school there for his children.

There, In April following, he buried his eldest son,[v] not quite six years old, a child of extraordinary pregnancy and forwardness in learning, and of a very towardly disposition. His character of this child is,

Præterque ætatem nil puerile fuit.

[He was remarkable for four things.

1. Forwardness in learning, having all the three requisites,—apprehension, judgment, memory,—even beyond his age, and also a great love to it; never seeking, at any time, to stay from school.

2. Tenderness of disposition. He was apt to melt into tears at the least show of displeasure, though but in a frown.

3. Patience under correction; which he had not often, because he did not deserve it; and, when he did, his penitence prevented it, if not altogether, yet in the severity of it.

4. Love to his brother and sisters. When Matthew sickened first, with the measles, (of which John died,) he went to bed with him of his own accord, sooner than ordinary, and wept over him.

He was of a strong, healthy constitution, not smaying[w] for cold in school like other children. He was full of action, stirring, always doing something, and what he did, he did with all his might.[x]]

This child, before he was seized with the sickness whereof he died, was much affected with some verses which he met with in Mr. White's Power of Godliness,[y] said to be found in the pocket of a hopeful young man, who died before he was twenty-four years old. Of his own accord he got them without book, and would be often rehearsing them: they were these;—

Not twice twelve years (he might say,
Not half twelve years) full told, a wearied breath
I have exchanged for a happy death.
Short was my life; the longer is my rest;
God takes them soonest whom he loveth best.
He that is born to-day and dies to-morrow,
Loses some hours of joy, but months of sorrow;
Other diseases often come to grieve us,
Death strikes but once, and that stroke doth relieve us.

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t P. Henry. Orig. MS.

u In some *memoranda* respecting his eldest son, Mr. Henry writes;—In January, 1667, we removed to Whitchurch, partly to satisfy the law, partly to have convenient schooling for him and his brother, in regard Mr. Catheral was appointed by Sir Orlando Bridgman to teach in Wigland, in a house newly built by him for that purpose, which was too far off us. I entered him at the Free School, being yet in coats, which had never been known there before. Orig. MS.

v He was born at Worthenbury, May 3, 1661. His complexion was observed to be sweet and ruddy, his countenance compleat, his eyes lively. He was baptized, May 12, by Mr. George Mainwaring, late of Malpas. He preached in the morning, from Zech. xii. 1. I preached in the afternoon, from Ps. li. 5. On the 14th of May, neighbours dined with us, and rejoiced in God's goodness. The same night my dear wife began to be ill of an ague. There are no comforts but what are mixed and chequered till we come to heaven. 'Tis the evening commends the day; therefore, we should serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. In the beginning of 1665, he went to school to Mr. Samuel Catheral, at Whitewell chapel, and by the end of that year, had learned to read English. In the beginning of 1666, he began his accidence which he despatched in that year, with some of his grammar also P. Henry. Orig. MS.

w Probably a contraction of *dismaying*.

x P. Henry. Orig. MS.

y See *ante*, p. 32. The copy which belonged to Mr. Henry, containing his hand-writing, and a few words ill written, supposed to be his son John's, is in the editor's possession. See an account of Mr. White, in the Noncon. Mem. v. i. p. 106. *ut supra*.

This was a great affliction to the tender parents. Mr. Henry writes upon it in the reflection,

Quicquid amas cupias non placuisse nimis

Many years after, he said, he thought he did apply to himself at that time, but too sensibly, that scripture, Lamentations, iii. 1.—*I am the man that hath seen affliction.* And he would say to his friends upon such occasions,—"Losers think they may have leave to speak,[a] but they must have a care what they say, lest speaking amiss to God's dishonour, they make work for repentance, and shed tears that must be wept over again."[a] He observed concerning this child, that he had always been very patient under rebukes, The remembrance of which, saith he, teacheth me now how to carry it under the rebukes of my heavenly Father. His prayer under this providence was,—Show me, Lord, show me wherefore thou contendest with me; have I over-boasted, over-loved, over-prized? A Lord's day intervening between the death and burial of the child,—I attended, saith he, on public ordinances, though sad in spirit, as Job, who, after all the evil tidings that were brought him, whereof death of children was the last and heaviest, yet fell down and worshipped. And he would often say upon such occasions, that weeping must not hinder sowing. Upon the interment[b] of the child, he writes,—My dear child, now mine no longer, was laid in the cold earth, not lost, but soon to be raised again a glorious body, and I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. A few days after, his dear friend, Mr. Lawrence, then living in Whitchurch parish, buried a daughter, that was grown up and very hopeful, and gave good evidence of a work of grace wrought upon her soul. How willing, saith he, may parents be to part with such when the Lord calls; they are not *amissi* but *præmissi*. And he hath this further remark,—The Lord hath made his poor servants, that have been often companions in his work, now companions in tribulation, the very same tribulation; me for my sin, him for his trial.[c]

While he lived at Whitchurch, he attended constantly upon the public ministry, and there, as ever, he was careful to come to the beginning of the service, which he attended upon with reverence and devotion; standing all the time, even while the chapters were read.

[He said,—He that gives to God his soul, and serves him with the inner man, will think no outward expression of reverence too much. He will give his body too.[d] Mr. Henry had high thoughts of the body as well as the soul. He would say, it is the workmanship of God, therefore not to be misused,—it is the house of the soul,—it is the servant to the soul, made use of in honouring God,—it is the purchase of Christ, united to him, 1 Corinthians vi. 15.—it is the temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Corinthians vi. 19.—it is intended for glorious things in the resurrection, Philippians iii. 21. Job xix. 26. 1 Corinthians xv.[e]]

In the evening of the Lord's day, he spent some time in instructing his family, to which a few of his friends and neighbours in the town would sometimes come in; and it was a little gleam of opportunity, but very short, for, as he notes;—He was offended at it, who should rather have rejoiced, if, by any means, the work might be carried on in his people's souls.

He observes in his Diary this year, how zealous people had generally been for the observation of Lent, a while ago, and how cold they are towards it now. The same he notes of processions in Ascension-week; for, saith he, what hath no good foundation, will not hold up long; but in that which is duty, and of God, it is good to be zealously affected always.

In this year, I think, was the first time that he administered the Lord's supper, very privately to be sure, after he was silenced by the Act of Uniformity; and he did not do it without mature deliberation. A fear of separation kept him from it so long; what induced him to it at last, I find thus under his own hand. I am a minister of Christ, and as such I am obliged, *virtute officii*, by all means to endeavour the good of souls. Now here is a company of serious Christians, whose lot is cast to live in a parish, where there is one set over them, who preacheth the truth; and they come to hear him, and join with him in other parts of worship; only, as to the Lord's supper, they scruple the lawfulness of the gesture of kneeling; and he tells them, his hands are tied, and he cannot administer it unto them any other way; wherefore they come to me, and tell me, they earnestly long for that ordinance; and there is a competent number of them, and opportunity to partake; and how dare I deny this request of theirs, without betraying my ministerial trust, and incurring the guilt of a grievous omission?

In February, 1667-8.[f] Mr. Lawrence and he were invited by some of their friends to Betley, in Staffordshire, and (there being some little public connivance at that time) with the consent of all concerned, they adventured to preach in the church, one in the morning, and the other in the afternoon,

[a] ——You must give losers
Their leave to speak. Ben Jonson, v. 6. p. 106. oct. 1816.
[a] See Bishop Beveridge's Private Thoughts, Article IV.
[b] He died April 12. Monday, April 15, he was buried, toward the upper end of the middle aisle in Whitchurch church. Mr. Samuel Edwards, his schoolmaster, preached his funeral sermon. Text, Mark xiii. 36. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[c] When others are afflicted, we are to conclude it is for trial,—when ourselves, for sin. Calamy. P. Henry's Com. Place Book. Orig. MS.
[d] P. Henry. See Mem. of Mrs. Savage, p. 217. *ut supra.*
[e] Ib. Orig. MS.
[f] Appendix, No. XIV.

of the Lord's day, very peaceably and profitably. This action of theirs was presently after reported in the House of Commons, by a Member of Parliament,[g] with these additions,—That they tore the Common Prayer Book, trampled the surplice under their feet, pulled down the ministers of the place out of the pulpit, &c. Reports which there was not the least colour for. But that, with some other such like false stories, produced an address of the House of Commons to the King, to issue out a proclamation for the putting of the laws in execution against papists and nonconformists, which was issued out accordingly; though the King, at the opening of that Session a little before, had declared his desire, that some course might be taken, to compose the minds of his Protestant subjects, in matters of religion; which had raised the expectations of some, that there would be speedy enlargement; but Mr. Henry had noted upon it,—We cannot expect too little from man,[h] nor too much from God.

And here it may be very pertinent to observe, how industrious Mr. Henry was at this time, when he and his friends suffered such hard things from the government, to preserve and promote a good affection to the government notwithstanding. It was commonly charged at that time upon the nonconformists in general, especially from the pulpits,[i] that they were all a factious and turbulent people, as was said of old,—Ezra iv. 15.—hurtful to kings and provinces; that their meetings were for the sowing of sedition and discontents, and the like; and there is some reason to think, that one thing intended by the hardships put upon them, was to drive them to this: there is a way of making a wise man mad. But how peaceably they carried themselves, is manifest to God, and in the consciences of many. For an instance of it, it will not be amiss to give some account of a sermon, which Mr. Henry preached in some very private meetings, such as were called seditious conventicles, in the year 1669, when it was a day of treading down, and of perplexity; it was on that text, Psalm xxxv. 20. *Against them that are quiet in the land.* Whence (not to curry favour with rulers, for whatever the sermon was, the very preaching of it, had it been known, must have been severely punished, but purely out of conscience towards God) he taught his friends this doctrine,—That it is the character of the people of God, that they are a quiet people in the land. "This quietness he described to be an orderly, peaceable subjection to governors and government in the Lord. We must maintain a reverent esteem of them, and of their authority, in opposition to despising dominion, 2 Peter ii. 10. We must be meek, under severe commands, and burdensome impositions, not murmuring and complaining, as the Israelites against Moses and Aaron; but take them up as our cross in our way, and bear them as we do foul weather. We must not *speak evil of dignities*, Jude 8. nor *revile the gods*, Exodus xxii. 28. Paul checked himself for this, Acts xxiii. 5. *οὐκ ἤθειν*; I did not consider it; if I had, I would not have said so. We must not traduce their government, as Absalom did David's, 2 Samuel xv. 3. Great care is to be taken how we speak of the faults of any, especially of rulers, Ecclesiastes x. 20.—The people of God do make the word of God their rule, and by that they are taught, (1.) That magistracy is God's ordinance, and magistrates God's ministers; that by him kings reign, and the powers that be are ordained of him. (2.) That they, as well as others, are to have their dues; honour, and fear, and tribute. (3.) That their lawful commands are to be obeyed, and that readily and cheerfully, Titus iii. 1. (4.) That the penalties inflicted for not obeying unlawful commands, are patiently to be undergone. This is the rule, and as many as walk according to this rule, *Peace shall be upon them*, and there can be no danger of their unpeaceableness. They are taught to pray for kings and all in authority, 1 Timothy ii. 1, 2. and God forbid we should do otherwise; yea, though they persecute, Jeremiah xxix. 7. Peaceable prayers bespeak a peaceable people, Psalm cix. 4. If some professing religion have been unquiet, their unquietness hath given the lie to their profession, Jude 8, 11, 12. Quietness is our badge, Colossians iii. 12. It will be our strength, Isaiah xxx. 7, 15, our rejoicing in the day of evil, Jeremiah xviii. 18. It is pleasing to God, 1 Timothy ii. 2, 3. It may work upon others, 1 Peter ii. 12, 13. The means he prescribed for the keeping of us quiet, were to get our hearts filled with the knowledge and belief of these two things: 1. That the kingdom of Christ *is not of this world*, John xviii. 36. Many have thought otherwise, and it made them unquiet. 2. That the *wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*, James i. 20. He needs not our sin to bring to pass his own counsel. We must mortify unquietness in the causes of it, James iv. 1. We must always remember the oath of God, Ecclesiastes viii. 2.

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g Major-General Egerton. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

h I remember one saying of General Lambert's, "That the best of men are but men at the best." Letters written by Eminent Persons, and Lives of Eminent Men, by John Aubrey, Esq. vol. ii. part I, p. 199.

i The clergyman at Whitewell Chapel sometimes was one of the accusers above alluded to. On one of those occasions, Mr. Henry thus writes;—"Mr. Green at chapel to-day seemed to say something with reflection: *Mark them that cause divisions, serving their own belly.* Lord, I can only appeal to thee, and say, if I seek myself in what I do, or my own things, and not the good of souls, and the advancement of thy glory; if I do it in any respect to divide, then fill my face with shame, and let my enemies have power over me. But if otherwise,—Lord, take my part, and plead my cause, and clear my integrity, for thy mercy sake." Diary, Orig. MS.

See an appeal somewhat similar by the venerable martyr Bishop Hooper. Fuller's Ch. Hist. b. vii. p. 404. fol. 1655.

The oath of allegiance is an oath of quietness. And we must beware of the company and converse of those that are unquiet. Proverbs xxii. 24, 25. Though deceitful matters be devised, yet we must be quiet still; nay, be so much the moré quiet."

I have been thus large in gathering these hints out of that sermon, (which he took all occasions in other sermons to inculcate, as all his brethren likewise did,) that if possible it may be a conviction to the present generation; or, however, may be a witness in time to come, that the nonconformist ministers were not enemies to Cæsar, nor troublers of the land; nor their meetings any way tending to the disturbance of the public peace, but purely designed to help to repair the decays of Christian piety.

All that knew Mr. Henry, knew very well that his practice all his days was consonant to these his settled principles.

In May, 1668,[k] he returned again with his family from Whitchurch to Broad Oak, which, through the good hand of his God upon him, continued his settled home, without any remove from it, till he was removed to his long home above twenty-eight years after. The edge of the Five-mile Act began now a little to abate, at least in that country; and he was desirous to be more useful to the neighbours, among whom God hath given him an estate, than he could be at a distance from them, by relieving the poor, employing the labourers, especially instructing the ignorant, and helping as many as he could to heaven. He made that scripture his standing rule, and wrote it in the beginning of his book of accounts, Proverbs iii. 9, 10. *Honour the Lord with thy substance*, &c. And having set apart a day of secret prayer and humiliation, to beg of God a wise and an understanding heart, and to drop a tear, as he expresseth it, over the sins of his predecessors, formerly in that estate, he laid out himself very much in doing good. He was very serviceable upon all accounts in the neighbourhood, and though it took up a great deal of his time, and hindered him from his beloved studies, yet it might be said of him, as the Bishop of Salisbury saith of Archbishop Tillotson, in his sermon at his funeral, that he chose rather to live to the good of others than to himself; and thought, that to do an act of charity, or even of tenderness and kindness, was of more value, both in itself, and in the sight of God, than to pursue the pompous parts of learning, how much soever his own genius might lead him to it.[l]

He was very useful in the common concernments of the township and country, in which he was a very prudent counsellor; it was, indeed, a narrow sphere of activity, but, such as it was, to him,—as to Job, chapter xxix. 21, 22.—*Men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at his counsel; after his words they spake not again;* and many of the neighbours who respected him not as a minister, yet loved and honoured him as a knowing, prudent, and humble neighbour. In the concernments of private families, he was very far from busying himself, and further from seeking himself; but he was very much busied, advising many about their affairs, and the disposal of themselves and their children, arbitrating and composing differences among relations and neighbours, in which he had an excellent faculty, and often good success, inheriting the blessing entailed upon the peace-makers. References have sometimes been made to him by rule of court, at the assizes, with consent of parties. He was very affable and easy of access, and admirably patient in hearing every one's complaint, which he would answer with so much prudence and mildness, and give such apt advice, that many a time to consult with him, was to ask counsel at Abel, and so to end the matter.[m] He observed, in almost all quarrels that happened, that there was a fault on both sides; and that generally they were most in the fault, that were most forward and clamorous in their complaints. One making her moan to him of a bad husband she had, that in this and the other instance was unkind; and Sir, saith she, after a long complaint which he patiently heard, what would you have me to do now? Why truly, saith he, I would have you to go home, and be a better wife to him, and then you will find that he will be a better husband to you. Labouring to persuade one to forgive an injury that was done him; he urged this, Are you not a Christian?[n] and followed that argument so close that at last he prevailed.

He was very industrious, and oft successful, in persuading people to recede from their right for peace sake; and he would for that purpose tell them Luther's story of the two goats, that met upon a narrow bridge over a deep water; they could not go back, they durst not fight; after a short parley, one of them lay down, and let the other go over him,

k May 27. This week I removed again with my family from Whitchurch to Broad Oke, Συν Θεω.

The reasons inducing me thereunto were these;

1. The ceasing of those things which brought us thence: which were, 1. To avoid the penalty of the law, now rebated. 2. For good schooling for my sons, now not to be had, by the removal of Mr. Edwards to Newport; and besides, the Lord hath taken my eldest son to himself, *sublatâ causâ, tollitur effectus.*

2. That I might be of more use there where God hath given me an estate, than I can be at this distance, by relieving the poor thereabouts, and by helping as many as I can to heaven. Now, Lord, glorify thyself in and by thy poor servant, and prevent trouble here, or make me able to bear it. P. Henry's Diary. Orig. MS.

l pp. 24, 25. 4to. 1694.

m See 2 Sam. xx. 18.

n In allusion, probably, to the martyrs, particularly, "that blessed woman," Blandina, who, "fighting the worthy battell, became stronger and stronger, and as often as she spake these words,—*I am a Christian*, neither have wee committed any evill,—it was to her a marvellous comfort and boldening to abide the torments." Fox's Acts and Monuments, v. 1. p. 60. fol. 1641.

and no harm was done.[o] He would likewise relate sometimes a remarkable story, worthy to be here inserted, concerning a good friend of his, Mr. T. Y.[p] of Whitchurch, who in his youth was greatly wronged by an unjust uncle of his. Being an orphan, his portion, which was £200, was put into the hands of that uncle; who, when he grew up, shuffled with him, and would give him but £40, instead of his £200, and he had no way of recovering his right but by law; but before he would engage in that, he was willing to advise with his minister, who was the famous Dr. Twiss,[q] of Newbury; the counsel he gave him, all things considered, was, for peace sake, and for the preventing of sin, and snares, and trouble, to take the £40, rather than contend; and Thomas, saith the Doctor, if thou dost so, assure thyself, that God will make it up to thee and thine some other way, and they that defraud thee will be the losers by it at last. He did so, and it pleased God so to bless that little which he began the world with, that when he died in a good old age, he left his son possessed of some hundreds a year; and he that wronged him fell into decay.

Many very pious, worthy families in the country would say of Mr. Henry, that they had no friend like-minded, who did naturally care for their state, and so affectionately sympathize with them, and in whom their hearts could safely trust.

[The interest of families lay near his heart, and, sometimes, he would ask the affectionate question, Are there no families to be wept over? Yes. When there are none in a family, as far as we can judge, spiritually alive. As in Egypt, there was not a house in which there was not one dead, so there are many families in which not one is alive. We weep over the body from which the soul is departed, and why not over the soul from which God is departed? There are families too in which God is not worshipped. And are not those to be wept over? There are families where worldliness prevails, where all are for the wealth of the world, and where there is no care for the soul. There are families where divisions reign, two are against three, and three against two; and there the house is on fire; the house is falling. There are families where God's hand hath been by correction, and they have been sensible of it; but the correction being removed, they are as bad or worse than ever. These are to be wept over.[r]]

He was very charitable to the poor, and was full of alms'-deeds, which he did, (as was said of Tabitha, Acts ix. 36.) not which he said he would do, or which he put others on to do, but which he *did himself*, dispersing abroad and giving to the poor, seeking and rejoicing in opportunities of that kind. And whenever he gave an alms for the body, he usually gave with it a spiritual alms, some good word of counsel, reproof, instruction, or comfort, as there was occasion, and in accommodating these to the persons he spoke to, he had a very great dexterity.

He was very forward to lend[s] money freely to any of his poor neighbours that had occasion, and would sometimes say, that in many cases there was more charity in lending than in giving, because it obliged the borrower both to honesty and industry. When one of his neighbours, to whom he had lent three pounds, failed, so that he was never likely to see a farthing of it, he writes thus upon it;—notwithstanding this, yet still I judge it my duty to lend, Μηδὲν ἀπελπίζων, nothing despairing; so Dr. Hammond reads it, Luke vi. 35. Though what is lent in charity be not repaid, yet it is not lost. When those that had borrowed money of him paid him again, he usually gave them back some part, to encourage honesty. He judged the taking of moderate interest for money lawful,[t] where the borrower was in a way of gaining by it. But he would advise his friends that had money rather to dispose of it otherwise if they could.

It must not be forgotten, how punctual and exact he was in all his accounts with tenants, workmen, &c. being always careful to keep such things in black and white, as he used to say, which is the surest way to prevent mistakes, and a man's wronging either himself or his neighbour; such was his prudence, and such his patience and peaceableness, that all the time he was at Broad Oak, he never sued any, nor ever was sued, but was instrumental to prevent many a vexatious law-suit among his neighbours.

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o The moral is easy. Be content thy person be trod upon for peace sake. Thy *person*, I say, not thy *conscience*. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

p Yates.

q Dr. Twiss, Prolocutor of the Assembly of Divines, in 1643. He died the 20th of July, 1646. æt. 71. He was offered a prebendary at Winchester, which he declined, because he foresaw it would excite a quarrel between two neighbouring clergymen. Clark's Lives of Eminent Persons. p. 13. *ut supra*.

r P. Henry. From a MS. in Mr. Matt. Henry's hand-writing.

s This was the practice of Dr. Hammond. See his Life, by Dr. Fell, p. 160. *ut supra*. It is said of a renowned nobleman, that he would often give to labouring men "good summes of money, making them believe hee did but lend it them; and causing some about him to passe their words for the repayment, when hee never meant to receive it again: but did that, as himself was wont to tell us, in policie, to make them continue their labour, and to be good husbands." A Sermon preached at the Funeral of William Lord Russel, by William Walker, B. D. p. 48. 4to. 1614.

t Mr. Henry has thus recorded the opinion of Mr. Baxter on this subject. It is transcribed from his common-place book. "If usury be condemned, 'tis either by law of nature or some positive law. If the former, then either as an act of impiety, injustice, or unmercifulness. That which can be proved to have any of these I am resolved against, but there is some usury which I am not able to see any of these in, nay, I think I could so lend on usury in some cases, as might be as great an act of bounty or mercy as to give near half the money. If it be forbidden by a positive law, then either of Moses, or of Christ. Not of Moses, for the Mosaic law is abrogated, though much of the matter of it be still in force,—as the law of nature, and of Christ. Not of Christ; for where hath Christ any such positive law? On these grounds I speak against all unjust and unmerciful usury, but I dare go no further, and yet I will justify none,—there is a paper of Dr. Sanderson's

He used to say,—There are four rules to be duly observed in going to law; (1.) We must not go to law for trifles, as he did who said, he would rather spend a hundred pounds in law, than lose a penny-worth of his right, Matthew v. 39, 40, 41. (2.) We must not be rash and hasty in it, but try all other means possible to compose differences; wherein he that yields most, as Abraham did to Lot, is the better man; and there is nothing lost by it in the end, 1 Corinthians vi. 1, 2. (3.) We must see that it be without malice, or desire of revenge. If the undoing of our brother be the end of our going to law, as it is with many, it is certainly evil, and it speeds accordingly. (4.) It must be with a disposition to peace, whenever it may be had, and an ear open to all overtures of that kind. The two mottos proper for the great guns are applicable to this, *ratio ultima regum*, and *sic quærimus pacem*.

[He was an enemy to austerity of deportment, and much enjoyed the pleasures of social intercourse. "Pest-houses," he would say, "always stand alone, and yet are full of infectious diseases. Solitariness is no infallible argument of sanctity."[u] It was against the *evils* of society his watchfulness was directed, and these he uniformly endeavoured to counteract. Hence four rules he sometimes gave to be observed in our converse with men. Have communion with few. Be familiar with one. Deal justly with all. Speak evil of none.

He was noted for an extraordinary neat husband about his house and ground, which he would often say he could not endure to see like the *field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the man void of understanding*. And it was strange, how easily one that had been bred up utterly a stranger to such things, yet when God so ordered his lot, acquainted himself with, and accommodated himself to, the affairs of the country, making it the diversion of his vacant hours to over-see his gardens and fields; when he better understood that known Epode of Horace, *Beatus ille qui procul negotiis*,[v] than he did when in his youth he made an ingenious translation of it. His care of this kind was an act of charity to poor labourers whom he employed; and it was a good example to his neighbours, as well as for the comfort of his family. His converse likewise with these things was excellently improved for spiritual purposes, by occasional meditations, hints of which there are often in his Diary, as those that conversed with him had many in discourse. Instances of this were easy, but endless, to give.

[The following may suffice:—

1661, March 20. The garden finished in time of an eclipse.—Lord, lift up upon me the light of thy countenance, and let nothing cloud it towards my soul!

Hawthorn sets planted to hedge in the orchard. Lord, be thou a *wall of fire* round about thy church, and let not the *wild boar out of the forest* devour thy tender plants!

A tree cut up by the roots may have the leaves green upon it a great while. So a people, or person, devoted by God to ruin, may yet retain many of their outward comforts for a time, but they are withering. Saul, though rejected, obtained many victories.[w]

As far as the boughs of a tree spread, so far spread the roots. As much corruption in our actions, so much in our hearts.[x]

He used to say, that therefore many of the scripture parables and similitudes are taken from the common actions of this life, that when our hands are employed about them, our hearts may the more easily pass through them to divine and heavenly things. I have heard him often blame those, whose irregular zeal in the profession of religion makes them to neglect their worldly business, and let the house drop through; the affairs of which the good man will *order with discretion*; and he would tell sometimes of a religious woman, whose fault it was, how she was convinced of it by means of an intelligent, godly neighbour; who, coming into the house, and finding the good woman, far in the day, in her closet, and the house sadly neglected, children not tended, servants not minded.—What, saith he, is there no fear of God in this house? Which much startled and affected the good woman, that overheard him. He would often say,—Every thing is beautiful in its season; and that it is the wisdom of the prudent, so to order the duties of their general callings as Christians, and those of their particular callings in the world, as that they may not clash or interfere,[y] I have heard it observed from Ecclesiastes vii. 16.—That there may be over-doing in well-doing.[z]

[He maintained, however,—That a Christian ought not to engage himself further in worldly business

very moderate and clear in it." Mr. Baxter. MS. letter to Mr. Newcome.

u Com. Pl. Book. Orig. MS. "It is a scandall that is cast upon religion, and the professors of it, that they are unneighbourly and unsociable. God himself loves society, he loves holy meetings, he loves the communion of saints, the household of faith, and his delight is to be with the sons of men, and well approves that the sons of men should be one with another, yet so that he may not be excluded." Expos. on Luke xi. 5—11. by Nehemiah Rogers, 4to. 1658. p. 139.

v Epode II. Vitæ Rusticæ Laudes.

w P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

x Com. Pl. Book. Orig. MS.

y One of the fathers,* speaking of the practice of Christians in the primitive times, saith,—"At supper, we eat and drink as those that must pray before they go to bed. So should we follow our callings all day as those who must pray before they go to bed." Lay not out the strength of your spirits upon earthly things, but keep it for fellowship with God. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

z It is said of the "pious and profoundly-learned" Joseph Mede, that the apophthegm,—Over-doing always undoes,—was "often in his mouth." Appendix to his Life, prefixed to his Works, p. xlii. fol. 1672.

* Tertullian; and see Flavel's Works, vol. vi. p. 321.

than so as still to keep himself fit for prayer. And sometimes would exclaim,—After the heart hath been let loose a little in the world, oh, what a hard matter is it to find it again![a]]

I cannot omit one little passage in his Diary, because it may be instructive. When he was once desired to be bound for one that had, upon a particular occasion, been bound for him, he writes,—Solomon saith, *He that hateth suretyship is sure;* but he saith also, *He that hath friends, must show himself friendly.* But he always cautioned those that became sureties, not to be bound for any more than they knew themselves able to pay, nor for more than they would be willing to pay, if the principal fail.

His house at Broad Oak was by the road side, which, though it had its inconveniences, yet, he would say, pleased him well, because it gave his friends an opportunity of calling on him the oftener.[b]

[He was a lover of good men, and such always met a cordial welcome under his roof; so that he would pleasantly say sometimes, when he had his Christian friends about him,—He had room for twelve of them in his beds, a hundred of them in his barn, and a thousand of them in his heart.[c]

Nor was he unmindful of others; for he spoke of it with pleasure, that the situation of his house also[d]] gave him an opportunity of being kind to strangers, and such as were any way distressed on the road, to whom he was upon all occasions cheerfully ready, fully answering the apostle's character of a bishop, that he must be of good behaviour,—Κόσμιος, decent, affable, and obliging,—and *given to hospitality;* 1 Timothy iii. 2. like Abraham, sitting at his tent-door, in quest of opportunities to do good. If he met with any poor near his house, and gave them alms in money, yet he would bid them go to his door besides, for relief there. He was very tender and compassionate towards poor strangers and travellers, though his charity and candour were often imposed upon by cheats and pretenders, whom he was not apt to be suspicious of; but would say, in the most favourable sense,—*Thou knowest not the heart of a stranger.* If any asked his charity, whose representation of their case he did not like, or who he thought did amiss to take that course, he would first give them an alms, and then mildly reprove them; and labour to convince them that they were out of the way of duty, and that they could not expect that God should bless them in it; and would not chide them, but reason with them. And he would say,—If he should tell them of their faults, and not give them an alms, the reproof would look only like an excuse to deny his charity, and would be rejected accordingly.

In a word, his greatest care about the things of this world was, how to do good with what he had, and to *devise liberal things;* desiring to make no other accession to his estate, but only that blessing which attends beneficence. He did firmly believe, and it should seem few do, that what *is given to the poor, is lent to the Lord,* who will pay it again in kind or kindness; and that religion and piety are undoubtedly the best friends to outward prosperity, and he found it so; for it pleased God abundantly to bless his habitation, and to *make a hedge about him,* and about his house, and about all that he had round about.[e] And though he did not delight himself in the abundance of wealth; yet, which is far better, he delighted himself in the *abundance of peace;* Psalm xxxvii. 11. All that he had, and did, observably prospered, so that the country oftentimes took notice of it; and called his family a family which the Lord had blessed.

His comforts of this kind were, as he used to pray they might be,—Oil to the wheels of his obedience;[f] and, in the use of these things, he served the Lord his God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, yet still mindful of, and grieved for, the affliction of Joseph. He would say sometimes, when he was in the midst of the comforts of this life, as that good man;—All this, and heaven too! Surely, then, we serve a good Master. Thus did the Lord bless him, and make him a blessing; and this *abundant grace, through the thanksgiving of many, redounded to the glory of God.*

Having given this general account of his circumstances at Broad Oak, we shall now go on with his story, especially as to the exercise of his ministry there, and thereabouts; for that was his Τὸ ἔργον, the thing in which he was, and to which he wholly gave himself, taking other things Ὡς πάρεργα. After this settlement at Broad Oak, whenever there was preaching at Whitewell Chapel, as usually there was two Lord's days in the month, he constantly attended

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a P. Henry. Orig. MS.

b 1697-8 Friday, January 13.

One of my dear father's remarks was this,—That, though it be comfortable to have friends to visit, and comfort in them; yet it is more to have a comfortable home; such a rest as this world affords. Blessed be God for the remaining rest. Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig MS.

The learned Henry Jessy could not "brook fruitless visits, and wrote his mind concerning it over his studie door accordingly:"—

Directions to all Visitors.

No fruitless visits. No, nor speech.
For time is precious: hinder none.
Let words be few,—good. Then cease.
Despatch:—prepare for death. {I'm / We're} gone.

Life duod. 1671, p. 102.

c So Mr. Vavasor Powel, who "was very free in the entertainment of strangers, and all saints," would say,—"He had room for twelve in his beds, a hundred in his barns, and a thousand in his heart." Life and Death of Mr. Powel, p. 111. duod 1671.

d Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

e See P. Henry's Sermons, *ut supra.* Sermon I. p. 35.

f If love be the weight and the oil that makes the wheels run, thine obedience is such as it ought to be. Dyke's Worthy Communicant, *ut supra,* p. 341. See *post,* p. 79.

there with his family, was usually with the first, and reverently joined in the public service; he diligently wrote the sermons; always stayed if the ordinance of baptism was administered, but not if there were a wedding, for he thought that a solemnity not proper for the Lord's day. He often dined the minister that preached; after dinner he sung a psalm, repeated the morning sermon, and prayed; and then attended in like manner in the afternoon. In the evening he preached to his own family; and, perhaps, two or three of his neighbours would drop in to him. On those Lord's days, when there was no preaching at the chapel, he spent the whole day at home; and many an excellent sermon he preached, when there were present only four besides his own family, and perhaps not so many, according to the limitation of the Conventicle Act.[g] In these narrow private circumstances he preached over the former part of the Assembly's Catechism, from divers texts; he also preached over Psalm cxvi. besides many particular occasional subjects.

What a grief of heart it was to him, to be thus put *under a bushel*, and confined to such a narrow sphere of usefulness, read in his own words, which I shall transcribe out of an elegy he made, to give vent to his thoughts, upon the death of his worthy friend, Mr. George Mainwaring, some time Minister of Malpas, who was silenced by the Act of Uniformity, and died, March 14, 1669-70; wherein he thus bewails, feelingly enough, the like restraints and confinements of his friend:—

His later years he sadly spent,
Wrapt up in silence and restraint.
A burden such as none do know,
But they that do it undergo.
To have a fire, shut up and pent
Within the bowels, and no vent;
To have gorg'd breasts, and, by a law,
Those that fain would, forbidden to draw.
But his dumb sabbaths here, did prove
Loud crying sabbaths in heav'n above.
His tears, when he might sow no more,
Watering what he had sown before.

Soon after Mr. Henry's settlement at Broad Oak, he took a young scholar into the house with him; partly to teach his son, and partly to be a companion to himself, to converse with him, and to receive help and instruction from him; and, for many years, he was seldom without one or other such; who before their going to the University, or in the intervals of their attendance there, would be in his family, sitting under his shadow. One of the first he had with him, in the year 1668, and after, was Mr. William Turner, born in the neighbourhood; afterwards of Edmund Hall, in Oxford, now Vicar of Walburton in Sussex, to whom the world is beholden for that elaborate "History of all Religions," which he published in the year 1695, and from whom is earnestly expected the performance of that noble and useful project for the "Record of Providences."[h] Betwixt Mr. Henry and him there was a most entire and affectionate friendship; and, notwithstanding that distance of place, a constant and endearing correspondence kept up as long as Mr. Henry lived.

It was observed, that several young men who had sojourned with him, and were very hopeful, and likely to be serviceable to their generations, died soon after their removal from him; I could instance in six or seven, as if God had sent them to him to be prepared for another world, before they were called for out of this; yet never any died while they were with him.

He had so great a kindness for the University, and valued so much the mighty advantages of improvement there, that he advised all his friends who designed their children for scholars, to send them thither, for many years after the change, though he always counted upon their conformity. But long experience altered his mind herein, and he chose rather to keep his own son at home with him, and to give him what help he could there, in his education, than venture him into the snares and temptations of the University.

It was also soon after this settlement of his at Broad Oak, that he contracted an intimate friendship with that learned, and pious, and judicious gentleman, Mr. Hunt of Boreatton, the son of Colonel Hunt, of Salop, and with his excellent lady Frances, daughter of the Right Honourable the Lord Paget.[i] The acquaintance then begun between Mr. Henry and that worthy family, continued to his dying day, about thirty years. One Lord's

[g] In reference to the termination of the Conventicle Act, 16 Charles II. c. 4 he writes:—1669, March 1. This day, as is supposed, determines the Act against Conventicles, the Parliament being prorogued by proclamation, from this day to October 19, which prorogation makes a session, and the Act was to continue for three years, and to the end of the next session after, which is this.

And, blessed be God, who hath let me live to see it die; for, though but few in these parts have suffered much by it, yet some have, and to others it hath been as a bridle of restraint, hindering them in the free exercise of their duty, which is, as they have occasion, to assemble themselves together for mutual edification, whereby God hath had great dishonour, and poor souls no small loss in heaven's way.

It seems the Lord hath inclined the King's heart to this, which is in his hand, and he turneth it whithersoever he pleaseth. To him be glory!

I am somewhat fearful lest any ill use should be made of this indulgence by intemperate spirits, especially now at first: which, God prevent, for his own name, mercy, and gospel sake. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS. Another Conventicle Act soon after passed; the 22nd Charles II. c. 1.

[h] Afterwards published in folio, 1697.

[i] Ambassador for many years at Vienna, afterwards at Constantinople. He and Lady Paget sojourned for some years with his brother-in-law Mr. Hunt of Boreatton. He came oft to Broad Oke to visit Mr. Henry. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra*. See the Life and Errors of John Dunton, v. 1. p. 347. *ut supra*.

day in a quarter he commonly spent with them, besides other interviews. And it was a constant rejoicing to him to see religion and the power of godliness uppermost, in such a family as that, when not many mighty, not many noble, are called; and the branches of it *branches of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.* Divers of the honourable relations of that family contracted a very great respect for him, particularly the present Lord Paget, now his Majesty's Ambassador at the Ottoman Court, and Sir Henry Ashurst, whom we shall have occasion afterwards to make mention of.

[Mr. Henry also stood high in the esteem of Thomas Corbet, Esq.[k] of Stanwardine,[l] George Clyve, Esq. of Walford, and Mr. Harris, of Prescot. These gentlemen were always glad to receive him into their houses, and to attend upon his ministry whenever they had an opportunity. They lived in the same parish,[m] and though they generally frequented the place of public worship, where they had a sober, judicious, and peaceable minister, the Rev. Mr. Hudson, yet they had often sermons preached in their own houses by the nonconformists, who lived near them, sometimes on week-days, sometimes on the Lord's day, out of the time of public worship; and I have often seen some of Mr. Hudson's family, his wife and children, present on such occasions.[n]]

In the time of trouble and distress by the Conventicle Act, in 1670, he kept private, and stirred little abroad, as loth to offend those that were in power, and judging it prudence to gather in his sails when the storm was violent. He then observed, as that which he was troubled at,—That there was a great deal of precious time lost among professors, when they came together, in discoursing on their adventures to meet, and their escapes, which he feared tended more to set up self, than to give glory to God. Also in telling how they got together, and such a one preached, but little inquiring what spiritual benefit and advantage was reaped by it; and that we are apt to make the *circumstances* of our religious services more the matter of our discourse than the *substance* of them.

[At the latter end of the year 1671, he ventured to London; and the following extracts from his Diary, on that occasion, will not be uninteresting.

1671, August 13. Preached on Jacob's vow, Genesis xxviii. 20, &c. with personal application, saying,—*If God will be with me in this way that I go, then the Lord shall be my God.*

14. I set forward[o] towards London.

19. To Kensington.

22. Back to London again.

24. Solemn fast in remembrance of the sad day of ministers' ejection, kept at the Countess of Exeter's,[p] with some measure of holy meltings and enlargements. Dr. Jacomb,[q] Mr. Steel,[r] Mr. Mayo,[s] Mr. Bull,[t] Mr. Poole,[u] prayed and preached alternatim. Texts, Psalm li. 4; xxxix. 9.

27. Preached at Mr. Doolittel's meeting place.[v] Text, Matthew xxv. 29.—*To him that hath*, &c.

30. Preached at Mr. Steel's.[w] Text, 1 Corinthians x. 12. in much distraction.

September 1. This evening I was ill.

2. Attempted to keep the annual fast, this day, in remembrance of the dreadful fire of London, A. D. 1666; but strength failed: to will was present, to do was not. Thanks is also to be given for the strange and wonderful rebuilding of it in so short a time; which, but that my eyes saw, I could hardly have believed. I had the sentence of death within myself, and was, in some measure, willing to it, at that time, and in that place, though a stranger,[x] had God seen good; but a reprieve came.

3. I should have preached and communicated with Dr. Annesley,[y] but prevented. *Multa cadent inter.* Time was when I might, and did not; now I would, and might not.

7. To Islington, where was buried Mr. Burghess,[z] a nonconformist minister of the west country: there

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k See two sermons preached at Cockshutt Chapel, Salop, by William Gearing, entitled, "Wisdom justified of her Children," and dedicated to Robert Corbet and Thomas Corbet, of Stanwardine, Esqrs. and to the vertuous Gentlewomen, their Wives." duod. 1668

l 1671. July 12. With my wife, at Stanwardine.

I accompanied them in killing a buck in their own park; far from being taken with any great delight or pleasure in the sport. They sent part of him to Bread Oak. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

m Baschurch.

n Tong's Life of Matt. Henry. pp. 36, 37. *ut supra.*

o The following minutes are now curious:—

1671. August 14. Lodged this night at Wolverhampton.

15. To Bromicham: thence to Coventry.

16. To Daventry: thence to Stony Stratford. Ebenezer.

17. To Barnett.

18. To London. The ways fair, and the weather favourable beyond expectation. Spent by the way, self and horse, 20*s*. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

p See Collins's Peerage, v. 2. p. 606, and Reliq. Baxter. part. iii. p. 96.

q Dr. Thomas Jacomb was born in 1622, and died 27 Mar. 1687. See Wilson's Hist. of Dissenting churches, v. 3. p. 13, &c.

r See *ante*, p. 35.

s The Rev. Richard Mayo, an eminent nonconformist, was born about 1631; he died Sept. 8, 1695. See Wilson's Hist. v. 2. p. 9.

t Rev. Daniel Bull. See Palmer's Noncon. Mem. v. 2. p. 458, &c. *ut supra.*

u See *ante*, p. 47.

v Whether then in Monkwell-street, or not, seems rather uncertain. Query,—Was not Monkwell-street Meeting-house in the possession of the Lord Mayor in 1671? See Wilson's Hist. v. 3. pp. 193, 194. Mr. Doolittle was born at Kidderminster, A. D. 1630. He died, May 24, 1707. *ib.*

w His congregation met at Armourer's Hall, Coleman-street. Wilson's Hist. v. 2. p. 451.

x See Life of Archbishop Leighton. Works, v. 1. p. xli. oct. 1820.

y Dr. Samuel Annesley was born A. D. 1620, and died Dec. 31, 1696. See Wilson's Hist. v. 1. pp. 365–370.

z It is probable that the reference is to the Rev. John Burgess, M. A. See the Noncon. Mem. v. 2. p. 3. *ut supra:* also, an extract from a letter written by Mr. Henry to his wife relating to the funeral of Mr. Burgess, in the Univ. Theol. Mag. vol. 8. p. 184.

were present one hundred or sixscore ministers; and I bless God that for one dead there were so many living. But it grieved me to see them divided; part stayed the office for the dead, part going out. Here I saw Mr. Senior,[a] Mr. Bull, Mr. Rowles, former acquaintances.

10. A sabbath spent with Mr. Doolittel. Text, John viii. 36. persuading sinners to be willing to be made free.

11. I saw Dean Hodges,[b] persuading to conform, but I dare not on such terms.

18. I reached home.

29. Day of family thanksgiving. The Lord accept in Christ Jesus.[c]

The visit, and particularly the indisposition which has been stated, gave rise to a letter which, viewed as an illustration of character, is too interesting to be entirely omitted. "For Mr. Philip Henry, to be left with Mr. Enock Darack, at the sine of the Trumpet, within Aldersgate, London."

My dear Husband;

I received your last yesterday, and am grieved to hear of your being ill. The children and family are well, blessed be God, and myself as well as I can be whilst in fear that you are ill. I have given up all my interest in you to my heavenly Father, and am labouring to be ready for evil tidings, which, if it be, God knows how I shall bear it. I shall expect, between hope and fear, till to-morrow night, and, whatever the issue may be, labour to justify God. Yet I hope to hear of your coming, and when it will be, in your next. My dear heart, the Lord be with you, and send us a happy meeting; so prayeth your

Faithful and loving Wife,

September 6, 1671. KATHERINE HENRY.[d]]

We shall close this chapter with two remarks out of his Diary, in the year 1671, which will show what manner of spirit he was of, and what were his sentiments of things at that time. One is this,—All acknowledge that there is at this day a number of sober, peaceable men, both ministers and others, among Dissenters; but who either saith or doth any thing to oblige them? Who desireth or endeavoureth to open the door to let in such? Nay; do they not rather provoke them to run into the same extravagances with others, by making no difference, but laying load on them as if they were as bad as the worst? It is true that about this time the Lord Keeper Bridgman, and Bishop Wilkins,[e] and the Lord Chief Justice Hale,[f] were making some overtures towards an accommodation with them; but it is as true, that those overtures did but the more exasperate their adversaries, who were ready to account such moderate men the worst enemies the Church of England had, and the event was, greater acts of severity.

Another is this,—If all that hath been said and written to prove that prelacy is anti-christian, and that it is unlawful to join in the Common Prayer, had been effectual to persuade bishops to study and do the duty of church rulers, in preaching, and feeding the flock, according to the word, and to persuade people to be serious, inward, and spiritual in the use of forms, it had been much better with the church of God in England, than it now is. Consonant to the spirit of this remark, was that which he took all occasions to mention as his settled principle.—In those things wherein all the people of God are agreed, I will spend my zeal; and wherein they differ I will endeavour to walk according to the light that God hath given me, and charitably believe that others do so too.

CHAPTER VI.

HIS LIBERTY BY THE INDULGENCE IN THE YEAR 1672, AND THENCEFORWARD TO THE YEAR 1681.

NOTWITHSTANDING the severe act against conventicles in the year 1670, yet the nonconformists in London ventured to set up meetings in 1671, and were connived at;[a] but in the country there was little liberty taken, till the King's declaration of March 15, 1671-2, gave countenance and encouragement to it. What were the secret springs which produced that declaration,[b] time discovered; however, it was to the poor dissenters as life from the dead, and gave them some reviving in their bondage; God graciously ordering it so, that the spirit he had made might not fail before him. But so precarious a liberty was it, that it should never be said, those people were hard to be pleased, who were so well pleased with that, and thanked God, who put such a thing into the King's heart. The tenor of that declaration was this,—In consideration of the ineffi-

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a The Rev. Thomas Senior, B. D. was Fellow and Lecturer of Trinity Church, Cambridge. He was a Westminster Scholar. Noncon. Mem. v. 1. p. 276. *ut supra.*

b Dean of Hereford, and father of Dr. Nath. Hodges. He had the living of Kensington, and was buried there Aug. 27, 1672. Lysons's Env. of London, v. 3. p. 193. Dr. N. Hodges was one of Mr. Henry's contemporaries at Westminster and Oxford. See Mr. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. vol. 18. p. 24.

c P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

d Orig. MS.

e The grandson of the venerable John Dod, (see *post.* p. 80,) was born in 1614; ob. 19 Nov. 1672. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 32. p. 74, &c. And see the Biog. Brit. v. 1. p. 637.

f Sir Matthew was born Nov. 1, 1609, and died 25 Dec. 1676. See his Life and Works, 2 vols. oct. 1805.

a 1671. Nov. 9. Five London ministers with the King; Dr. Annesley, Mr. Watson, Mr. Whitaker, and the two Vincents; to whom he said,—He was sensible of their straits, and would endeavour their enlargements. Amen. He said,—As he would not willingly be persecuted himself for his own religion, so neither did he like to persecute others for theirs. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

b See it at length in Neal's Hist. v. 4. p. 461, &c. *ut supra.*

cacy of rigour, tried for divers years, and to invite strangers into the kingdom, ratifying the Establishment in the Church of England, it suspends penal laws against all nonconformists and recusants, promiseth to license separate places for meetings, limiting papists only to private houses.

On this Mr. Henry writes; It is a thing diversely resented, as men's interests lead them; the conformists displeased, the presbyterians glad, the independents[c] very glad, the papists triumph. The danger is, saith he, lest the allowing of separate places help to overthrow our parish-order, which God hath owned, and to beget divisions and animosities among us, which no honest heart but would rather should be healed. We are put hereby, saith he, into a trilemma, either to turn independents in practice, or to strike in with the conformists, or to sit down in former silence and sufferings, (and silence he accounted one of the greatest sufferings,) till the Lord shall open a more effectual door. That which, he saith, he then heartily wished for, was,—That those who were in place, would admit the sober nonconformists to preach sometimes occasionally in their pulpits; by which means he thought prejudices would in time wear off on both sides, and they might mutually strengthen each other's hands against the common enemy,—the papists;[d] who he foresaw would fish best in troubled waters. This he would choose much rather than to keep a separate meeting. But it could not be had. No, not so much as leave to preach in Whitewell chapel when it was vacant, as it often was, though it were three long miles from the parish church. He found that some people, the more they are courted, the more coy they are; however, the overtures he made to this purpose, and the slow steps he took towards the setting up of a distinct congregation, yielded him satisfaction afterwards in the reflection, when he could say,—we would have been united, and they would not.

It was several weeks after the declaration came out, that he received a licence to preach, as Paul did,[e] in his own house, and elsewhere, no man forbidding him. This was procured for him by some of his friends in London, without his privity, and came to him altogether unexpected.

[On the King's declaration, his papers contain the following observations:—

All or most of the conformists have said they could not deny us ministers, but not ministers of the Church of England, without episcopal ordination.

By a minister of the Church of England can be meant no other than a minister of Christ authorized to preach in the Church of England.

All the power[f] to be owned in bishops, is derived to them from the King; and, in those things wherein the King hath power in church matters, in those things we may obey the bishops, as his delegates and substitutes.

In King James's time, when four Scotch presbyters were to be consecrated bishops at Lambeth, it was moved that they might first be ordained presbyters again; but it was overruled, being without need.

In our case, the King immediately, without bishops, which is the better, gives us liberty, being already ministers of Christ, to preach in his dominions where he appoints.

The law calls the King patron-general of England. His appointing me to preach, supposes I must have hearers, and those, of necessity, out of some parish or other. What we do is to serve the present necessity, and not of choice.

There are many among us debarred by imposition from communicating with freedom in public in the Lord's supper; the King takes pity upon them, authorizes one or another to give it in a way wherein they are satisfied. And why not?[g]]

The use he made of it was, that at his own house, what he did before to his own family, and in private, the doors being shut for fear, he now did more publicly; threw his doors open, and welcomed his neighbours to him, to partake of his spiritual things. Only one sermon in the evening of the Lord's day, when there was preaching at Whitewell chapel, where he still continued his attendance with his family and friends as usual; but when there was not, he spent the whole day, at public time, in the services of the day, exposition of the Scriptures read, and preaching, with prayer and praise. This he did *gratis*, receiving nothing for his labours, either at home or abroad, but the satisfaction of doing good to souls, which was his meat and drink, with the trouble and charge of giving entertainment to many of his friends, which he did with much cheerfulness; and he would say, he sometimes thought that the bread did even multiply in the breaking; and he found that God did abundantly bless his provision with that blessing, which, as he used to say, will make a little to go a great way. He was wont to observe, for the encouragement of such as had meetings in their houses, which sometimes drew upon them inconveniences,—That the ark is a guest that always pays well for its entertainment. And he noted, that when

c In two things the independents are to be commended,—they keep up discipline among them; they love and correspond one with another. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

d In the debates on the Bill for uniting His Majesty's Protestant Subjects, Dec. 21, 1680, it was remarked, by a Member of the House of Commons, that the Oxford Act, and other laws against Dissenters, were much promoted by Sir Thomas Clifford, Sir Solomon Swale, and Sir Roger Strickland, who since all appeared to be Papists. Coll. of the Parliamentary Debates, from 1668. v. I. p. 484. oct. 1741.

e See Acts xxi. 40.

f See Hooker's Eccl. Pol. *ut supra*. B. VII. pp. 11, 12, &c.

g P. Henry. Orig. MS.

Christ had borrowed Peter's boat to preach a sermon out of it, he presently repaid him for the loan, with a *great draught of fishes*, Luke v. 3, 4.

Many thoughts of heart he had concerning this use he made of the liberty, not knowing what would be in the end hereof; but after serious consideration, and many prayers, he saw his way very plain before him, and addressed himself with all diligence to the improvement of this gale of opportunity.[h] Some had dismal apprehensions of the issue of it; and that there would be an after-reckoning. But, saith he, let us mind our duty, and let God alone to order events, which are his work, not ours.

It was a word upon the wheels, which he preached at that time for his own encouragement, and the encouragement of his friends, from that scripture, Ecclesiastes xi. 4. *He that observes the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.* Those that are minded either to do good, or get good, must not be frighted with seeming difficulties and discouragements. Our work is to sow and reap, to do good and get good; and let us mind that, and let who will mind the winds and clouds. *A lion in the way, a lion in the streets;*[i] a very unlikely place, he would say, for lions to be in; and yet that serves the sluggard for an excuse.

[In one of his Diaries, in reference to this subject, he thus writes:—I had occasion to discover another of the sins which do so easily beset me, and that is fearfulness. I am often afraid where no fear is. Dr. Hammond observes,—In evil times it fares best with them that are most careful about duty, and least about safety.

To be afraid where no fear is, is sometimes the sin of God's people, and oftentimes the punishment of wicked men, Proverbs xxviii. 1.[k]

Thus diligently did he watch against evil, and excite himself to activity in his Master's service.]

While this liberty lasted, he was *in labours more abundant;* many lectures he preached abroad in Shropshire, Cheshire, and Denbighshire,[l] laying out himself exceedingly for the good of souls, spending and being spent in the work of the Lord. And of that neighbourhood and of that time it was said, that this and that man was born again, then and there; and many there were who asked the way to Sion, with their face thitherwards, and were (not proselyted to a party, but) savingly brought home to Jesus Christ. I mean this; such as had been vain, and worldly, and careless, and mindless of God and another world, became sober, and serious, and concerned about their souls, and a future state. This was the conversion of souls, aimed at, and laboured after, and through grace not altogether in vain.

Whatever lectures were set up in the country round, it was still desired that Mr. Henry would begin them, (which was thought no small encouragement to those who were to carry them on,) and very happy he was, both in the choice and management of his subjects at such opportunities, seeking to find out acceptable words. Take one specimen of his address, when he began a lecture with a sermon on Hebrews xii. 15. I assure you, saith he, and God is my witness, I am not come to preach, either sedition against the peace of the state, or schism against the peace of the church, by persuading you to this or that opinion or party; but as a minister of Christ, that hath received mercy from the Lord, to desire to be faithful, my errand is to exhort you to all possible seriousness in the great business of your eternal salvation, according to my text, which if the Lord will make as profitable to you, as it is material and of weight in itself, neither you nor I shall have cause to repent our coming hither, and our being here to-day; looking diligently, lest any of you fail of the grace of God. If it were the last sermon I were to preach, I did not know how to take my aim better to do you good.[m]

In doing of this work, he often said, that he looked upon himself but as an assistant to the parish ministers, in promoting the common interests of Christ's kingdom, and the common salvation of precious souls, by the explication and application of those great truths, wherein we are all agreed. And he would compare the case to that in Hezekiah's time, when the Levites helped the priests to kill the sacrifice, which was something of an irregularity, but the exigence of affairs called for it; the priests being too few, and some of them not so careful as they should have been to sanctify themselves; (see 2 Chronicles xxix. 34.) and wherever he preached, he usually prayed for the parish minister, and for a blessing upon his ministry. He hath often said how well pleased he was, when, after he had preached a lecture at Oswestry, he went to visit the minister

h Opportunity is the flower and cream of time. All opportunity is time, but all time is not opportunity. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

See the "Gale of Opportunity;" a Sermon, preached at Lidbury North, at the Funeral of the Worshipful Humphrey Walcot, of Walcot, Esq. June 8, 1650; by Thomas Froysell, Minister of the Gospel at Clun, in Shropshire, duod. 1658.

i See the outlines of a Sermon by Mr. P. Henry on this passage, in the Evan. Mag. v. xxii. p. 512.

k Orig. MS.

l Particularly Wrexham. In 1672 he has recorded a circumstance, which, while locally interesting, is illustrative of his own character, and fraught with instruction:—I said to Mrs. Figes, in my own house, speaking of the offence taken at the meeting-place in Wrexham being a barn, that,—wheat in a barn is better than chaff in a church. Her brother, Stephen Morhal, hearing it, told some, who told others, and it reached Dr. Fowler, who, a sabbath or two after, took notice of it in the pulpit, and said,—"There are some who, in the abundance of their humility, have said, lately, that there is nothing but chaff in churches; whereas chaff is rather to be looked for in barns,"—or, to that purpose. Whereby, I see how words, innocently spoken, may be perverted; but I, *as a deaf man, heard not;* for, I said, Lord, thou hearest. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

m Appendix, No. XV.

of the place, Mr. Edwards,[n] a worthy good man, and told him, he had been sowing a handful of seed among his people, and had this answer,—That's well, the Lord prosper your seed and mine too, there is need enough of us both. And another worthy conformist that came privately to hear him, but was reprimanded for it by his superiors, told him afterwards with tears, that his heart was with him.

His heart was wonderfully enlarged in his work at this time, the fields were white unto the harvest; and he was busy, and God did remarkably own him, setting many seals to his ministry, which much confirmed him in what he did. He hath this observable passage in his Diary, about this time, which he recorded for his after benefit, and the example of it may be instructive.—Remember that if trouble should come hereafter, for what we do now in the use of present liberty, I neither shrink from it, nor sink under it; for I do therein approve myself to God, and to my own conscience, in truth and uprightness; and the Lord whom I serve, can and will certainly both bear me out, and bring me off with comfort in the end. I say, Remember, and forget it not, this 24th day of March, 1672-3.

It was at the beginning of this liberty, that the society at Broad Oak did commence; made up, besides their neighbourhood, of some out of Whitchurch, and Whitchurch parish, that had been Mr. Porter's people, some out of Hanmer parish, that had been Mr. Steel's, and some out of the parishes of Wem, Prees, and Ellesmere. Persons generally of very moderate and sober principles, quiet and peaceable lives, and hearty well-wishers to the king and government; and not rigid or schismatical in their separation, but willing to attend, though sometimes with difficulty and hazard, upon those administrations which they found most lively and edifying, and most helpful to them, in the great business of working out their salvation. To this society he would never call himself a pastor, nor was he willing that they should call him so; but a helper, and a minister of Christ for their good. He would say,—That he looked upon his family only as his charge, and his preaching to others was but accidental, whom if they came, he could no more turn away, than he could a poor hungry man, that should come to his door for an alms. And being a minister of Jesus Christ, he thought himself bound to preach the gospel, as he had opportunity.

[His epistolary communications, as well as his public preaching, bore upon this object, as is manifest from the following letter; which also corroborates the testimony borne of him as to the poor. The souls of such, he would say, are as precious as the souls of the rich.

To John Beard and Jane Comberbach.

Loving Friends;

Though the superscription be only to one of you, yet the letter is intended to you both. God having in his providence cast your lot to be fellow-servants in the same family. I hope you are, according to your opportunities, mutually helpful to each other in your way to heaven; it is a narrow way, and an up-hill way, but it is the way to life, and few find it, and fewer walk in it; if God hath given you to be of those few, he hath done that for you which should for ever engage your hearts to him, and for which you have great cause to be thankful, and to say with Judas, not Iscariot, John xiv. 22. *Lord, how is it!*—I doubt not but your hands are full of the employments of your particular calling, and it ought to be so,[o] in obedience to the will of God appointing you to it, and that the tempter may find you busy; but it is a good question you should be often putting to yourselves,—Where is the *mind* now? They only are *too* busy that lose God in their business, if you abide with him, and walk with him, and live to him, doing what you do in his name and fear, and as in his sight, *not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart as to the Lord,* you may be assured you are, in Jesus Christ, accepted of him, and shall as certainly receive the reward of the inheritance, as any other in the world; wherefore encourage yourselves and one another with these words. Let the things of the other world be real things in your account and esteem; see heaven and hell before you, and believe every thought, word, and work, *now,* is so much seed sown that, according as it is, will be sure to come up again, either in corruption, or in life eternal. I know not how it is with you at present, as to your liberties for worship, but you had a day of it; and, were you diligent? Have you provided meat in summer? Did you gather food in harvest? If aye, bless God; if no, reflect with grief and shame, and make peace, and *up* yet, *and be doing;*[p] it is no small measure of guilt that rises from our neglect of opportunities when God puts them as a price into our hand. I am glad to hear that you, Jane have been in fellowship at the table of the Lord

[n] Ejected from Christleton, in Cheshire. He afterwards conformed. See the Noncon. Mem. v. I. p. 346. *ut supra.*

[o] There dwelled in his parish a tanner, a very godly man, and one that had much communion with my father. This man, as he was very busie tawing of a hide with all his might, (not so much as turning aside his head any way,) my father, coming by accidentally, came behind him, and merrily gave him a little clap upon the back; he started; and, looking behind him suddenly, blushed. —"Sir," saith he, "I am ashamed you should find me thus." To whom my father said again,—"Let Christ, when he comes, find me so doing!" "What," says the man, "doing thus!"—"Yes," saith my father to him, "faithful in the duties of my calling." The Tomb-stone, or, a broken and imperfect Monument, of that worthy Man, the Rev. John Carter, p. 15. duod. 1653.

[p] See 1 Chron. xxii. v. 16. A valuable note upon the phrase occurs in Mr. Dibdin's Ædes Althorp. v. I. p. ix.

remember the vows of God that are upon you, and also the covenant of God there sealed with you, the former for your establishment, the latter for your comfort. And I hope that you, John, either have already or will speedily apply yourself to it, considering it is not privilege only,—if so, it were another matter,—but *duty*, and while you live without it, having opportunity for it, let the pretence be what it will,—awe and reverence towards it, sense of your own unworthiness, or whatever else,—you live in a sin of omission, and that of a known duty, a great duty, a sweet duty, made so by the command of a dear and dying Redeemer, saying,—*Do this*, and,—*do it in remembrance of me*. We commend our love to you both. God everlasting be your Sun and Shield, Father and Friend, Part and Portion. Amen!

So prays,

Broad Oak, Flint, March 24, 1674-5. Yours, in true affection, PHILIP HENRY.

For John Beard,
At Mr. Bray's House,
In Worcester.[q]]

Usually once a month he administered the ordinance of the Lord's supper. Some of his opportunities of that kind he sets a particular remark upon, as sweet sealing days, on which he found it good to draw near to God.

When, about the year's end, there was a general expectation of the cancelling of the indulgence, he hath this note upon a precious sabbath and sacrament day, as he calls it;—"Perhaps this may be the last; *Father, thy will be done;* it is good for us to be at such uncertainties; for now we receive our liberty from our Father fresh every day, which is best and sweetest of all."

[In the spring and summer of 1673, he preached over at Broad Oak, the parable of the Prodigal Son, in about forty sermons, in which it pleased the Lord wonderfully to assist and succeed him. Many who got good to their souls by those sermons, earnestly desired the publishing of them, and he was almost persuaded; but his modesty proved invincible, and it was never done.

He preached over the several articles of the new covenant, Hebrews viii. 10, &c. in the year 1674.

When an end was put to that gleam of liberty, which had continued about three years, he was preaching upon the parable of the barren fig-tree, Luke xiii. 6, &c. *These three years do I come seeking fruit*, and observed how the word of God was fulfilled,—though not cut down, yet cut short,—in opportunities.

However, after a year or two, there was such a general connivance of authority, that the meetings grew again as full as ever, especially at Broad Oak; the neighbouring magistrates of Flintshire being very civil, and not willing to give trouble to one who was so very peaceable and obliging,—for which he would often give thanks to God, who hath the hearts of all men in his hands.[r]]

On the 3rd of March, 1676-7, being Saturday night, the town of Wem, in Shropshire, about six miles from him, was burnt down,[s] the church, market house, and about one hundred and twenty-six dwelling houses, and one man, in little more than an hour's time, the wind being exceeding violent; at which time Mr. Henry was very helpful to his friends there, both for their support under, and their improvement of, this sad providence. It was but about half a year before, that a threatening fire had broke out in that town, but did little hurt; some serious people there presently after celebrated a thanksgiving for their deliverance, in which Mr. Henry imparted to them a spiritual gift, October 3, 1676, from Zechariah iii. 2. *Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?* In the close of that sermon, pressing them, from the consideration of that remarkable deliverance, to personal reformation and amendment of life; that those who had been proud, covetous, passionate, liars, swearers, drunkards, sabbath-breakers, would be so no more; and urging Ezra ix. 13, 14. he added,—If this providence have not this effect upon you, you may in reason expect another fire; for when God judgeth, he will overcome; and minded them of Leviticus xxvi. where it is so often threatened against those who walk contrary to God, that he would *punish them yet seven times more*. The remembrance of this could not but be affecting, when, in so short a time after, the whole town was laid in ruins. The first time he went thither after that calamity, a neighbouring justice, having notice of it, sent to forbid him to preach, to his own grief, as well as to the grief of many others, who came expecting. But, saith he in his Diary, there was a visible sermon before us, the ruins preaching, that sin is an evil thing, and God a terrible God. However, a few days after he got an opportunity of preaching to them a word in season, which some will not forget, from Hosea vi. 1.—*Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn*———. And, at the return of the year, when the town was in the re-building, he gave them another very suitable sermon, from Proverbs iii. 33. *The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just.* Though it be rising again, saith he in his Diary, out of its ashes, yet the burning of it should not be forgotten,

q Orig. MS.
r Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

s See the History of Wem, by the Rev. S. Garbet, A. M. p. 223, &c. oct. 1818.

especially not the sin that kindled it. He often prayed for them, that the fire might be a refining fire.

In the years 1677, 1678, and 1679, in the course of his ministry at Broad Oak, he preached over the Ten Commandments, and largely opened from other texts of Scripture, the duties required, and sins forbidden, in each commandment. For though none delighted more than he in preaching Christ and gospel-grace; yet he knew that Christ came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil; and that though, through grace, we are not under the law as a covenant, yet we are under it as a rule; under the law to Christ. He was very large and particular in pressing second-table duties, as essential to Christianity. We have known those, saith he, that have called preaching on such subjects, good moral preaching; but let them call it as they will, I am sure it is necessary, and as much now as ever. How earnestly would he press upon the people the necessity of righteousness and honesty in their whole conversation. A good Christian, he used to say, will be a good husband, a good father, and a good master, and a good subject, and a good neighbour, and so in other relations. How often would he urge to this purpose, that it is the will and command of the great God, the character of all the citizens of Sion, the beauty and ornament of our Christian profession; and the surest way to thrive and prosper in the world. Honesty is the best policy. He would say, that these are things in which the children of this world are competent judges. They that know not what belongs to faith, and repentance and prayer, yet know what belongs to the making of an honest bargain; they are also parties concerned, and oftentimes are themselves careful in these things; and, therefore, those who profess religion, should walk very circumspectly, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed, nor religion wounded through their sides.

[How sensible he was of the dislike frequently felt to practical preaching, as well as of the importance of such preaching, appears in the following extract. Having explained, in a course of sermons, the Redeemer's sayings, as recorded in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew's Gospel, he pressed, in his last discourse, the importance, the necessity, of *doing*, as well as hearing, from the divine assurance,—that a stormy day is coming shortly, when hearers *only* will be found fools, and suffer loss; whereas hearers *and* doers will be owned for wise people, and will have the comfort of it. What ado, he remarks, some one will object, is here about doing; doing! If I had preached, he proceeds, these sermons, I know where, I had certainly been called a legal preacher, if not a papist, a jesuit, a preacher of works; and some would have said, we will never hear him again. If to preach on these things *be* legal preaching, then our Lord himself was a legal preacher, for you see they were *his* sayings all along that I took for my text to each sermon. Such a preacher as he was, may I be, in my poor measure. I cannot write after a better copy. I cannot tread in better steps. His sayings must be *done*, as well as heard, that we may answer his end in saying them, which was to promote holiness,—that we may approve ourselves his true kindred,—that God may be glorified,—that our profession may be beautified,—and that our building may stand. But they must be done *aright*. The tree must be good. All must be done by faith, and in the name of the Lord Jesus. Hebrews xi. 6. Colossians iii. 17.—with evenness and constancy,—with humility and self-denial,—in charity,—and with perseverance, and continuance.

Do all you do as those who are under a covenant of grace, which, though it requires perfect, yet accepts of sincere, obedience.[t] While the hand is doing, let the eye be looking at Jesus Christ, both for assistance and acceptance. This is the life of faith. Be resolved in duty. Look often at the recompence of reward.[u]

Thus he preached, and his constant practice was a comment upon it. One thing I remember, he was more than ordinarily enlarged in the pressing of, which was,—upon the ninth commandment,—to *speak evil of no man*, from Titus iii. 2. If we can say no good of persons, we must say nothing of them. He gave it as a rule.—Never to speak of any one's faults to others, till we have first spoken of them to the offender himself. He was himself an eminent example of this rule. Some that have conversed much with him, have said, That they never heard him speak evil of any body; nor could he bear to hear any spoken evil of, but often drove away a backbiting tongue with an angry countenance.[v] He was known to be as faithful a patron of offenders before others, as he was a faithful reprover of them to themselves.

Whenever he preached of moral duties, he would always have something of Christ in his sermon; either his life, as the great pattern of the duty, or his love, as the great motive to it; or his merit, as making atonement for the neglect of it.

[Thus, in pressing moral duties, he observed that,

[t] Sincerity is all in all. It is all in all our prayers; all in all our tears; all in all our services. It is all to God,—that which God accounts all. Sincerity is gospel perfection. The Dead Saint speaking to Saints and Sinners living, by Samuel Bolton, D. D. p. 298. fol. 1657.

[u] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[v] He that backbites with his tongue wounds four at once; he wounds the good name of his neighbour, which is dearer to him than the apple of his eye; he wounds the name of God, religion suffers, when those who profess it thus backbite each other; he wounds his own soul, brings the guilt of a great sin upon his own soul, which he must certainly answer for; he wounds love in him that hears it, so that the esteem of his brother is lessened. P. Henry. Mrs. Savage's MS.

—To an acceptable act of obedience, it is necessary that the principle be right, which is a *habit* of true grace in the heart. There must also be a knowledge of, and respect to, the will of God, as well as freedom, cheerfulness, and delight in doing it, in opposition to forced obedience. We are not to be haled to duty as a bear to a stake; but we are to do it voluntarily and pleasantly. There must also be faith[w] in Jesus Christ, both for strength to do, and for acceptance when we have done. And, withal, a single eye to God's glory.[x]

With a view to chronological arrangement, the narrative may be here interrupted by the introduction of the following epistle.

I have lately met, remarks Mr. Henry's biographer, with a letter of his to a couple related to him, who, in a very short time, had buried all their children of the small-pox to their great grief; it was in the year 1679. What comfort and counsels he administered to them, may be of use to others in their afflictions, and, therefore, I shall transcribe the whole letter, though it be long.

Dear Cousins;

This is to you both, whom God hath made one in the conjugal relation, and who are also one in the present affliction; only to signify to you that we do heartily sympathize with you in it. The trial is, indeed, sharp, and there will be need of all the wisdom and grace you have, and of all the help of friends you can get, both to bear, and to improve, it aright. You must bear it with silence and submission. *Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement.* He is Sovereign Lord of all, and may do with us, and ours, as pleaseth him. It is not for the clay to quarrel with the potter. It was a mercy you had children, and comfort with them so long; it is a mercy that yet you have one another,[y] and your children are not lost, but gone before, a little before, whither you yourselves are hastening after. And if a storm be coming, (as God grant it be not,) it is best with them that first put into the harbour. Your children are taken away from the evil to come, and you must not mourn as they that have no hope. Sensible you cannot but be, but dejected and sullen you must not be; that will but put more bitterness into the cup, and make way for another, perhaps a sharper, stroke. You must not think, and I hope you do not, that there cannot be a sharper stroke; for God hath many arrows in his quiver; he can heat the furnace seven times hotter, and again, and again, seven times hotter, till he hath consumed us; and if he should do so, yet still we must say, he hath *punished us less than our iniquities have deserved.* For examples of patience in the like kind, we have two eminent ones in the book of God, those are Job and Aaron; of the latter it is said, Leviticus x. 3. *He held his peace;* and that which quieted him, was what his brother Moses said to him,—*This is that which the Lord hath said, I will be sanctified;* and if God be sanctified, Aaron is satisfied; if God have glory from it, Aaron hath nothing to say against it. Of the former it is said, Job i. 20, he *fell down,* but it was to *worship;* and we are told how he expressed himself, *The Lord gave, &c.* He acknowledgeth God in all: and, indeed, after all, this is it (my dear cousins) that you must satisfy yourselves with under the sad providence, that the Lord hath done it, and the same will that ordered the thing itself[z] ordered all the circumstances of it; and who are we that we should dispute with our Maker? *Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth, but let not the thing formed say to him that formed it,—Why hast thou made me thus?* And as for the improvement of this affliction, (which, I hope, both of you earnestly desire, for it is a great loss to lose such a providence, and not to be made better by it,) I conceive there are four lessons which it should teach you; and they are good lessons, and should be well learned, for the advantage of them is unspeakable. 1. It should for ever *imbitter sin to you;* you know what she said to the prophet, 1 Kings xvii. 18. *Art thou come to call my sins to remembrance, and to slay my son?* It is sin, sin that is the old kill-friend, the Jonah that hath raised this storm, the Achan that hath troubled your house; then how should you grow in your hatred of it, and endeavours against it, that you may be the death of that which hath been the death of your dear children? I say the death of it, for nothing less will satisfy the true penitent, than the death of such a malefactor. 2. It should be a *spur*[a] *to you, to put you on in heaven's way;* it may be you were growing amiss in duty, beginning to slack your former pace in religion, and your heavenly Father saw it, and was grieved at it, and sent this sad providence to be your monitor, to tell you, you should remember whence you are fallen, and do your first works, and be more humble, and holy, and heavenly, self-denying, and watchful, abounding always in the work of the Lord. Oh, blessed are they that come out of

w Look, what oyle is to the wheels, what weights are to the clock, what wings are to the bird, what sails are to the ship,—that *faith* is to all religious duties and services. Heaven on Earth, by Thomas Brooks, duod. 1657. p. 342.

x P. Henry. Orig. MS.

y If God should have riven the tree asunder, I meane, severed you one from another, it must have been taken thankfully; but, much more, when he leaveth the tree, and taketh but the fruit. Baynes's Christian Letters, *ut supra,* p. 127.

z The will of God's purpose is the rule of all his actions; the will of his precept is the rule of all our actions. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

a Therefore, sickness, weepings, sorrow, mourning, and, in conclusion, all adversities, be unto us as *spurs;* with the which, we being dull horses, or, rather, very asses, are forced not to remain long in this transitory way. A Meditation touching Adversity, made by Lady Mary's Grace, 1549. Strype's Eccl. Mem. v. 3. p. 552. oct. ed. 1822.

such a furnace thus refined; they will say hereafter, it was a happy day for them that ever they were put in. 3. You must learn by it, as long as you live, *to keep your affections in due bounds towards creature-comforts.* How hard is it to love, and not to *over* love; to delight in children, or yoke-fellows, and not *over* delight; now God is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to any other; and our access this way doth often provoke him to remove that mercy from us, which we do thus make an idol of; and our duty is to labour, when he doth so, to get that matter amended, and to rejoice in all our enjoyments with trembling, and as if we rejoiced not. 4. It should be a means of drawing *your hearts and thoughts more upwards and homewards;* I mean your everlasting home. You should be looking oftener now than before into the other world. *I shall go to him,* saith David, when his little son was gone before. It is yet but a little while ere all the things of time shall be swallowed up in eternity. And the matter is not great whether we or ours die first, while we are all dying; in the midst of life we are in death:—*What manner of persons then ought we to be?*[b] Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, be your support under, and do you good by, this dispensation, and give you a name better than that of sons and daughters. We are daily mindful of you at the throne of grace, in our poor measure, and dearly recommended to you, &c.[c]

In answer to the inquiry,—How are we to glorify God in our afflictions? he replied, Own and acknowledge sin to be the cause, and give glory to God. Own him as the author of your sufferings; acknowledge the mercies left, with all thankfulness. See what has been amiss, and when you have found it, turn again unto the Lord.[d] Glorify him by patience, and quietness, and cheerful submission unto his will—Ply the throne of grace. Believe, and wait for a good issue. Hold fast your integrity.[e]

On another occasion it being asked,—When are we inordinately dejected and disquieted under afflicting providences? he answered,—When we grieve beyond the nature of the thing for which we grieve. When we are *wearied* and *faint in our minds.* When we grieve as those that *have no hope.* When we are unfitted for the duties of our calling. When we are hindered from worshipping and rejoicing in God. When our grief exceeds bounds,—in continuing *too long.* 1 Samuel xvi. 1.[f]

In the year 1680 he preached over the doctrines of faith and repentance from several texts of Scripture. He used to say, that he had been told concerning the famous Mr. Dod,[g] that some called him in scorn, faith and repentance; because he insisted so much upon those two,[h] in all his preaching. But, saith he, if this be to be vile, I will be yet more vile; for faith and repentance are all in all in Christianity.

[Illustrating the nature of faith, he would observe that,—We must take hold of Christ, as a man that is sinking in deep waters takes hold of a bough, or cord, or plank. We must see him to be the only way, and rest on him accordingly. We must see ourselves pursued by the justice of God, and see him to be the only altar. As the guilty malefactor took hold of the city of refuge. As a besieged garrison takes hold of terms when offered. As a man takes hold of an arm that is going to strike him, so must we resort to and accept of Christ. Plainly thus; there are three things in believing,—The sight and sense of our sin and misery,—Assent to the testimony given in the word concerning Christ, believing that though I am a great sinner, yet he is a *great* Saviour,—Application of him to ourselves, consenting to take him to be ours, and we to be his,—to be ruled by him, and saved by him.[i]]

Concerning repentance he hath sometimes said, If I were to die in the pulpit, I would desire to die preaching repentance; as if I die out of the pulpit, I would desire to die practising repentance: And he had often this saying concerning repentance. He that repents every day, for the sins of every day,[k] when he comes to die, will have the sins but of one day to repent of.[l] Even reckonings make long friends. [Speaking of Luke xxii. 62. concerning Peter, he would say,—Peter's sin is recorded for our admonition, his repentance for our imitation.[m]]

[On this Christian duty he further remarks. It is not required to make us precious to Christ, but to make Christ precious to us, and when it does that

b 2 Peter iii. 11. It is a word of admiration,—What manner of holiness should we use,—*looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of the Lord;* that is, despatching and doing all for our lives against that day. Our lives should, as it were, be in a hurry after the day of judgment, as those that are to remove at quarter day, they hasten to do all against the time. Dr. Goodwin. Works. v. 5. 39. fol. 1704.

c Transposed from p. 177. Life. 3d. edit.

d Get repentance by an affliction, and then you may look on it as traffic, and not as a trouble, like a merchant's voyage, which hath pain in the way, but treasure in the end. No afflictions can hurt him that is penitent. Bishop Reynolds on Hosea. Works. p. 732. *ut supra.*

e P. Henry. from Mrs. Savage's MS.

f Ibid.

g Nat. 1549. ob. 1645. æt. 96. Clark's Lives, annexed to hi Martyrologie. p. 168, &c. *ut supra.*

h Mr. Hieron, noticing his own preaching, thus expressed him self. "I have but two things to teach; faith towards God, and holy life. In one of these two I must still insist." Works. p 323. fol. 1624.

i From Mrs. Savage's MS.

k The dailiness of sin must be bewailed with the dailiness o sorrow. Bishop Taylor. Cited in his Life prefixed to Bisho Heber's edition of his Works p. clvii. *ut supra.*

l Sayth Seint Augustine, penance of good and humble fol si the penance of every day. Chaucer's Canterbury Tale by T. Tyrwhitt, Esq. vol. 2. p. 283. 4to. 1798. The Person Tale.

m Diary, Orig. MS.

then are we humbled to divine acceptation, though not to divine satisfaction. Sorrow is sin's echo, but as the echo answers the voice best where there are broken walls and ruined buildings to return it, so does sorrow when reverberated by a broken ruined heart. That eye weeps most which looks oftenest on the Sun of Righteousness.[n] Though we cannot wash in innocency, yet we must wash in penitency.[o] The ingredients of true repentance are,—hearty sorrow, particular confession, faith in Christ, and general amendment.[p] When we set our sins before our faces in repentance and confession, God casts them behind his back in pardon and remission; but if we carelessly cast them behind our back, God justly sets them before his face.[q]]

That year also, and the year 1681, he preached over the duties of hearing the word and prayer; of the former, from the parable of the four sorts of ground; of the latter, from Luke xi. 1, &c. when he preached over the Lord's Prayer in above thirty excellent and elaborate discourses. He looked upon the Lord's Prayer to be not only a directory or pattern[r] for prayer, but, according to the advice of the Assembly of Divines, proper to be used as a form;[s] and, accordingly, he often used it both in public and in his family. And as he thought it was an error on the one hand to lay so much stress upon it as some do, who think no solemn prayer accepted, nor any solemn ordinance or administration of worship complete, without it, and so repeat it five or six times, and perhaps oftener, at one meeting; so he thought it an error on the other hand not to use it at all; since it is a prayer, a compendious, comprehensive prayer, and may be of use to us, at least as other scripture prayers; but he thought it a much greater error to be angry at those who do use it, to judge and censure them, and for no other reason to conceive prejudices against them and their ministry. A great strait, saith he, poor ministers are in, when some will not hear them, if they do not use the Lord's Prayer, and others will not hear them if they do.[t] What is to be done in this case? We must walk according to the light we have, and approve ourselves to God, either in using or not using it, and wait for the day when God will end the matter; which I hope he will do in his own due time.

He was in the close of his exposition of the Lord's Prayer, when a dark cloud was brought upon his assemblies, and he was necessitated to contract his sails.

[In the year 1680, his son and biographer, Mr. Matthew Henry, having nearly completed his eighteenth year, was conducted to London, together with his relation and friend, Mr. Robert Bosier, and placed under the care of that "holy, faithful minister, Mr. Thomas Doolittle, who then lived at Islington."[u] This event gave rise to the following letters:

From the Rev. Philip Henry, to Mr. Matthew Henry.

My Dear Child;

Your letter to me I received, and your mother also hers. In the former, an account of your being busy, at which we were glad; in the latter, of your being not well, and that troubles us; but we are in hope, that this night's post will bring us better tidings. However, we desire to acquiesce in the will of God, in whose hand *our times* are, and at whose disposal are all our ways; who doth always that which is just and righteous, always that which is best to those who love him. I am at Boreatton, where I expected your mother this morning, as we appointed, but, instead of coming herself, she sends Roger with your two letters, and her desire to me to answer them from hence by way of Shrewsbury. They are all well, blessed be God, both there and here. My Lord Paget intended to have gone from hence to-morrow, which hastened me hither a week sooner than I expected, and caused a failure at home yesterday, no chapel-day; but his stay, now, is till next week. I am comforted, that you acknowledge God in your distemper, and are prepared to receive, with patience, what he appoints. The two last subjects we were upon when you left Broad Oak,—faith and repentance,—I hope were made profitable to you. He that truly repents of sin, and truly believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, nothing can come amiss to him; things present are his, things to come are his; life, death; this world, and the other world. Though you are at a distance from us, you are near to him, who, according to his promise, is a present help, to those that fear him, in every time of need. Our poor prayers for you, you may be sure, are not, shall not, be wanting,—that, if the Lord please, you may have health to ply the work you came about, that you

n P. Henry. Com. Pl. Book. Orig. MS.
o P. Henry. Mem. of Mrs. Savage, *ut supra.* p. 217.
p P. Henry. Orig. MS.
q P. Henry. Life of Lieut. Illidge, by Matt. Henry. Misc. Works, vid *post.*
r See "A Guide to goe to God, or an explanation of the perfect Patterne of Prayer, the Lord's Prayer," by [Dr.] W. Gouge. 4to. 1636.
s See the Larger Catechism argued upon by the Assembly of Divines. 4to. 187. And their Directory for public worship. ed. 1793. p. 539.
t See Letters to and from Dr. Doddridge, published by Mr. Stedman. pp, 14. 15. and Dr. Doddridge's Exposition on Luke xi. 1, 13. n. d.
u Life of Matt. Henry, p. 26. *ut supra.* It may be thought, indeed, that he who taught his daughter Hebrew at seven years of age, had little occasion to send his son from under the paternal roof, in order to prepare him for the church; but Philip Henry was a public spirited man, and he found that his frequent labours in the ministry were incompatible with the constant attentions which education indispensably requires. Hist. of Dissenters. v. 2. p. 291. A list of Mr. Doolittle's pupils may be seen in Dr. Toulmin's Historical View, p. 584.

may serve the will of God in your generation; if otherwise, that you may be satisfied in what he doth; and so we, by his grace, shall endeavour to be also. Commend us to Mr. Doolittel, and his wife, whose tender love to you, and care concerning you, we shall always acknowledge with all thankfulness; also to Cousin Robert,[y] who, I know, will help to bear your burthen. The Lord Almighty bless you, my dear child, and cause his face to shine upon you, and send us good news in your next concerning you. Amen. This, from

Your loving father,

Aug. 16, 1680. P. H.[w]

From the Rev. Philip Henry, to Mr. Robert Bosier.

August 28, 1680.

Dear Cousin;

I received yours, of August 24; the former part whereof, which was concerning yourself, gave cause for a great deal of joy and thankfulness to our good God, that you are so well pleased in your present circumstances of improvement; and, I hope, will be so more and more. I like it well, that you are put upon the exercise of your gifts, which is the ready way to increase, and add to them; for, *to him that hath, shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly;* and, I doubt not, but, if you set about it, in the strength of the divine grace, and not in your own strength, you will find that grace both ready to you, and sufficient for you. Your Concordance I forbear to send till I hear from you again. Notes upon the Galatians, &c. I have none yet, else you should have them. Strive not to be large, but concise, and close, and substantial, wherein, here, you wanted an example. I pray, be careful, in a special manner, about secret communion; for, you know, as *that* is kept up, or falls, accordingly the *soul prospers.* Do not over-tire yourself with study, especially by candle; fair and softly goes far. Though you do well to bewail your loss of precious time, yet, blessed be God for what you have redeemed; and, though it is true, as things are with you, *now* is your time, if ever, to be *busy;* yet health and strength must be considered, and nothing done to over-drive.

The latter part of your letter, which was concerning Matthew, gave us some trouble, yet I thank you that you were so large and particular in it. We have freely yielded him up, and our interest in him, as well as we can, to our Heavenly Father; and his will be done! I have written to him, as you will see,—if he be willing and able, and there be cause, with advice of friends,—to hasten home; and, if he must so leave you, it will be an instance,—that man purposes, but God disposes.

Present my dear love and respects to Mr. Doolittel, and to his wife, to whom I am much obliged for their kindness, which I shall ever acknowledge, whatever the event be. Fail not to write as there may be occasion. Here is room only to tell you, that we are all remembered to you; and, particularly, that I am,

Your true friend,

P. H.

This was intended for the superscription, but the paper being thin, I chose to enclose it. My two last sabbaths' absence hence, so quickly after the former three, at London, though I designed it not, hath caused reports, as if we had quite done, but I hope it is not so. To-morrow, God willing, we shall set the plough in again, begging of God, that late intermissions may quicken desires, and make the word so much the sweeter. Concerning Matthew I know not what to say more than I have said. The Lord prepare and fit us for evil tidings! I will not say, our *life is bound up in the life of the lad,* but much of the comfort of our life is; and yet, Father, *thy will be done!* Our cisterns may, and will, dry up, first or last, but our Fountain remains for ever.[x]]

CHAPTER VII.

THE REBUKES HE LAY UNDER, AT BROAD OAK; BETWEEN THE YEARS 1680 AND 1687.

In the beginning of the year 1681, in April and May, the country was greatly afflicted and threatened by an extreme drought; there was no rain for several weeks, the grass failed. Corn, that was sown, languished; and much that was intended to be sown could not. The like had not been known for many years. It was generally apprehended that a dearth would ensue, especially in that country, which is for the most part dry. And now it was *time to seek the Lord;* and, according to his own appointment, to *ask of him rain in the season thereof.* Several serious thinking people being together at the funeral of that worthy minister of Jesus Christ, Mr. Malden, it was there said, how requisite it was that there should be some time set apart on purpose for fasting and prayer, in a solemn assembly, upon this occasion. Thomas Millington, of Weston, in Hodnet Parish in Shropshire, desired it might be at his house; and Tuesday, June 14, was the day pitched upon. The connivance of authority was presumed upon because no disturbance of meetings was heard of at London, or any where else. Mr. Henry was desired to come and give his assistance at that day's work. He asked upon what terms they stood with their neighbouring justices, and it was answered, "Well enough." The drought continuing in extremity, some that had not used to come to such meet

[y] Robert Bosier

[w] Orig. MS.

[x] Orig. MS.

ings, yet came thither, upon the apprehensions they had of the threatening judgment which the country was under. Mr. Edward Bury,[a] of Bolas, well known by several useful books he hath published, prayed; Mr. Henry prayed, and preached on Psalm lxvi. 18.—*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me;* whence his doctrine was, —That iniquity, regarded in the heart, will certainly spoil the success of prayer. When he was in the midst of his sermon, closely applying this truth, Sir T. V.[b] of Hodnet, and Mr. M.[c] of Ightfield, two justices of the peace for Shropshire, with several others of their retinue, came suddenly upon them; disturbed them, set guards upon the house door, and came in themselves, severely rallied all they knew, reflected upon the late Honourable House of Commons, and the vote they passed concerning the present unseasonableness of putting the laws in execution against Protestant Dissenters, as if, in so voting, they had acted beyond their sphere, as they did who took away the life of King Charles the First. They diverted themselves with very abusive and unbecoming talk; swearing, and cursing, and reviling bitterly. Being told the occasion of the meeting was to *seek to turn away the anger of God from us* in the present drought, it was answered;—"Such meetings as these were the cause of God's anger." While they were thus entertaining themselves, their clerks took the names of those that were present, in all, about one hundred and fifty, and so dismissed them for the present. Mr. Henry hath noted, in the account he kept of this event, that the justices came to this good work from the ale-house upon Prees Heath, about two miles off: to which, and the bowling-green adjoining, they, with other justices, gentlemen, and clergymen, of the neighbourhood, had long before obliged themselves to come every Tuesday, during the summer time, under the penalty of twelve-pence a time if they were absent; and there to spend the day in drinking and bowling; which is thought to be as direct a violation of the law of the land; *viz.* the Statute of 33d Henry VIII. cap. 9. "for debarring unlawful games," which was never yet repealed, as the meeting was of the Statute of 22d Car. II.; and, as much more to the dishonour of God, and the scandal of the Christian profession, as cursing, and swearing, and drunkenness, are worse than praying, and singing psalms, and hearing the word of God.[d] It is supposed the justices knew of the meeting before, and might have prevented it by the least intimation; but they were willing to take the opportunity of making sport to themselves, and trouble to their neighbours. After the feat done, they returned back to the ale-house, and made themselves and their companions merry with calling over the names they had taken, making their reflections as they saw cause, and recounting the particulars of the exploit. There was one of the company, whose wife happened to be present at the meeting, and her name taken among the rest; with which upbraiding him, he answered, that she had been better employed than he was, and if Mr. Henry might be admitted to preach in a church, he would go a great many miles to hear him. For which words he was forthwith expelled their company, and never more to show his face again at that bowling-green; to which he replied,—if they had so ordered long ago, it had been a great deal the better for him and his family. Two days after they met again at Hodnet, where, upon the oath of two witnesses, who, as was supposed, were sent on purpose to inform, they signed and sealed two records of conviction. By one record, they convicted the master of the house, and fined him £20, and £5 more as constable of the town that year; and, with him, all the persons present, whose names they had taken, and fined them 5*s.* a piece, and issued out warrants accordingly. By another record, they convicted the two ministers, Mr. Bury and Mr. Henry. The Act makes it only punishable to preach, or teach, in any such conventicle; and yet they fined Mr. Bury £20, though he only prayed, and did not speak one word in the way either of preaching or teaching, not so much as,—"Let us pray;" however, they said, "Praying was teaching;"[e] and, right or wrong, he must be fined; though his great piety, peaceableness, and usefulness, besides his deep poverty, one would think, might have pleaded for him, against so palpable a piece of injustice. They took £7 off from him, and laid it upon others, as they saw cause; and, for the remaining £13, he being utterly unable to pay it, they took from him, by distress, the bed which he lay upon, with blanket and rug; also, another feather-bed, nineteen pair of sheets, most of them new; of which he could not prevail to have so much as one pair returned for him to lie in; also, books, to the value of £5, besides brass and pewter. And, though he was at this time perfectly innocent of that heinous crime of preaching and teaching, with which he was charged, (for so the record runs

[a] 1700. Friday, May 10. This week, old Mr. Bury, of Bolas, in Shropshire, was buried, an aged nonconformist, some time a fellow-labourer and sufferer with my dear father, now gone to his reward; —few left of the old generation. Lord, pour out of thy Spirit on our sons and our daughters! Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig. MS. Mr. Bury was born A. D. 1616. He died May 5, 1700. Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 141, &c.

[b] Sir Thomas Vernon. Orig. MS. P. Henry.

[c] Charles Mainwaring, Esq. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[d] See Baxter's Eng. Noncon. p. 183, 4to. 1690.

[e] In the case of Robert Collins, A. M. it was contended, that "presbyterian preaching and praying was all one; for they, in their prayers, would undertake to teach Almighty God." The counsel for the prosecutor prayed the bench to call for a dictionary, and said, "There they would find, that *prædicare* and *orare* were the same." See the Noncon. Mem. v. 2. p. 75. *ut supra.* Also, v 3. p. 151.

again and again, concerning Mr. Henry and Mr. Bury,—*Quod ad tunc et ibidem precaverunt, predicaverunt et docuerunt,)* yet he had no way to right himself, but by appealing to the justices themselves in quarter sessions, who would be sure to affirm their own decree, as the justices in Montgomeryshire had done not long before in a like case, especially when it was to recover to themselves treble costs. So the good man sat down with his loss, and *took joyfully the spoiling of his goods;* knowing in himself, that he had, *in heaven, a better and a more enduring substance.*

But Mr. Henry being the greatest criminal,[f] and having done the most mischief, must needs be animadverted upon accordingly; and, therefore he was fined £40; the pretence of which was this: In the year 1679, October 15, Mr. Kynaston, of Oatly, a justice of peace in Shropshire, meeting him and some others coming, as he supposed, from a conventicle, he was pleased to record their conviction, upon the notorious evidence and circumstances of the fact. The record was filed at Salop the next sessions after, but no notice was ever sent of it, either to Mr. Henry, or the justices of Flintshire; nor any prosecution upon it, against any of the parties charged; (the reason of which, Mr. Henry, in a narrative[g] he wrote of this affair, supposeth to be not only the then favourable posture of public affairs towards dissenters, but also the particular prudence and lenity of Mr. Kynaston;) so that, having never smarted for this, he could not be supposed to be deterred from the like offence; nor, if he were wronged in that first conviction, had he ever any opportunity of making his appeal. However, the justices being resolved he should have *summum jus,* thought that first record sufficient to give denomination to a second offence, and so he came to be fined double. This conviction, according to the direction of the Act, they certified to the next adjoining justices of Flintshire, who had all along carried themselves with great temper and moderation towards Mr. Henry, and had never given him any disturbance; though, if they had been so minded, they had not wanted opportunities; but they were now necessitated to execute the sentences of the Shropshire justices. It was much pressed upon him to pay the fine, which might prevent his own loss and the justices' trouble. But he was not willing to do it, partly, because he would give no encouragement to such prosecutions, nor voluntarily reward the informers for that which he thought they should rather be punished for; and partly because he thought himself wronged in the doubling of the fine.[h] Whereupon his goods were distrained upon, and carried away; in the doing of which many passages occurred which might be worth the noting, but, that the repetition of them would perhaps grate, and give offence to some. Let it therefore suffice, waving the circumstances, to remember only that their warrant, not giving them authority to break open doors, nor their watchfulness getting them an opportunity to enter the house, they carried away about thirty-three cart-loads of goods without doors, corn cut upon the ground, hay, coals, &c. This made a great noise in the country, and raised the indignation of many against the decrees which prescribed this grievousness; while Mr. Henry bore it with his usual evenness and serenity of mind, not at all moved or disturbed by it. He did not boast of his sufferings, or make any great matter of them; but would often say,—Alas, this is nothing to what others suffer, nor to what we ourselves may suffer before we die! And yet he rejoiced, and blessed God that it was not for debt, or for evil doing, that his goods were carried away. —And, saith he, while it is for well doing that we suffer, they cannot harm us. Thus he writes in his Diary upon it;—How oft have we said that changes are at the door; but, blessed be God, there is no sting in this! He frequently expressed the assurance he had, that, whatever damage he sustained, —God is able to make it up again. And, as he used to say,—Though we may be losers *for* Christ, yet we shall not be losers *by* him in the end. He had often said, that his preaching was likely to do the most good, when it was sealed to by suffering; and, if this be the time, saith he, welcome the will of God even this also shall turn to the furtherance of the gospel of Christ. *Bene agere et male pati vere Christianum est.*[i]

Soon after this, was the assizes for Flintshire held at Mold, where Sir George Jeffries,[k] afterwards Lord Chancellor, then Chief Justice of Chester, sat Judge. He did not, in private conversation seem to applaud what was done in this matter, so as was expected; whether out of a private pique against some that had been active in it, or for what other reason is not known; but it was said, he pleasantly

f See an Account of the Rev. John Baily. Mather's History of New England, book iii. p. 233; and Middleton's Biog. Evang. v. 4. p. 102. oct. 1786.

g This MS. is entitled, "An Account of the Proceedings against the Rev. Philip Henry, and others, for Preaching and Praying in the House of Mr. Thomas Millington, of Weston, in the Parish of Hodnet, in the County of Salop, in the reign of Charles II. in the year 1681." It is in the hand-writing of Mr. Henry, and possessed by Mr. Witton.

h This refusal is thought and termed contempt, stubbornness, and what not. But let God and the world judge. It is suppose the easier they come by the fines, the likelier they will be to com again. Besides, as yet, the general practice of good peop throughout the nation is to refuse payment, and to suffer distres though it be found, for the most part, to inflame the reckonin P. Henry. Orig. MS.

i Appendix, No. XVI. See 1 Pet. ii. 20.

k See Granger's Biog. Hist. v. 3. p. 368, and the Life of Lo North, 4to. 1742, p. 209, &c.

asked some of the gentlemen, by what new law they pressed carts, as they passed upon their occasions along the road, to carry away goods distrained for a conventicle? It was also said, that he spoke with some respect of Mr. Henry; saying, he knew him, and his character, well, and that he was a great friend of his mother's, (Mrs. Jeffries of Acton, near Wrexham, a very pious, good woman,) and that sometimes, at his mother's request, Mr. Henry had examined him in his learning, when he was a schoolboy, and had commended his proficiency. And it was much wondered at by many, that, of all the times Sir George Jeffries went that circuit, though it is well enough known what was his temper, and what the temper of that time, yet he never sought any occasion against Mr. Henry, nor took the occasions that were offered, nor countenanced any trouble intended him, though he was the only nonconformist in Flintshire. One passage I remember, not improper to be mentioned; there had been an agreement among some ministers, (I think it began in the West of England, where Mr. Allen[l] was,) to spend some time, either in secret, or in their families, or both, between six and eight o'clock every Monday morning, in prayer for the church of God, and for the land and nation, more fully and particularly than at other times, and to make that their special errand at the throne of grace; and to engage as many of their praying friends as ever they could to the observance of it. This had been communicated to Mr. Henry, by some of his friends at London, and he punctually observed it in his own practice, I believe, for many years. He also mentioned it to some of his acquaintance, who did in like manner observe it. It happened that one in Denbighshire,[m] to whom he had communicated it, was so well pleased with it, that he wrote a letter of it to a friend of his at a distance; which letter happened to fall into hands that perverted it, and made information upon it, against the writer and receiver of the letter, who were bound over to the Assizes, and great suspicions Sir George Jeffries had, that it was a branch of the presbyterian plot,[n] and rallied the parties accused severely.

It appeared, either by the letter, or by the confession of the parties, that they received the project from Mr. Henry, which, it was greatly feared, would bring him into trouble; but Sir George, to the admiration of many, let it fall,[o] and never inquired further into it. It seems, there are some men, whose *ways so please the Lord, that he makes even their enemies to be at peace with them;* and there is nothing lost by trusting in God.

Mr. Henry, at the next assizes after he was distrained upon, was presented by one of the high constables,—1. For keeping a conventicle at his house; and, 2. For saying,—That the law for suppressing conventicles ought not to be obeyed, and that there was never a tittle of the word of God in it. As to this latter presentment, it was altogether false. He had, indeed, in discourse with the high constable, when he insisted so much upon the law, which required him to be so rigorous in the prosecution, objected,—That all human laws were not to be obeyed, merely because they were laws. But, as to any such reflections upon the law he suffered by, he was far from it, and had prudence enough to keep silence at that time; for it was an evil time when so many were made *offenders for a word.* But these presentments met with so little countenance from Judge Jeffries, that Mr. Henry only entered his appearance in the prothonotary's office, and they were no more heard of; wherein he acknowledged the hand of God, *who turneth the hearts of the children of men as the rivulets of water.*

As to what was taken from him by the distress, they who took it made what markets they pleased of it, payed those they employed, and, what the remainder was, is not known for certain; but, it was said, that the following summer about £27 was paid to Sir T. V., of which, and the rest that was levied in other places, which amounted to a considerable sum, it was credibly reported, and I have not heard it contradicted, that neither the king nor the poor had their share, which, by the Act, is to be two-thirds, nor the informers all theirs neither; but, people said, the gentlemen had occasion for it all. But, as they that had it were never the richer for it, so he that lost it would often say,—That he found that God did so abundantly bless the remainder to him, that he was never the poorer; which he would mention for the encouragement of his friends, not to balk duty, as he used to express it, for fear of suffering.

In the same year, 1681, happened a public discourse at Oswestry, between the then Bishop of St. Asaph, Dr. William Lloyd,[p] now Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and some nonconformist ministers, of which Mr. Henry was one. The story, in short, is this:—That learned bishop, at his first coming to the diocese of St. Asaph, in his zeal for

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l The Rev. Joseph Alleine. Nat. 1633; ob. Nov. 1688. See his Life and Letters, duod. 1671; lately reprinted.

m Mr. Ambrose Lewis. MS. See *ante*, p. 29.

n See Baxter Reliq. part. iii. p. 186, &c. Various curious pamphlets were originated by the accusation; particularly the Horrid Sin of Man-catching, the Second Part, 4to. 1681: and "No Protestant Plot, in Three Parts," 4to. 1681, 1682.

o At the same time, he (the judge) caused Mr. Ambrose Lewis, his old school-master at Wrexham, in Denbighshire, a worthy good man, Mr. Henry's great friend, to be presented, and rallied against him particularly, with great keenness in his charge to the grand jury, for keeping conventicles, as he called it, in the school; "by which means," saith he, "your children get the twang of fanaticism in their noses when they are young, and they will never leave it." Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

p Nat. A. D. 1627; ob. 30th August, 1717. Mr. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 20. p. 347, &c.

the established church, set himself with vigour to reduce dissenters to it; and, that he might do it with the *cords of a man*, he resolved, before he took any other methods, to reason the matter with them, and to endeavour their conviction by discourse, in which he had a very great felicity, both by his learning and temper. If there were any that declined discoursing with him, he improved that against them very much; urging, as he wrote afterwards to Mr. Henry,—"That no man can pretend conscience for not coming when he is required, to give an account of his religion, to them that have authority to demand it, by the laws under which he lives, and to hear from their mouths what can be said for the established religion. These are things from which conscience is so far from exempting, that the great rule of conscience requires it, as an indispensable duty, that we should be always ready to *give an account of the hope that is in us*; and that we should hear them that are in *Moses's chair*,[q] &c.; and, therefore, those who refused this, he would consider as men governed, not by conscience, but obstinacy."

He publicly discoursed with the quakers at Llanfyllin, in Montgomeryshire; their champion was Dr. Lloyd, a physician. One of the most considerable nonconformist ministers in his diocese was Mr. James Owen, of Oswestry,[r] then very young, but well known since by his learned book, which he calls, "A Plea for Scripture Ordination;" proving ordination by presbyters, without diocesan bishops, to be valid, (published in the year 1694,) a point of controversy which he was then obliged, in his own defence, to search into. Several discourses the bishop had with him in private; at last, his lordship was pleased to appoint him to give him the meeting in the town-hall at Oswestry, on Tuesday, September 27, 1681, there to give account, "by what right he exercised the ministry, not having episcopal ordination." He directed him also to procure what other ministers he could to assist him, for he would be glad to hear what any of them had to say for themselves. The notice was very short, not above four or five days. Some, whose assistance was desired, apprehended it might do more hurt than good, and might be prejudicial to their own liberty, and therefore declined it. It was not agreeable to Mr. Henry's mild and modest temper, to appear in such circumstances; but he was loth to desert his friend, Mr. Owen, and so, with much importunity, he was prevailed with to come to Oswestry, at the time appointed; and there came no other but he and Mr. Jonathan Roberts, of Denbighshire, in the diocese of Bangor, a plain man, of great integrity, and a very good scholar. The bishop came, according to appointment, and brought with him, for his assistant, the famous Mr. Henry Dodwell.[s] Mr. Henry, who was utterly a stranger to the bishop, pressed hard to have had the discourse in private, before a select number, but it would not be granted. He also desired his lordship that it might not be expected from him, being of another diocese, to concern himself in the discourse, but only a hearer. "Nay, Mr. Henry," said the bishop, "it is not the concern of my diocese alone, but it is the common cause of religion, and, therefore, I expect you should interest yourself in it more than as a hearer." His lordship was pleased to promise, that nothing that should be said by way of argument, should be any way turned to the prejudice of the disputants, nor advantage taken of it to give them trouble. There were present divers of the clergy and gentry of the country, with the magistrates of the town, and a great number of people, which, if it could have been avoided, was not easy to Mr. Henry, who never loved any thing that made a noise; herein like his Master,[t] who *did not strive, nor cry*. The discourse began about two o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till between seven and eight at night; much was said, *pro* and *con*, touching the identity of bishops and presbyters, the bishoping and unbishoping of Timothy and Titus,[u] the validity of presbyterian ordination, &c. It was managed with a great deal of liberty, and no under the strict laws of disputation, which made i hard to give any tolerable account of the particular of it. The arguments on both sides may better b fetched from the books written on the subject tha from such a discourse. The bishop managed hi part of the conference with a great deal of gravity calmness, and evenness of spirit, and therein gav an excellent pattern to all that are in such stations Mr. Henry's remark upon this business, in his Diary is this;—That, whereas, many reports went abroa far and near, concerning it, every one passing thei judgment upon the result of it, as they stood affec ed; for my own part, saith he, upon reflection, find I have great reason to be ashamed of my man fold infirmities and imperfections; and yet, do ble God, that, seeing I could manage it no better, to d the truth more service, there was not more said an done to its disservice. To God be glory. But the were others, who said, that Mr. Henry was an i strument of glorifying God, and serving the churc in that affair, almost as much as in any thing th ever he did, except the preaching of the gosp And some, who were adversaries to the cause

q See Matt. xxiii. 2.

r Afterwards of Shrewsbury; where he died, April 8, 1706, æt. 52. See his Life, *ut supra*; and Memoirs of Mrs. Savage. Appendix, No. IV.

s Nat. Oct. 1641; ob. 7th June, 1711. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 12, p. 182, &c. There is a curious statement respecting him in the Preface to Dr. S. Clarke's Discourses, vol. 1. p. xvi. oct. 1730, Benjamin, Lord Bishop of Salisbury.

t "I will always call Jesus my Master." Geo. Herbert. Liv by Walton, v. 2. p. 75. *ut supra*.

u See a curious volume bearing this title, 4to. 1636.

pleaded, though they were not convinced by his arguments, yet, by his great meekness and humility, and that truly Christian spirit, which appeared so evidently in the whole management, were brought to have a better opinion of him, and the way in which he walked.

The conference[v] broke off a little abruptly. The bishop and Mr. Henry being somewhat close at an argument, in the recapitulation of what had been discoursed of, Mr. Jonathan Roberts whispered to Mr. Henry,—"Pray, let my lord have the last word;" which a justice of peace upon the bench over-hearing, presently replied;—"You say, 'My lord shall have the last word;' but he shall not; for I will.—We thank God, we have the sword of power in our hands; and, by the grace of God, we will keep it; and it shall not rust; and I hope every lawful magistrate will do as I do. And, look to yourselves, gentlemen, by the grace of God, I will root you out of the country." To which a forward man in the crowd, said,—"*Amen!* Throw them down stairs." This the bishop heard with silence, but the mayor of the town took order for their safety.

Two days after this discourse, the bishop wrote a very obliging letter to Mr. Henry, to signify to him how very much he was pleased with the good temper and spirit that he found in him at Oswestry, and that he looked upon him as one that intended well, but laboured under prejudices; and to desire further acquaintance and conversation with him; particularly that he would come to him, straightway, to Wrexham.

[The letter was as follows;—

"Sir;

"I was much pleased with the good temper I found in you at the conference at Oswestry, and sorry to find so little of it in those to whom you had joined yourself; therefore, though I would have bestowed a day or two more with them, in that service, if I had known what answer I should have received from Mr. Evans, of Wrexham, and Mr. John Trevors, I do not think it worth while to seek for an answer from men that contend, not for truth, but only for victory. But, for you, Sir, in whom I saw better appearances, I would go a good way to have an intercourse with you, could I be sure of finding you at home; and, since I cannot be sure of that, I send this bearer to desire you would meet me at Wrexham, where I intend, God willing, to be on Friday morning, and to stay all day; and allow me as much of your company as you can. Give me leave to tell you, though I think you put a wrong interpretation upon 2 Timothy iv. 17. it is probable, that, in thus thinking, I may follow a prejudice of my own; and I know no reason to suspect this in myself, but on account of human infirmity; but, I make bold to say, with St. Austin, 'I cannot be a heretic.' I trust God will keep me from being obstinate in any error; for I know, and desire to follow, none but him. If you are of the same disposition, there may be a good effect of this meeting. Howsoever, there can be no bad of it, as far as I am able to judge. God direct us in the way of peace and holiness!

"Your humble servant,

"In the Lord Jesus Christ,

W. St. Asaph."[w]

"September 29, 1680."

About three months after he sent for him again to Chester; in both which interviews a great deal of discourse, with much freedom, passed between them in private, in which they seemed to vie in nothing more than candour and obligingness, showing to each other *all meekness*. I remember the bishop was pleased to show him his plan for the government of his diocese, and the method he intended to take in church-censures, which Mr. Henry very well approved of; but pleasantly told his lordship, he hoped he would take care that Juvenal's verse should not be again verified. (Sat. 2.)

Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas.

Which the bishop smiled at, and told him he would take care it should not. His lordship, observing his true catholic charity and moderation, told him he did not look upon him as σχισμάτικος, a schismatic;[x] but only as παρασυνάγωγος, a separatist; and, that if he were in his diocese, he did not question but that he should find out some way to make him useful. But all his reasonings could not satisfy Mr. Henry's conscience of the lawfulness of being re-ordained and conforming. The bishop, for some years after, when he came that way, towards London, either called on Mr. Henry, at his house, or sent for him to him at Whitchurch, and still with all outward expressions of friendship.

[With his characteristic benevolence, Mr. Henry took occasion to avail himself of the favour[y] of the worthy prelate, on behalf of his oppressed brethren, as appears by the following interesting letter:—

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v Appendix, No. XVII.

w From an authentic copy.

x "Envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness," are the ingredients of schism. See the Enquiry into the nature of schism, *post*. Who will not join heartily in the response,—From all these, "Good Lord, deliver us?"

See the Tracts of the ever-memorable Hales, of Eton, p. 184. duod. 1721; and Bishop Taylor's Liberty of Prophesying, sect. xxii. Works, *ut supra*, vol. 8. p. 230. Likewise, Howe's Works, vol. 8. p. lxvi.

y The Rev. Richard Stretton used to say, that he kept up his acquaintance with persons of estate and figure as long as he could improve it for the doing of good; and, when it would no longer be made to serve that purpose, he let it drop. Funeral Sermon for Mr. Stretton, *post*.

For the Right Reverend
William, Lord Bishop of St. Asaph.

My Lord;

The experience which I have had of your very great candour, together with the particular leave you were pleased to give me of applying myself to you, as there might be occasion of this nature, are my encouragement to trouble your lordship with these few lines. I understand there are several protestant dissenters of your diocese, that, being excommunicate, are in danger of being cast into prison, by writs remaining in the sheriff's hands for that purpose, concerning whom, when I was with you at Chester, you were pleased to say,—"It was not for their mere nonconformity, but for withholding their church dues;" and, having made inquiry about it, I do find, that there are but few of them chargeable with that neglect, and, of those few, there is one William David, of Myvod, on whose behalf the minister of the place hath written the enclosed, whereby it will appear, that his default therein was not wilful and usual, but merely accidental; which, when your lordship sees, I hope it will prevail to obtain from you his discharge. And, for the rest, who suffer for not conforming, I have personal acquaintance with divers of them, both about Wrexham, and in Montgomeryshire; particularly with Mr. Walter Griffiths, and Richard Gardner, and Evan Roberts; and have reason to believe concerning them, that they are religious, sober, peaceable men, though under dissatisfactions in the things imposed; and, being such, I would entreat your lordship, that your lenity may be extended towards them, and the rather, considering, that the casting them into the jail is like to be the ruin of themselves, and of their families, as to this world, which I am confident can be no way pleasing to you in the reflection. Besides, the process against them, if I be not misinformed, is upon presentments made in your predecessor's days long since; and if, in other cases, the action dies with the person,[z] it were but reasonable it should in this also. Would your lordship please to forbear but for a while this highest act of severity towards them, it may be, upon further conference with them, and knowledge of them, you will find them other persons than they are represented to you to be. I humbly beg your lordship's pardon for my boldness with you herein; and subscribe myself,

My Lord,
Your servant, much obliged,
March 25, 1682. PHILIP HENRY.[a]]

The trouble which Mr. Henry was in, about the meeting at Weston, obliged him for a while to keep his sabbaths at home somewhat private; but, in the year 1682, he took a greater liberty, and many flocked to him on Lord's days, through the kind connivance of the neighbouring magistrates; but, in the year 1683, when the meetings were generally suppressed throughout the kingdom, he was again necessitated to contract his sails, and confine his labours more to his own family, and his friends that visited him. He continued his attendance at Whitewell chapel as usual; and, when he was abridged of his liberty, he often blessed God for his quietness. Once, when one of the curates preached a bitter sermon against dissenters, on a Lord's day morning, some wondered that Mr. Henry would go again in the afternoon, for the second part.—But, saith he, if he do not know his duty, I know mine; and, I bless God, I can find honey in a carcass.

In this time of treading down, and of perplexity, he stirred little abroad,[b] being forced, as he used to express it,—To throw the plough under the hedge; but he preached constantly at home without disturbance.

[During this period he preached over the Old-Testament types of Christ, real and personal: twelve of each; and the principal passages in the history of Christ's last sufferings; also, Psalm lxxiii. and part of Psalm lxxvii. besides many other occasional subjects.[c]]

He often comforted himself with this;—When we cannot do what we would, if we do what we can, God will accept us; when we cannot keep open shop, we must drive a secret trade. And he would say,—There is a mean, if we could hit it, between fool-hardiness and faint-heartedness. While he had some opportunity of being useful at home, he was afraid lest he should prejudice that by venturing abroad. One of his friends, in London, earnestly soliciting him to make a visit thither in this time of restraint in the country, he thus wrote to him;—I should be glad once more to kiss my native soil, though it were but with a kiss of valediction; but my indisposedness to travel, and the small prospect there is of doing good to countervail the pains, are my prevailing arguments against it. I am here, it is true, buried alive, but I am quiet in my grave,[d] and have no mind to be a walking ghost.[e] We rejoice, and desire to be thankful, that God hath given us a home, and continued it to us, when so many, better than we, have not where to lay their head, having no certain dwelling-place. (It was at

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z *Actio personalis moritur cum persona.*—A maxim in law.

a Orig. MS. This letter, a little altered, was printed in the Protestant Dissenters' Magazine, v. 2. p. 456.

b Except to Boreatton. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

c Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.* See Mather's History of New England, book iv. p. 152.

d In allusion, no doubt, to the prophetic vision as to the state of the Jews, Ezek. xxxvii. 12, 13. See also Milton's Poetical Works, *ut supra*, v. 5. pp. 352, 353. and the notes. Samson Agonistes, 100, &c.

e "When spirits walk, and ghosts break up their graves."
Shakspeare. Hen. VI. 2d part, act I. sc. 4.
"Like a ghost, walk silent among men."
Ben Jonson. Works, v. 8. p. 411. *ut supra.*

the time of the dispersion of the French protestants.) Why they exiles, and not we? They strangers in a strange land, and not we? We must not say, *We will die in our nests;* lest God say, Nay: nor, We will *multiply our days as that bird,* the phœnix; (referring to Job xxix. 18.) lest God say, *This night thy soul shall be required of thee.* Our times, and all our ways, are at his disposal, absolutely and universally; and it is very well they are so.

At the time of the Duke of Monmouth's descent,[f] and the insurrection in the west, in the year 1685, Mr. Henry, as many others, (pursuant to a general order of the lord-lieutenant, for securing all suspected persons, and particularly all nonconformist ministers,) was taken up by a warrant from the deputy-lieutenants, and sent under a guard to Chester Castle, where he was about three weeks a close prisoner. He was lodged with some gentlemen and ministers that were fetched thither out of Lancashire, who were all strangers to him, but he had great comfort in the acquaintance and society of many of them.

[Thence he addressed to Mrs. Henry the following letter;—

July 8, 1685.

Dear heart;

I continue very well at present,—thanks be to God!—and feel nothing yet of the inconveniences of a prison. We are better accommodated, as I acquainted you in my last, than we could have expected, though we must pay for it. Just now, six ministers, nonconformists, are brought in hither from Lancashire, more than before; so far are we from enlargement. But our times are in God's hand, who hath sent us hither, I am confident, for good, though how, or which way, or wherein, I know not; but *He is faithful who hath promised.* My chamber-fellows and I differ something in our apprehensions of things past, which will not be helped; but, for the *unseen things* that are to come, that are eternal, we are all one. Our afternoons, till late, are filled with visitants, who love us, and wish us well, and are kind to us; but we cannot do with them what we would. I have not yet opened the little bottle I brought with me, not wanting it, and being more afraid of what might heat me, in regard we have no drink but strong, (unless very seldom,) which may turn to feverish distempers, wanting exercise. I have not trodden on the ground since Saturday, which, using myself to in the mornings, I thought the want of might be prejudicial; but hitherto, it is not. I have not tasted butter yet with bread, since I came from home. This dinner we had beans and bacon, salmon, &c. I am careful what I eat; not fishes and fleshes. Mrs. Wenlock was to see me yesterday, and brought me a bottle of wine. I bestow all of that kind in common with my companions, strangers here. Let me hear from you, how you do, and the children, &c. as oft as you can. Love to Matthew. Our guards change every hour, which makes it so very hard to come to us. I would gladly see him; but when, or how, I know not. I think there is little danger of any harm to him here, if there be none at home at his return. Love to Sarah and Eleanor, and to all the rest. Do what you can to get to heaven yourselves, and to help one another thither. Prepare for further sufferings, to which it may be these things are but the preamble; but all is well that ends everlastingly well. Thanks for all your love and faithfulness to me, and patience with me; the Lord will reward it. One of my fellow-prisoners last night received a letter from his wife, subscribed,—"So I rest, dear husband, in all duty and obedience, your obedient wife."—Such is Lancashire kindness; but deeds exceed words.

I am, in short, most entirely, and most affectionately, thine;

P. H.[g]]

He often spake of this imprisonment, not as a matter of complaint, but of thanksgiving,[h] and blessed God he was in nothing uneasy all the while. In a sermon to his family, the day after he came home, he largely and affectionately recounted the mercies of that providence; as for instance;—That his imprisonment was for no cause: it is guilt that makes a prison. That it was his security in a dangerous time. That he had good company in his sufferings, who prayed together, and read the Scriptures together, and discoursed to their mutual edification. That he had health there; not *sick; and in prison;* that he was visited and prayed for by his friends. That he was very cheerful and easy in his spirit, many a time asleep and quiet, when his adversaries were disturbed and unquiet. That his enlargement was speedy and unsought for, and that it gave occasion to the magistrates who committed him, to give it under their hands, that they had nothing in particular to lay to his charge; and, especially, that it was without a snare, which was the thing he feared more than any thing else.

It was a surprise to some that visited him in his imprisonment, and were big with the expectations of the Duke of Monmouth's success, to hear him say;—I would not have you to flatter yourselves with such hopes, for God will not do his work for us in these nations by that man; but our deliverance and salvation will arise some other way.

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f See the History of Taunton, pp. 135—170.

g Orig. MS.

h "The mercies of God are infinite; who doth, not only by his word, but also by his justice, make us fit for his kingdom. Little do our enemies know what good, by these things, they do unto us, and what wreck they bring to their own kingdom, while they set forth the wickedness thereof." Life of Mrs. Katharine Brettergh. 4to. 1676, p. 4. Bl. Lett.

It must not be forgotten how ready he was, nay, how studious and industrious, to serve and oblige such as had been any way instruments of trouble to him, as far as it lay in his power, and he had any opportunity to do it; so well had he learned that great lesson of forgiving and loving enemies: of this it were easy to give instances.

When a gentleman, who had sometimes been an instrument of trouble to him, had occasion to make use of his help to give him some light into a cause he had to be tried, Mr. Henry was very ready to serve him in it; and though he might have declined it, and it was somewhat against his own interest too, yet he appeared a witness for him, which so won upon the gentleman, that he was afterwards more friendly to him. Mentioning in his Diary the death of another gentleman in Shropshire, he notes,—That he was one that had been his professed enemy; but, saith he, God knows I have often prayed for him.

Some have wondered to see how courteously and friendly he would speak to such as had been any way injurious to him, when he met with them, being as industrious to discover his forgiving of wrongs, as some are to discover their resentments of them: [thus exemplifying the sentiment he pressed on others;—When any have provoked you, you say, you will be even with them; there is a way not only to be even with them, but above them, and that is, —to forgive them.[i]]

It was said of Archbishop Cranmer,[k] that the way to make him one's friend, was to do him an unkindness; and I am sure it might be said of Mr. Henry, that, doing him an unkindness would not make him one's enemy. This minds me of an exemplary passage concerning his worthy friend Mr. Edward Lawrence. Once going, with some of his sons, by the house of a gentleman that had been injurious to him, he gave a charge to his sons to this purpose, —That they should never think or speak amiss of that gentleman for the sake of any thing he had done against him; but, whenever they went by his house should lift up their hearts in prayer to God for him, and his family. And, *who is he that will harm* those *who are* thus *followers of* him *that is good*, in his goodness? It is almost the only temporal promise in the New Testament, which is made to the meek, Matthew v. 5.—that *they shall inherit the earth*; the meaning whereof, Dr. Hammond, in his Practical Catechism, takes to be especially this; that, in the ordinary dispensations of God's providence, the most mild and quiet people are most free from disturbance. Those only have every man's hand against them, that have theirs against every man.[l]

[He often mentioned the memorandum which Dr. Prideaux[m] gave in the war-time to a gentleman who had been his pupil, containing three good lessons, in three Hebrew names twice put together, (lessons which he had well learned,) *Mishmah, Dumah, Massa*; Genesis xxv. 14. 1 Chronicles i. 30. which signify, *Hear, Keep silence, Bear.* The apostle has them together, James i. 19.—*Be swift to hear, slow to speak,*[n] *slow to wrath.*[o]

Being asked,—What are the common vices of the tongue, of which Christians ought more especially to beware?—he replied;—Vain, flattering, and proud speeches; also, much speaking; an open mouth is a sign of an empty heart; as a chest open is a sign nothing is in it; when money or jewels are within it, it is kept locked. *Filthy speaking*; we ought to sprinkle gracious discourses among our other discourses about worldly things; else, not wholesome food. False and profane speaking; beware of making use of scripture expressions without due reverence. Make not sport of the sins of others. Abusive speeches; our tongues must not be scourges, nor razors, nor swords.[p]

In advising as to the government of the tongue, he pressed commencement with the heart.[q]—Resolve, he added, to *Take heed*; but resolve in the strength of Christ. Be not *hasty in speech.* Commit the guidance of your tongue to God in prayer. He is the Maker of the tongue.[r]]

We shall next introduce some of Mr. Henry's letters to a person of quality in London. The beginning of his correspondence with that gentleman, (which continued to his death, and was kept up monthly for a great while,) was in the year 1686; and the following letter broke the ice:—

Honoured Sir;

Hoping you are, by this time, as you intended, returned to London, to your home and habitation

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i P. Henry. Com. Pl. Book. Orig. MS. *Overcome evil with good.* That is a noble victory indeed. This is the way not to be even with him that wrongs us, but to be above him. Poole's Annotations on Romans xii. 21. fol. 1688.

k Nat. July 2, 1498. He suffered martyrdom at Oxford in the sixty-seventh year of his age. See his Life by the Rev. J. Strype, M. A. fol. 1694.

l See Gen. xvi. 16.

m Dean of Norwich. He was a pupil of Dr. Busby's, and died 1st Nov. 1724, æt. 77. Aikin's Gen. Biog. v. 8, p. 340.

n We should keep a pair of scales between our heart and our mouth, to weigh what is suggested. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

o Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.* It is said of Mr. Eliot, that when he heard any ministers complain, that such and such in their flocks were too difficult for them, the strain of his answer still was,—Brother, compass them! Learn the meaning of those three little words, Bear, Forbear, Forgive. Life, by Cotton Mather, p. 36 duod. 1691.

p P. Henry. Orig. MS.

q The heart is the scribe that indites matter; the tongue is the pen that writes it down. Ps. xlv. 1. The heart is as he that rides upon a horse; the tongue is as the horse that is ridden. James iii 3. The heart is the pilot in the ship; the tongue is the ship James iii. 4. The heart is the fountain; words are as the streams Matt. xii. 34. The heart is the treasury; words are as stuf brought out of it. Matt. xii. 35. The heart is the root; word are the fruit. Prov. xv. 4. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

r P. Henry. Orig. MS.

there, I make bold, according to my promise, to salute you in a few lines. In the first place, to be your remembrancer of the vows of God which are upon you, upon the account of the many mercies of your journey, both in your going out, and in your coming in. Was not every step you took hedged about with special providence? Had not the *angels charge over you?* Did they not pitch their tents where you pitched yours? Did not *goodness and mercy follow* you,—and should it not then be had in thankful remembrance? Where mercy goes before, should not duty follow after? If you have Mr. Angier's Life, you will find there, pages 88, 89, a collection out of his Diary, of ten heads of mercies, acknowledged in a journey,[s] to heighten God's praises, and to quicken his own and others' hearts therein, and they are certainly very affecting. Next, Sir, I am to acquaint you, that I have faithfully disposed of the money you left with me at parting, to eight poor praying widows in this neighbourhood, as you appointed. And this, among all the rest of your alms'-deeds, is had in memorial before God;—it is fruit that will abound in your account;—*bread,* sent a voyage *upon the waters,* which you and yours will *find again after many days;* for, *he is faithful that hath promised.* The apostle's prayer shall be mine, 2 Corinthians ix. 10.—*Now he that ministereth seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness. Amen.*[t]

[Who shoots an arrow, and looks not after it;[u] or knocks at a door, and stays not for an answer?[v] *I will direct my prayer to Thee,* says holy David, Psalm v. 3, as an archer his arrow to the mark, *and will look up,* to see what becomes of it. And, again, Psalm lxxxv. 8. *I will hearken what God the Lord will say.* And so, another prophet, having been at prayer, says, Habakkuk ii. 1. *I will get me to my watch-tower.* Sometimes our heavenly Father withholds mercies, to quicken prayer; grants them, to awaken our thankful acknowledgments; or, if denied, to excite penitent reflections, searching and trying,—why, and wherefore: for, it is never so, but there is some cause. Thus the soul and God converse, and correspond. We send to him for some mercy wanted. He replies in his providence, either giving, delaying, or denying. We, in suitable returns, as there is occasion; and, if so, he is never wanting to rejoin, either in kind, or kindness, as he sees best.

With my due and true respects, I take leave, and rest,

Sir, Yours, ever obliged,
to honour and serve you, in our dear Lord,
November 3, 1686. PHILIP HENRY.[w]

For Henry Ashurst, Esq.
at his house in St. John-street,
London.

December 15, 1686.

Sir;

I received yours soon after the date of it; and, according to your order therein, I have distributed other 20*s.* to the same eight poor praying widows in this neighbourhood, to whom I gave the former. I did also oblige them to continue their supplications at the throne of grace on the same particular account, which you at first desired; and, I believe, they have done and do it accordingly; and, you may be sure, it shall not be in vain, because Truth itself hath said it shall not. Isaiah xlv. 19. It is true of prayer what is said of winter, that it rots not in the skies.[x] Though the answer be not always in the thing asked, yet it is in something else as good, or better. Abraham's prayer for Ishmael was heard in Isaac. Sometimes God answers us, by *strengthening us with strength in our souls,* Psalm cxxxviii. 3. He answered his Son so, Luke xxii. 42, 43. If the prayer be for the removal of a present burthen, and it be not removed, yet, if we are enabled with faith and patience to undergo it, the prayer is answered. If, for the bestowing of a desired mercy, as that of Moses, that he might go over into the promised land; if he say, as he did to him, Let it suffice thee; that is, if he give a contented frame of heart in the want

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s "1. *Direction in the right way;* want of this causeth wandering, labour, and sorrow. Ps. cvii. 7.

"2. Preservation of man and beast, of life and health, from falls, harm, from enemies, robbers, murderers: some have died in the way, as Rachel; others fallen sick by the way, as 1 Sam. xxx. 13. It is a mercy when God supports in travel, to endure heat and cold; for a horse to die, or be lame, in the way, is a great affliction; so, daily supply of new strength is mercy.

"3. Comfort in the way and weather, when both are good, and company is suitable and comfortable.

"4. Convenient places for rest, and good refreshment for noon and night.

"5. Seasonable provision of necessary food, and cheerful entertainment.

"6. Temporary ease from the burthen of domestic affairs, both care and labour, the mind and body both are eased; others take the burthen upon them for a time.

"7. Variety of objects to delight the sense, fair buildings, fruitful fields, pleasant meadows.

"8. Change of air; pleasantness and healthfulness there, by refreshing gales in the heat of the day.

"9. The society of friends whom we visit, and the mutual comfort that ariseth from their meeting after a time of absence, and from their friendly and hearty converse.

"10. Opportunity of understanding more fully how God hath answered our prayers for them; opportunity of soul-help, of doing and receiving good by joint prayer, and by conference, by declaring experiences, by stirring up one another to what is good." Life of the Rev. John Angier, pp. 88, 89. duod. 1685.

t Transposed from the 3rd edit. pp. 176, 177.

u See Ps. v. 3.

v See Gurnall's Christian in Complete Armour, part iii. pp. 603, 604, 4to. 1662.

w From an authentic copy.

x Beware of extremities; and, till the Lord hath truly brought downe *thy winter out of the sky, know it will never rot there,* it must be the mercifull calme of grace which must bring a settled state upon thy soule. Naaman's Disease and Cure, by Dan. Rogers, p. 264. fol. 1642.

of it, the prayer is answered; as was also that of Paul's, when he prayed that the thorn in the flesh might pass from him;—*My grace*, said he, *is sufficient for thee.* We have great need of heavenly wisdom, (the Lord give it!) both to discern and to improve answers to prayer; if we have them not in kind, if we have in kindness, we should be no less thankful. I shall be glad to hear, if God see good, that your child recovers; but, if not, if he sanctify the affliction to him and you, that is, further you in sanctification, do your souls good by it, bear you up under it in a quiet, patient, submissive frame, you will say, at last,—*It was well.* So, also, as to the fitting you with a convenient seat for your family; it were very desirable, if he please, that you should be sped in it; but, if his pleasure be rather to keep you longer in your present circumstances, and then, withal, to give you a heart to improve the same, and to take occasion, from the uncertainties and unsettlements of this world, to be so much the more diligent in making sure, what will be made sure, a building in heaven, *not made with hands*, you will be no loser thereby, but a gainer.

My thoughts of justifying faith and sincere repentance, are, 1. That they are choice gifts of God, Ephesians ii. 8. Acts xi. 18. If he give not to us to believe and to repent, we can neither believe nor repent; and therefore, in the want of them, we are to ask them: and, if we ask, he will give. 2. That they are the fruits of electing love. Those that were, from all eternity, given to Christ,—to all those, and to none but those, it is in time given to believe, and repent, Acts xiii. 48. John vi. 37; xii. 39, 40. If it be said, "Why doth he then find fault?" I should answer,—The decree is secret, which is concerning us, but that is revealed which is our duty; and to that we must attend. 3. That they are necessary conditions of pardon. There may perhaps be such a notion framed of a condition, as will by no means be applicable to them, but *sano sensu*, they are so required, that, if we have them not, our sin remains upon us. Luke xiii. 3—5. John iii. 36. If we have them, it is most certainly done away; 1 John i. 9. John iii. 16. not for their sake, but for *Christ's sake.* 4. That they are inseparable companions; where one is, there is the other also. He that says, "I believe," and doth not repent, presumes; he that says, "I repent," and doth not believe, despairs. Faith in Christ doth not justify *from* sin, where there is not godly sorrow *for* sin;[y] neither can sorrow for sin obtain pardon of it, where there is not faith in Jesus Christ, because *his blood*, alone, *cleanseth from all sin.* If your meaning were, what the *nature* of them is, and how they may be *known*, I have not left myself room in this paper to tell you. The Lord, by his grace, work them in us, and increase them more and more!

Please to give my most humble service to your good lady,[z] and to your virtuous daughter. I hope she doth not forget her baptismal covenant. The Lord fill you with comfort in each other, and in all your children, but especially, and above all, in himself, who is the Spring-head and Fountain!

With my due respects to your good self, Sir, I rest,
Yours, much obliged, to honour and serve you,
P. H.

For Henry Ashurst, Esq.
At his house in St. John-street,
London.[zz]]

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAST NINE YEARS OF HIS LIFE IN LIBERTY AND ENLARGEMENT AT BROAD OAK, FROM THE YEAR 1687.

[THE correspondence, already introduced, was early continued in the year 1687, by the following excellent letters:—

Sir;

Our last to each other, as it seems, were of the same date, and met upon the road. You begin with a good subject;—to have my thoughts of faith and repentance. They are the two hinges, upon which the door of our salvation turns; except we repent, and believe the gospel, we cannot possibly be accepted, and saved. Paul tells the elders of Ephesus, Acts xx. 20. that he had *kept back nothing that was profitable unto them;* and then adds, verse 21.—*testifying repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*,—as if those included all that is profitable.[a] But why *repentance towards God?* Because he is the party wronged and injured by sin; and, therefore, to him it is fit the penitent acknowledgment should be made. And, also, because if it be not towards God, it is worth nothing. If we sorrow not with an eye to him; Ezekiel vi. 9.—*They shall remember me, and loathe themselves.* If our confessions be not before him, as the prodigal's,—

y The *motives* to repentance are,—the shortness of life, and uncertainty of the space for repentance, Rev. ii. 21.—the misery and danger of impenitency, Luke xiii. 3, 5.—the commands of God, Acts xvii. 30, 31.—the goodness of God, Rom. ii. 4.—his readiness to forgive us upon our repentance, Ps. lxxxvi. 5.—the gospel's gracious invitations of Jesus Christ, Matt. iii. 2.—there is no other way to pardon and reconciliation. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

z She was the fifth daughter of William, Lord Paget, by the Lady Frances, eldest daughter of Henry, Earl of Holland. See a Sermon preached on the Death of the Lady Diana Ashurst, who died Aug 24, 1707, by Richard Mayo, Minister of St. Thomas's Hospital in Southwark, 4to. 1708, p. 17.

zz Orig. MS.

a In managing the great business of repentance, set God before thee in his holiness, Christ in his love, and thy sins in their filthiness. Dwell awhile upon the sight: compare one with another. Compare thy sins with the pure law. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

Guilt in the soul is like a mote in the eye; not at ease till wept out. P. Henry. Palmer's Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 490.

Father, I have sinned, &c. (not as Judas who told the chief-priests what he had done, but did not tell God,) and, if our forsaking of sin, which is a necessary ingredient of saving repentance, be not for God's sake, and from a true respect to his will and glory,—it is not the sorrow, the confession, the forsaking, that accompanies salvation. We are, notwithstanding it, but as *sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.* And, therefore, this is the main matter in repenting. Is what I do in it, done as *towards God?* Is he in the beginning, in the middle, at the end of it?—*When ye fasted and mourned, saith he, those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?* Zechariah vii. 5. That there should be fasting and mourning for seventy years together, and not a jot of it to God, how sad was this! There is repentance in hell, but it is not repentance towards God, and, therefore, it avails nothing. If the sight and sense we have of sin drive us from God, and we pine away in our iniquities, how should we then live? But, if it bring us to God, lay us low, even at his feet, with shame and blushing, then it is right.[b] I say, with shame and blushing, as Ezra, Ezra ix. 6. —*O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God.* It is that inward blushing of soul that is the colour of repentance. *I abhor myself*, saith Job, *and repent.* Self-abhorrency is always the companion of true repentance, and it flows from a sight of God, in his purity and glory. *Mine eye seeth thee, therefore I abhor myself.* There is the shame of a thief, when he is taken, Jeremiah ii. 26. the ground whereof is the shameful punishment he is to undergo; and there is the ingenuous shame of a child towards a father, when he hath offended him, and cannot lift up his face with that boldness as before, which is quite another thing. Such was David's repentance, when he cries for washing, purging, cleansing; like one fallen in the dirt: and, when he prays,—*Open thou my lips;* Psalm li. like one tongue-tied through guilt. I believe there is no true penitent but what can witness this *there*, where no eye hath seen, but his that sees every where, and that daily, more or less, as there is occasion. And that is another evidence of true repentance, that it is constant and continual; not like a land-flood, but like the flowings of a spring; not a single, but an *abiding, habit.*

With most affectionate respects, and humble service, to your whole good self; beseeching the Lord to remember both you and yours with *the favour which he bears unto his people, that you may see the good of his chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of his nation;* I rest,

Sir,

Yours, obliged, to honour and serve you,

January 14, 1686-7. P. H.

To Henry Ashurst, Esq.
At his house in St. John-street,
London.[c]

Sir;

I had yours from Hampton this week, and rejoice to hear of your good health, which God continue! I shall do as you direct in the distribution of 20*s.* at present to the eight widows, and shall acquaint them with your concern in the young man you mention. God, if it be his will, prevent your fears about it! Uncertainty is written upon all things here below, but there is an unchangeable happiness laid up for us in the other world, and that may be made *sure.* Your acknowledging God in it, as in all your affairs, I cannot but rejoice in, as an evidence of the uprightness of your heart[d] towards him. It is the life and soul of all religion. It is, indeed, to walk with God: and includes as much as any other scripture command in so few words; —*In all thy ways acknowledge him.* In every thing thou dost, have an eye to *him;* make *his* word and will thy rule; *his* glory thy end; fetch strength from *him;* expect success from *him;* and, in all events that happen, which are our ways too, whether they be for us, or against us, *he* is to be acknowledged; that is, adored; if prosperous, with thankfulness; if otherwise, with submission; as Job;—*The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, and blessed be the name of the Lord!* This is to *set the Lord always before us: to have our eyes ever towards him.* Where this is not, we are, so far, *without God in the world.*

As to what you desire concerning your son, I am heartily willing to my poor power, to serve you in his education here, for a while, but I am afraid, by reason of your undeserved over-valuing thoughts of me, (wherein you would abate if you knew me better,) lest you promise yourself that, from it, which will not be. Should the liberty talked of prove an open door, concerning which we are yet

[b] The *ingredients* of true repentance are, inward, hearty sorrow, Zech. xii. 10. hatred of sin, and of self because of sin, Job xlii. 6. apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, Matt. iii. 2. particular confession, with shame and blushing, 1 John i. 7. a special eye to original sin, Ps. li. 5. reformation of life, Prov. xxviii. 13. Heb. vi. 1. restitution in case of wrong to man, Luke xix. 8. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[c] From a copy by the late Rev. S. Lucas, of Shrewsbury, from the Orig. MS.

[d] There are various signs of uprightness of heart. See Prov. xiv. 2. an upright man fears the Lord. See Prov. xvi. 17. he departs from evil. See Ps. xix 13. he is kept back from presumptuous sins. See Ps. xviii. 23. he is kept from his own iniquity, and performs all duties, Luke i. 6, 7. See Prov. x. 9. he walketh surely. See Matt. xix. 21. he is willing to part with any thing for Christ. He is as good in secret as before others; he keeps a single eye at God's glory, 2 Cor. i. 12. To get an upright heart, walk as always in God's sight, 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Gen. xvii. 1. It will be a comfort when you lie upon your death-bed. Isa. xxxviii. 3. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

in the dark here, and, I perceive, so are they also that are nearer you, I think, if others enter, *(salv. conse.)* I shall be loth to stay behind; it will be a hinderance to that attendance to his teaching, which should be, especially if he be not yet past the school measures. And, another thing is, that he will be alone, which will make the wheels go heavy. I have refused several of late, and at present do not know of any undisposed of, that will be meet for him. It were desirable it should be one who is rather a step before than behind him. These are the things, at present, that offer themselves to my thoughts concerning it, and, from mine, they come to you, if my son have not already hinted them to you. I suppose it will not be long ere he will be looking homewards; and, if so, with his help, it will be the better done. Please to weigh it yet further with yourself, and the Lord direct and determine your will by his will, and that shall be my will in the matter.

Sir, I most heartily thank both you and your good lady, (to whom I give my humble service,) for your very great kindness and respect to my son;[e] he intimates the deep sense he hath of it, and I join with him in the thankful acknowledgment.

I shall be glad to hear, in your next, how it is with your younger son, and also the young man you mention. The Lord, I trust, will be gracious. To his mercy, grace, and peace, I recommend you and yours; and beg again, that I, and mine, may be remembered of you, who am,

Sir, Yours, much obliged,
to honour, love, and serve you,

March 26, 1687. P. H.

For Henry Ashurst, Esq.
At his house in St. John-Street,
London.[f]]

It was in the latter end of the year 1685, when the stream ran so very strong against the dissenters, that Mr. Henry, being in discourse with a very great man of the church of England,[g] mentioned King Charles's indulgence in 1672, as that which gave rise to his stated preaching in a separate assembly; and added, if the present King James should, in like manner, give me leave, I would do the same again. To which that great man replied,—"Never expect any such thing from him; for, take my word for it, he hates you nonconformists in his heart."—Truly, said Mr. Henry, I believe it, and I think he doth not love you of the Church of England neither. It was then little thought that the same right reverend person who said so to him, should have the honour, as he had soon after, to be one of the seven bishops[h] committed to the Tower by King James; as it was also far from any one's expectation, that the same King James should so quickly give liberty to the nonconformists. But we live in a world, wherein we are to think nothing strange, nor be surprised at any turn of the wheel of nature, as it is called. James iii. 6.

The measures then taken by King James's court and council were soon laid open, not only to view, but to contempt, being in a short time, by the overruling providence of God, broken and defeated. However, the indulgence granted to dissenters in April, 1687, must needs be a reviving to those, who, for so many years, had lain buried in silence and restraint; nor can any, who will allow themselves the liberty of supposing the case their own, wonder that they should rejoice in it, though the design of it being manifest, they could not choose but *rejoice with trembling*. Mr. Henry's sentiments of it were, —Whatever men's ends are in it, I believe God's end in it is to do us good.

There were many that said, surely the dissenters will not embrace the liberty which is intended only for a snare to them. Mr. Henry read and considered the letter of advice[i] to the dissenters at that juncture; but concluded,—*Duty is ours, and events are God's.* He remembered the experience he had had of the like in King Charles's time, and *that* did good, and no hurt. And why might not this do so too? All power is for edification, not for destruction.[k] Did Jeremiah sit still in the court of the prison, because he had his discharge from the King of Babylon? Nay, did not Paul, when he was persecuted by his countrymen for preaching the gospel, appeal to Cæsar; and find more kindness at Rome than he did at Jerusalem? In short, the principle of his *conversation in the world* being not *fleshly wisdom*, or policy, but *the grace of God*, and particularly the grace of simplicity and godly sincerity, he was willing to make the best of that which was, and to hope the best of the design and issue of it. Doubtless it was intended to introduce popery; but it is certain, that nothing could arm people against popery more effectually than the plain and powerful preaching of the gospel; and thus, they who granted that liberty, were out-shot in their own bow, which manifestly appeared in the event and issue

e Matthew Henry, then in London.
f Orig. MS.
g Most likely Dr. Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph. See *ante*, p. 85.
h Dr. William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury.
Dr. William Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph.
Dr. Francis Turner, Bishop of Ely.
Dr. John Lake, Bishop of Chichester.
Dr. Thomas Kenn, Bishop of Bath and Wells.
Dr. Thomas White, Bishop of Peterborough.
Sir Jonathan Trelawny, Bishop of Bristol.
The Speech, prepared to have been spoken by the Bishop of St. Asaph, on his trial, is preserved in Gutch's Collect. Cur. v. p. 369.
i Written by the Marquis of Halifax. See Neal, *ut supra*, v. 5. pp. 42—44.
k See 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

And, as they did good service to the Protestant religion among scholars, who wrote so many learned books against popery[l] at that time, for which we return them our best thanks; so they did no less service among the common people, who are the strength and body of the nation, that preached so many good sermons to arm their hearers against that *strong delusion*, which Mr. Henry, as the rest of the nonconformists generally did, took all occasions to do. How often would he commend his hearers, as Dr. Holland,[m] Divinity Professor in Oxford, was wont to do, to the love of God, and the hatred of popery.[n]

Besides his preaching professedly to discover the errors and corruptions of the church of Rome, (which he would have taken occasion to do more fully, had he seen those he preached to in any immediate danger of the infection,) there could not be a more effectual antidote against popery, than the instructing and confirming of people in the truth, *as it is in Jesus;* and advancing the knowledge of, and a value and veneration for, the Holy Scriptures; to which, how much Mr. Henry in his place did contribute, all that knew him will bear record. He used to observe, that the fall of Babylon followed upon the free and open preaching of the *everlasting gospel*, Revelations xiv. 6, 7. He apprehended this liberty likely to be of very short continuance, and to end in trouble; and, because he could not see how his not using of it would help to prevent the trouble, but he did see that his vigorous improvement of it would help to prepare for the trouble, he set himself with all diligence to make the best use he could of this gleam, both at home and abroad, on sabbath days, and week days, to his power; yea, and beyond his power.

[It was at this juncture that Mr. Henry had the happiness of recognizing, in his son, an ordained minister of the gospel. The occasion gave rise to the following letter:—

May 14, 1687.

Son Matthew;

I rejoice in what you heard, and saw, and felt, of God on Monday last, and hope it hath left upon you a truly indelible character, and such impressions as no time, nor any thing else, shall be able to wear out. Remember; assisted by thy strength, O God, I will! As to the manner and circumstances of your return, we cannot order them here, but must leave it to yourself to do as you shall see cause, beseeching the Lord, in every thing, to make your way plain before you; but, as to the thing itself, we rejoice in hopes it will not be long now ere we shall see you here, (though *multa cadunt inter*,) and, I must not say, be filled with your company, for this is not the world that we must be together in. Your dear mother hath no great joy in the thoughts of your closing with them at Chester upon the terms proposed; her reasons are weighty, and, in other things, have many times swayed with me against my own, and it hath done well. What they are in this matter, you shall hear immediately from herself. As to your Northampton affair we are no little concerned about it, making mention of it in every prayer, to our heavenly Father, who, we have learned, besides a common providence, hath a special hand in such proposals, Proverbs xix. 14. And we say, if you, of all the other, should miss, it would be a grief of mind, Genesis xxvi. 35.

The clergy in Cheshire and Shropshire are hammering an address of thanks, but divers of them will not strike. They begin to feel now for their oaths' sake.

Our love and blessing is all here is room for. Ἐρῤῥωσο! Ἐρῤῥωσο! twice; within, without.[o]

Mr. Matthew Henry having, shortly after the preceding letter was written, settled at Chester,[p] the following was addressed to him by his father, on another, and interesting subject:—

July, 1687.

Son Matthew;

I am very much concerned that two such great affairs are, at this time, met together upon your hand,—that of the next sabbath, and that of the week after. You know which of the two should fill you most, and I hope it will accordingly; and, if it do, you may the more comfortably expect a blessing

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[l] Dr. Holland, "when he went any journey, calling the fellows of the college together, used to say to them,—*Commendo vos dilectioni Dei, et odio papatûs et superstitionis.*" Clarke's Marr. Eccl. Hist. p. 893, *ut supra.*

1687, Mar. 18. We heard of the strengthening of the popish interest; they are to have places for their worship in many great towns; particularly that which was my dear father's chamber at Christ-church, must now, as they say, be a mass-house. Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig. MS.

[m] Nat. at Ludlow, in Shropshire. Ob. 17th March, 1611-12. Wood's Ath. Oxon. v. 2. p. 111. *ut supra.* Brooks's Lives of the Puritans, vol. 2. p. 213. *ut supra.*

[n] In the Common Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth, the Litany ran thus;—"From the tiranny of the Bishope of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, good Lord, deliver us! 4to. 1547.

[o] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[p] Urbs Legionum, its primeval name,
Where many a Roman toil'd; where many a brow
Has grac'd a mitre; 'twas a kingdom once,
And now a County Palatine; all that's rare
In army, navy, church, and state, dwells here
In miniature. But, most of all revered
For that great name, a *valiant Philip's* son,
Nobler than he of Macedon: for grace
Makes heroes, such as Plutarch never knew,
As Homer never sung; to courts unknown.
While Matthew Henry in his "Comment" lives,
Chester can never die.

See the Select Remains of the late Rev. Ebenezer White of Chester, p. 152. duod. 1812.

upon the other; for, ever since I knew any thing in those matters, I have found it true, that, when I have been most careful in doing God's work, God hath been most faithful in doing mine.[q] I have not sealed, but subscribed, a draught of articles with Mr. Hardware.[r] We were together yesterday at each place; and, upon view, found every thing, not worse, but rather better, than represented. As to a time and place of sealing, I would meet half way on Monday, but Wednesday being the first day appointed at Hanmer, I must needs attend that. If you would not think it too long to defer till the week after, that is, to the 19th instant, I should hope, by that time, (your next sabbath work, and your Warrington journey, and our engagements here, being all over,) there would be much more of clearness and freeness, without hurry, as to each circumstance; but I must not move it, however, not *insist* upon it, lest *the heart be made sick*;[s] therefore do as you see cause, only in every thing take God along with you,[t] and do all *in the name of the Lord Jesus*.

Give my kind respects to ———, your good friend, whom I hope to call by another name shortly. The Lord bless you both, and first fit you for, and then give you to, each other, in much mercy! *Amen*.[u]

To resume the narrative.] The great subject of debate at this time in the nation, was, concerning the repeal of penal laws and tests. Mr. Henry's thoughts were, as to the penal laws, that, if those against the dissenters were all repealed, he would rejoice in it, and be very thankful both to God and man; for he would sometimes say, without reflection upon any, he could not but look upon them as a national sin; and, as for those against the papists, if our law-givers see cause to repeal them in a regular way; I will endeavour, saith he, to make the best of it, and to say,—The will of the Lord be done!

When King James came his progress into that country, in August, 1687,[v] to court the compliments of the people, Mr. Henry joined with several others, in and about Whitchurch, Nantwich, and Wem, in an address to him, which was presented when he lay at Whitchurch; the purport of which was, not to sacrifice their lives and fortunes to him and to his interest, but only to return him thanks for the liberty they had, with a promise to demean themselves quietly in the use of it.

Some time after, commissioners were sent abroad into the country, to inquire after the trouble the dissenters had sustained by the penal laws; and how the money that was levied upon them was disposed of, little of it being found paid into the Exchequer; they sent to Mr. Henry, to have an account from him of his sufferings; he returned answer, by letter, that he had indeed been fined some years before, for a conventicle, and distrained upon, and his goods carried away; which all the country knew, and to which he referred himself. But, being required to give a particular account of it upon oath, though he said he could be glad to see such instruments of trouble legally removed, yet he declined giving any further information concerning it; having, as he wrote to the commissioners, long since, from his heart, forgiven all the agents, instruments, and occasions of it; and having purposed never to say any thing more of it.

It was on Tuesday, June 14, 1681, that he was disturbed at Weston in Shropshire, when he was preaching on Psalm lxvi. 18. and on Tuesday, June 14, 1687, that day six years, he preached there again without disturbance, finishing what he was then prevented from delivering, concerning prayer, and going on to verse 19, 20.—*But, verily, God hath heard me, blessed be God*, concerning the duty of thanksgiving. This seventh year of their silence and restraint, proved, through God's wonderful good providence, the year of release.

[Some admirable letters to Mr. Ashurst will carry the year to its close, and cannot fail to impress the reader with the writer's accomplishments as a Christian, a divine, and a gentleman.

September 2, 1687.

Sir;

My sabbath subject was, Acts xi. 21.—*The hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.* In this I shall acquaint you, the subject being the same, with the

q God saith to us, as a king said to a nobleman who desired to leave the court that he might provide for some that relied upon him: "Do my work," said the king, "and I will do thine." Canaan's Flowings. by Ralph Venning. duod. 1658, p. 251.

r Miss Hardware, of Moldsworth, was Mr. Matthew Henry's first wife. See his Life by Tong, *ut supra*, p. 101, &c.

s See Prov. xiii. 12.

t Mr. Matthew Henry was married July 19. See Tong's Life of Mr. M. Henry, chap. iii. *ut supra*.

u P. Henry. Orig. MS. Addressed to Mr. Matthew Henry at Moldsworth.

v In the former editions of the Life, the royal visit is stated to have been in September. This no doubt was a mistake. The last visit made to the ancient town of Shrewsbury, by its sovereign, was on the 25th of *August*, [1687.] The King, James the Second, passed a day there, and kept his court at the council house; and, during his stay, the conduits ran with wine. Some Account of the Ancient and Present State of Shrewsbury, pp. 514, 515.

In unison with the above statement is the following extract from the Diary of Mrs. Savage:—

"1687. Friday, August 26, the king came into Whitchurch James the Second, in his progress to Chester; great flocking to see him. Lord, order all consultations and actions for glory to thy name!

"Tuesday. I went to Whitchurch to see His Majesty in his return from Chester; saw him only in his coach; desired heartily to pray that he were as good as he is great." Mrs. Savage. Diary. Orig. MS

heads of what was then spoken, after my plain, country manner. The preachers here were such as had been scattered by persecution after the death of Stephen, Acts viii. which scattering was intended by the devil, and wicked men, for hurt to the church; but God turned it for good, as he often does, and we ourselves have had experience of it. It was like the scattering of seed, or salt, whereby more were seasoned. It seems, then, that the hand of the Lord may be with us, when the hand of man is against us. Preachers disowned and persecuted by worldly powers, may be owned and blessed in their labours, by the God of Heaven. The place was Antioch, where these converts were, the first that took the honourable and sweet name of Christians. At Antioch, not at Rome. If Christians should own one place more than another, as the mother church of all churches, methinks it should be that, rather, where they first had their name. The preaching was Jesus. They preached the Lord Jesus, and then *the hand of the Lord was with them.* We are then most likely to have the hand of the Lord with us, in our preaching, when we preach Jesus.[w] Not when we preach ourselves; but when we preach Jesus, and *ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.* By the *hand of the Lord with them,* is meant, the Lord himself, according to his promise, Matthew xxvii. 20. *Lo! I am with you.* He assisted them in their preaching; made way for the word into the hearts of those that heard it; gave it the setting on there: and this is always all in all. If the hand of the Lord be not with the preachers, there will be no believing, no turning, among the people; for *faith is the gift of God;—Unto you it is given to believe;—Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.* A *great number believed.* Sometimes God is pleased to enlarge his hand, in the conversion of many, by the ministry of the word; not a fish or two, but whole shoals, caught in the net of the gospel. Oh, that it might be so at this day! Your love to souls, I know, will say, *Amen!*

To believe, has three things in it;—1. Assent to what is spoken, as true, either from the evidence of the thing itself, or upon the account of the veracity of him that speaketh it. 2. Application of it to myself; I must look upon myself as concerned in it, and say, "This belongs to me." 3. Answerable affections and actions, according as the thing is that is spoken. Without this, my believing is nothing. Noah believed, and feared, Hebrews xi. The *devils believe, and tremble,* James ii. If one tell me the house is falling, and I believe it, I shall fear, and run out of it; or, that there is a pot of gold hid in such a place, and I may have it for digging for it, if I believe, I shall dig. Now, there are, among many others, four great truths revealed in the word of God, the belief whereof, such a belief as hath in it the three things before mentioned, doth always accompany conversion and salvation.—

1. That a sinful condition is a miserable condition. That it is so, is certainly true; thou art wretched and miserable, under the curse of God, liable to all miseries. But do we believe it; that is, assent to it; and that with application? I am the man; sinful, and therefore miserable. And are we thereupon afraid, brought under a spirit of bondage? And doth that fear set upon serious inquiries, "What shall we do to get out of it?" If so, so far is well.

2. That Jesus Christ is ordained of God to be *Prince and Saviour;* that he is able and willing to save, *to save even to the uttermost.* Do we assent to this, this *faithful saying?* And do we apply it? "He is able and willing to save me." And are we suitably affected thereunto? And do we act accordingly? Come to him, close with him, accept of him, as he is offered to us in the gospel.[x] If so, we are believers; and, if believers, then *the sons of God,* justified by that faith, at peace with God, and heirs of heaven. And to that also we must assent, with application, and be affected, and act accordingly; *rejoicing always with joy unspeakable,* and *abounding always in the work of the Lord.*

3. The absolute necessity of an holy heart, and an holy life. That we must be new creatures, or we cannot enter the New Jerusalem; *born again,* or we *cannot see the kingdom of God.* That we must *deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this world,* if ever we mean to be happy in another world. Do we believe this; that is, assent to it? Is it not plain in the word of God, written there as with a sun-beam, so that *he who runs may read?* But do we apply it? I must be regenerated; if I be not, I shall not be saved. My civility and moral honesty, my profession and outward form of godliness, will not serve my turn;—I must *put off the old man, and put on the new.* And doth there follow suitable affection and action? Do I love the word as a regenerating word? Do I pray for and receive the Spirit, as a regenerating Spirit? Do I set myself, in the use of all God's appointed means, to the great work of *crucifying the flesh, with all the affections and lusts,—walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless?* This is believing.

4. The certainty and reality of future rewards and punishments. That there is another life after this, and that it is to be a life of retribution; that, as sure as there is an earth which we tread upon, so

[w] See Sermon, Faith in Christ inferred, &c. *post.*

[x] To believe in Jesus Christ for salvation is to come to him. Matt. xi. 28. John vi. 37; v. 40. By unbelief, we depart from him. Heb. iii. 12. It is to lean upon him. Cant. viii. 5. forsaking all other leaning-stocks whatever. It is to look upon him. John iii. 14, 15. *Look unto me, and be ye saved.* It is to receive, and accept of him, as he is offered in the promise, to be Lord and King, as well as Priest and Saviour; giving ourselves to him unreservedly. 2 Cor. viii. 5. Hos. iii. 3: P. Henry. Orig. MS.

sure there is an hell under it, a place of eternal torments; so sure as there is an outward heaven, which our eyes see, so sure there is another heaven beyond it, a fixed state of everlasting blessedness. Are these things so? Certainly they are; for *the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.* No room is left for doubting. But will one of these be our place shortly? Certainly it will. I must; I; even I, be, ere long, either in hell miserable, or in heaven happy. Oh, then, how should I be affected? How should I act? Should I not fear that place of torment, and fly from it? Make sure that place of happiness, and rejoice always in the hope of it; having my conversation there;[y] laying up treasure there? This is believing. The same may be said in reference to every other truth of God; precept, promise, threatenings. There are quarter-believers, and half-believers; but the *whole*-believer is he that assents, applies, is affected, and acts according to what he says he believes.

Now the good Lord work this belief in all our hearts, fulfilling in us all *the good pleasure of his goodness* and this *work of faith with power.*[z] *Amen.*

Sir;

Your continued kind acceptance is still my encouragement to perform this monthly service to you, wishing I could do it better to your soul's advantage and edification. The grace of faith is, indeed, the grace of all graces. 1. The grace that God hath most honoured in making it,—whether the condition or the instrument,—I am sure, the *means* of our justification, reconciliation, acceptation, salvation. Of all graces, faith doth most abase the creature, and lift up God; it is a self-emptying and a God-advancing grace; and therefore, of all graces, God doth most advance and lift up faith; for so is the word that he hath spoken, *Those that honour me, I will honour.* 2. The grace that of all graces we do live by; for *the just shall live by faith,* Habakkuk ii. 4. than which, I think, there is scarce any one passage in the Old Testament more often quoted in the New; and good reason, for it is the marrow of the gospel. *We live by faith.* 1. *Spiritually, as to justification, sanctification, consolation;* in which three stands our spiritual life. We are justified by faith, Romans v. 1. Acts xiii. 39. justified from the guilt of sin, the curse of the law, and the damnation of hell. In the want of which justification, we are but dead men, that is, under a sentence of death; so that in that sense, by faith we live; we live by it as we are made just by it; the just, by faith, shall live. We are sanctified by faith, Acts xxvi. 18. as, by it we receive the spirit of sanctification, who finds us dead in trespasses and sins, as to our spiritual state, and then breathes into us the breath of spiritual life, whereby we become living souls, alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We are comforted by faith, Romans xv. 13. and that comfort is our life, 1 Thessalonians iii. 8. Now we live, that is, now we are comforted, *if ye stand fast in the Lord: non est vivere sed valere vita.* Faith comforts as it applies the promises, which promises are our breasts of consolation, at which the believing soul sucks and is satisfied. And there are two of them, one concerning the things of the life that now is, the other concerning the things of that which is to come; for godliness hath both, and hath need of both, in order to comfort, upon one occasion or other, every day. They are also called well-springs of salvation, and, as such, faith is the bucket by which we draw water from those wells. If the well be deep, as good no well as no bucket; so, as good no promise as no faith. 2. As we live spiritually[a] by faith in all these three great concernments of our spiritual life, so we

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y I find my heart inclined to things below, and am sensible, in some measure, what a dishonour it is to God, and what a wrong to myself, and fain I would that it might be otherwise.

Get to know the nature of earthly things, common things, such as a man may abound in, and perish everlastingly. They are empty things, that will not satisfy; vexing things, *vexation of spirit.* Labour for a serious, practical knowledge of this. Beg of God to give you a sight of their vanity and emptiness. Look into the word. Prov. xxiii. 5. Isa. lv. 2. Matt. vi. 24. John vi. 27. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Ecclesiastes. Observe and improve your own crosses and disappointments, and the crosses and disappointments of others. The voice of these dispensations is,—Cease from the world, the men of the world, the things of the world. Consult with dying men, and see what account they will give you of earthly things.

Actuate this knowledge by meditation, and do it often. There is no duty more profitable,—none more neglected.

Study the nature and necessities of thy soul. Thou hast a soul that is greatly in want, a poor, though precious, soul; it wants pardon of sin, wants peace with God, wants his image, wants his grace, wants his Spirit. And can the world furnish these? No. Mic. vi. 6, 7.

Look beyond this to another world. Will these things avail there? No. 'Tis not getting more, but making use of what we have, that will then avail. Luke xvi. 9. 2 Cor. iv. 18.

Cast thy care upon the Lord; if thou art a believer, he careth for thee. 1 Pet. v. 7.

Be acquainted with the reality and excellency of heavenly things. Heb. xi. 1. John iv. 10. Earthly-minded men are like moles, they live in the earth, and so are blind as to spiritual things; they see no beauty in holiness, no comeliness in Jesus Christ.

Learn to spiritualize earthly things. It is our sin and misery that earthly thoughts mix themselves when we are employed in spiritual duties; it were our profit and advantage if heavenly thoughts might as often mix themselves, and be as welcome, when we are employed in worldly affairs.

Choose as much as may be to be in heavenly company. Company is of a transforming nature. Prov. xxii. 24, 25. 1 John i. 2, 3. Be often discoursing of things above.

Labour to tread in the steps of those who have gone before us in heaven's way. Phil. iii. 17, &c. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

z Evan. Mag. v. 3. p. 276.

a Spiritual life is an inward principle in the soul of a believer, arising from his union with Jesus Christ. The following are signs of such a life:—The knowledge of God and Christ, John xvii. 3. —Growth in grace and knowledge, John xv. 2.—Faith in Jesus Christ, John vi. 47.—Heavenly mindedness, Col. iii. 1, 2. Rom. vi. 11.—Spiritual sense; of sin, the first risings of it. Rom. vii. 24. the sins of others, 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8. of the withdrawings of God's presence, Ps. xxii. 1. of the afflictions of God's people, Jer. ix. 1. Neh. i. 4, &c. 1 John iii. 14.—Speech; to God in prayer, Gal. iv. 6. Acts ix. 11. Zech. xii. 10. for God.—Appetite, 1 Pet. ii. 2.—Care for self-preservation, Job ii. 4. comp. 1 Pet. ii. 7.—Desires to com-

live our life in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, Galatians ii. 20.[b] He means his life of conversation in the world; for, that is the life that he lived then in the flesh. *We walk by faith, not by sight*,—not as glorified saints do in heaven by immediate vision,—nor by carnal sight, as the men of the world, who look only at the *things that are seen* with bodily eyes,—but by faith. So that faith is a principle of living quite different from the one and from the other. It is far short of living by heavenly vision, but it is infinitely above and beyond the life of carnal reason, which men, as men, live. *In the ordinary actions and affairs of life*, 1. It is by faith and no otherwise, that we *set the Lord always before us*, and see him that is invisible. And what influence that hath upon the conversation, to make it what it should be, they can best tell that have tried. 2. It is by faith, and no otherwise, that we close with the word of God as our rule and square, by which we regulate and order our conversation. The commandments are to be believed, Psalm cxix. 66. as well as the promises. 3. It is by faith that we fetch strength from the Lord Jesus, for the doing of what we have to do every day in every thing, for *without him we can do nothing*. 4. It is by faith, that we look at the *recompence of reward*, which makes us lively and cheerful in our obedience, both active and passive; *forasmuch as we know our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. And then for life eternal*, as we look at it by faith, so by faith it is that we have title to it; *he that believes shall be saved.* Whosoever believes *shall not perish, but have everlasting life.* We *are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.* And *if children then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.*[c] If all this be true of faith, and not the one half hath been told you, then there is good reason why it should be called *precious* faith. It closes with a precious Christ, and to them only that believe is he precious. It embraces precious promises, and it saves precious souls. Is Christ our all in all? So, in a sense, is faith our all in all. Oh, faith, (but that also must be taken with a grain of salt,) *thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory*; not thine to rest with thee, but thine to hand to him, whose it is. Amen.

Your son shall be truly welcome here at the time you mention, and I shall think it long till it come. As to the late access made to your estate, much good may it do you, that is, much good may you do with it, which is the true good of an estate. Lady Warwick[d] would not thank him that would give her £1000 a year, and tie her up from doing good with it. I rejoice in the large heart which God hath given you with your large estate, without which heart, the estate would be your snare. As to your purposed kindness to me, you will call me unkind if I refuse it; but as to the quantity, let it be as little as you please, for it cannot be too little where so little is deserved, as is by

September 28, 1687. Your Servant.

My most humble service is to your worthy lady, and to your son and daughter with you, whom God bless.

For Henry Ashurst Esq.
At his house in St. John Street,
London.[e]

October 28, 1687.

Sir;

Yet further concerning the grace of faith. Besides that it is that by which we live,—as of Christ it is said, *who is our life*,—so we may say of faith, in a different sense, it is our life. As Paul says, *to me to live is Christ*; so we may say, to us to live is to believe. I say, besides this, there are four great things said in Scripture concerning faith, which deserve a particular consideration. 1. It purifies the heart;[f] *purifying their hearts by faith.* Faith is a heart-purifying grace, elsewhere called, *purging the conscience from dead works*, Hebrews ix. 14. It is done *by the blood of Christ, who, through the*

municate, 1 John i. 1, 2, 3.—Art thou alive? live at a higher rate than others, 1 Cor. iii. 3.—Art thou dead? make haste to Christ, Eph. v. 14.—He complains, Ye will not come to me that ye might have life, John v. 40. For encouragement to come to Christ, he raised three to life in the gospel,—one in the chamber, secret sinners,—another in the street, open sinners,—a third buried, dead four days, aged sinners. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

b See a sermon by P. Henry, on these words. Eighteen Sermons, *ut supra*. p. 144.

c There are *evidences* of saving faith. Faith, however, is the best evidence of itself, 1 John v. 10. as we know that the sun shines by its own light. The following are evidences.—A new nature, Acts xxvi. 18.—Heart purity, Acts xv. 9. at least begun and laboured after.—A low esteem of earthly things, Phil. iii. 8. a high esteem of Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 7.—Joy in tribulation, Acts xvi. 25, &c. Rom. v. 1. 2. 1 Pet. i. 7. Hab. iii. 17, 18.—Reliance upon God for things of this life, as well as of heaven.—How came we by our faith? Did it come by hearing? Rom. x. 17.—Did it begin in doubting? What fruit doth it bear? James ii. 14, &c. Gal. v. 6.—Self-denial, Luke vii. 6, 7, 9.—Fear of offending.—A true believer reckons it the hardest thing in the world to believe. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

d See a sermon at the funerall of the Countesse of Warwick. By Anthony Walker, D. D. duod. 1680. Also Memoirs of Eminently Pious Women, v. 1. p. 169. oct. 1815. She died A. D. 1678. æt. 54.

e P. Henry. Orig. MS. Part of this letter was printed in the Evan. Mag. v. 3. p. 368.

f Means are to be used to get and keep a pure heart. We must be sensible of our impurity, Prov. xxx. 12.—Pray for a clean heart, Ps. li.: it is promised, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26.—Be frequent in self-examination.—Beware of other men's sins, 1 Tim. v. 22.—Abstain from all appearance of evil, 1 Thess. v. 22, 23.—Act faith. This is a heart-purifying grace, Acts xv. 9. it interests us in the blood of Christ, and that cleanses, 1 John i. 7. Zech. xii. 1. by it we receive the Spirit; by it we apply the promises, 2 Pet. i. 3, 4. Attend upon the ordinances, John xv. 3. xvii. 17. Titus, iii. 5.—Improve your baptism, it is a cleansing ordinance.—Afflictions, when sanctified, are means of cleansing.—Watchfulness, Ps. cxix. 9. We must take heed where we tread. We are in the light, and must walk as children of the light; carefully; cleanly. P. Henry Orig. MS.

Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, meritoriously, and, by faith, instrumentally. Christ's blood is the water of purification, the true and only water, and faith is as the bunch of hyssop, dipped in it, and so purging the conscience, that is, pacifying it in reference to the guilt contracted, quieting the mind as to the pardon and forgiveness of it before God, which nothing else can do. All the legal purifyings prescribed by the law of Moses, availed nothing as to this; it is done by faith only, and, therefore, the Gentiles, which is the scope of that place, ought not to be obliged by circumcision to those ceremonial observances, seeing there was another nearer and better way to that blessed end, and that was, by believing. We may also, by purifying the heart, understand the work of sanctification, wherein faith is greatly instrumental; but I conceive the other the design of the place. 2. *It works by love*, Galatians v. 6. It is a working grace; if it be idle, and work not, it is not genuine faith. And how works it? *By love.* Love in the full extent and latitude of it; the love of God, and the love of our neighbour, which two are *the fulfilling of the law;* so that to work by love, is to work by universal obedience, which obedience is worth nothing further than love hath a hand in it, and love stirs not further than faith acts it. He that believes the love of Christ for poor sinners, in dying for them, with particular application to himself,[g] cannot but find his heart constrained thereby, more or less, according as the belief is, to love him again, and out of love to him to keep his commandments. Do we find love cold? It is because faith is weak. Do we love little? Our belief is little. Therefore, when a hard duty was enjoined, which is that of loving and forgiving enemies,—*Lord*, say the disciples, *increase our faith;* intimating, without more faith, it would not be possible. The more strongly and stedfastly we believe that Christ loved us when we were enemies to him, the more frequently and freely, readily and cheerfully, we shall forgive our brother, who is become an enemy unto us. 3. It overcomes the world, 1 John v. 4. *This is the victory, that overcometh the world, even our faith;*[h] where, by world, is meant, especially, its smiles and frowns; they are both as nothing to us, have no power or prevalency with us, so as to draw or drive us from our Christian course, as long as we keep faith alive and active,—either upon the past great things that our great Redeemer hath done and suffered for us; or upon the future invisible realities of the other world, that crown and kingdom which he hath set before us, and made over to us. 4. It quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked, Ephesians vi. 16. that is, the devil and all his instruments; all the temptations of which kind soever, wherewith, at any time, they may assault us, they are quenched by faith, lose their hurtful keenness, and wound us not. But then that faith must be not in habit only, but in act and exercise; as a shield, not hanging up, but in the hand. Oh that to us, then, *it might be given* always *to believe!* How much better would it be with us, on this four-fold account, had we more faith!

As to the truth of the matter whereof you desire an account, it was this; what reports are concerning it I know not. When I had read the address, the words which the King spoke[i] were to this purpose.—Gentlemen, I perceive you have been yourselves sufferers for your consciences, and, therefore, I cannot but look upon you as men of conscience, and take it for granted, you will be ready to do what is fit to be done for the ease both of yourselves and others in that case, when there is a Parliament. For my part, I shall be ready to do what lies in me, and I hope, so will you. You desire me to continue your liberty, and I promise you I will as long as I live, and could be well contented, it might be as secure to you by law, as your Magna Charta is.

Q. What persuasion are you of? Are you for the congregational way?

A. No, Sir, we are not for the congregational way.

Q. What then are you for?

A. We are for a moderate presbytery.

Q. Are you all so hereabouts?

A. There are few dissenters, if any, hereabouts, that differ from us in that matter.

This was all that was spoken, as far as I can remember; after which, he gave each of us (in all eight, whereof two were ministers) his hand to kiss, and so went his way.

Sir, I received your extraordinary kind token, and return you my most humble, hearty thanks for it. It hath no fault but that it is too good. Last week, another of your praying widows went to rest, a very choice flower in our small garden.[k]

Most humble service to your whole self, &c.

P. H.[l]

For Henry Ashurst, Esq.
At his house in St. John-street,
London.

Sir;

The nature, excellency, and usefulness of the grace of faith, is the subject concerning which I do yet owe you a further account of my poor thoughts. And, oh! that I, while I am writing, and you also,

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g See Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. James Hervey, by the Rev. J. Brown. p. 57, &c. 3d ed. 1822.

h See the substance of a sermon by Mr. P. Henry, on these words, in the Evan. Mag. v. xxvii. p. 314.

i See *ante*, p. 96.

k See Sol. Song iv. 12; v. 1. Ps. xcii. 13.

l Orig. MS.

while you are reading, might each of us find, through the powerful working of the Spirit in us, an increase of that grace, that precious grace, that we may be strong in believing, giving glory to God, and that our consolations may be strong also; for as the faith is weak or strong, so the comfort is. Faith is the EYE of the soul, by which we look unto Christ, as the poor stung Israelites did to the brazen serpent, lifted up upon the pole, and thereby receive a cure from him; but, as Paul saith in another case, 1 Corinthians xii. 14. the body is not one member but many, so faith is not one member but many. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? verse 17. So if faith were our eye only, and nothing else, what should we do for other instruments of spiritual life and motion? Behold, therefore, how faith, besides being our eye, is our FOOT, by which we come to Christ; an expression often used in Scripture, *e. g.* Matthew xi. 28. Come unto me, that is, believe in me. John vi. 37. *Him that cometh unto me*, that is, that believeth in me, *I will in no wise cast out.* By unbelief we depart from the living God, Hebrews iii. 12. By faith we come to him by Christ, *ib.* vii. 25. And without him there is no coming, for he is the way, the true, and living, and only way; all that are out of him are out of the way. It is our HAND also, by which we receive him, John i. 12. *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name;* where believing is the same with receiving. In the gospel, God offers him to us, freely and graciously, to be our Prince and Saviour, to be *the Lord our righteousness*, to redeem us from iniquity, and to purify us to himself. When we do heartily, by faith, close with that offer, and accept of him to be ours, he becomes ours: we have union with him, relation to him, and benefit by him. But then, there is another act of faith put forth at the same time by another hand, which is the giving act, whereby we give ourselves to him to be his, to love him, and serve him, and live to him. *O Lord*, saith David, *I am thy servant, truly I am thy servant*, Psalm cxvi. 16. *They gave their ownselves unto the Lord*, 2 Corinthians viii. 5. Without this our receiving is not right. There is a faith that is one-handed, receives, but gives not; this will not save. They that come to Christ for rest, and receive Christ, must take his yoke upon them, and learn of him.[m] It is the MOUTH of the soul, by which we feed upon him, and are nourished by him. John vi. *Except ye eat his flesh, and drink his blood*, that is, believe in him, as it is there explained, ye cannot be saved. And this of all the rest doth in the most lively manner represent to us what it is to believe. To believe, is when a poor soul, being made sensible of its lost and undone condition by sin, doth earnestly desire, as they do that are hungry, and thirsty, after a Saviour. Oh for a righteousness, wherein to appear before God! Oh for a pardon for what is past! Oh for grace and strength to do so no more! And hearing, by the report of the gospel, and believing that report, that all this, and a great deal more, is to be had in Christ; the next request is,—Oh for that Christ! Oh, that that Christ might be mine! Why, he is thine, man, if thou wilt accept of him! Accept of him! Lord, I accept of him. Then feed upon him, *His flesh is meat indeed, his blood is drink indeed.* Oh, taste and see that he is gracious. How sweet are his promises! What inward refreshment doth the soul find by his suffering and dying to redeem, and save! How is it thereby strengthened, as by bread, and made glad, as by wine! We must and do each of us eat for ourselves, and drink for ourselves. My eating will not refresh another, nor strengthen another; neither will my believing. The just shall live by his faith, his own faith. Other creatures die to make food for our bodies, and to maintain natural life; but then we must take them, and eat them, and digest them, and having done so, they turn into nourishment to us, and so become ours, that they and we cannot be parted again. It is so in believing. Christ died to make food for our souls; and not thereby to maintain only, but to give spiritual life, which other food doth not to the body. But then we must take him, and eat him, and digest him, that is, make a particular application of him to ourselves, and, having done so, nothing shall, nothing can, separate us from him. Oh that unto us it might be more and more given, thus to believe![n]

Sir, I thank you most heartily, as for your last great kindness, (had it been coarser it would have been fitter for me,) so for your affectionate inquiry after my poor children. I bless God, they are all yet, both married and unmarried, our comfort and joy. Bless God with me that it is so, and pray that it may be more and more so, especially that my son may be still owned and blessed in his great work! My most humble service to your good lady, and dear children, with you. The Mediator's blessing be upon them. Upon the 8th instant, there was a public ordination in the meeting-house at Warrington in your Lancashire; the ordainers six, the ordained six, with solemn fasting and prayer, where much of God was seen.

November 25, 1687.

For Henry Ashurst, Esq.
At his house in St. John-street,
London.[o]

[m] See the Works of Bishop Cowper, fol. 1629. p. 691.
[n] See Phil. i. 29.

[o] P. Henry. Orig. MS. See the Evan. Mag. v. 8. p. 452.

Sir;

This once more concerning the grace of faith. As it is that by which we live, so it is that by which also we must *die*, if we will die well. There is no dying *well* without it. Hebrews xi. 13. *These all died in faith;* meaning Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, spoken of before, who all died well, who all died believing. To die well, is to die safely, comfortably, profitably.

1. Safely. He dies safely, whose spiritual state and condition is good; who is a *new creature; born again;* reconciled to God; whose sins are forgiven; whose person is justified. Death hath no hurt in it to such an one: it shall be well with him for ever. Now, without believing, there is none of all this. It is faith that justifies; it is faith that sanctifies. There is no adoption, no reconciliation, no acceptation, and, consequently, no salvation, without it. *He that believeth not, is condemned already;* the law condemns him, though the sentence be not yet actually passed upon him.

2. Comfortably. These two may be, and often are, parted. How many die safely who do not die comfortably; whose sun sets under a cloud. And whence is it? They are *of little faith*, and, therefore, they doubt; and, therefore, they are not comforted; they are not filled with joy and peace, for want of believing. Such kind of dying brings an evil report, like that of the evil spies, upon the good ways of the Lord; causes them to be ill thought of, and ill spoken of. If religion will not bear us out, and bear us up, at the last cast, in a dying hour, what is it good for? There are degrees of this comfort in dying. All that have it, have it not alike; some have more, some less. There is such a thing as dying triumphantly, which is putting into harbour with full-spread sails;[p] when *an abundant entrance is administered unto us into the everlasting kingdom.* And it is according as the faith is.

There are six things, the firm belief whereof will exceedingly promote our comfort in dying:—

1. That, at what time soever, and in what way soever, death comes, it comes by the will and appointment of our heavenly Father. He cuts no corn of his down till it is fully ripe, Job v. 26. Revelations xi. 7.

2. That death hath no sting in it to them that are *in Christ Jesus;* and therefore, though it may hiss at us, we need not fear it. The brazen serpent had the form of a serpent, which is affrighting, but it hurt none; it healed the believing looker on it. How doth Paul exult over death and the grave! 1 Corinthians xv. 56.

3. That, to them that fear the Lord, immediately beyond death is heaven,[q] Luke xvi. 25. now, now, he is comforted; Philippians i. 23. No sooner dissolved, but presently with Christ. Where this is believed, with application, there cannot but be comfort.[r] Were the soul to be no more, or to sleep till the last day, or to go, for nobody knows how long, to a popish purgatory, what comfort could we have in dying? But, if the last moment on earth be the first moment in heaven, how sweet is that!

4. That the body will certainly rise again a *glorious body;*—it is sown in weakness, and dishonour, and corruption; it shall be raised in power, and glory, incorruptible;—even this body. Yours, and mine, now crazed and sickly, hereafter shall be like the glorified body of Jesus Christ, or like *the sun shining in its brightness.*

5. That God will certainly take care of poor disconsolate relations left behind, Psalm xxvii. 10. Jeremiah xlix. 11. "He that feeds the young ravens will not suffer the young Herons to starve," as godly Mr. Heron said to his wife on his death-bed.[s] This helped to make Jacob's death comfortable to him, Genesis xlviii. 21. Joseph's, Genesis l. 24.

6. That God will certainly accomplish and fulfil, in due time, all the great things that he hath purposed and promised concerning his church and people in the latter days; as, that Babylon shall fall; the Jews and Gentiles be brought in; the gospel kingdom more and more advanced; divisions healed. Oh! how have some rejoiced, and even triumphed, in a dying hour, in the firm belief of these things! As Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day, now past, and died in the faith of it, so may we as to another day of his, which is yet to come, before and besides the last day.

3. To die profitably is a step beyond dying comfortably; I mean, to die so as to do good to those that are about us in dying. To die so as to convince them of sin, and convert them from it; which is to die like Samson, who slew more Philistines at his death, than in all his life before.[t] We die profitably when our natural death is a means of spiritual life to any. Now this will not, cannot be, but in the way of believing. He that doubts, droops, desponds, calls all in question, and dies so, rather frightens from, than allures to, the love of religion and godliness. What need have we then to pray,

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p See "Invisible Realities demonstrated in the Holy Life and Triumphant Death of Mr. John Janeway, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge." duod. 1698. A new edition was published in 1815, with a Preface by the Rev. R. Hall.

q Let him be afraid to die that is afraid of going to heaven. Mr. Henry. Palmer's Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 490.

r See a Sermon at the Funeral of Lady Anne Waller, by Edmund Calamy, B. D. 4to. 1662.

s "He that feeds the young ravens will not starve the young Herons." The Morning Exercise at Cripplegate, 4to. 1661. p. 437. Sermon 18.

See Turner's Remarkable Providences, ch. xxvii. p. 128, fol. 1697. where the same fact, differently expressed, is cited from "Dr. Fuller in his Meditations."

t See Judges xvi. 30.

and pray again,—*Lord, increase our faith*,—that we may not only have wherewithal to live, while we live, but wherewithal to die also, when we die!

Thus I have written you, Sir, a funeral letter, God knows whose, perhaps my own. It is certainly good to be always ready, seeing we know neither day nor hour.

Sir, I sent on Friday for your worthy, hopeful son, who came hither safe and well on Saturday. I see him very much upon improvement in learning, and rejoice that God hath guided you, both now, and formerly, to put him into circumstances conducent thereunto. His profiting is much beyond his equals in age; and I hope he doth also, which is the main matter, seriously set his face heavenwards, and means to make religion his business. God keep it always *in the imagination of the thoughts of his heart, and establish his way before him!*

My most affectionate respects and service are to your good lady, son, and daughter. God Almighty spare you to them, and them to you, to your mutual comfort and joy! *Amen.*

December 20, 1687.

For Henry Ashurst, Esq.
In St. John-street, London.[u]

To resume the narrative:]—

In May, 1688, a new commission of the peace came down for the county of Flint, in which, by whose interest or procurement was not known, Mr. Henry was nominated a justice of peace for that county. It was no small surprise to him to receive a letter from the clerk of the peace, directed to Philip Henry, Esq. acquainting him with it, and appointing him when and whither to come to be sworn. To which he returned answer, that he was very sensible of his unworthiness of the honour, and his unfitness for the office which he was nominated to, and, therefore, desired to be excused, and he was so, and did what he could, that it might not be spoken of in the country. There were some, who, upon this occasion, unhappily remembered, that, a few years before, a reverend clergyman in Shropshire told Mr. Henry to his face, that he had done more mischief in the country than any man that ever came into it;[v] and that he himself hoped shortly to be in the commission of the peace, and then he would rid the country of him. But, alas, he was quite disappointed! Thus honour is like the shadow, which flies from those that pursue it, and follows those that flee from it.

For two years after this liberty began, Mr. Henry still continued his attendance, as usual, at Whitewell chapel, whenever there was preaching there; and he preached at his own house only when there was no supply there, and in the evening of those days when there was. For doing thus he was greatly clamoured against by some of the rigid separatists, and called a dissembler, and one that halted between two, and the like. Thus, as he notes in his Diary, one side told him, he was the author of all the mischief in the country, in drawing people *from* the church; and the other side told him, he was the author of all the mischief, in drawing people *to* the church.—And, which of these, saith he, shall I seek to please? Lord, neither, but thyself alone, and my own conscience; and, while I can do that, I have enough.

In a sermon at Whitewell chapel, one Lord's day in the afternoon, where he and his family, and many of his congregation, were attending, much was said, with some keen reflections, to prove the dissenters schismatics, and in a damnable state. When he came immediately after to preach at his own house, before he began his sermon, he expressed himself to this purpose;—Perhaps some of you may expect now that I should say something in answer to what we have heard, by which we have been so severely charged; but truly I have something else to do;—and so, without any further notice taken of it, went on to preach *Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

It was not without some fear and trembling, that Mr. Henry received the tidings of the Prince of Orange's landing, in November, 1688, as being somewhat in the dark concerning the clearness of his call, and dreading what might be the consequence of it. He used to say;—"Give peace in our time, O Lord,"—was a prayer that he would heartily set his *Amen* to. But, when secret things were brought to light, and a regular course was taken to fill the vacant throne with such a king, and such a queen, none rejoiced in it more heartily than he did. He celebrated the National Thanksgiving for that great deliverance, with an excellent sermon on that text, Romans viii. 31.—*What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

[Referring to this change of affairs, as it affected associating for Christian worship, he thus endeavoured to raise the minds of his flock above the consideration of mere second causes.—Christ is, said he, a shield to particular congregations and assemblies, professing faith in, and obedience to, him; especially, walking worthy of their profession, to protect and defend them against the wrath and violence of those who hate them. Are not we ourselves an instance, among many others, in like circumstances? Had we been here to-day, if the blessed Jesus had not been a Shield to us? Whose hand but his hath been our covering? It is true, we have a good law, and a good king and queen,[w] but had they been for us if the Lord Jesus had been against

[u] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[v] The Apostle Paul was called a pestilent fellow, Acts xxiv 5; and see Archbishop Leighton's Works, v. 2. p. 275, &c. *ut supra.*

[w] William and Mary.

us? No, no;—he hath been for us, therefore they. *The shields of the earth belong unto God.* He who hath undertaken the protection of the whole tabernacle, hath undertaken the protection of every apartment in it. He who hath undertaken the care of the whole vineyard, hath undertaken the care of every bed in it. He who hath undertaken to look after the whole flock, hath undertaken to look after every sheep in it. He who hath the command of the whole army, hath the command of every troop in it. Therefore, to him let us give the glory. Therefore, on him let us still wait.[x]]

Soon after that happy settlement, there were overtures made towards a comprehension of the moderate dissenters with the church of England; which Mr. Henry most earnestly desired, and wished for, if it could be had upon any terms less than sinning against his conscience; for never was any more averse to that which looked like a separation than he was, if he could possibly have helped it, *salvâ conscientiâ.* His prayers were constant, and his endeavours, as he had opportunity, that there might be some healing methods found out and agreed upon.[y]

But it was well known what was the *vox cleri* at that time, *viz.*—That, forasmuch as the oaths, subscriptions, and ceremonies, were imposed only to keep out such men, they would never consent to their removal, for the letting them in again. *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari,*[z] was a saying perverted to this purpose. And the fixed principle was,—Better a schism without the church, than a faction within it, &c. This was at that time published and owned, as the sense of the clergy in convocation. Which temper and resolve, so contrary to that which might have been expected upon that happy and glorious revolution, did a little alter his sentiments in that matter; and he saw himself perfectly driven from them. Despairing, therefore, to see an accommodation, he set himself the more vigorously to improve the present liberty. In June, 1689, the Act of Indulgence[a] passed, which not only tolerated, but allowed, the dissenters meetings, and took them under the protection of the government.

[In allusion to the gratifying event, he writes:[b]—

The condition of many ministers and people among ourselves, of many in France, hath been, in outward appearance, a dead condition. The words of the Act[c] are, that they shall be as if naturally dead: but, blessed be God, there hath been a resurrection in some measure, a coming out of the grave again, of which, whoever was the instrument, the Lord Jesus himself hath been the principal Agent. He is the Resurrection to us. When a company of nonconformists went to court to congratulate the king and queen, and to thank them for the present liberty, being clothed alike in long black cloaks, such as ministers usually wear in London, a scoffer said;—"Whither are all these going;—to a burial?" "No, Sir," said one of them, "to a resurrection."[d]]

Soon after, though he never in the least changed his judgment as to the lawfulness of joining in the Common Prayer, but was still ready to do it occasionally; yet the ministers that preached at Whitewell chapel, being often uncertain in their coming, which kept his meeting at Broad Oak at like uncertainties, to the frequent disappointment of many of his hearers that came from far; he was at last prevailed with to preach at public time every Lord's day, which he continued to do while he lived, much to his own satisfaction, and the satisfaction of his friends. An eminent minister in Lancashire, who did in like manner alter his practice about that time, gave this for a reason;—"That he had been for twenty-seven years striving to please a generation of men, who, after all, would not be pleased; and therefore he would no longer endeavour it as he had done."

It may be of use to give some account how he managed his ministerial work in the latter part of his time, wherein he had as signal tokens of the presence of God with him as ever; enabling him still to *bring forth fruit in old age,* and to *renew* his *youth like the eagles.* Though what he did, he still did *gratis,* and would do so, yet he was not willing to have any constant assistant, nor had he any; so much was he in his element, when he was about his Master's work. It was his meat and drink to do it.

1. As to his constant sabbath work, he was uniform and abundant in it. He began his morning family worship, on Lord's days, at eight o'clock, when he read and expounded pretty largely, sung a psalm, and prayed; and many strove to come time enough to join with him in that service. He began, in public, just at nine o'clock, winter and summer. His meeting-place was an out-building of his own, near adjoining to his house, fitted up very decently and conveniently for the purpose. He began with prayer? then he sung Psalm cx. without reading the line; next, he read and expounded a chapter in the Old Testament in the morning, and in the New

x P. Henry. Orig. MS.

y Appendix, No. XVIII.

z See Letters from a late eminent Prelate to one of his Friends, p. 145. 4to.

a Usually styled the Toleration Act, and entitled,—"An Act for exempting their Majesty's Protestant Subjects, dissenting from the Church of England, from the Penalties of certain Laws." 1st William and Mary, st. 1. c. 18: confirmed by 10th Anne, c. 2; 19th Geo. III. c. 44; and 52d Geo. III. c. 155. See the Hist. of Rel. Lib. v. 2. pp. 172, 213, 394. Also, Lord Mansfield's Speech in the House of Lords. Letters to the Hon. Mr. Justice Blackstone by P. Furneaux, D. D. p. 257. oct. 1771.

b P. Henry. Orig. MS.

c The Act of Uniformity.

d A similar anecdote, and, probably, originating in this, is related of the Rev. Thomas Bradbury, in the reign of King George the First. See Wilson's History of Dissenting churches, v. 3. p. 514. History of Dissenters, v. 3. p. 118.

Testament in the afternoon. He looked upon the public reading of the Scriptures in religious assemblies to be an ordinance of God, and that it tended very much to the edification of people by that ordinance, to have what is read expounded to them. The bare reading of the word he used to compare to the throwing of a net into the water; but, the expounding of it is like the spreading out of that net, which makes it the more likely to catch fish;[e] especially as he managed it, with practical, profitable observations. Some that have heard him read a chapter with this thought,—How will he make such a chapter as this useful to us?—have been surprised with such pertinent, useful instructions, as they have owned to be as much for their edification as any sermon. And, commonly, when he had expounded a chapter, he would desire them, when they came home, to read it over, and recollect some of those things that had been spoken to them out of it.

In his expounding of the Old Testament, he industriously sought for something in it concerning Christ, who is the true treasure, hid in the field, the true manna hid in the dew of the Old Testament. Take one instance: The last sabbath that ever he spent with his children at Chester, in the public morning worship, he read and expounded the last chapter of the Book of Job. After he had gone through the chapter, and observed what he thought fit out of it, he expressed himself to this purpose.—When I have read a chapter in the Old Testament, I used to inquire what there is in it that points at Christ, or is any way applicable to Christ. Here is in this chapter a great deal of Job, but is there nothing of Christ here? Yes. You have heard of the patience of Job, and have in him seen the end of the Lord. This in Job is applicable to Christ, that after he had patiently gone through his sufferings, he was appointed an intercessor for his unkind friends. Verse 8. Go to my servant Job, and my servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept. If any one hath an errand to God, let him go to Jesus Christ, and put it into his hand, for there is no acceptance to be hoped for with God, but by him, who is his beloved Son; not only with whom he is well pleased, but in whom, viz. with us in him, he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

[On another occasion, having gone through a course of lectures on the real types[f] (as distinguished from personal[g]) of Christ, he thus concluded the repetition sermon, in which he had briefly recapitulated the twelve topics;—Thus I have endeavoured to break these shells that you may come at the kernel. What have we need of, that is not to be had in *Christ*,—the marrow in all these bones? In him we have an ark against a deluge, a ram to be slain for us, a ladder to get to heaven by, a lamb to take away our sins, manna to feed us, water out of the rock to refresh us, a brazen serpent to heal us, purification-blood to cleanse us, a scape-goat to carry our sins into a land of forgetfulness, a city of refuge to fly to, a temple to pray to, an altar to sanctify all our gifts. Lo, Christ is all this, and infinitely more, therefore we need to look for no other.[h]

After the exposition of the chapter, he sung a psalm, and commonly chose a psalm suitable to the chapter he had expounded; and would briefly tell his hearers how they might sing that psalm with understanding, and what affections of soul should be working towards God, in the singing of it; his hints of that kind were of great use, and contributed much to the right performance of that service; he often said,—The more singing of psalms there is in our families and congregations on sabbath days, the more like they are to heaven, and the more there is in them of the everlasting sabbath. He would say sometimes, he loved to sing whole psalms, rather than pieces.

After the sermon in the morning, he sung the 117th psalm, without reading the line.

He intermitted at noon about an hour and a half, and on sacrament days not near so long, in which time he took some little refreshment in his study, making no solemn dinner; yet many of his friends did partake of his carnal, as well as of his spiritual, things, as those did that followed Christ, of whom he was careful they should not *faint by the way*. The morning sermon was repeated, by a ready writer, to those that stayed in the meeting place, as many did; and when that was done, he begun the afternoon's exercise; in which he not only read and expounded a chapter, but catechised the children, and expounded the catechism briefly before sermon. Thus did he go *from strength to strength*, and from duty to duty, on sabbath days; running the way of God's commandments with an *enlarged heart*. And the variety and vivacity of his public services made them exceeding pleasant to all that joined with him, who never had cause to complain of his being tedious. He used to say,—Every minute of sabbath time is precious, and none of it to be lost; and that he scarce thought the Lord's day well spent, if he were not weary in body at night; wearied *with* his work, but not weary *of* it, as he used to distinguish.

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[e] See Matt. iv. 18, 19. John xxi. 7, &c.

[f] Having Mrs. Savage's MS. copy of these excellent discourses before me, it seems desirable to preserve here the order in which they were delivered, and the texts.

The Lamb, from John i. 29.—Rock, 1 Cor. x. 4.—Ark, 1 Pet. iii. 18—21.—Ram, Gen. xxii. 13.—Manna, John vi. 49—51.—The brazen serpent, John iii. 14, 15.—Jacob's ladder, Gen. xxviii. 12.—The red heifer, Heb. ix. 13, 14.—The scape-goat, Lev. xvi. 8—10, 22.—Cities of refuge, Josh. xx. 1—3.—Temple, John ii. 19—21.—An altar, Hebrews xiii. 10. See *ante*, p. 88.

[g] The personal types discussed by Mr. Henry, were,—Adam, Melchisedec, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Samson, Joshua, David, Solomon, Jonah, Cyrus. Mrs. Tylston's MS.

[h] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

He would say sometimes to those about him, when he had gone through the duties of a sabbath,—Well, if this be not the way to heaven, I do not know what is. In pressing people to number their days, he would especially exhort them to number their sabbath days, how many they have been, and how ill they have been spent; how few it is like they may be, that they may be spent better; and to help in the account, he would say, that for every twenty years of our lives, we enjoy above a thousand sabbaths, which must all be accounted for in the day of reckoning.

As to his constant preaching, it was very substantial and elaborate, and greatly to edification. He used to say, he could not starch in his preaching; that is, he would not; as knowing where the language and expression is stiff, and forced, and fine, as they call it, it doth not reach the greatest part of the hearers. When he grew old, he would say, sure he might now take a greater liberty to talk, as he called it, in the pulpit, that is, to speak familiarly to people; yet to the last he abated not in his preparations for the pulpit, nor ever delivered any thing raw and undigested; much less any thing unbecoming the gravity and seriousness of the work. If his preaching was talking, it was talking to the purpose. His sermons were not common-place, but even when his subjects were the most plain and trite, yet his management of them was usually peculiar, and surprising. In those years, as formerly, he kept for the most part in a method for subjects, and was very seldom above one sabbath upon a text. And his constant practice was, as it had been before, when he concluded a subject that he had been a good while upon, he spent one sabbath in a brief rehearsal of the marrow and substance of the many sermons he preached upon it; which he called the clenching of the nail, that it might be *as a nail in a sure place*. So very industrious was he, and no less ingenious, in his endeavours, that his hearers might be able, after his decease, to have these things always in remembrance, 2 Peter i. 15. and it is hoped, that, by the blessing of God, the effect did not altogether disappoint his expectation. In the latter times of his ministry he would often contrive the heads of his sermons to begin with the same letter, or rather two and two of a letter;[i] but he did not at all seem to affect or force it; only if it fell in naturally and easily, he thought it a good help to memory, and of use, especially to the younger sort. And he would say, the chief reason why he did it was, because it is frequently observed in the Scripture, particularly the Book of Psalms. And though it be not a fashionable ornament of discourse, if it be a *scripture* ornament, that is sufficient to recommend it, at least to justify it against the imputation of childishness. Mr. Porter, of Whitchurch, very much used it; so did Mr. Malden. But the excellency of his sermons lay chiefly in the enlargements, which were always very solid, grave, and judicious; but in expressing and marshalling his heads, he often condescended below his own judgment, to help his hearers' memories. Some of his subjects, when he had finished them, he made some short memorandums of in verse,[k] a distich or two of each sabbath's work, and gave them out in writing, among the young ones of his congregation, many of whom wrote them, and learned them, and profited by them.[l]

It might be of use, especially to those who had the happiness of sitting under his ministry, to give some account of the method of his sabbath subjects, during the last eight or nine years of his ministry; and it was designed, till it was found it would swell this narrative into too great a bulk.[m]

2. As to the administration of the sacraments, those mysteries of God, which ministers are the stewards of.

As to the sacrament of baptism, he had never, that I know of, baptized any children except his own, from the time he was turned out in 1662, till his last liberty came, though often desired to do it; such was the tender regard he had to the established church; but now he revived the administration of that ordinance in his congregation. The occasion was this: One of the parish ministers, preaching at Whitewell chapel,—Mr. Henry and his family,

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i Thus in a discourse on Rom. v. 12. *By one man sin entered into the world;* after showing that sin consists in the want of original righteousness, and in the corruption of the whole nature, he remarked that a natural state is,—

An estate of distance from God, Eph. ii. 13. Luke xv. 13. Gen. iii. 8. Eph. iv. 18.

Desperate enmity against God, Rom. viii. 7. Rom. i. 30.

Universal disorder in the whole man. That which should obey, rules: the will rules the understanding; the affections the judgment; the body the soul: alluding to Eccles. x. 6, 7.

A dark state, Eph. v. 8. Eph. iv. 18. Nay, not only void of light, but hating it, resisting it, not receiving spiritual things, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

A defiled state, Ps. xiv. 3. Ezek. xvi. 6. Ps. li. 5, 7.

A diseased state, Isaiah i. 6.

Dead to every thing that is good, Eph. ii. 1. No will, desire, or inclination to do the will of God, no more than a dead man hath to any natural action of life.

Disposed to all manner of evil, Hos. xi. 7. bent, as the bowl to follow the bias.

Disabled for ever to help himself out of this condition, Ezek. xvi. 1, 2, 3, &c. Rom. v. 6. *without strength;* nay, refusing help when offered; alluding to Luke xiii. 11. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

k A godly minister in Wales, perceiving his people to be ignorant, and also much addicted to singing, at last took this course; —he turned the subject of his sabbath sermon into a song, and gave it to his parishioners; and it did good. Much of God's mind is revealed in Scripture by songs. P. Henry. From Matthew Henry's MS.

The allusion is supposed to be to the Rev. Rees Prichard, author of the Welshman's Candle. See a version of part of this useful poem, entitled, The Vicar of Llandovery, a Light from the Welshman's Candle, "by John Bulmer." duod. 1821. Preface, pp. x. xvi. &c. Mr. Prichard died in 1644, æt. 69.

l Appendix, No. XIX.

m Appendix, No. XX.

and many of his friends, being present,—was earnestly cautioning people not to go to conventicles, and used this as an argument against it,—"That they were baptized into the Church of England." Mr. Henry's catholic charity could not well digest this monopolizing of the great ordinance of baptism, and thought it time to bear his testimony against such narrow principles, which he ever expressed his dislike of in all parties and persuasions. Accordingly he took the next opportunity that offered itself, publicly to baptize a child, and desired the congregation to bear witness,—That he did not baptize that child into the church of England, nor into the church of Scotland, nor into the church of the Dissenters, nor into the church at Broad Oak, but into the visible catholic church of Jesus Christ. After this he baptized very many, and always publicly, though, being in the country, they were commonly carried a good way. The public administration of baptism, he not only judged most agreeable to the nature and end of the ordinance, but found to be very profitable and edifying to the congregation; for he always took that occasion, not only to explain the nature of the ordinance, but affectionately and pathetically to excite people duly to *improve* their baptism. He usually received the child immediately out of the hands of the parent that presented it, and returned it into the same hands again, with this, or the like charge;—Take this child, and bring it up for God. He used to say, that one advantage of public baptism was, that there were many to join in prayer for the child, in which therefore, and in blessing God for it, he was usually very large and particular. After he had baptized the child, before he gave it back to the parent, he commonly used these words;—We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's church, having washed it with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in token, that, hereafter, it shall not be ashamed to confess Christ crucified, and manfully to fight, &c.

He baptized many adult persons, that, through the error of their parents, were not baptized in infancy, and some in public.

The solemn ordinance of the Lord's supper he constantly celebrated in his congregation once a month, and always to a very considerable number of communicants. He did not usually observe public days of preparation for that ordinance, other than as they fell in course in the weekly lectures; nor did he ever appropriate any particular subject of his preaching to sacrament days, having a great felicity in adapting any profitable subject to such an occasion: and he would say;—What did the primitive Christians do, when they celebrated the Lord's supper every Lord's day? His administration of this ordinance was very solemn and affecting. He had been wont to go about in the congregation, and to deliver the elements with his own hand; but, in his latter time, he delivered them only to those near him, and so they were handed from one to another, with the assistance of one who supplied the office of a deacon,[n] as having also the custody and disposal of the money gathered for the use of the poor; Mr. Henry taking, and carefully keeping, a particular account of it.

Such as desired to be admitted to the Lord's supper, he first discoursed with concerning their spiritual state, and how the case stood between God and their souls; not only to examine them, but to instruct and teach them, and to encourage them, as he saw occasion; gently leading those whom he discerned to be serious, though weak and timorous. He usually discoursed with them more than once, as finding *precept upon precept, and line upon line*, necessary; but he did it with so much mildness, and humility, and tenderness, and endeavour to make the best of every body, as did greatly affect and win upon many. He was herein like our great Master, who can have *compassion on the ignorant*, and doth not *despise the day of small things*.

But his admission of young people out of the rank of catechumens into that of communicants, had a peculiar solemnity in it. Such as he catechised, when they grew up to some years of discretion, if he observed them to be intelligent and serious, and to set their faces heavenwards, he marked them out to be admitted to the Lord's supper, and, when he had a competent number of such, twelve or fifteen, perhaps, or more, he ordered each of them to come to him severally, and discoursed with them of the things belonging to their everlasting peace; put it to their choice, whom they would serve; and endeavoured to affect them with those things with which, by their catechisms, they had been made acquainted; drawing them with the *cords of a man, and the bands of love*, into *the way which is called holy*. For several Lord's days he catechised them, particularly in public, touching the Lord's supper,[o] and the duty of preparation for it, and their baptismal covenant, which in that ordinance they were to take upon themselves, and to make their own act and

[n] The peculiar work of deacons, according to the primitive institution, was the serving tables, and making a prudent and faithful distribution of the stock of the society, Acts vi. 2. Dr. Lardner's Works. vol. ii. p. ix. oct. 1788. Watts's Works, v. 4. p. 146. oct. 1813. Some of them, perhaps all, were occasionally preachers; but this was no part of their office as deacons. Mr. Newton. Review of Ecclesiastical History. Works, v. 3. p. 87. oct. 1808.

[o] 1687-8. Sab. Mar. 11, I spent still at dear Broad Oak; many sweet lessons taught us. The subject,—that a bold spirit is an excellent spirit; but I was most affected with the catechising, which was not then of the children, but the young persons who are shortly to be admitted to the Lord's supper. After many serious exhortations and questions, all the company, as well as dear father, were much affected, when tears would scarce let him say any more than,—God bless you! Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS.

deed. Often telling them upon such occasions, that they were not to oblige themselves to any more than what they were already obliged to by their baptism, only to bind themselves faster to it. Then he appointed a day in the week before the ordinance; when, in a solemn assembly on purpose, he prayed for them, and preached a sermon[p] to them, proper to their age and circumstances; and so the following sabbath they were all received together to the Lord's supper. This he looked upon as the right confirmation, or transition into the state of adult church-membership. The more solemn our covenanting with God is, the more deep and the more durable the impressions are likely to be. He hath recorded it in his Diary, upon one of these occasions, as his heart's desire and prayer for those who were thus admitted;—That it might be as the day of their espousals to the Lord Jesus, and that they might each of them have a wedding-garment.

3. The discipline he observed in his congregation was, not such as he could have wished for, but the best he could get, considering what a scattered flock he had, which was his trouble; but it could not be helped. He would sometimes apply to the circumstances he was in, that of Moses, Deuteronomy xii. 8, 9. However, I see not but the end was effectually attained by the methods he took, though there wanted the formality of officers and church-meetings for the purpose. If he heard of any that walked disorderly, he sent for them, and reproved them gently, or sharply, as he saw the case required. If the sin had scandal in it, he suspended them from the ordinance of the Lord's supper till they gave some tokens of their repentance and reformation. And where the offence was public and gross, his judgment was, that some public satisfaction should be made to the congregation before re-admission. But, whatever offence did happen, or breaches of the Christian peace, Mr. Henry's peculiar excellence lay in restoring with the *spirit of meekness*;[q] which with his great prudence, and love, and condescension, did so much command the respect of his people, and win upon them, that there was a universal satisfaction in all his management; and it may be truly said of him, as it was of David, 2 Samuel iii. 36, that *whatsoever he did pleased all the people*. And it is an instance and evidence, that those ministers who will rule by love and meekness, need no laws or canons to rule by, other than those of the Holy Scripture.—*How forcible are right words!* Job vi. 25.

4. He was very strict and very serious in observing the public fasts appointed by authority, and called them a delight. He had seldom any one to assist him in carrying on the duties of those days, but performed the service of them himself alone. He began at nine of the clock, or quickly after, and never stirred out of the pulpit till about four in the afternoon, spending all that time in praying, and expounding, and singing, and preaching, to the admiration of all that heard him, who were generally more on such days than usual. And he was sometimes observed to be more warm and lively towards the latter end of the duties of a fast day than at the beginning; as if the spirit were most willing and enlarged when the flesh was most weak. In all his performances on public fast days, he did, *hoc agere*, attend to that which was the proper work of the day; *every thing is beautiful in its season*. His prayers and pleadings with God on those days, were especially for national mercies, and the pardon of national sins. How excellently did he order the cause before God, and fill his mouth with arguments in his large and particular intercessions for the land, for the king, the government, the army, the navy, the church, the French Protestants, &c. He was another Jacob, a wrestler, an Israel, a prince with God.[r] Before a fast day, he would be more than ordinarily inquisitive concerning the state of public affairs, as Nehemiah was, Nehemiah i. 2. that he might know the better how to order his prayers and preaching; for, on such a day, he hath sometimes said,—As good say nothing, as nothing to the purpose. He made it his business on fast-days, to show people their transgressions, especially *the house of Jacob their sins*.—It is most proper, said he, to preach of Christ on Lord's days, to preach of sin on fast days, and to preach duty on both. He went over the third chapter of the Revelations, in the fast sermons of two years. Another year he preached over the particulars of that charge,[s] Zephaniah iii. 2. Hypocrisy in hearers, and flattery in preachers, as he would sometimes say, is bad at any time, but it is especially abominable upon a day of humiliation.

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p Once he preached on that occasion, on 1 Cor. xiii. 11; at another time on 2 Chron. xxx. 8. another, on 1 Chron. xxix. 11. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra*.

q Meekness is a grace of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23. and is of general use to us in every thing we do, both towards God and man, James iii. 13. Meekness in the understanding is seen in receiving the truths of God, James i. 21. Meekness in the will is seen in yielding to his commands, Matt. xi. 29. The proper work of meekness is to compose, and cool, and quiet the spirit. It regulates anger in its cause, measure, and continuance, Eph. iv. 26. We must answer with meekness, 1 Pet. iii. 15. We must instruct with meekness, 2 Tim. ii. 25. We must restore with meekness, Gal. vi. 1. We must bear reproaches with meekness, Numb. xii. 2, 3. 2 Sam. xvi 7, 8. We must bear reproofs with meekness. Meekness towards God stands opposed to murmuring and repining at his dealings with us. The language will be,—*It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

r 1697-8 Sab. Sept. 4. I oft think of a petition of dear praying father, now with God, thus;—Let, O Lord, the blessing of the ordinances reach those whose hearts are with us here to-day, though their persons be not. God grant I may tread in his steps, and be truly of the seed of this praying Jacob, who was so mighty in that duty. Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig. MS.

s See P. Henry's Sermons, oct. 1816. pp. 226, 242, 269. Also, a Sermon on the Fifth of November, by P. Henry. Evan. Mag. vol. xxviii. p. 456.

5. He preached a great many lectures in the country about, some stated, some occasional, in supplying of which he was very indefatigable. He hath sometimes preached a lecture, ridden eight or nine miles, and preached another, and the next day two more. To quicken himself to diligence he would often say,—Our opportunities are passing away, and *we must work while it is day, for the night cometh.* Once, having very wet and foul weather to go through to preach a lecture, he said, he comforted himself with two scriptures; one was, 2 Timothy ii. 3.—*Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ;* the other, because he exposed and hazarded his health, for which some blamed him, was, 2 Samuel vi. 21.—*It was before the Lord.* He took all occasions in his lectures abroad, to possess the minds of people with sober and moderate principles, and to stir them up to the serious regard of those things wherein we are all agreed.—We are not met here together, said he, once in an exhortation, with which he often began at his lecture, because we think ourselves better than others, but because we desire to be better than we are.

He was very happy in the choice of his subjects for his week-day lecture. At one, which was stated, he preached against errors[t] in general, from James i. 16.—*Do not err, my beloved brethren;*—particularly, from divers other scriptures he showed, that we must not err concerning God, and Christ, and the Spirit; concerning sin and repentance, faith and good works; concerning God's ordinances; concerning grace and peace, and afflictions and prosperity, and the things of the life to come.[u]

[At another lecture, he considered what the people of God are compared to in Scripture. They are *the salt of the earth; the light of the world; God's witnesses; the planting of the Lord; his husbandry; his building.*[v]]

At the monthly lectures at his own house, he chose to preach upon the four last things, death and judgment, heaven and hell, in many particulars, but commonly a new text for every sermon. When he had, in many sermons, finished the first of the four, one that used to hear him sometimes, inquiring of his progress in his subjects, asked him if he had done with death, meaning that subject concerning death; to which he pleasantly replied;—No, I have not done with him yet. I must have another turn with him, and he will give me a fall; but I hope to have the victory at last. He would sometimes remove the lectures in the country from one place to another, for the benefit of those that could not travel. Once having adjourned a lecture to a new place, he began it with a sermon on Acts xvii. 6.—*These men that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also;* in which he showed how false the charge is as they meant it; for religion doth not disturb the peace of families, or societies, doth not cause any disorder or unquietness, &c. And yet, that in another sense there is a great truth in it,—that, when the gospel comes in power to any soul, it turns the world upside down in that soul; such is the change it makes there.

All this he did *gratis*, and without being burthensome to any; nay, he was best pleased, when, at the places where he preached, nothing was got for his entertainment, but he came home, though some miles, fasting; as in other places it was a trouble to him to see his friends careful about much serving, though it was out of their respect to him.

Lastly. As he was an excellent preacher himself, so he was an exemplary hearer of the word, when others preached, though every way his inferiors; so reverent, serious, and attentive was he in hearing, and so observant of what was spoken. I have heard him tell, that he knew one, and I suppose it was as Paul knew a man in Christ, who could truly say, to the glory of God, that for forty years he had never slept at a sermon.

[He would sometimes remark;—Those who are ordinarily drowsy in hearing the word of God, and allow themselves in it, are next door to some great affliction, or great temptation, or on the declining hand.[w]]

He was diligent also to improve what he heard afterwards by meditation, repetition, prayer, and discourse; and he was a very great encourager of young ministers that were humble and serious, though their abilities and performances were but mean. He hath noted in his Diary, as that which affected him, this saying of a godly man, a hearer of his;—"I find it easier to go six miles to hear a sermon, than to spend one quarter of an hour in meditating and praying over it in secret, as I should, when I come home.[x]

As to the circumstances of his family in these last nine years of his life, they were somewhat different from what they had been; but the same *candle*[y] *of God*, which had shined upon his tabernacle, continued still to do so. In the years 1687 and 1688,

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[t] Appendix, No. XXI.

[u] As a preservative against error, get truth of grace, and grow in it, 2 Pet. iii. 17, 18. Heb. xiii. 9. Matt. xxiv. 24. Be filled with knowledge, especially in fundamentals, Matt. xxii. 29. Ps. cxix. 104, &c. Get an humble heart, Ps. cxxxi. 1, 2. Ps. xxv. 9. Receive the truth in the love of it, 3 Thess. ii. 10, 11. John vii. 17. Be much in secret prayer; pray for the Spirit, who is given to lead into truth, John xvi. 13. Maintain communion with the saints; come not near seducers, 2 Cor. vi. 17. Prov. iv. 14, 15. 2 John 10. Jer. xxiii. 16. Keep up due esteem of ministers whom God hath set over you, Heb. xiii. 7, 17. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. Jer. vi. 16, 17. Eph. iv. 11, &c. Mal. ii. 2, 7. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[v] Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

[w] From an authentic MS. believed to be in the hand-writing of his daughter, Mrs. Tylston.

[x] Appendix, No XXII.

[y] See Job xxix. 3.

he married all his five children; the three eldest in four months' time, in the year 1687; and the other two in a year and a half after; so many swarms, as he used to call them, out of his hive;[z] and all, not only with his full consent, but to his abundant comfort and satisfaction. He would say, he thought it the duty of parents to study to oblige their children in that affair. And though never could children be more easy and at rest in a father's house than his were, yet he would sometimes say concerning them, as Naomi to Ruth, Ruth iii. 1.—*Shall I not seek rest for thee?* Two advices he used to give, both to his children and others, in their choice of that relation. One was:—Keep within the bounds of profession, such as one may charitably hope is from a good principle. The other was;—Look at suitableness in age, quality, education, temper, &c. He used to observe, from Genesis ii. 18.—*I will make him a help meet for him,*—that where there is not meetness, there will not be much help. And he would commonly say to his children, with reference to that choice;—Please God, and please yourselves, and you shall never displease me; and greatly blamed those parents, who conclude matches for their children, and do not ask counsel at their mouth.

[When the proposal made to his youngest daughter was communicated to him, his sentiments were expressed in the following letter:—

My dear Daughter;

Your present affair we can truly say was no less a surprise to us, than it was to you; but we have learned, both from our fixed belief of God's universal providence in every thing, and his particular special providence towards those that fear him, and also from our last year's experience, once and again, of his doing that for us which we looked not for;—to cease our wonder, and to apply ourselves, as we ought to do, to our duty. We would have you do so likewise; saying, as Paul, which was the first word that grace spoke in him,—*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Your way is, in the first place, to acknowledge God, not only in the thing itself, but in all the motions and events of it; and if you do so, he will direct you; that is, guide, and bless, and succeed your steps. You are, next, to admit the person into your converse, as in another case, 1 Timothy v. 2. with all purity; that is, at no unfitting time, in no unfitting place, manner, or other circumstance; as it will not be desired, so neither ought it to be granted. Your end, herein, is to be the same with his; your next end that you may be acquainted with each other's temper and disposition. Especially that you may feel the pulse of each other's soul, how it beats towards God, and his works and ways. As the agreement is in *that*, accordingly will be much of the sweetness and comfort of the condition.

As to the calling, estate, and other things of that kind, I am glad you know, and am more glad you have espoused, Mr. Alleyn's six principles,[a] which are the same in *practice*, and are of as great use and influence, as Mr. Perkins's Six Principles[b] in *Doctrine;* and, therefore, hold to them. If height and fulness in the world were the things that would make us happy, those who have them would be the happy people; but it is not so. It shall be my endeavour, as far as I can, to inform myself how things are in those matters, that there may be no mistake on either side, and then to do as there shall be cause. You will remember one thing, which you have often heard from me in others' cases, though never in your own, and that is,—To keep yourself free from all engagements, by promise, till the time come when it shall be thought proper, by mutual consent, that I contract you,[c] which will be time enough for you to do that. To how many hath the not observing this rule been a snare! We are truly thoughtful for you, you may well believe, but must not be too thoughtful. Unto God we must, and do, commit our way in it, and so must you yours, —*casting all our care upon him, for he careth for us.* We have, hitherto, found his contrivances best, not ours. I am glad you have so worthy a friend as Mrs. M. K. to unbosom yourself to, and to help to advise you, and pray for you. I told your brother when I thought it would be convenient you should come home. If he has not opportunity of sending you then, we shall, soon after, God willing, send for you. Our love and blessing is to him, and our daughter, and to your dear self, having *confidence in you in all things*, (2 Corinthians vii. 16.—but it is *through the Lord*, as it is limited, Galatians v. 10.) that you will act as I have counselled you.

Committing you to his protection and guidance, I rest, Your loving father,

Feb. 17, 1687-8. PHILIP HENRY.[d]]

He never aimed at great things[e] in the world for his children, but sought for them, in the first place,

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z Probably in allusion to Shakspeare:—

"All's well that end's well." Act I, sc. 2.

I after him, do after him wish too,
Since I nor wax, nor honey, can bring home,
I quickly were dissolved from *my hive*,
To give some labourer room.

a See the Sure Guide to Heaven, by Joseph Alleine, pp. 235, 245. ed. 1704. duod.

b See *ante*, p. 10.

c See the Investigator, v. 7. p. 70. Also the works of the Rev. R. Greenham, p. 174. fol. 1605. where there is a Treatise of a Contract before Marriage.

d Orig. MS.

e Having in view, very likely, the pithy couplet of his admired poet, George Herbert:—

"For gold and grace did never yet agree;
Religion always sides with povertie."

The Temple, &c. *ut supra*, 191. Also, Clark's Lives annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 152. *ut supra*.

the kingdom of God, and the *righteousness* thereof. He used to mention, sometimes, the saying of a pious gentlewoman, that had many daughters;—"The care of most people is how to get good husbands for their daughters; but my care is to fit my daughters to be good wives, and then let God provide for them." In this, as in other things, Mr. Henry steered by that principle,—That *a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth.* And it pleased God so to order it, that all his children were disposed of, into circumstances very agreeable and comfortable, both for life and godliness. He was greatly affected with the goodness of God to him herein, without any forecast or contrivance of his own.—The country, saith he, in his Diary, takes notice of it, and what then shall I render? Surely, this is *a token for good.*

[Speaking of the arrangements of outward comforts, and the eagerness of the affections towards them, he would remark, that,—God hath three hands, wherewith he distributes earthly things: A hand of common providence; with this he feeds the ravens, when they cry. A hand of special love; with this he feeds his children, who commit their way to him, and put their trust in him. A hand of anger and wrath; with this he gives to those who are impatient: they must and will be rich; they must and will have this or that.[f] In gifts from men we look more at the mind of the giver than the value of the gift. So should we in gifts from God. Have *I* his *love* with what I have? Then I am well enough. If otherwise, it is but a sad portion; as a golden suit with the plague in it.[g]]

All his four daughters were married at Whitewell chapel, and he preached a wedding-sermon[h] for each of them in his own family after.[i]

He would often tell his friends, that those who desire, in the married condition, to live in the favour of God, must enter upon that condition in *the fear of God.* For it is an ill omen to stumble at the threshold; and an error in the first concoction is seldom amended in the second.

While he lived he had much comfort in all his children, and their yoke-fellows, and somewhat the more, that, by the Divine Providence, four of the five families which branched out of his, were settled in Chester.

His youngest daughter[k] was married April 26, 1688, the same day of the year, as he observes in his Diary, and the same day of the week, and in the same place, that he was married to his dear wife, twenty-eight years before; upon which, this is his remark;—I cannot desire for them, that they should *receive* more from God than we have received, in that relation and condition; but I would desire, and do desire, that they may *do* more for God in it than we have done.

His usual compliment to his new-married friends, was;—Others wish you all happiness, I wish you all holiness, and then there is no doubt but you will have all happiness.

When the marriage of the last of his daughters was about to be concluded on, he thus writes;—But *is Joseph gone, and Simeon gone, and must Benjamin go also?* We will not say, that *all these things are against* us, but *for us.* If we must be thus, in this merciful way, bereaved of our children, let us be bereaved; and God turn it for good to them, as we know he will, if they love and fear his name. And when, some time after she was married, he parted with her to the house of her husband, he thus writes;—We have sent her away, not as Laban said he would have sent his daughters away, with *mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp,* but with prayers, and tears, and hearty good wishes.—And now, saith he, in his Diary, we are alone again, as we were in our beginning. God be better to us than twenty children. Upon the same occasion he thus writes to a dear relation;—We are now left as we were, one and one, and yet but one one; the Lord, I trust, that has brought us thus far, will enable us to finish well;[l] and then all will be well, and not till then.

That which he often mentioned, as the matter of his great comfort that it was so, and his desire that it might continue so, was the love and unity that was among his children; and that, as he writes, the transplanting of them into new relations, had not lessened that love, but rather increased it; for this he often gave thanks to the God of love; noting, from Job i. 4;—That the children's love to one another is the parents' comfort and joy. In his last will and testament, this is the prayer which he puts up for his children,—That the Lord would build them up in holiness, and continue them still in brotherly love, as *a bundle of arrows which cannot be broken.*

When his children were removed from him, he was a daily intercessor at the throne of grace for them, and their families. Still the burnt-offer-

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f Upon those men who escape the curse of Adam, Genesis iii. 19.—*In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,*—God commonly inflicts the serpent's curse; verse 14.—*Upon thy belly shalt thou go, dust shalt thou eat.* Those usually that *have* most dote most upon what they have, grovelling in the earth, &c. We must use riches as thorns; make a hedge, and stop gaps with them; but by no means make a bed of them, as that fool, Luke xii. 19. P. Henry. Com. Pl. Book, Orig. MS.

g P. Henry. Orig. MS.

h For a singular Collection of Wedding Sermons, see the Anecdotes of Literature and Scarce Books, by the Rev. W. Beloe, v. 3. pp. 100—109, oct. 1808;—"Every one of which, from some cause or other, the whimsicality of the title, the phraseology, or the matter, is an object of curiosity." Ib. p. 100.

i Appendix, No. XXIII.

k See *ante.*

l See Acts xx. 24.

ings were offered *according to the number of them all.* He used to say;—Surely, the children of so many prayers will not miscarry. Their particular circumstances of affliction and danger were sure to be mentioned by him with suitable petitions. The greatest affliction he saw in his family, was the death of his dear daughter-in-law, Catharine,[m] the only daughter of Samuel Hardware, Esq.; who, about a year and a half after she was transplanted into his family, to which she was the greatest comfort and ornament imaginable, died of the small-pox in child-bed, upon the Thanksgiving-day for King William's coming in. She died but a few weeks after Mr. Henry had married the last of his daughters; upon which marriage she had said;—"Now we have a full lease, God only knows which life will drop first." She comforted herself in the extremity of her illness with this word;—"Well, when I come to heaven, I shall see that I could not have been without this affliction." She had been for some time before under some fears as to her spiritual state, but the clouds were, through grace, dispelled, and she finished her course with joy, and a cheerful expectation of the glory to be revealed. When she lay ill, Mr. Henry, being in fear not only for her that was ill, but for the rest of his children in Chester, who had none of them past the pikes[n] of that perilous distemper, wrote thus to his son, on the evening of the Lord's day.—I have just done the public work of this day, wherein, before many scores of witnesses, many of whom, I dare say, are no little concerned for you, I have absolutely, freely, and unreservedly, given you all up to the good-will and pleasure of our heavenly Father, waiting what he will do with us, for good I am sure we have received, and shall we not receive evil also? He preached at Chester, upon occasion of that sad breach in his family, on Job x. 3.—*Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

When two of his children lay ill, and in perilous circumstances, after he had been wrestling with God in prayer for them, he wrote thus in his Diary;—If the Lord will be pleased to grant me my request this time concerning my children, I will not say as the beggars at our door used to do;—I'll never ask any thing of him again; but, on the contrary, he shall hear oftener from me than ever; and I will love God the better, and love prayer the better, as long as I live. He used to say,—Tradesmen take it ill if those that are in their books go to another shop. While we are so much indebted to God for past mercies, we are bound to attend him for further mercies.

As he was an intercessor for his children at the throne of grace, so he was upon all occasions a remembrancer to them, both by word and letter, to quicken them to that which is good. How often did he inculcate this upon them? Love one another, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Do all you can, while you are together, to help one another to heaven, that you may be together there, for ever, and with the Lord. When the families of his children were in health and peace, the candle of God shining upon their tabernacles, he wrote thus to them;—It was one of Job's comforts in his prosperity, that his children loved one another, and feasted together. The same is ours in you, which, God continue. But you will not be offended, if we pray that you may none of you curse God in your hearts. Remember the wheel is always in motion, and the spoke that is uppermost will be under,[o] and therefore mix tremblings always with your joy.

He much rejoiced in the visits of his children, and made that, as other things, which were the matter of his rejoicing, the matter of his thanksgiving. His usual saying, at parting, was;—This is not the world we are to be together in, and it is well it is not; but there is such a world before us. And his usual prayer was,—That our next meeting might be either in heaven, or further on in our way towards it.

He had, in eight years' time, twenty-four grandchildren born; some by each of his children; concerning whom he would often bless God, that they were all the sealed ones of the God of heaven, and enrolled among his lambs. On the birth of his second grand-child, at a troublesome time as to public affairs, he thus writes;—I have now seen my *children's children;* let me also see *peace upon Israel;* and then I will say,—*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart.* Some were much affected with it, when he baptized two of his grand-children together at Chester, publicly, and preached on Genesis xxxiii. 5.—*They are the children which God hath graciously given thy servant.* He observed in what a savoury, pious, gracious manner Jacob speaks. He had

m See Tong's Life of the Rev. Matthew Henry, 105. &c. *ut supra.* Her epitaph is preserved in the History of Cheshire, *ut supra,* vol. I. p. 262; and a pedigree of the Hardware family, *ib.* vol. 2. p. 181.

Mr. Matthew Henry bewailed his loss in some pathetic lines which were first printed in the Evan. Mag. v. 2. p. 351; and, a little altered, v. 29. p. 163.

n Mr. Paul Bayne, in his Christian Letters, *ut supra,* p. 246. urges for consolation, that it is,—"promised we shall *passe the pikes,* and bring forth, though with sorrowes." In another of his works he says;—"We see that who will keepe life and power in his course, endeavouring a good conscience in all things, they must *passe the pikes* of evill tongues which are shaken against them." The Triall of a Christian's Estate, p. 27. duod. 1637. See also Bishop Saunderson's Thirty-four Sermons, p. 24. fol. 1674; and an Exposition of the Ten Commandments, by John Dod and Robert Cleaver, p. 16. 4to. 1622.

An Old Biographer says;—There are no preachers so experimental, spiritual, powerful, courageous, awakening, convincing, converting, compassionate, comforting, as those who have passed *through the pikes.* Life of Mr. John Murcot, p. 5. prefixed to his Works, *ut supra.*

o Heavenly honour and glory, like a pole, or axle-tree, is fixed and immoveable; but earthly is like a wheel that turns over and over, and runs round; that part which is now above, or aloft, will by and by be below, and at bottom. Precepts for Christian Practice, by Edward Reyner. p. 184. duod. 1668. edit. 13th.

spoken good sense if he had only said; they are my children; but then he had not spoken like Jacob, like one that had so lately seen the face of God. Though our speech be not always *of* grace, yet it must be always *with* grace; grace poured into the lips. There is a kind of language, the air of which speaks it the *language of Canaan*. Christians should speak like Christians.

It was not long after his children were married from him, but his house was filled again with the children of several of his friends, whom he was, by much importunity, persuaded to take to table with him.[p] All that knew him, thought it a thousand pities that such a master of a family should have but a small family, and should not have many to sit down under his shadow.[q] He was first almost necessitated to it, by the death of his dear friend and kinsman, Mr. Benyon, of Ash, who left his children to his care. Some he took *gratis*, or for small consideration; and when, by reason of the advances of age, he could not go about so much as he had done, doing good, he laid out himself to do the more at home. He kept a teacher to attend their school-learning; and they had the benefit not only of his inspection in that, but, which was much more, his family worship, sabbath instructions, catechising, and daily converse, in which his tongue was *as choice silver*, and his *lips fed many*. Nothing but the hopes of doing some good to the rising generation could have prevailed with him, to take this trouble upon him. He would often say;—We have a busy house, but there is a rest remaining. We must be doing something in the world while we are in it; but this fashion will not last long, methinks I see it passing away.

Sometimes he had such with him as had gone through their course of university-learning, at private academies, and desired to spend some time in his family, before their entrance upon the ministry, that they might have the benefit, not only of his public and family instructions, but of his learned and pious converse,[r] in which, as he was thoroughly furnished for every good word and work, so he was very free and communicative. The great thing which he used to press upon those who intended the ministry, was to study the Scriptures, and make them familiar. *Bonus textuarius est bonus theologus*, was a maxim he often minded them of. For this purpose he recommended to them the study of the Hebrew, that they might be able to search the Scriptures in the original. He also advised them to the use of an interleaved Bible, wherein to insert such expositions and observations as occur occasionally in sermons or other books: which he would say, are more happy and considerable sometimes, than those that are found in the professed commentators. When some young men desired the happiness of coming into his family, he would tell them;—You come to me, as Naaman did to Elisha, expecting that I should do this and the other for you, and, alas, I can but say as he did, *Go, wash in Jordan*. Go, study the Scriptures. I profess to teach no other learning but scripture-learning.

[Sometimes he would say;—Prefer having eyes to read the Scriptures, and be blind to every thing else, rather than to read every thing else, and neglect the Bible.[s] Christ is the lesson there taught, and it is a lesson which it will do us abundant good to learn. It is unspeakably satisfying to the understanding. It is both sweet and comfortable, refreshing and joyous. It is strangely renewing and changing within, as to the *inner man*, by making the tree good, bowing the will, and raising the affections; and as strangely reforming and mending without, in the life and conversation.[t]]

It was but a little before he died, that, in reading Isaiah l. he observed, from verse 4.—*The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, &c.*—That the true learning of a gospel minister consists,—not in being able to talk Latin fluently, and to dispute in philosophy,—but in being able to *speak a word in season* to weary souls. He that knows how to do that well, is a learned minister.

[He still employed his edifying talent in letter-writing, to the no small gratification of his friends. In these communications he usually wrote with the warmth of holy affection and zeal; occasionally indulging in a playfulness of expression, which served to show how far he was from being gloomy, or morose. The following may be taken as examples:—

July 5, 1692.

Dear Sir;

The change of your hand for so much the better, made me altogether uncertain to whom I owed the kindness of the printed paper, till your father informed my ignorance, which is now quite removed by your second letter. The tidings whereof, though it be not like that of the former, as to the account it

p It would be interesting to see a list of his "Tablers," as his papers designate them, but an effort to furnish one has proved ineffectual. Dr. Latham, in a "Sermon preached at Uttoxeter, May 26, 1745, on occasion of the Death of the Rev. Mr. Daniel Madock," says;—"His first years were spent in old Mr. Philip Henry's family, where he was early formed to piety as well as instructed in good literature." p. 27. oct. 1745.

q See Sol. Song. ch. ii. v. 3.

r Mr. Wilson, of Warwick, an eminent young minister, (See Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, pp. 49, 271.) before he undertook a public charge desired to spend some time in the family of the excellent Philip Henry; and said to a near relation of his,—He desired to learn Mr. Henry's way of preaching, and praying, and living; and, says he, "If God will give me his Spirit, I shall be a happy person." This desire of his was pleasing to God; he had the opportunity, and most discernible advantage by it. A Funeral Sermon for the Rev. Mr. Samuel Slater, p. 26. 4to. 1704. By the Rev. W. Tong.

s See Hildersam's Lecture upon the 4th of John, fol. 1629. Address, "To the godly reader, whether minister or private Christian."

t P. Henry. Orig. MS.

gives of public affairs, yet as to this were very acceptable, that it assures me of the continuance of your personal respect to, and remembrance of, unworthy me; and also gives me good ground of hope, that you are confirmed more and more in your choice of the good ways of the Lord, the good old ways of religion and godliness, as the ways you resolve to walk in, though but few of your rank and circumstances, yea, *very few*, do so. And what then? Is it not better to go to heaven with a remnant, than to hell with a multitude? Are diamonds and rubies ever the less precious, because they are short in number of the pebble stones? I am glad to think there is one the more for you; and I hope, *He that hath begun the good work*, the same *will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ*. What you write of the paralyzing atheism of the town, I am afraid is too true; but what do you think of such a thing as *a-christism?* I am sure Ephesians ii. 12. mentions both. How many are there that own a God, and worship him, that have no regard to Christ Jesus in doing so,—as if we could come to him, and have to do with him, and receive from him, without a Mediator! How is he then *the way?* Hath he not said, —*No man cometh to the Father but by me?* Is he the way to those that do not *walk in him*, or an Advocate to those that do not employ him? The blessed Paul could say, *To me to live is Christ;* and if we cannot, in some measure, say so too, to us *to die* will not be *gain*. Dear Sir, give me leave, with all the affectionate earnestness I can use, to recommend him to your study and acquaintance; and to entreat you to *abound therein more and more;* learn him, and love him, and live him, and, my soul for yours, all will be well. Learn him, for he is a good Lesson; love him, for he is a good Friend; and live him, for he is a good Pattern. Count upon it you can have no sin pardoned without him: no strength to do your duty without him; no acceptation, when it is done, without him; no communion with God here, without him; and no heaven hereafter, without him. And is there not good reason, then, why you should make him your *All in all*, and use him accordingly?

I have been for some weeks, of late, a poor prisoner, under pain in an ill-affected limb, which still continues; but, I thank God, with less violence. I am in hopes of creeping to the pulpit again, from which, for three sabbaths, I have been excluded; if so, it shall be to preach *Christ Jesus the Lord*, the *Prince of our peace*, and the *Captain of our salvation;* to whose acquaintance I again recommend you; and rest,

Dear Sir,

Your truly loving friend, to serve you,

My wife is, with all due respects, remembered to you. PHILIP HENRY.

[u] Orig. MS. Mr. Hunt was of Boreatton, in Shropshire, and afterwards a magistrate for the county. See *ante*, p. 52.

For Thomas Hunt, Esq.
In White Hart Yard,
In Fleet-street, London.[u]

Dear Sir, Cousin, and Brother;

You have authorized me more than ever to call you so, since you have superscribed your letter to Mr. Philip Tallents, at Broad Oke. It was no mistake; for my name is Philip, and I am Tallents's; obliged his, adopted his. As to Mr. Hal, I have not yet a conveniency for him, there having been no vacancy made as yet, as I expected. If he will please to come guestwise for a night or two, he shall be welcome. It may be, the sight of our mean circumstances, when he sees them, will give him enough to prevent inquiring further; for they are really poor and mean.

We do both of us most affectionately salute you both in our dear Lord. He that told us you talked of letting us see you here together, when the days and ways would permit, did make us really glad. Many thanks to you for your kind entertainment of my last Mercury. The Lord Almighty be your *Sun and Shield! Amen.* This from,

Dear Cousin and Brother,
Yours to serve you,

Jan. 12, 1692-3. PHILIP HENRY.

For the Rev. Mr. Tallents,
At Salop.
These.[v]

I send you these few lines to be your remembrancer when you do not see me. You are now come out of the age of childhood; and, though when you were a child, you *thought and spake as a child, and understood as a child*, it will be time for you now *to put away childish things*. You must begin to bethink yourself for what you are come into this world; not to eat, and drink, and play, but to glorify God, and save your soul. You are, *by nature, a child of wrath, even as others;* your understanding dark; your mind carnal, and that *carnal mind* no better than downright *enmity against God*,—prone to all manner of evil, and backward to all manner of good. Do not you find it so, every day, in every thing? Must there not, then, be a change? Must you not be *renewed in the spirit of your mind, born again, passed from death to life?* You must, if you will be *saved*, for none but *new creatures* are fit for the *New Jerusalem*.

And is the good work wrought in you? When? Where? How was it? How long is it since you closed with Christ upon gospel terms, taking him to be yours,—giving yourself to him to be his. I do not mean in word and tongue only;—I have often heard you *so* do it, but *in deed and truth;* in secret,

[v] Orig. MS.

between God and your own soul, where no eye hath seen, nor no ear hath heard; from a due sight and sense of your lost condition without him; as one truly weary of the heavy yoke of sin and Satan,—and resolved no longer to draw in it, laying your neck under Christ's sweet and easy yoke. If you have not done this, do it before you sleep; do it before you proceed any further. Once well done, and it is done *for ever*. Can you give any good reason, to the contrary, why you should not? either as to the thing itself, or as to the speedy doing of it? Can you begin too soon to be Christ's? Is any time yours but the *present* time? Until *this* be done, you are a *child of the devil*, and heir of the curse and condemnation. The guilt of all your past sins is upon your score. God is your enemy. But assure yourself, as soon as it is done aright, and as it ought to be done, in the very moment in which you repent and believe the gospel, and receive Christ Jesus the Lord, to be your Prince and Saviour, you are immediately made a child of God, and an heir of heaven; all your past sins are forgiven; your peace is made; all the promises in the Bible are yours, both concerning this life and the other. No evil thing shall befall you; no good thing shall be wanting to you. And is not that a blessed condition? Will it not then grate for ever, that you might so easily have been saved, and would not? And why would you not,—but *because* you would not? They that hate me *love* death, says wisdom. Do you love death,—*eternal* death? I hope you do not.

Your name-sake, Mary, made a wise choice, and pray let it be yours. When she had an opportunity she laid all other matters aside, and sat down at Christ's feet, and heard his word. So do you love your Bible, take your alone meals out of it every day,[w] besides what you have in common with the family. Be sure you read and hear with application. *Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you.* Make a business of praying; though you cannot do it as you would,[x] do it as you can;—*to him that hath shall be given.* Remember, it is to a Father, and let it be in the name of Christ, and it shall not be in vain.

In your place and calling be diligent, humble, and trusty. Take heed of vain companions, either men or women, lest you be insnared by them. Let your dress be modest, and according to your place, not coveting every fine thing that you see others have, nor desiring to be like them. Learn Peter's good lesson, to be *clothed with humility;* and, to put on *the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price.*

I have not room to enlarge; if you receive it, and heed it, it is enough; if not, it is too much.

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. Amen.

P. H.

August 1, 1693.[y]

Dear Brother;

I received yours by Mr. Travers;[z] and, though I am so near you, and though it be so much in my desires to see you both, yet, being at present not in a capacity to do it, through my great indisposedness to travel, further than needs must, (especially winter travel, unless about my Master's immediate work,) yet, having so fair an opportunity, a line is better than nothing, if it be only to wish you both a holy, happy, new year, and to present you with a new-year's gift,—which is, a half-moon, the body of the sun, and the fourth part of a star; which, when you have put together, you will find me, as always,

Dear sir,

Your cordial brother,

Friend, Cousin, Servant,

Jan. 1, 1693-4. P. H.

the 130th day of my dying year.[a]

For the Rev. Mr. Fran. Tallents, at Salop:
This, with my hearty love and respects.[b]

Mar. 20, 1693-4.

DD SS.;[c]

It is as long since we heard from you, as it is since you heard from us; and we thought it long. As yours to us brings no evil tidings from the wood,[c] so neither doth this to you from the oak. Your mother continues to mend, through God's goodness, and bids me tell you she is better,—God be praised,—to day, than she was yesterday, and yesterday than the day before. She is come down stairs, and that is, to her, like launching into a sea again; for we have at present a troublesome house of it. Oh, that you and we may be better after late corrections! For, *though no affliction, for the present, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, afterwards,—afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness.*

w I wryt my knawledge, and do speik my conscience, that sa necessarie as meit and drink is to the preservatioun of lyfe corporall, and so necessarie as the heit and bryghtnes of the sone is to the quicknyng of the herbis and to expell darknes; sa necessarie is also to lyfe everlasting, and to the illuminaution and lyght of the saule, the perpetuall meditation, exercis, and use of Godis halie word. Lat na day slip over without sum comfort resavit fra the mouth of God; open your earis, and he will speik even pleasing thingis to your hart. Knox's Letter of Instructions to the Protestants of Scotland. Life, by Dr M'Crie, vol. 1. p. 416.

x See a Sermon by P. Henry, on Gal. v. 17.—*So that ye cannot do the things that ye would,*—in the Cong. Mag. v. 7. p. 230.

y The above letter was "written by my honoured father, Mr. Henry, to a young woman newly gone from her parents to service in Chester; Mary Web, now Mrs. Frail." Mrs. Savage. Orig. MS.

z See Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, p. 259, *ut supra.*

a See *post.* p. 216.

b Orig. MS.

c Dear Daughter, Sarah Savage.

d Wrenbury Wood, Mrs Savage's residence.

This is the 210th day of my commonly dying year. Lord, teach me to number aright. Amen!

Our love and blessing are to you both, and to all yours.

The God of love and peace be with you,

This, from

Your loving Father,

For Mrs. Savage. P. H.[e]

Bor. May 14.

264, d. 1694.

Dear and Honoured Brother;

I should have answered your last sooner, but wanted opportunity of sending it. I rejoice in the continuance of your mercies, that your *bow doth yet abide in strength*, and that my dear sister also is spared to you in her usefulness. The Lord's most holy name be blessed and praised for it! It seems you have your mixtures for exercise. God will have you yet to shine brighter; the dish-clouts that he makes use of, must help to do it; theirs the shame, yours the honour. *Qui volens detrahit famæ tuæ, nolens volens addit mercedi tuæ.*[f] It is a sign we gallop in our way,[g] when the dogs follow us barking. Slack not your pace, though they do so. There will as certainly be a resurrection of names,[h] as of bodies, and both with advantage. Both as the sun at noon day. I know not when I shall be so happy as to see you at Salop, though I much desire it. I am like a traveller's horse that knows its stages, which, if he exceed, he tires, and is the worse for it. Hither, once a quarter, is my *non plus ultra*. I have not been at Chester, though I have many loadstones there, above these thirteen months.

Once a week, and sometimes twice, I keep my circuit of two miles, or four miles, each Wednesday, by which time I am recovered from my sabbath weariness; and, by the time I am recovered from that, the sabbath work returns again; so that I am never not weary. But why do I tell you this?—That I may boast what a labourer I am? I am a loiterer, a trifler, a slug. *Magnis conatibus nihil ago.* It is that you may know wherein to help me with your prayers. Beg for me, that I may be found faithful, and that, *while I preach to others, I myself may not be a cast-away.* I have some hope, through grace, that I shall not; but the heart is deceitful, the devil is busy, and God is just and holy. Only this I trust to,—*Christ hath died, yea, rather, is risen again.*

Dear love, and service to you both. The Lord himself be your everlasting portion. Amen.

This, from

Your affectionate obliged Brother,

Friend, Servant in our dear Lord,

For Mr. Francis Tallents, P. H.[i]

At Salop.

These.

Aug. 13, 355 d. 1694.

Dear Cousin and Brother;

I came from home on Saturday, not without some hopeful thoughts of seeing you two, and dear Mr. Bryan,[k] in his present illness, this day; but the weather and ways are grown suddenly such, that really, Sir, I dare not venture, for my strength will not bear it; and I dare not tempt God. I am therefore hastening back to my nest, where the young ones are at present such, and so many, that the poor hen, though she can do as much as another, yet, alone, cannot manage them without me. If we do any good, it is well; the Lord accept of it in Christ; but, I am sure, it is not without a great deal of care and cumber to ourselves in our declining age. It was a special providence to gratify dear Cos. Benyon, that at first brought us into it; and I wait upon the same providence, in what way the Lord pleases, for there are many ways, to let us fairly out again, that we may not break prison. I pray this, once more, accept of this true excuse; and give my dear love and respects to good Mr. Bryan, and tell him, my heart is with him, and my daily prayers are to God for him. If there be more work to be done, well; he shall recover to do it; if not, better, (for him better, whatever for others,) *there is a rest remaining.* We serve a good Master.

Dearest love to you both. The Eternal God be your refuge; and underneath you be his *everlasting arms*, living, dying. Amen!

For the worthy Mr. Tallents,

At Salop.

These.[l]]

CHAPTER IX.

HIS SICKNESS, DEATH, AND BURIAL.

In the time of his health, he made death very familiar to himself, by frequent and pleasing thoughts

e Orig. MS.

f Augustine: with *meæ* altered to *tuæ*.

g Mr. William Fenner, of Essex, that eminent servant of Jesus Christ, was so taken with the active spirit of Mr. Wilson, that he said,—"I am even ashamed of myself to see how Mr. Wilson gallopeth towards heaven, and I do but creep on at a snail's pace." Clark's Lives, p. 34. fol. 1683.

h "There shall be a resurrection, not only of bodies, but of credits." The Bruised Reed and Smoaking Flax, by Dr. Sibbs, p. 113. duod. 1808. 9th ed.

i Orig. MS.

k The Rev. John Bryan, M. A. He was Minister of St. Chad's Church, in Shrewsbury, till Aug. 24. 1662. He died Aug. 31 1699.

"1699, Sept. 2. I heard of the death of good Mr. Bryan, of Salop an aged nonconformist, and a bold, zealous preacher of the truth gone to receive his *Well done.*" Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig. MS A portrait, in oil, of Mr. Bryan, is in the editor's possession. See Palmer's Noncon. Mem. v. 13. p. 15.

l P. Henry. Orig. MS.

and meditations of it; and endeavoured to make it so to his friends, by speaking often of it. His letters and discourses had still something or other which spoke his constant expectations of death. Thus did he learn to *die daily*. And it is hard to say whether it was more easy to him to speak, or uneasy to his friends to hear him speak, of leaving the world. This minds me of a passage I was told by a worthy Scotch minister, Mr. Patrick Adair, that, visiting the famous Mr. Durham,[a] of Glasgow, in his last sickness, which was long and lingering, he said to him, Sir, I hope you have so set all in order, that you have nothing else to do but to die.[b] "I bless God," said Mr. Durham, "I have not had that to do neither these many years." Such is the comfort of dying daily, when we come to die indeed.

[Mr. Henry, some time before his last illness, had a severe attack of disease, which greatly excited the alarm of his friends. His excellent wife was then on a visit to Mrs. Savage, at Wrenbury Wood. How his own mind was affected by the apparent approach of the last enemy will be seen by the following letter:—

Dear Daughter;

This is to you because of yours to me. I am glad to see you so well so quickly, as to be able to write, —that your *right hand hath not forgot its cunning;* neither hath mine yet. I had an ill day yesterday, and an ill night after, but ease came in the morning. I have been preaching Christ, *the door* to God, and letting a little one in to him by the door of baptism, and hope for strength for the afternoon work, though in some pain, yet less than deserved. Your mother hath sometimes told me, she could not endure to see me die, and for that reason I was glad she was away, for I thought, all night, there was *but a step.* Here are many people, and they are come to hear of Christ; and willing, I am, they should, and that they should learn what I have learned of him. I can cheerfully say,—*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!*[c] God increase your strength, and especially your thankfulness, and *write the name of the child in the book of the living.*

My dear love to my wife, and to yourself and husband, and all the rest. I am glad that she is acceptable to you, and am willing she should be so, while she and you please.

The Lord everlasting be your portion![d]

For Mrs. Sarah Savage,
At Wrenbury Wood.]

Mr. Henry's constitution was but tender, and yet, by the blessing of God upon his great temperance,[e] and care of his diet, and moderate exercise by walking in the air, he did for many years enjoy a good measure of health, which he used to call,—The sugar that sweetens all temporal mercies; for which, therefore, we ought to be very thankful, and of which we ought to be very careful.

He had sometimes violent fits of the colic, which would be very afflictive for the time. Towards the latter end he was distressed sometimes with a pain, which his doctor thought might arise from a stone in his kidneys. Being once upon the recovery from an ill fit of that pain, he said to one of his friends, that asked him how he did,—he hoped, by the grace of God, he should now be able to give one blow more to the devil's kingdom; and often professed, he did not desire to live a day longer than he might do God some service. He said to another, when he perceived himself recovering,—Well, I thought I had been putting into the harbour, but I find I must to sea again.[f]

He was sometimes suddenly taken with fainting fits, which, when he recovered from, he would say,—Dying is but a little more.

When he was in the sixty-third year of his age, which is commonly called the grand climacteric, and hath been to many the dying year, and was so to his father, he numbered the days of it, from August 24, 1693, to August 24, 1694, when he finished it. And when he concluded it he thus wrote in his Diary;—This day finisheth my commonly dying year, which I have numbered the days of; and should now *apply my heart,* more than ever, *to heavenly wisdom.*

He was much pleased with that expression of our English Liturgy in the office of burial, and frequently used it;—"In the midst of life we are in death."

The infirmities of age, when they grew upon him, did very little abate his vigour and liveliness in

[a] He died 25th June, 1658. æt. 36. Biographia Scoticana, p 205, 1796.

[b] When Dr. Gouge was visited by his friends in his sickness, he often said,—"I am willing to die; having, I bless God, nothing to do but to die." Clark's Lives annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 246. *ut supra.*

[c] 1669, Nov. 17. Ill of the cold, which provoked other distempers, insomuch that, for a time, I despaired even of life. Apt to faint; and what is death, but a very little more? Lord, I bless thee, that I can look death in the face with comfort, knowing that my *redemption draweth nigh.* P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

[d] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[e] He was, all his days, a pattern of temperance in eating and drinking, above any that I have known, as to time, quantity, and quality. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

He never took tobacco. If asked concerning it, he would say, he was not come to it yet; but he did not know what he might do; having known some who had vigorously resolved against it, but afterwards were persuaded to it. Ibid.

It is said of the learned Dr. Barrow, that he was very free in the use of tobacco, believing it did help to regulate his thinking. Life, prefixed to his Works, vol. 2. fol. 1683.

[f] Sir Henry Wotton, being visited in his latter days by his learned friend, the celebrated Mr. Hales, of Eton, said to him,—"I now see that I draw near my *harbour* of death; that *harbour* that will secure me from all the future *storms and waves* of this restless world; and, I praise God, I am willing to leave it, and expect a better." Walton's Lives, by Dr. Zouch, v. I. p. 284. See, also, Clarke's Lives annexed to the Martyrologie, *ut supra*, p. 171.

preaching, but he seemed even to *renew his youth as the eagles;* as those that are *planted in the house of the Lord,* who *still bring forth fruit in old age;* not so much to show that they are upright, as to *show that the Lord is upright,* Psalm xcii. 14, 15. But, in his latter years, travelling was very troublesome to him; and he would say, as Mr. Dod used to do, that, when he thought *to shake himself as at other times,* he found his *hair was cut;*[g] his sense of this led him to preach an occasional sermon not long before he died, on John xxi. 18.—*When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, &c.* Another occasional sermon he preached when he was old,[h] for his own comfort, and the comfort of his aged friends, on Psalm lxxi. 17, 18.—*O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, &c.* He observed there,—That it is a blessed thing to be taught of God from our youth; and those that have been taught of God from their youth, ought to *declare his wondrous works* all their days after. And those that have been taught of God from their youth, and have all their days declared his wondrous works, may comfortably expect, that when they are old he will not forsake them. Christ is a Master that doth not use to cast off his old servants.[i]

[On another occasion, he writes;—It was David's prayer;—*O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared all thy wondrous works. Now, also, when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not!* And we should thus pray. For, when God forsakes, it is like as when the soul forsakes the body. There is nothing left but a carcass. It is as when the sun forsakes the earth, which causes night and winter. It is as when the fountain forsakes the cistern, for God alone is the Fountain. It is as when the father forsakes the children. It is as when the pilot forsakes the ship; then she is in great danger of rocks and quicksands. It is as when the physician forsakes the patient, which is not till the case is desperate. It is as when the guide forsakes the traveller, and then he is exposed to many dangers.[k]]

For some years before he died, he used to complain of an habitual weariness, contracted, he thought, by his standing to preach, sometimes very uneasily, and in inconvenient places, immediately after riding. He would say, every minister was not cut out for an itinerant; and sometimes the manifest attention and affection of people in hearing, enlarged him both in length and fervency, somewhat more than his strength could well bear. It was not many months before he died, that he wrote thus to a dear relation, who inquired solicitously concerning his health;—I am always habitually weary, and expect no other till I lie down in the bed of spices. And, blessed be God, so the grave is to all the saints,[l] since he lay in it, who is *the Rose of Sharon,* and the *Lily of the Valleys.* When some of his friends persuaded him to spare himself, he would say;—It is time enough to rest when I am in the grave. What were candles made for, but to burn?[m]

[One of the last letters he wrote to Mrs. Savage is thus expressed; and it manifests the enlightened and calm anticipation he indulged as to his final change;—

May 28, 1695.

Dear Daughter;

You are loath to part with your sister, but you know this is not the world we are to be together in; and, besides, it is to a father and mother, that are to be but a while, either for her or you to come to. These short partings should mind us of the long one, which will be shortly, but then the meeting again, to be together *for ever,* and *with the Lord,* is very comfortable in the hope; and much more will it be so in the fruition. Two that awhile ago were of us, Ann D. and Susan, are gone before; and, as sure as they are gone, we are also going, in the time and order appointed.

Our dear love and blessing are to all and each. Farewell.

Your loving father,

P. H.[n]]

It doth not appear that he had any particular presages of his death; but many instances there were of his actual gracious expectation of it, somewhat more than ordinary, for some time before. The last visit he made to his children in Chester, was in July, 1695, almost a year before he died, when he spent a Lord's day there, and preached on the last verse of the Epistle to Philemon;—*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.* By grace, he understood not so much the *good will* of God towards us, as the *good work* of God in us; called the *grace of Christ,* both because he is the Author and Finisher of it, and because he is the Pattern and Samplar of it. Now the choicest gift we can ask of God for our friends, is, that this *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* may *be with their spirit.* This is the *one thing*

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g See Judges xvi. 19, 20. and the Account of the Rev. John Dod, in Fuller's Church History, *ut supra,* B. xi. p. 220.

h April 28, 1692.

i Appendix, No. XXIV.

k P. Henry. From Mrs. Savage's MSS.

l The body of him who hath, in truth, given his name to Christ and his gainfull service, shall goe into the grave, as into a chamber of rest, and bed of downe, sweetly perfumed unto it by the sacred body of the sonne of God lying in the grave. Directions for a comfortable Walking with God, by Robert Bolton, B. D. 4to. 1638. Ep. Ded.

m "You are as a candle, the better part burnt out."
Shakspeare. Second Part of Henry IV. Act. 1. Scene 2.
See Matt. v. 15. Mark, iv. 21, 22. Luke, viii 16, 17. xi. 33.
We are wasted as candles. What matter, so we may light our people to heaven! Mr. Steele, at an Ordination, Nov. 15, 1659. Philip Henry's MS.

n Orig. MS.

needful, the *better part*, the *root of the matter*, the *whole man*, the *principal thing*, the *more excellent way*, a *blessing indeed*, and the *thing that accompanies salvation*. The grace of Christ in the spirit *enlightens* and *enlivens* the spirit, softens and subdues the spirit, purifies and preserves the spirit, greatens and guides the spirit, sweetens and strengthens the spirit; and therefore, what can be more desirable? A spirit without the grace of Christ, is a field without a fence, a *fool without understanding*; it is a *horse without a bridle*, and a house without furniture; it is a ship without tackle, and a soldier without armour; it is a *cloud without rain*, and a carcass without a soul; it is a tree without fruit, and a traveller without a guide. How earnest, therefore, should we be in praying to God for grace both for ourselves and for our relations. He had intended to preach upon that text when he was at Chester the year before, but was then prevented by a particular sad occasion, which obliged him to a funeral sermon, Divine Providence reserving that benediction, which his heart was much upon, for his valediction. The Thursday following, being kept as a fast in his son's congregation at Chester, he preached on Luke xix. 41.—*He beheld the city, and wept over it*;—which proved his farewell to the town, as the former was his farewell to his friends and relations in it.

It was not many weeks before he died, that he wrote thus to one of his children:—We are well here, thanks be to God, and are glad to hear that you and yours are well also; God, in mercy, continue it! But why should we be well always? Do we deserve it? Are there no mixtures in our obedience? Are there any persons or families, at whose door sickness and death never knocked? Must the *earth be forsaken* for us, or the *rock removed out of its place?* Is it not enough that we be dealt with *according to the manner of men?* And that we have a promise, that it shall end well, everlastingly well.

To another of his children, about the same time, he writes:—We are sensible that we decline apace, but the best of it is, that as time goes, eternity comes; and we are in *good hope, through grace*, that it will be a comfortable eternity.

It was in April, 1696, a few weeks before he died, that his son's father-in-law, Robert Warburton, Esq.[o] was *gathered to his grave in peace, in a good old age.* Upon the tidings of whose death, Mr. Henry wrote thus to his son:—*Your fathers, where are they?* Your father-in-law gone, and your own father going; but you have a God-Father that lives for ever. He was wont, sometimes, to subscribe his letters,—Your ever-loving, but not ever-living, father.

It was not a month before he died, that, in a letter to his very dear and worthy friend and brother, Mr. Tallents,[p] of Shrewsbury, he had this passage:—Methinks it is strange, that it should be your lot and mine, to abide so long on earth *by the stuff*,[q] when so many of our friends are dividing the spoil above, but God will have it so; and to be willing to live in obedience to his holy will, is as true an act of grace, as to be willing to die when he calls, especially when life is *labour and sorrow*. But when it is labour and joy, service to his name, and some measure of success and comfort in serving him; when it is to stop a gap, and stem a tide, it is to be rejoiced in; it is heaven upon earth; nay, one would think, by the psalmist's oft repeated plea Psalms vi. xxx. lxxxviii. cxv. cxviii. that it were better than to be in heaven itself. And can that be?

[In a manuscript, showing wherein the happiness of heaven consists, he has thus expressed his views. *We shall see God*, Matthew v. 8. Job xix. 26. This will be a clear sight, 1 Corinthians xiii. 12. 1 John iii. 2. transforming, Psalm xvii. 15. and satisfying, John xiv. 8. We shall enjoy the presence of Jesus Christ, John xvii. 24. Philippians i. 23.[r]—and have society with glorified saints, Matthew viii. 11. There will be freedom from sin and sorrow, Revelations vii. 17. It will be a heavenly sabbath, Hebrews iv. 9. which will differ from sabbaths now,—in the exercises to be performed: there will be all praise; no mourning for sin.—In the frame of our hearts for the performance: our affections will be raised.—In the *place:* it will be our Father's house.—In the *continuance:* there will be no intermissions, no parting, no night.—*Now*, while we are sanctifying the sabbath, others are profaning it; but then all shall join.[s]]

A little before his sickness and death, being summer time, he had several of his children and his children's children about him, at Broad Oak, with whom he was much refreshed, and very cheerful; but ever and anon spoke of the fashion he was in, as passing away; and often told them, he should be there but a while to bid them welcome. And he was observed frequently in prayer, to beg of God, that he would make us ready for that which would come certainly, and might come suddenly. One asking him how he did, he answered,—I find the chips fly off apace, the tree will be down shortly.[t]

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o Of Hefferston Grange in Cheshire. See Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, *ut supra*, p. 108. Nichol's Lit. Anecd. v. 5. pp. 529, 530. Mr. Matthew Henry married his daughter, Mrs. Mary Warburton, July 8, 1690. See also Mr. Tong's Sermon on the Death of Matthew Henry, 4to. 1714. Dedication.

p Nat. Nov. 1619; ob. April 11, 1708. See his Life in this volume.

He was an intimate acquaintance of the Hon. Robert Boyle. Biog. Brit. v. 3. p. 496. n. F.

q 1 Sam. xxx. 24.

r The happiness of heaven consists in being with Christ; *That they may be with me.* Thoughts of this are reviving, and should be improved, as a cordial, to keep from fainting under any trouble; as a spur, to put us forward in duty; as a bridle, to restrain from sin; and as a loadstone, to draw our affections upward. P. Henry. Mem. of Mrs. Savage, p. 218. *ut supra.*

s P. Henry. Orig. MS.

t When King James the First was informed of the death of his

The last time he administered the Lord's supper, a fortnight before he died, he closed the administration with that scripture, 1 John iii. 2. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be;* not yet, but it will shortly.

The sabbath but one before he died, being, in the course of his exposition, come to that difficult part of Scripture, the 40th of Ezekiel, and the following chapters, he said he would endeavour to explain those prophecies to them; and added,—If I do not do it now, I never shall. And he observed, that the only prophetical sermon which our Lord Jesus preached, was but a few days before he died. This many of his hearers not only reflected upon afterwards, but took notice of at that time with a concern, as having something in it more than ordinary.

On the Lord's day, June 21, 1696, he went through the work of the day with his usual vigour and liveliness. He was then preaching over the first chapter of St. Peter's Second Epistle, and was that day on those words, *Add to your faith virtue*,[u] verse 5. He took virtue for Christian courage and resolution in the exercise of faith; and the last thing he mentioned, in which Christians have need of courage, is in dying; for, as he was often used to say, it is a serious thing to die, and to die is a work by itself.[v]

[He that would not die when he must,[w] and he that would die when he must not, are both alike cowards.[x]

A Christian's desire of life, he sometimes remarked, should proceed from a desire of honouring God with his life, as it was with Paul. Philippians i. 23, 24.[y]]

That day he gave notice, both morning and afternoon, with much affection and enlargement, of the public fast, which was appointed by authority the Friday following, June 26, pressing his hearers, as he used to do upon such occasions, to come in a prepared frame, to the solemn services of that day.

The Tuesday following, June 23, he rose at six o'clock, according to his custom, after a better night's sleep than ordinary, and in wonted health. Between seven and eight o'clock he performed family worship, according to the usual manner; he expounded very largely the former half of the 104th Psalm, and sung it; but he was somewhat shorter in prayer than he used to be, being then, as it was thought, taken ill. *Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.* Immediately after prayer he retired to his chamber, not saying any thing of his illness, but was soon after found upon his bed in great extremity of pain in his back, breast, and bowels; it seemed to be a complicated fit of the stone and colic together in very great extremity. The means that had been used to give him relief in his illness were altogether ineffectual. He had not the least intermission or remission of pain, neither up nor in bed, but [was] in a continual toss. He had said sometimes, that God's Israel may find Jordan rough; but there is no remedy, they must through it to Canaan; and would tell of a good man who used to say,—he was not so much afraid of death as of dying.[z] We know they are not the godly people, part of the description of whose condition it is, that there are no bands in their death, and yet [it is of the godly alone that we can say,] their end is peace, and their death gain, and they have hope in it.

In this extremity he was still looking up to God, and calling upon him, who is a present help in the needful hour.

[He had been accustomed to remark when in usual health,—Prayer is never out of season, but it is in a special manner seasonable when we are sick and come to die,—Christ's last breath was praying breath,—then we take our leave of prayer for ever. Those that do not pray while they live, cannot expect to be heard and accepted when they come to die.[a]]

When the exquisiteness of his pain forced groans and complaints from him, he would presently correct himself with a patient and quiet submission to the hand of his heavenly Father, and a cheerful acquiescence in his heavenly will. I am ashamed, saith he, of these groans, I want virtue, O for virtue now when I have need of it, referring to his subject the Lord's day before. Forgive me that I groan thus, and I will endeavour to silence them. But, indeed, my stroke is heavier than my groaning. It is true what Mr. Baxter said in his pain, there is no disputing against sense. It was his trouble, as it was Mr. Baxter's, that by reason of his bodily pain, he could not express his inward comfort; however, that was it with which God graciously strengthened him in his soul. He said to those about him, they must remember what instructions and counsels he had given them when he was in health, for now he could say but little to them; [he could] only refer them to what he had said, as that which he would live and die by.

favourite, James, Marquis of Hamilton, he said, *If the branches be thus cut down, the stock cannot continue long.* Walton's Lives by Dr. Zouch, v. 2. pp. 50, 51.

u This was his last subject. See the discourse among "Eighteen Sermons," by Philip Henry, p. 350. *ut supra.*

v My dear father's prayer for such usually was,—When they come to do a work they never did, let them have that strength and grace they never had.—This *once* to die.—What emphasis has it! Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig. MS.

w Moses and Aaron, like well nurtured children, went to bed when they were bidden, though great provision was making ready for others. P. Henry. Com. Place Book. Orig. MS. See also Dr Sibb's Soules Conflict, p. 362. duod. 1651.

x P. Henry. Orig. MS. It was the speech of dying Julian. See Swinnock's Christian Man's Calling, part. iii. p. 648. 4to. 1665.

y P. Henry. Orig. MS.

z Would you be above the fear of death,—get an interest in Christ,—labour to know thy interest in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, &c.—Live in the fear of God, Luke xii. 4, 5.—Learn to die daily, 1 Cor. xv. 31. in meditation; in expectation; Job xiv. 14. Ps. xliv. 22.—Sit loose from the world; keep a good conscience; live by faith; 2 Cor. iv. 18; v. 1, &c. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

a P. Henry. Mr. Matthew Henry's MS.

It was two or three hours after he was taken ill, before he would suffer a messenger to be sent to Chester for his son, and for the doctor, saying,—He should either be better, or dead before they could come; but at last he said, as the prophet did to his importunate friends,—Send.[b] About eight o'clock that evening they came, and found him in the same extremity of pain, which he had been in all day. And nature being before spent with his constant and indefatigable labours in the work of the Lord, now sunk, and did perfectly succumb under its burthen, and was quite disabled to grapple with so many hours' incessant pain. What further means were then used proved fruitless, and did not answer the intention. He apprehended himself going apace, and said to his son when he came in,—Oh son, you are welcome to a dying father. *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.* His pain continued very acute, but he had peace within. *I am tormented*, said he once, but, blessed be God, *not in this flame*;[c] and soon after, I am all on fire, (when at the same time his extreme parts were cold,) but he presently added,—Blessed be God, it is not the fire of hell. To some of his next neighbours who came in to see him, for those at a distance had not notice of his illness, he said,—Oh, make sure work for your souls, by getting an interest in Christ while you are in health, for if I had that work to do now, what would become of me? But I bless God I am satisfied. It was a caution he was often wont to give,—See to it, that your work be not undone, when your time is done, lest you be undone for ever.

Towards ten or eleven o'clock that night, his pulse and sight began to fail; of the latter he himself took notice, and inferred from it the near approach of his dissolution. He took an affectionate farewell of his dear yoke-fellow, with a thousand thanks for all her love, and care, and tenderness; left a blessing for all his dear children, and their dear yoke-fellows, and little ones, that were absent. He said to his son, who sat under his head,—Son, the Lord bless you, and grant that you may do worthily in your generation, and be more serviceable to the church of God than I have been; such was his great humility to the last. And when his son replied, Oh, Sir, pray for me that I may but tread in your steps; he answered,—Yea, follow peace and holiness, and let them say what they will.——More he would have said, to bear his dying testimony to the way in which he had walked, but nature was spent, and he had not strength to express it.

His understanding and speech continued almost to the last breath, and he was still in his dying agonies calling upon God, and committing himself to him. One of the last words he said, when he found himself just ready to depart, was,—O death, where is thy—;[d] with that his speech faltered, and within a few minutes, after about sixteen hours' illness, he quietly breathed out his precious soul into the embraces of his dear Redeemer, whom he had trusted, and faithfully served in the work of the ministry, about forty-three years.[e] He departed between twelve and one o'clock in the morning of June 24, Midsummer-day, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. Happy, thrice happy, he to whom such a sudden change was no surprise, and who could triumph over death, as an unstung, disarmed enemy, even when he made so fierce an onset. He had often spoke of it as his desire, that if it were the will of God, he might not outlive his usefulness; and it pleased God to grant him his desire, and give him a short passage from the pulpit to the kingdom, from the height of his usefulness, to receive the recompence of reward. So was it ordered by him, in whose hands our times are.

[The afflicting dispensation was communicated to Mr. Tallents, in the following interesting letter.

Broad Oke, June 24, 96.

Honoured Sir;

Here is an opportunity that offers itself soon enough to bring you the evil tidings of this place and day. My dear and honoured father was this time yesterday as usual, worshipping God with his family, and in wonted health; but, presently after, was seized with violent pain and sickness. It was in great extremity, and without any intermission; means used gave him no relief. Doctor Tylston and I had speedy notice of his illness sent us to Chester, and came hither last night, and found him very ill. Nature, being decayed with his great labours in the work of the Lord, was not able to bear up under it, but sunk away apace under the heavy load of pain; and a little after midnight he quietly breathed out his dear soul into the hands of the Lord Jesus, in whom he now *sleeps*. Oh, Sir, this is a sad providence, and so sudden, that I am as one stunned. I cannot express my loss. I have many things to write to you concerning it, but I am in haste, and much confused. We intend, if the Lord will, to lay up the mantle of this translated prophet in the wardrobe of the grave, upon Saturday next, not doubting but our friends that hear will, as far as they can, let us have their company. My poor mother's and my respects to yourself, and Mrs. Tallents, and Mr. Bryan, and Mr. Jones.

I rest your's *totus in lachrymis*,

M. Henry.

I know you will pray for us, and mourn with us.[f]

For the Rev. Mr. Tallents.

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[b] See 2 Kings ii. 17.
[c] See Luke xvi. 24.
[d] See Matthew Henry's Sermons on these words, July 8, 1696.
[e] See Eighteen Sermons, by P. Henry, p. 371, *ut supra*. See Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, p. 131, &c. *ut supra*.
[f] Orig. MS.

In reply to a letter written by Mr. Tallents, expressive of the greatness of his sorrow on this melancholy occasion, the bereaved widow writes thus.

Jus 24, 96.

Dear Ser;

It is my coumfort and joy that the people of God do sympathis[h] with me in this my great loss, and truly I have reason to acknowleg the goodnes of God that did spar him so long, and dus suport[i] and send reuiuing in the midst of trubel. Pray for me that I may be a widdou inded, trusting in God; that my children may, in all things, carry themselues like the children of such a fathar, and that wee may get the good and learne what our heauenly Fathar is teching us by this sad strok. Good Sir, giue my loue and saruis to my ould good friend and sistar, for so I wil make bould to cale her, your dear yoak-fellow, and except of the same, with many thanks to you both for past and present favors,

From Sir, yours,

My sister presents her sarvis to you both. Much obliged,

Kat. Henry.[k]]

After the account we have given of his great usefulness, it is easy to imagine what sorrow and mourning there was among his friends, when they heard that the Lord had taken away their master from their head. One that lived so much desired, could not but die as much lamented. The surprise of the stroke put people into a perfect astonishment; and many said,—the Lord removed him so suddenly, because he would not deny the many prayers that would have been put up for his recovery, had it been known that he was in peril. One thing that aggravated this severe dispensation, and made it, in the apprehension of many, look the more dismal, was,—that this powerful intercessor was taken away just before a fast-day, when he would have been wrestling mightily with God for mercy for the land. However, it proved a fast-day indeed, and a day of humiliation, to that congregation, to whom an empty pulpit was an awakening sermon. The Broad Oak was then like that under which Rebekah's nurse was buried, Genesis xxxv. 8. *Allon-bacuth*,—the oak of weeping. They who had many a time sat with dry eyes, under melting ordinances, could not sit so under such a melting providence, by which the Lord God called so loudly to *weeping, and to mourning, and to girding with sackcloth*. But because Mr. Henry had been wont to give it for a rule,—that weeping must not hinder sowing, a mite was cast into the treasury of the nation's prayers, and a word spoken, to bring the work of the day and the event of the day together, from 2 Kings xiii. 20.

The day following, being Saturday, June 27, the earthen vessel, in which this treasure had been lodged, was laid up in the grave in Whitchurch church, attended thither with a very great company of true mourners, all the country round. Many from Chester and Shrewsbury, and the towns about, came to do him honour at his death. And, besides the floods of tears that were shed, there were abundance of testimonies given to him by persons of all sorts, like that to Jehoiada, 2 Chronicles xxiv. 16. That he was one *that had done good in Israel*. And there were those who said,—He was a man that nobody did or could speak evil of, except for his nonconformity. He was used to say to his relations,—When I am dead, make little ado about me, a few will serve to bring me to my grave;—but his mind could not be observed in that; it was impossible such a burning and shining light could be extinguished, but there must be a universal notice taken of it. Multitudes came unsought unto, not to fill their eyes, as Mr. Vines expresseth it, but to empty[l] them; nor was there any other noise there, but that of general lamentation.

That morning, before the removal of the corpse, a most affectionate sermon was preached at Mr. Henry's meeting-place, by his dear and worthy friend, Mr. Tallents, of Shrewsbury, who was eleven years older than he, and, through God's goodness, still survives him. He was willing to take that opportunity, to testify the great love and honour that he had for Mr. Henry, whom he called a friend that is nearer than a brother. His text[m] was, Rom. viii. 23. *And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves*

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g Supposed to be July. Mr. Tallents has written at the top, "In answer to one of mine."

h The wives of many painful ministers, while their husbands lived, were made account of, and invited, that, when God hath taken their husbands from them, (when they had most need of comfort,) have found cold friendship, not of straugers only, but even of those that professed greater love to the parties deceased. This is but carnal, or at least but cold, love, that is then farthest off, when there is most need of it. A Treatise of Love, by Jo Rogers, p. 220. duod. 1632.

i We went to Broad Oak to visit dear mother: found her in health. I cannot but own the goodness of God in supporting her under this heavy stroke. It is to me the answer of my dear father's prayer, which he, thus, frequently expressed;—"Fit us to leave, or to be left, according to the will of God." Dr. Preston hath an expression to this purpose,—that the children of God receive no prejudice by affliction, no more than the sun by an eclipse. We think it darkened, but it really is not so. Mrs. Savage. Diary. July 29, 1696. Orig. MS.

After dear father's death, my dear mother thus comforted herself. She was especially thankful to God, 1. That she ever knew Mr. Henry. 2. That she had him so long. 3. For the good hope she had of being eternally with him in glory. Mrs. Savage. Diary. Orig. MS. Nov. 1743.

k Orig. MS.

l See the Hearse of the renowned, the Right Hon. Robert Earl of Essex, &c. in a Sermon preached at his Funerall, Oct. 22, 1646, by Richard Vines, p. 6. 4to. 1646.

Mr. Vines was born about 1600, and died in 1655. See Enoch's Walk and Change; a Sermon at his Funeral, by Thomas Jacomb, (afterwards D. D.) 4to. 1656. 2d edit.

m See the Sermon at large, prefixed to Eighteen Sermons, by Mr. P. Henry, p. 1. *ut supra*.

groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. In his application he showed excellently, and with much affection, how "the consideration of the spirit and life of this eminent servant of God, would greatly lead us to believe on Christ, and to have the Spirit of Christ and live after it;" and to suffer with Christ, and to groan for our adoption. Several things were hinted concerning him, which have been mentioned already in this narrative, and a very honourable testimony borne to him. From a long acquaintance with him, he witnessed concerning him, to those who knew his record to be true, that "he was humble and meek, kind and peaceable, wise and charitable, and one in whom the fruits of the Spirit were eminently: that he was a friend and a counsellor and a father to many; that his expounding and preaching was plain and pleasant, warm and savoury, full, and such as few could reach, and greatly blessed by God; and that in it he laboured more abundantly than any." And after a great encomium of him, it was excellently observed, and must be mentioned here, as that which was highly agreeable to Mr. Henry's spirit, and his expressions upon all occasions,—"That it was not his own righteousness that saved him, nor his own strength that quickened and upheld him, but Christ's righteousness and Christ's strength; for to him to *live was Christ.* And in all his discourses, sermons, and letters,[n] he was very careful to ascribe the honour of all to Christ, and to make Christ his all in all." He concluded with some words of seasonable advice to those of that society and neighbourhood.

"1. Give thanks to God that ever you had him or saw him, and that you had him so long, above thirty years in this place. Do not many of you owe even your very souls to him under God? While you mourn, give thanks to God that you ever knew him. Old and great mercies must be thankfully remembered.

"2. Rejoice in the glory that he now enjoys. *Weep not for him, but weep for yourselves.* It was the text on which he preached, not much above a year ago, at the funeral of that intelligent, holy, useful man, Mr. William Lawrence, of Wem.[o] The primitive Christians buried their saints with hymns and psalms of joy. Chrysostom, on the Hebrews, saith, we are to glorify God, and give thanks to him, that he hath crowned the deceased, and freed them from their labours; and chides those that mourned and howled. And the days of their death were called *Natalitia Martyrum et Sanctorum*, the birth-days of the saints and martyrs. And Hierom, in his epitaph on holy Paula, (and in the lives of other holy persons, wrote by him,) saith, that at her funeral no shrieks were heard, but multitudes of psalms and hymns were sung in divers languages.

"3. Bewail the loss, the general loss, and yours in particular, yet so as to have hope in God. I need not tell you how great your loss is, you feel it more than I am able to express. If any rejoice that he is gone, because he tormented them; say as the church, Micah vii. 8, 9.

"4. Seek out for a supply; do not mourn and sit still, but up and be doing in your places. You have had a cheap gospel hitherto. God sent you one that could preach freely, and which is more, that would do so too; one that sought not yours, but you; and now God will see what you will do for yourselves, that now the Shepherd is smitten the sheep may not be scattered. Pray to God to raise up others like him, and graciously to give you one.

"5. Take heed of liking no preacher, now he is gone. This is a usual fault among many that have had excellent preachers; nobody can please them. But God may bless weaker means, and make your souls live, and thrive under them.

"6. Hold fast that which you have; it is the advice given to Philadelphia, the best of the churches, Revelations iii. 11. Keep that good thing which is committed to you, that savouriness of heart, that love to Christ and to saints, to all saints, that knowledge of the truth. Keep to his sober principles. Remember his dying counsel.—*Follow peace and holiness.* Have these things always in remembrance. Take heed of falling off; take heed of falling away. The world will draw you, and Satan will tempt you, and your own busy hearts will be apt to betray you, but go on humbly and honestly in the strength of Christ, and fear not. Be not like those Jews that turned aside, when John Baptist was dead, John v. 35. The Lord keep you from being such, and give you to go on to his heavenly kingdom."

It would have swelled this book too much, if we had inserted the sermon at large, and therefore we forbear it.

The next day, being Lord's day, Mr. Owen, of Oswestry, preached a most excellent sermon in the morning, agreeable to that sad occasion, upon that pathetical farewell which Elisha gave to Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 12. *My father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent*

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n Thus, not long before his death, he wrote to Mr. Tallents,—

Nov. 1. 1695.

My dear Brother Tallents:

You do, in all your letters, *spirare Christum*, which, I thank God, sides your love to me, unworthy me, declared in them, is the ing, that I can truly say, makes them sweet to me; to see, that nen I myself am so poor and low in my knowledge of him, deesafter him, delight in him, there are you and others that do so abound therein. He is truly worthy, altogether worthy, that it should be so. To learn him, and love him, and to live him, is *All in all.* He is *Foundation, Food, Root, Raiment, Refuge, Righteousness, Head, Hope, Light, Life, Peace, Propitiation,*—what not, that we have need of, to make us holy and happy. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

o The father of the Rev. S. Lawrence. See the Life of Mr. S. Lawrence, in this volume, where his character is delineated by Philip Henry.

them. He observed, "1. That faithful ministers are the fathers of a people, and their chariots and horsemen; the former a metaphor taken for a family, a peaceable society; the latter from an army, a warlike body. Fathers,—to provide good things. Chariots and horsemen,—to protect from evil things. 2. There is a time when we shall see these fathers, these chariots and horsemen, of Israel no more. Their time is appointed, their work cut out for them, and when those are finished they are removed. 3. When God takes away our fathers, the chariots of our Israel, and the horsemen thereof, it is a proper season for mourning and lamentation.[p] Under this, he did most affectionately excite us, 1. To be sensible of our loss, which is better felt than expressed. It is the loss of one that was a father; a father to his family, to whom he was constant, in unfolding the holy oracles; a father to the prophets, for counsel, and conduct, and example; the sons of the prophets never conversed with him, but they were, or might have been, the better for him; a father to his congregation, now left orphans. It is the loss of one of the chariots and horsemen of our Israel; so eminent was he for prevalency in prayer, courage in duty, conduct in affairs, constancy in religion, and a firm adherence to his ministerial vows, and lastly, a contempt of the world, in which, as he that warreth, he did not entangle himself. 2. To be sensible of those sins, which have provoked God to deprive us of him. Barrenness and unfruitfulness under his ministry; it is for this that God hath a controversy with us. 3. To bless God that we enjoyed him so long; eaten bread must not be forgotten. 4. To be followers of him, as he was of Christ.[q] He was a pattern for ministers, excelling in the knowledge of the Scriptures, which made this man of God perfect, and industrious to advance the honour of Jesus Christ, whom he made the *Alpha* and *Omega* of his religion; not addicted to controversies, but walking in the good old way; unwearied in the work of God; it was the delight of his heart, to be laying out himself for the good of souls. Exemplary for humility and low thoughts of himself, and his own performances; for meekness and readiness to forgive injuries; for candour in speaking of others, and their words and actions, on which he ever put the best construction,[r] and was never apt to speak evil of any man. Eminent for family religion, and in that an excellent copy to all masters of families. Those things, therefore, which you have heard and seen in him do, and the God of peace shall be with you." These were the heads which were copiously and excellently enlarged upon in that sermon.

In the afternoon of that sabbath, another sermon was preached by a near relation[s] of Mr. Henry's, on Hebrews xi. 4. *And by it he being dead yet speaketh, ἔτι λαλεῖται,* is yet spoken of by us, and yet speaketh to us.

The Wednesday following, July 1, being the lecture in course at Danford, in Whitchurch parish, Mr. Samuel Lawrence,[t] of Nantwich, whose turn it was to preach that lecture, brought up the long train of mourners, as he expressed it, in a most savoury and pertinent discourse, on Hebrews xiii. 7. *Remember them which have (or have had) the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.* "Bishops, no doubt," saith he, "are here meant, scripture primitive bishops, the pastors of particular congregations, for they were such as had spoken to them the word of God, and watched for their souls, verse 17. Such a one Mr. Henry was, that great man, who is fallen this day in Israel, removed from us, but hath left behind him a good name to be remembered; a good example to be imitated; many a good word spoken to us, and many a good prayer put up for us. Remember him with thankfulness, that God has given such power, such gifts and graces unto men; (I never knew a man," said he, "in all my acquaintance, in whom I have seen so much of God as in good Mr. Henry, whose holy, humble, heavenly, gracious conversation hath been to me some small confirmation of the truth of the Christian religion;) that God gave him to you, and continued him so long, to see the church in a better state than he had sometimes seen it; that God crowned his labours with such great success. Many souls in heaven, and some on earth, blessing God that ever they saw his face, and that God continued him in his usefulness to the last. Remember him with a quiet submission to the hand of God in his removal from us. Sensible we must be of the stroke; it is a public loss, a loss to the ministry; our hands are this day weak; a loss to the nation, for which he was a powerful intercessor; a loss to this country, in which he was a burning and shining light; but yet we must acquiesce in the divine will. The treasure was in an earthen vessel, and God will bring us to depend more upon himself; and he is teaching us to live

p It is not only no sin, but our duty, to mourn for our departed friends. Tears are a tribute which we owe them. *Jesus wept,* John xi. 35. And this, though they were godly, and therefore gainers by death, for our own loss. God complains when it is not so, Isaiah lvii. 1. The sin lies in the *excess.* We must not *sorrow as those that have no hope,* 1 Thessalonians iv. 13. either concerning them, or concerning ourselves, who are left behind. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

q If we copy the example of Christ, it will be an evidence that we are his now, in the kingdom of grace, and an earnest that we shall follow him, hereafter, into the kingdom of glory. P. Henry Memoirs of Mrs. Savage, p. 217. *ut supra.*

r A wise man hath a court of chancery in his breast, to which appeals are made when the letter of the law will admit of no apology. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

s Mr. Matthew Henry. See the Sermon, *post.*

t Nat. 1661; ob. April 24, 1712. See his Life in this volume. There was much in him that resembled old Mr. Henry, both in temper, conversation, and preaching. Tong's Life of M. Henry, p. 209. *ut supr.*

and live to Christ, without good Mr. Henry, though we have sometimes said, we did not know how we could live without him. Remember him, to pay all honour and respect to his name and memory; rise up, and call him blessed. That is a foul tongue, as well as a lying one, that can say any thing of him unbecoming a disciple, servant, and minister of Jesus Christ. Remember him, to imitate his good example. Many of you will be called Mr. Henry's followers. Be so indeed. He was a pattern to ministers of diligence, zeal, humility, and great meekness in dealing with all people, which contributed abundantly to his success; his preaching affectionate without affectation. To all people he was a pattern of faith and charity, and contempt of the world, of zeal and moderation, patience in suffering, and of constancy and perseverance to the end. Remember him, and remember your sins which have provoked God to take him away. Have not we grieved this good man's spirit? &c. Remember him, and remember Christ's fulness, who is the same, verse 8, and hath the residue of the Spirit. Instruments shifted, cisterns emptied, but there is the same in the fountain. Remember him, and remember your own death, and heaven, where he is. We may think the worse of this world, which is much impoverished, and the better of heaven, which is somewhat enriched, by the removal of this good man."

Thus we have gleaned a little out of the sermons, which very well deserved to have been published at large, some of the testimonies that were borne to him, by such as had had long and intimate acquaintance to him, that knew his excellences very much, and knew as little to give flattering titles. Nor was it any invidious piece of service, to speak thus honourably of one, who, like Demetrius,[v] had a good report of all men, and of the truth itself.

Nor was it there only, but from abroad, that very honourable testimonies were given of him. Sir Henry Ashurst, (whose great worth and usefulness the world hath been made to know, by some of the best pens of the age,) besides the personal acquaintance he had with Mr. Henry, both at Boreatton and in London, had kept up a constant correspondence with him, by letter, for many years. Read the character he gave of him, in a letter to a near relation of Mr. Henry's, upon the tidings of his death. "I need not tell you how sadly I received the doleful news of Mr. Henry's translation, who, I do think, lived the greatest example of sincere godliness, with prudence and sweetness of temper, of any I ever knew." And in another letter, not only proposing, but pressing, the publication of an account of his life, he professeth, he thought there was "none like him in his day," at least of his acquaintance, which is known to be both of the largest and of the best. "And," saith he, "if Sir Fulke Greville[w] would have it inscribed upon his tombstone, that he was a friend to Sir Philip Sidney,[x] I may well be pleased to have it told to the world, that I loved, and honoured, blessed Mr. Henry; a man of so much prudence, and withal so much sincerity, of so good a temper, so much a gentleman, and yet of such strict piety and devotedness to God, that I scarce ever knew his fellow."

The Rev. Mr. William Turner, now Vicar of Walburton in Sussex, of whom mention was made before, lately sent to me a very kind letter, *Ex mero motu*, with his free consent to have it inserted in this account; some hints whereof I think fit to subjoin.

"Worthy Sir;

"I am glad to hear that you have been prevailed with to set upon so good a work, as recording the most remarkable passages of Mr. Henry's life. I doubt not but you will meet with some, that will give such a history but a cold reception. All that part of the world that lies in darkness, will be offended, when beams of clear light and sunshine first dart into their faces. *Virtutem præsentem odimus.*

"A little before I went to the University, I was, upon the commendation of my worthy schoolmaster, Mr. E., yet living, and with my father's consent, half a year a domestic with him; partly as a tutor to his young ones, and partly as a pupil to himself; and in some little degree as a companion; where I had the opportunity of informing myself more fully concerning the humour, and principles, and conversation of a sort of people, and especially him and his family, whom I had heard aspersed very freely in former companies, and represented to the world as very hypocritical and disloyal people. At my first going, I resolved to stand upon my guard, and pry into the cause, which was then the great subject of difference and dispute; and upon the whole do say, that Mr. Henry was a man of so clear a brain, so gentle a behaviour, so steady a conversation, so regular a devotion, was so courteous and condescending to inferiors, so respectful and dutiful to superiors, so sweet and obliging to all; was so careful to improve his time well, to do as much good as possible to every body, so constantly affectionate in his prayers for the king and government, so desirous to keep up a fair correspondence and communion with his conformable brethren,[y] so very

[v] See 3 John 12.

[w] Afterwards Lord Brooke. Nat. 1554; ob. Sept. 30, 1628. Mr. Palmers s Biog. Dict. v. 16. p. 305.

[x] Nat. 29th Nov. 1554; ob. 1586. See Dr. Zouch's Memoirs of Sir P. Sidney, 4to. 1808.

[y] The remark, applied to an eminent nonconformist, may be fitly quoted in connexion with Mr. Henry:—"As he chose to leave his living rather than stain his conscience, so his nonconformity was no way tinctured, either with spleen to the established church, or disloyalty to his prince." Life of Richard Allein. Biog. Brit. v. 1. p. 143.

indifferent in making proselytes to his particular opinions; and withal, so zealous to promote substantial goodness and true Christianity, so mighty inoffensive and peaceable in all his expressions and actions; so prudent, pure, pious, just, sober, charitable, cheerful, and pleasant, that I profess I am almost afraid to give him his due character without some correctives, lest they that knew him not should suspect my veracity, and imagine my pen to be managed by some mercenary hand. I remember the worshipful Rowland Hunt, of Boreatton, Esq. speaking of Mr. Henry, thus expressed himself to me, and, if I mistake not, the Lord Ambassador Paget was present. I was, said he, near seven years resident in the Universities, and seven more at the Inns of Court in London, and had opportunity of knowing and acquainting myself with the most eminent divines and preachers in both those places; yet I never found any every way so accomplished, for clearness and quickness of apprehension, solidity of judgment, and roundness of style, as Mr. Henry is. I have noted in my *Book of Providences*,[z] the remark I made upon the temporal blessings God hath rewarded him with; viz. a good and virtuous consort, who brought him a good estate, gave him a due reverence, loved him with an entire affection; an ingenious and hopeful offspring, well affected, well educated, and well disposed in the world; the favour of men, and a quiet undisturbed habitation upon earth, in great measure, &c.

Sic testatus, sic monet, sic precatur,
Amicus mærens, anhelus, superstes.
W. Turner, A. M."

Another very worthy conformist, formerly of his acquaintance, but now living at a great distance, having occasion to mention him in a letter to a friend, calls him,—The great, good, and now glorious, Mr. Henry, whose memory, saith he, shall ever be precious, and even sacred to me.

Such as these were the honourable testimonies which all that knew him, and knew how to value true excellency, attended him with. It is part of the recompence of charity and moderation in this world, that it obtains a *good report of all men. The kingdom of God*, saith the blessed apostle, Romans xiv. 17, 18. *is not meat and drink*, which were then the matters of doubtful disputation, *but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; and he that in these things serveth Christ, is not only acceptable to God, but approved of men: as, on the contrary, they that judge will be judged, and with what *measure we mete, it will be measured to us again*. And this is the excellency of a good name, that it is out of the reach of death, and is not buried in the grave, but rather grows up from it. It is not for nothing that Solomon hath joined this good name, which is better *than precious ointment*, with the *day of one's death*, which, upon that account, is *better than the day of one's birth*, that it completes the character of those that finish their course well, and are faithful unto death; whereas a *great name*, like the names of the great ones of the earth, is often withered and blemished by death. We read of those that *bear their shame* when they *go down to the pit*, though *they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living*,—Ezekiel xxxii. 25.

At a meeting of the Dissenting Ministers of Cheshire, at Knutsford, in May, 1696, a few weeks before Mr. Henry died, it was agreed, that their next meeting should be at Chester,[a] though inconvenient to many of them, upon condition that he would meet them there, and give them a sermon. It was with much difficulty that he was prevailed with to promise it, but his Master called for him before the time appointed came. Mr. Flavel, of Devonshire,[b] died when he was under a like appointment. But happy they that are come to the *general assembly and church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect*.

As to his bodily presence, he was of a middle stature, his complexion not approaching to any extreme, of a very pleasant aspect, and an unusual mixture of gravity and sweetness in the air of his countenance, which was the true index of the mind. [He would never be persuaded to wear a periwig or border, though he had but very little hair, and was like Elisha for a bald-head. He sometimes said,—As long as I have three hairs of my own, I will never wear any body's else.[c]] When some of his friends have solicited him to have his picture drawn,

z "Mr. Philip Henry, of whom I have made mention before, was a man of a very sedate even temper, a calm spirit, a great peace-maker in his neighbourhood; and, accordingly, he lived, loved, and died, with the universal lamentation of people of all sorts; and which, perhaps, ought not to be omitted in the consideration, after the enjoyment of a kind and loving wife, who brought him a good and plentiful estate; and, seeing his children all disposed of with his consent, and to the content of all persons concerned, and they walking in the truth, and in mutual love one with another, and his children's children, to his great joy and comfort. I say, after all these blessings poured plentifully upon his head, with great assurance and satisfaction about his spiritual and eternal estate, he, quietly, with a short sickness of about twelve hours' continuance, or not much more, resigned up his spirit into the hands of the God of peace." Turner's History of Remarkable Providences, ch. lxxvii. p. 100. *ut supra*.

a See Memoirs of Mrs. Savage, pp. 51, 52. *ut supra*.

b See his Life, prefixed to his Works, vol. I. He died the 26th of June, 1691 æt. 64.

c Life, Orig. MS. *ut supra*. See Walton's Lives by Dr. Zouch, v. 2. p. 417. Mr. Matthew Henry, in his Diary, writes thus:—

"1707-8. January 22. This day I was quite overruled by Brother H. and some of my friends, to cut off my hair, I having of late been very uneasy with coldness in my head, tooth-ache, and at present a deafness. I had purposed not to have done it, but feared, lest persisting in my refusal against the most earnest advice of my physician and friends, should arise from a secret pride in my own hair, and an affectation of singularity." Orig. MS.

he would put them off[d] with this, that the best picture of a minister is in the hearts of his people.

CHAPTER X.

A MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTION OF SOME OF HIS SAYINGS, OBSERVATIONS, COUNSELS, AND COMFORTS, OUT OF HIS SERMONS, LETTERS, AND DISCOURSES.

Mr. Henry, through the excess of his modesty and self-diffidence, never published any of his labours to the world, nor ever fitted or prepared any of them for the press; and yet none more valued the labours of others, or rejoiced more in them; nor have I heard any complain less of the multitude of good books, concerning which he often said, that store is no sore,[a] and he was very forward to persuade others to publish; and always expressed a particular pleasure in reading the lives, actions, and sayings of eminent men, ancient and modern, which he thought the most useful and instructive kind of writings. He was also a very candid reader[b] of books, not apt to pick quarrels with what he read, especially when the design appeared to be honest; and when others would find fault, and say this was wanting, and the other amiss, his usual excuse was,—There is nothing perfect under the sun.

It will be but a small repair of this want of the publishing of some of his works, but I doubt it will prove the best we can make, to glean up some few of many of his sayings, observations, and good instructions, as his remains, which we shall not marshal in any order, but give them as they occur, besides those which have been already inserted into this narrative.

It was a saying he frequently used, which hath been mentioned already,—That every creature is that to us, and only that, which God makes it to be: and another was,—Duty is ours, events are God's:[c] and another was,—The soul is the man,[d] and therefore, that is always best for us, which is best for our souls: and another was,—The devil cozens us of all our time, by cozening us of the present time.

[Referring to the death of a friend who had often expressed his intention of leaving the substance of his estate to pious uses, but had not done so, he remarked,—Many good purposes lie in the churchyard.[e]]

In his thanksgivings for temporal mercies, he often said,—If the end of one mercy were not the beginning of another, we were undone: and to encourage to the work of thanksgiving he would say,—That new mercies call for new returns of praise, and then those new returns will fetch in new mercies.

[Sometimes he would say,—Former mercies are a support to faith in expectation of future mercies: at other times,—Praise is our rent-penny, which we pay to our great Landlord. We are God's tenants for his creatures, and we are tenants at will. Threepence of rent he looks for; a penny of thankfulness, of obedience, of charity. We must relieve to our power proportionable to what we hold.

Of all the blessings we enjoy, saving, spiritual blessings cry loudest on us for returns of praise. They are the best blessings, the most excellent in themselves, the most costly to the Father, the most advantageous to us.[f]]

From Psalm l. 23. *He that offers praise*[g] *glorifies me, and to him that orders his conversation aright*, he observed, that thanks-giving is good, but thanks-living is better.

[O what a mercy, he would say, is health. If the least wheel in our watch (the most menial servant) be out of order, what trouble is it to all the family.[h]]

When he spoke of a good name, he usually described it to be a name for good things with good people.

When he spoke of contentment, he used to say,—When the mind and the condition meet, there is contentment.[i] Now in order to that, either the condition must be brought up to the mind, and that is not only unreasonable but impossible,—for as the condition riseth, the mind riseth with it,—or else the mind must be brought down to the condition, and that is both possible and reasonable. And he observed,—That no condition of life will of itself make a man content, without the grace of God; for we find Haman discontented in the court, Ahab dis-

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d See Heywood's Life of Angier, p. 62. *ut supra*; and Dr. Jortin's Life of Erasmus, v. 2. p. 93.

a "*Store is no sore*, young mistress,
My mother is wont to say."
Ben Jonson. Works, vol. 6. p. 34. *ut supra.*

b Appendix, No. XXV.

c See also a Letter from Philip to Matthew Henry, where this and others of Mr. Henry's sayings are introduced. Prot. Diss. Mag. v. 2. p. 454.

"Duties are ours, and events are God's." Mr. Rutherford. See Joshua Redivivus, or 352 Religious Letters, by the "eminently pious and learned Mr. S. Rutherford." Lett. xci. to the Rev. D. Dickson, Mar. 7, 1637, oct. 1809, p. 111. 13th ed.

d "The soul," saith a Heathen, "is the man; that which is seen is not the man:"

Ουκ εστιν ανθρωπος το ορωμενον. Plato.
Mens cujusque is est quisque.
Cicero. Somnium Scipionis. Fragmenta, p. 64. op. tom. 8. duod. 1642.

And see 2 Cor. iv. 16, where the soul is called the *inward man.*

e Diary, Orig. MS.

f P. Henry. Orig. MS.

g Christians are to give God the praise, Ps. cxv. 1. of all they have; gifts, graces;—of all they do; duties;—of all they get; success. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

h Diary, Orig. MS.

i "Though a man cannot bring his condition to be as big as his heart, yet, if he can bring his heart to be as little as his condition, to bring them even;—from thence is contentment. The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment, by Jer. Burroughs, p. 30, 4to. 1685. So Plato;—"The man, who would be truly happy, should not study to enlarge his estate, but to contract his desires." Plutarch, vol. 5. p. 365. *ut supra.*

See Flavel's Husbandry Spiritualized, ch. vi. Works, *ut supra*, v. 6. 60.

contented on the throne, Adam discontented in paradise; nay, and higher we cannot go, the angels that fell discontented in heaven itself.

[It pleases God to divide and dispense his gifts severally to the children of men: not all to one; but some to one, and some to another. There is no man so happy but hath something that is an alloy to his happiness, some trouble, or cross, or other, which should make us humble. And no man is so miserable, but he hath something that is an alloy to his misery; if he be poor, yet he hath health. This, if well considered, might help to quiet our hearts, and teach us, in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content.[k]

You that have estates, he advised,—be sober in the use of them. You that have none, be sober in your desires.[l]

With a view to check inordinate desires, he would sometimes say,—Consider what are those things towards which thy desires are,—they are earthly, vanity. This I can assure thee, thou wilt not find that in them which thou lookest for. The Holy Ghost hath caused a whole book of scripture to be written about this argument; it is the book of Ecclesiastes,—*Delight thyself in the Lord.* Creature-comforts ebb and flow, but God is always the same. Mortify inordinate affections. Let that of Jacob be our rule, Genesis xxviii. 20—22; or that of Agur, Proverbs xxx. 7, &c. or that of Christ, *daily bread.* Nature is contented with little; grace with less; lust with nothing at all.[m]

Earthly-minded men, he remarks, are like moles: they live in the earth; they see no beauty in holiness, no comeliness in Jesus Christ.[n]

The three questions which he advised people to put to themselves in self-examination before the sacrament, were, What am I? What have I done? and, What do I want?[o]

[Noticing hypocrisy, he has remarked;—Though, to live in the least sin cannot consist with the *power* of godliness, yet, to live in the greatest, may with the *form.* Moses took a veil, when he spoke to Israel; put it off, when to God. Hypocrites do quite contrary; they show their best face to men, their worst to God. But he sees through the veil. Vipers speckled without, are poisonous within.[p]]

He used to recommend to his friends these four scripture arguments against sin, expressed, for memory sake, in four verses, to be ready in an hour of temptation.

Is this thy kindness to thy friend?[q]
It will be bitterness in the end.[r]
The vows of God upon me lie;[s]
Should such a man as I am fly?[t]

[Pressing upon professors the wrong done by their sin to others, he would say;—Your sin brings an evil report upon the ways of God, and grieves the hearts of your brethren, while it is the enemy's joy and triumph. Your example doth mischief; others will think they may safely venture to do as they see you do.[u] There is not the least sin allowed of, and affected, but will end in the eternal separation of the soul from God. Guilty of one, guilty of all. James ii. 10.[v]

If I sin, he remarked, I must repent of it, and repentance is made up of shame and sorrow, and hath much bitterness in it. Sin is against God. And, how shall I do *this great wickedness, and sin against the great God,* and a *great King above all gods?* Sin is pleasing to the devil; and shall I do that which gratifies him who does all he can to destroy me? Consider the reflection of sin upon Jesus Christ; how it grieves, pierces, and openly shames him, my dear Redeemer, who shed his blood to redeem and ransom my soul from sin. Of this, it may be said, as of Goliah's sword, *There is none like it.* Consider the vows of God, which are upon us, especially the great vow of our baptism. Consider, though I may not be damned for this sin hereafter, yet I may be sorely chastened for it here, as David. The consideration of death and judgment, and the account that must be rendered *when every secret thing shall be revealed,* is a weighty argument against sin. If it be a public sin, consider the scandal of it to religion, besides the harm it may do as a bad example.[w]

Watch against the beginnings and occasions of sin. This was Joseph's remedy.[x] *Set the Lord always before thee.* How can I do this, not only *against God,* but in his very face? *Put on the whole armour of God;* especially the *shield of faith.* Faith realizes invisible things; threatenings, promises, hell, heaven, and above all, *Christ crucified.* Pray much. The best way to fight against sin, is to fight upon our knees. Remember your end. Death is at hand, and, *after death,* comes *judgment.* Do but suppose the next sin should be the determining sin, as perhaps it may.[y]

When God pardons sin, he would say, he takes it

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k P. Henry. Orig. MS.
l Ibid.
m Ibid. A little will satisfy nature, less will satisfy grace, but nothing will satisfy a proud man's lusts. Galen. See Brooks's Unsearchable Riches of Christ, p. 19. 4to. 1671.
n P. Henry. Orig. MS.
o Appendix, No. XXVI.
p P. Henry. Orig. MS.
q 2 Sam. xvi. 17.
r 2 Sam. ii. 26.
s Ps. lvi. 13.
t Neh. xi. 11.
u P. Henry. Orig. MS.
v Ibid.
w P. Henry. Orig. MS.
x See a Sermon, by P. Henry, on Gen. xxxix. 9. Eighteen Sermons, p. 49. *ut supra.*
y P. Henry. Orig. MS.

off as a burthen; removes it away, as filthiness; and blots it out, as a debt.

Saving grace takes off the affections from sin; but, most of all, from that which was formerly best beloved.[z]

Sanctification is the resurrection of the soul from the death of sin to the life of grace; the *first resurrection*, Revelations xx. 6.[a]]

He said there were four things which he would not for all the world have against him;—The word of God, his own conscience, the prayers of the poor, and the account of godly ministers.

[There are four things he would say, we must not make a mock of;—sin, Proverbs xiv. 9.—people's natural infirmities,—the word of God,—and good people.[b]

Tria sunt difficilia;—to believe things impossible to reason,—to hope against hope when the thing hoped for is deferred,—and to cleave to God as to a friend, when he appears against us as an enemy.[c]

There are two things he remarked, we should greatly beware of;—That we may never be ashamed of the gospel,—and, that we may never be a shame to it, Proverbs xxx. 9.[d]]

"He that hath a blind conscience, which sees nothing; a *dead* conscience, which feels nothing; and a *dumb* conscience, which saith nothing; is in as miserable a condition as a man can be in on this side hell."

[He remarked,—There are three things, which, if Christians do, they will prove mistaken:

1. If they look for that in themselves, which is to be had in another; viz. *righteousness*.

2. If they look for that in the *law*, which is to be had only in the gospel; viz. *mercy*.

3. If they look for that on earth which is to be had only in heaven; viz. *perfection*.

Seriousness in trifles, trifling in the most serious things, he would observe, undoes thousands.[e]]

Preaching on 1 Peter i. 6. *If need be, ye are in heaviness*,—He showed what need the people of God have of afflictions. The same that our bodies have of physic, that our trees have of pruning,[f] that gold and silver have of the furnace, that liquors have of being emptied from vessel to vessel, that the iron hath of a file, that the fields have of a hedge, that the child has of the rod.

[The evil of an affliction, he would say, is the wrath of God in it.

The pilot is wise though the sea is rough.[g]

Afflictions are enlightening; they open the eyes. *Schola crucis est schola lucis*:[h]—humbling; they help to lay us low:—softening; as the rain to the parched earth, as fire that melts the metals:—composing; they help to make people sober and serious, opening the ear to discipline.[i]

When outward afflictions are upon the Lord's people, their chief endeavours should be after spiritual, inward mercies; to get sin pardoned, peace established, Psalm xxv. 18. It is usual with Satan, at such times, to disquiet God's people with the remembrance of old miscarriages. He is a great enemy to our peace. When he doth so, our best course is to sue out a fresh pardon.[k]

We are *born to trouble* as men, Job xiv. 1. and *born again* to it as Christians, 2 Timothy iii. 12.[l]

The graces of God's children are like fire in a flint, the flint must be struck before the fire will appear.

The way to make a burthen light, he writes, is to poise it equally, that it may not hang all on one side. So afflictions are made easy by parting our care, so as to take upon us only the care of duty, and leave events to God.[m]

Great affections prove great afflictions.[n]

Thus he would pray;—When the flail[o] of affliction, O Lord, is upon me, let me not be as the chaff that flies in thy face, but as the corn that lies at thy feet.[p]]

Preaching on that prayer of Christ for his disciples, John xvii. 21.;—*That they all may be one*; which, no doubt, is an answered prayer; for the Father heard him always; He showed,—That, notwithstanding the many sad divisions that are in the church, yet all the saints, as far as they are sanctified, are *one*; one in *relation*, one *flock*, one *family*, one *building*, one *body*, one *bread*; one by *representation*; one in *image* and *likeness*, of one *inclination* and *disposition*; one in their *aims*, one in their *askings*, one in *amity* and *friendship*, one in *interest*, and one in their *inheritance*; nay, they are one in *judgment* and *opinion*; though in some things they differ, yet those things in which they are agreed are many more, and much more considerable than those

z P. Henry. Orig. MS.
a Ibid.
b Ibid.
c Ibid.
d Ibid.
e Diary, Orig. MS.
f God's vine bears better for bleeding. Israel went but seventy to Egypt, but returned six hundred thousand,—being increased their bondage. P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig. MS.
g Mr. Henry. Palmer's Noncon. Mem. v. 3, p. 490; said to be nted from his Diary.
h Cyprian.
i P. Henry. Orig. MS.
k P. Henry. Orig. MS.
l P. Henry. Skeleton of a Sermon on Matt. xvii. 14. taken from his own MS. Theol. Mag. and Review, v. 2. p. 422. A. D. 1802.
m P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig. MS.
n P. Henry. Orig. MS.
o The flayle, or the winde, hurtithe not the wheat, but clensyth yt from the chaffe. And ye, dearly beloved, are God's wheat; feare not the fanning wind. An Epistle sent by Mr. Latimer, to all the unfayned lovers of God's trewthe, owte of a prison in Oxenford, called Bocardo; where the said Latimer was emprisonned for the testimony of Criste, the 15th of May, 1555. Strype's Eccl. Mem. v. 3. p. 308. *ut supra*.
p P. Henry. Orig. MS.

things wherein they differ. They are all of a mind concerning sin, that it is the worst thing in the world; concerning Christ, that he is *All in all;* concerning the favour of God, that it is *better than life;* concerning the *world*, that it is *vanity;* concerning the *word of God*, that it is *very precious*, &c.

Preaching on Galatians i. 16. concerning the conversion of Paul, he began his sermon with this remark, to raise attention;—Much is said in story concerning the seven wonders of the world, the Temple of Ephesus, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Tomb of Mausolus, &c. all which are now no more; but I have been sometimes thinking, whether I could not name seven things which I would call the seven wonders of the church. And what do you think of these seven? Are they not wonderful? 1. Our redemption by Jesus Christ, who is called *Wonderful.* 2. The salvation of Noah in the ark. 3. The faith of Abraham in offering up Isaac. 4. The patience of Job. 5. The providences of God towards the nation and people of the Jews. 6. The pouring out of the Spirit upon the apostles. 7. The conversion of Paul.

[Preaching on Romans v. 12.—*And death by sin, and so death passed upon all men;* he observed,—That eternal death is meant, or the death of both body and soul in hell. This is part of the *wages of sin;* in Romans vi. 23. opposed to *eternal life.* It is a living death, or a dying life. It is, therefore, death, because separation from God. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Depart:—now, the Spirit saith, Come; and the Bride saith, Come;* but then, *Depart from me,—the Fountain of Life;*—from my presence, in which is *fulness of joy.* This is the punishment of loss;—the very hell of hell. Lord, if we must go from thee, let us part friends! No;—*Depart, ye cursed;* and those whom he curses, are cursed indeed. Then let it be to some other place, where we may be quiet. No;—*into fire.* Such fire as ours is but a poor shadow of. Let us stay there but a while. No;—into *everlasting* fire. Let us have good company. No;—the *devil, and his angels.* The same by whom thou didst choose to be ruled, shall now torment thee.[q]

Preaching on Hebrews vi. 9;—*But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation,*[r] *though we thus speak;* he said, in the close;—Do these things. See sin to be the worst of evils, and depart from it. See Christ to be the best of goods, and choose him, and cleave to him. See the world passing away, and set not thy heart upon it. See the ways of God to be the best ways, and his people the best people; and walk in those ways, and with those people. See heaven and hell before you, and carry it accordingly. Love the word of God; make it your guide, your food.[s]

In an exposition of Genesis iii. after analyzing the awful sentence upon our first parents, he thus beautifully remarked;—In the midst of all the wrath denounced and executed in this chapter, what a sweet mixture there was of mercy: alluding to Psalm ci. 1. There is a promise of Christ, verse 15. *In sorrow thou shalt bring forth;* there is wrath: but then it shall be *children;* there is mercy. *Thy desire shall be* subject, but it shall be *to thy husband.* Thy face shall sweat; but *in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.* Mercy is seen in making garments for them, verse 15.[t]

Preaching on Matthew vii. 24, &c.—*Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him, &c.* he observed, that he who hears sermons, and doth not do them, is a monster in religion. He is all head and ears, having neither hands to work with nor feet to walk with. There is a disease, which children have, called the rickets, wherein their heads swell as large as two heads, and their legs are crooked, which hinder their going. We have many ricketty Christians; they hear much, and their heads swell with empty notions, and indigested opinions, but their legs are crooked, their walking is perverse. Every such person is a mocker of God, a deceiver of himself, a discourager of ministers, barren soil, a bad servant, a *beholder of his natural face in a glass,* a *builder of his house upon the sand.*[u]

Preaching on Christ, as the redemption of his people, from 1 Corinthians i. 30.—*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us redemption;* he thus concluded;—Live as the redeemed of the Lord; live with your eye upon the redemption; viewing it often; aiming at it as your scope; 2 Corinthians iv. 18. Live with your hand upon the plough, *abounding always in the work of the Lord.* Live with your feet upon the world, despising its glories, bearing patiently its frowns. Live with your heart upon the Redeemer, in love and thankfulness.[v]

Preaching on Ephesians ii. 12. *That at that time ye were without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel;* he thus described the miserable condition of those who are without Christ;—They are children without a father, orphans; sheep, without

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q P. Henry. Orig. MS.

r The *things that accompany salvation*, are,—*repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.* Where these are, there is salvation, Acts iii. 19. xvi. 31. Without these, we cannot be saved, Luke xiii. 3. John viii. 24. A holy heart, and a holy life, John iii. 3. Heb. xii. 14. Matt. xviii. 3. Sincerity, truth, and uprightness, Gen. xvii. 1. Ps. li. 6. Isa. xxxviii. 3. 2 Cor. i. 12. Habitual preparation of soul to part with all for the sake of Christ and his gospel, if God shall call us thereunto, Luke ix. 23. Matt. x. 37. Matt. vi. 24. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

s P. Henry. Orig. MS.

t Ibid.

u Ibid.

v Ibid. A heart to be truly thankful for the Redeemer, is a good sign of an interest in the redemption. P. Henry. Memoirs of Mrs Savage, p. 217. *ut supra.*

a shepherd, none to lead them, to feed them, to guard them; they are in the dark, and no sun to enlighten them; they are in a friendless condition, Christ is their enemy; they are under a debt, and have no surety; they are in the midst of enemies, and have no Saviour; they have a cause to plead, but have no Advocate; they are sinners, but have no Prophet, Priest, or King, to appear for them; they are out of the way, for *Christ is the* only *way;* they are mortally diseased, but have no Physician; they are naked, and have no clothing, for Christ's righteousness is the only clothing; they are foodless, breadless, for he only is bread to the soul; they are without wisdom; and, therefore, fools. A Christless condition is a *miserable* condition.[w]]

But it would be endless to gather up such passages as these out of his sermons, which were full of them, and we mention these only because they occur first.

He used to observe concerning the nation of the Jews, that, before the captivity in Babylon, no people could be more strongly addicted to idols and idolatry than they were,—to admiration, considering what clear warnings they had against it. But after that captivity, never was any people more averse to idols and idolatry than they, that the promise might be fulfilled, *Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?* And he looked upon it, that the idolatry of the papists was one of the greatest obstructions to the Jews' conversion, which he did expect and look for, as not apprehending how the promises, Romans xi. have yet had their full accomplishment; not that they shall again be incorporated into a people, but shall join themselves to the churches of Christ, in the several nations whither they be scattered.

The great thing that he condemned and witnessed against in the Church of Rome, was their monopolizing of the church, and condemning all that are not in with their interests, which is so directly contrary to the spirit of the gospel, as nothing can be more. He sometimes said,—I am too much a catholic to be a Roman Catholic.

He often expressed himself well pleased with that healing rule,[x] which, if duly observed, would put an end to all our divisions;—*Sit in necessariis unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in omnibus charitas.* Let here be in necessary things unity, in every thing charity, and then there need not be, in every punctilio, uniformity.

By the institutions of the gospel, he said, he knew of no holy place, one holy day,[y] two holy sacraments, and four holy canons. Let all things be done *in charity.* Let all things be done *to edifying.* Let all things be done *decently,* and in *order.* Let all things be done *to the glory of God.*

When his opinion was asked about any doubtful matter, as playing at cards, the marriage of cousin-germans, or the like, he was very cautious in determining such things to be sinful; but he would say;—It is good keeping on the safer side; and a man would not choose to go upon a precipice, when he might go upon even ground, Proverbs x. 5. *He that walks uprightly walks surely,* in opposition to walking at all adventures.

[There are excellent rules to guide us in doubtful cases. What would Peter, or Paul, or Christ himself do in this case, if they were here? What would I do myself if I were dying now, and going to judgment?[z] What is the first dictate of my own conscience; I say, the *first,*—before interest, profit, hath bribed it? Usually, that is the right.[a]

On another occasion, in reference to the sacred injunction,—*Commune with thine own heart, and be still,* he said,—When the question hath been put to conscience,—Do I do well to live in the practice of such and such a thing?—Stay, and hearken to the answer.[b]

Noticing the common objection urged against the strictness of a holy life;—It is more than needs. I have a good heart towards God; I go to church, and give to every man his own; and what do the best more?—I will tell thee, saith he.—They do more; they watch against the *occasions* of sin, and pray, and endeavour, that the wicked one may not touch them. When he hath touched them, and they have sinned, it is the great grief of their souls, causes them to *mourn* bitterly. They take hold, by *faith,* on the blood of Christ, and receive remission through him. This they improve as the greatest, and most prevailing, argument to all manner of gospel obedience after. This they do, and these are *the things that accompany salvation.*[c]

On Christian joyfulness we have the following remarks:—

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w Mrs. Savage's MS.

x Of St. Augustine.

y About the one-and-thirtieth yeare of Henry the Eighth, holy-ays were growne to such an unreasonable number, as that men ad almost no time to worke and attend the businesse of their allings; servants had so many play days, and poore people so w working dayes, as began to breed much inconvenience, by eason of much idleness. Wherefore there came forth injunctions om the king by the convocation, for the restraint thereof. God's oly House and Service, by Foulke Robarts, pp. 22, 23. 4to. 1639. e a copy of "Thacte made for Thabrogacion of certayne holy-ayes," in Bishop Sparrow's Collection of Articles, &c. 4to. 1675. 167.

One of the injunctions of King Edward the Sixth, in 1547, was, that—"All parsons, vicars, and curates, shall teach and declare unto their parishioners, that they may, with a safe and quiet conscience, in the time of harvest, labour upon the holy and festival days, and save the thing which God hath sent." Ibid. p. 7. This was repeated by Queen Elizabeth, in 1559. Ibid. p. 73.

Mr. Henry probably had these things in view.

z See the Sermon preached before the interment of Mr. John Sympson, pp. 39, 40. 4to. 1663.

a P. Henry. Orig. MS.

b Ibid.

c Ibid.

Whosoever takes his full, though lawful, pleasure in the things of the world,[d] to such God commonly denies the extraordinary delights of his Spirit.

Men may be in a state of joy, and yet not apprehend it, as Hagar, who had a well by her, and yet complained for thirst. Genesis xxi. 17.

Joy must not always be judged of by the outward expressions; for a man will laugh more at a jest than he will at news of a pardon.

If we let the reins loose to sin and folly; if we suffer the world, and vanities of it, to encroach upon us, and to steal away our thoughts and affections, that will quickly spoil Christ's being our song, Hosea ix. 1. Joy is forbidden fruit to a backslider. Such have other work to do. It is they only who keep a *conscience void of offence*, that *walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise*, that keep close to God and duty.—I say it is they only, that can *rejoice in Christ Jesus*. And, therefore, see to it all ye that desire to make Christ your song, and to rejoice always in him. Mind your way; mend your pace; ply your work.

Rest not, he would say, in having life, but press after liveliness, Revelations iii. 1, 2. A lively frame in our walking, is an excellent frame; it rids work; brings something to pass in religion.[e]

Usually, after continued deadness, rested in, comes some notable affliction, or other cross.—'Is it so, indeed? Can you afford me no better duties?' Withdraw, Comforter! Smite, sickness! Vex him, Satan! Persecute him, enemies! Hosea v. 15; vi. 1.[f]

Writing upon worldliness, he observed, that, although the affections may not be *only* upon earthly things, they may be so *principally;* as when we affect earthly things in the first place; when we affect them for their own sakes, and not in subordination to a higher end; when heavenly things must give way to them; and when we can be content to forfeit a good conscience, that we may gratify our regard to them.

The root of a tree lies out of sight; so the affections. When they are set upon the world, what they do, they do slily. The soul is lost without noise.

One of the most dreadful expressions of wrath in all the Scripture is denounced against a *root of bitterness*, Deuteronomy xxix. 18, 20, 21. Such a root is earthly-mindedness; and the fruit it brings forth is bitter fruit.

A child of God may be master of the world, but he cannot be a slave to it.[g]

If the affections of a Christian be towards earthly things, the soul will be wronged. It will engage him in a multitude of temptations and snares, 1 Timothy vi. 9. It will exceedingly hinder communion with God. Earthly things are as bird-lime to the soul. When the heart is mounting up towards heaven, then will come in a wandering thought, as a bullet, or as an arrow out of a bow, and on the sudden fetch it down again. It is the very root of apostasy; and it unfits us for death. None are so unwilling to die as those whose affections are towards earthly things.[h]

Earthly riches are *uncertain riches*, 1 Timothy vi. 17. but spiritual mercies are *sure mercies*, Isaiah lv. 3.[i]]

In the observations he made of God's providences,[k] he frequently took notice, in discourse with his friends, of the fulfilling of the Scripture in them; for, saith he,—The Scripture hath many accomplishments, and is in the fulfilling every day. Speaking of a wicked son in the neighbourhood, that was very undutiful to his mother, he charged some of his children to observe the providence of God concerning him; perhaps, saith he, I may not live to see it, but do you take notice, whether God do not come upon him with some remarkable judgment in this life, according to the threatening implied in the reason annexed to the Fifth Commandment. But he himself lived to see it fulfilled not long after, in a very signal providence.[l]

[On the subject of declensions in religion he remarked;—It was never said of any one that fell away,[m] that he was either *justified*, or *begotten again;* whereas, many other glorious things are spoken of them. Hebrews vi. 4, 5, &c.[n]

Many men begin well in the profession of religion, and hold on a while, and yet break off at last, and come to nothing. What is the matter? Want of a single eye. They did not choose religion for religion's sake, nor the ways of God for God's sake, but for

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d And, for pleasures and delights of the world, we must deal with it as men who buy and taste honey, only touch it with the tip of the finger, not with our whole hand, for feare of surfeit. Venerable Bede. The Lives of the Primitive Fathers, p. 516. 4to. 1640.

e P. Henry. Orig. MS.

f Ibid.

g Ibid.

h Ibid.

i Ibid.

k One of these observations was noticed by Mr. Turner in proof of "great effects being wrought by weak means." A woman near Hanmer, going over a hedge, was hung to death with her head-string catching accidentally in the sticks; as was related to me by Mr. Henry of Broad Oak, in Flintshire. Remark. Provid ch. cxli. p. 69. *ut supra.*

l A striking illustration of a similar nature is recorded by Bishop Hopkins, in his "Exposition on the Commandments." Works, v. 1, p. 452. *ut supra.*

m They that voluntarily fall off from God's truth, are, of all men, the most given to railing and bitterness, 1 Timothy i. 20. Julian, the apostate, was the bitterest railer against Christians. There are various reasons for this. The desire they have to justify themselves; because they know they have made themselves odious to God's people; (as nations take up arms against those they have no hope to be reconciled to;) to give assurance to that side they have given themselves to, 2 Sam. xvi. 21. A fury of spirit follows the worst cause. Let us hold fast the truth, and take heed of falling away; for then we shall fall into the *gall of bitterness*. Mr. D. Burgess on 2 Pet. ii. 15, 16. Sept 21, 1619. From a MS. of the Rev Arthur Hildersham. *Penes me.*

n P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig. MS.

some secular advantage, or by-respect; and, when the weight is off, the clock stands.[o]]

He observed from scripture instances, as well as from some providences, which he had taken notice of in his own day,—That, if any began well in the ways of religion and godliness, and afterwards *cast off* their *profession*, and returned to profaneness again, usually God sets a mark of his displeasure upon them, by some visible judgment in this world; their estates ruined, their reputation blasted, their families sunk, or themselves brought to misery; so that all who passed by might say,—'This was an apostate.' *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

He observed, from Numbers x. 12.—That all our removes in this world are but from one wilderness to another. Upon any change that is before us, we are apt to promise ourselves a Canaan, but we shall be deceived, it will prove a wilderness.

Once, pressing the study of the scriptures, he advised to take a verse of Psalm cxix.[p] every morning to meditate upon, and so go over the psalm twice in the year; and that, saith he, will bring you to be in love with all the rest of the scripture; and he often said;—All grace grows,[q] as love to the word of God grows.

[Mentioning that passage;—*And turned my feet unto thy testimonies;*—he observed, that the great turn to be made in heart and life, is *from* all other things *to* the word of God. Conversion turns us to the word of God, as our touch-stone, to examine ourselves, our state, our ways, spirits, doctrines, worships, customs; as our glass, to dress by, James i. as our rule to walk and work by, Galatians vi. 16; as our water, to wash us, Psalm cxix. 9; as our fire, to warm us, Luke xxiv. as our food, to nourish us, Job xxiii. 12; as our sword, to fight with, Ephesians vi. as our counsellor, in all our doubts, Psalm cxix. 24; as our cordial, to comfort us; as our heritage, to enrich us.[r]

Noticing the *exceeding great and precious promises* of the divine word, he would say;—Those good things, which are only convenient for us, are not absolutely promised; as degrees of grace, comforts, externals.

To every command there is a promise; Deuteronomy x. 16; compare xxx. 6; Ezekiel xviii. 31; compare xxxvi. 26; the command finds us work; the promise finds us strength. The purposes of God are his concealed promises; the promises, his revealed purposes. A believer, though he may have little in possession, he has treasures in reversion. The promises of God to us are greater helps for mortifying sin, than our promises to God.[s]]

One, asking his advice, what to do when, as often unavoidably, we are in the sight and hearing of the wickedness of the wicked, and whether we are to reprove them;—Why, saith he, you know what an angry countenance doth, and we may sometimes give a reproof by our looks, when we have not opportunity of giving it otherwise.

[He would remark, that it is strange to see sometimes what an awe arises upon the spirits of wicked men from the very company and presence of one eminent in holiness; they dare not do then as they dare and do at other times. One having dined with Mr. John Dod, said, afterwards, that he did not think it could have been possible to have forborne swearing so long.[t]

On the duty of Christian reproof, he observes;—When we reprove our brother, we must be careful we violate not his credit. So Christ *looked* only upon Peter, lest, if he had spoken to him, the Jews, over-hearing, might have reviled and upbraided him with his treachery to his Master. So, also, at supper, when he reproved Judas, he speaks in general terms;—*One of you.*[u]

Again;—To reprove a brother, is like as, when he is fallen, to help him up again; when he is wounded, to help to cure him; when he hath broken a bone, to help to set it; when he is out of his way, to put him in it; when he is fallen into the fire, to pluck him out; when he hath contracted defilement, to help to cleanse him.[v]

In reproving, temper zeal with charity. In the ark, as there was Aaron's rod, so there was also the pot of manna; *virga severitatis manna dulcedinus;* bitter pills must be gilded over with love and meekness.[w]

He would not bear that any should be evil spoken of in his hearing; it was to him as vinegar to the teeth. He would mind those who reflected upon people behind their backs, of that law, Leviticus xix. 14. *Thou shalt not curse the deaf.* Those that are absent are deaf, they cannot right themselves, and therefore say no ill of them. A friend of his

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o P. Henry. Orig. MS. Brit. Mus. Fol. 4275. Plut. iii. E. Bibl. Birch. They that are acted only by an outward law, are all the while moved artificially, and not by any principle of motion from themselves within; or, like clocks and watches, that go pretty regularly for a while, but are moved by weights and plummets, or some other artificial springs, that must be ever now and then wound up, or else they cease. Dr. Cudworth's Sermon before the House of Commons, March 31, 1647, appended to the True Intellectual System of the Universe, v. 2, p. 64, 4to. 1743.

p 1687-8, March 9. Friday morn. I have been, of late, taking some pains to learn by heart Psalm cxix. and have made some progress therein. Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS.

q A man cannot continue long at a stand in godliness. If we do not find an increase of grace, we may justly suspect a decay in grace. 2 Pet. iii. 17, 18. The regenerate part in a believer is styled, in scripture, the *new man;* or, as it may be rendered, the *young* man, Col. iii. 10. Youth is on the growing hand; so is grace in the heart. Mal. iv. 2. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

r P. Henry. Orig. MS.

s P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig MS.

t P. Henry. Orig. MS.

u P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig. MS.

v P. Henry. From Mrs. Savage's MS.

w P. Henry. Orig. MS.

inquiring of him concerning a matter which tended to reflect upon some people; he began to give him an account of the story, but immediately broke off, and checked himself with these words, but our rule is, *to speak evil of no man*, and would proceed no further in the story. It was but the week before he died, that one desired him to lend him such a book. Truly, saith he, I would lend it you, but that it rakes in the faults of some, which should rather be covered with a mantle of love. It were easy to multiply instances of this.

[Speaking of anger, he would say,—Wise anger is like fire in a flint: there is much ado to get it out, and when it is out, it is gone again presently.[x]

To quicken people to diligence and liveliness in the worship of God, he would sometimes observe, that the temple was built upon a threshing-floor, a place of labour. He would also urge *that* in answer to those who turned it to his reproach, that his meeting-place had been a barn; no new thing, would he say, to turn a threshing-floor into a temple.

[The following counsel is connected with the same subject,—Beware of such things as deaden the heart. Avoid guilt, for it mars all our boldness of access. Guard against the cares of the world, for they are as clogs and fetters. They are to the soul as bird-lime. A bird so caught, cannot fly as before.

Study things above that ye may be wise about them. *Mind* them, Romans viii. 5. Philippians iii. 19—*Savour* them: the word is so translated, Matthew xvi. 23.—Keep up your *relish* of them. The whole man is to be exercised, and set on work in heavenly things, but chiefly the affections. Affect things above.

Spiritual things, graces and duties, &c. are termed things above, because they are so to the natural man, above his reach to understand, above his power to perform, 1 Corinthians ii. 14.—because they elevate and advance the soul that hath them, and is exercised about them. (There is not a duty in religion, but an angel might be seen performing it without disparagement,)—because they are so in regard of their original. (Duties were enjoined from above: we are enabled to perform them from above,)—and because they are so in regard of their tendency,—upwards, towards heaven.[y]

Inquire,—which do we usually reckon the happier man,—he who is poor in the world, and hath true grace, or he who is rich in the world, and hath none? In which of these two men's condition would we choose to be? What is it we are most solicitous to make sure to ourselves,—things on earth, or things above? What is it you desire most to leave your children? Have you spent as many thoughts, and cast as many ways, how you might bring them to Christ, as how you might raise them, and provide for them, in the world? These queries, impartially answered, will evidence what esteem we have of things above, and our esteem will evidence what affections we have towards them.[z]]

When some zealous people in the country would have him to preach against top-knots, and other vanities in apparel, he would say, that was none of his business; if he could but persuade people to Christ, the pride and vanity, and excess of those things, would fall of course; and yet he had a dislike to vanity and gaiety of dress;[a] and allowed it not in those that he had influence upon. His rule was, that in such things we must neither be owls nor apes; not affect singularity, nor affect modishness; nor, as he used to observe from 1 Peter iii. 3. make *the putting on of apparel our adorning*, because Christians have better things to adorn themselves with.[b] When some complained to him of a relation of theirs, that would not let them dress his children with ribbons, and other fine things; why truly, saith Mr. Henry, those things are fit for children; thereby reproving both him that would not allow them to his children, and them that perhaps minded them too much themselves.

[On first wearing a new suit of clothes, he wrote,—Lord, clothe me with thy righteousness, which is a comely, costly, lasting, everlasting garment.[c]

Four sorts of zeal, he would remark, are to be condemned. Blind zeal; Romans x. 2. Bitter zeal; James iii. 14. Proud zeal; 2 Kings x. Partial zeal; Matthew xxiii. 23.[d]

On one occasion he writes,—None should despair, because God can help them; none should presume, because God can cross them.[e]

Referring to the fundamentals of the Christian religion, they consist, he observes, in matters of *faith*. John xvii. 3; viii. 24. Acts iv. 11. 1 Corinthians i. 23. *ib.* ii. 2. *ib.* iii. 11.; of *practice*. Matthew iv. 17. Luke ix. 23. John xiii. 34.; xv. 14.; and of *worship*. John iv. 24; xvi. 23. Philippians iii. 3. Colossians iii. 17; ii. 18, 19.[f]

True godliness is scripture godliness. Godliness according to what is written. Psalm cxix. 133. Galatians vi. 16.[g]

Speaking of pride, he would say,—The worst sin,

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x P. Henry. Orig. MS.

y Ibid.

z Ibid.

a See Strutt's Manners and Customs of the English. v. 3. p. 93. &c. 4to 1776. In 1551, the King [Edward the Sixth] drew up for the Paliament a bill for restraining and directing of apparel, but it took not effect. See the Rough Draft, in Strype's Eccl. Mem. v. 2. p. 555, &c. *ut supra.*

b Christ is a Christian's glory. Ps. iii. 3. No such ornament as true godliness. Be not ashamed of your ornaments. Phil. iii. 3. 2 Cor. i. 12. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

c Diary. Orig. MS.

d Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

e P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig. MS.

f Ibid.

g P. Henry. Orig. MS.

pride, comes out of our graces, and the best grace, which is humility, comes out of our sins.[h]

At other times,—We should be troubled as much at unjust praises as at unjust slanders.[i]

What the soul is to the body, he would remark, that the saints are to the world; the balsam and life of it; yet as the body abuses the soul, so doth this world the saints.[k]

The study of history, he notes, is pleasant. I find afflictions and persecutions have been always the lot of the people of God, but God hath still upheld his church, and will do it to the end.[l]

To one complaining of weakness in duty he said; —Remember two things; *that you are not under the law, but under grace;* that you are on earth, and not in heaven.[m]

If you would pray fervently, walk watchfully. Rest not in forms. Artificial breath, such as that which comes from a pair of bellows, is cold; but natural breath, which comes from the mouth of a living man, is warm. Stir thyself up with quickening meditations, Psalm xxxix. 3. Beg assistance from the spirit.[n]

We must not go a step out of our way, neither to meet the cross nor to miss it.[o]

He often, both in sermons and discourses, would press people to fix to themselves some good principles, and to come off from the corrupt and carnal principles that worldly people go by. He took all occasions to recommend such principles as these. That God who is the first and best, should have the first and best.[p]—That a part in Christ is a good part. —That soul prosperity is the best prosperity, and that it is well or ill with us, according as it is well or ill with our souls.—That honesty is the best policy. —That those that would have the comfort of relations, must be careful to do the duty of them.—That all is well that ends everlastingly well.[q]—That time, and the things of time, are nothing compared with eternity, and the things of eternity.—That it is better to suffer the greatest affliction, than to commit the least sin.—That it highly concerns us to do that now, which we shall most wish we had done when we come to die.—That work for God is its own wages. —That it is folly for a man to do that which he must certainly undo again by repentance, or be undone to all eternity. Such as these were the principles he would have Christians to govern themselves by.

[Contrasting the superior principles under which Christians act with those which influence others, he writes;—A man may be strong to do much, and suffer much, from external weights, pulling and drawing, that is, from motives from without; to please men, or to gain applause; but that is another thing from what is done by an inward principle; grace in the heart, the love of God shed abroad there, the love of Christ constraining; as the bias in the bowl, the spring in a watch.[r]

Illustrating the future blessedness of Christians by comparison, he remarked;—Eternal life is the life of heaven: this and spiritual life are for substance the same; they differ in degree only. Life spiritual, the life of grace, is life eternal, the life of glory, begun; and life eternal, the life of glory, is life spiritual, the life of grace perfected.[s] They differ as the child's life and the man's life, 1 Corinthians xiii. 11, 12. As the morning-sun from the noon-sun, Proverbs iv. 18. As the spring from the summer; the budding-rose from the blown rose.[t]]

Speaking of the causes of atheism, he had this observation;—That a head full of vain and unprofitable notions, meeting with a heart full of pride and self-conceitedness, dispose a man directly to be an atheist.

A gentlewoman, that upon some unkindness between her and her husband, was parted from him, and lived separately near a twelvemonth, grew melancholy, and complained of sin, and the withdrawing of the light of God's countenance, and the want of assurance; he told her she must rectify what was amiss between her and her husband, and return into the way of duty, else it was in vain to expect peace. Her friends were against it; but he said, he was confident it would prove so.

[Noticing the causes of God's hiding his face from his people, he remarks;—That most commonly sin in us is the cause. Sin is a separating, darkening thing, Isaiah lix. 2. Ephesians v. 11. Particularly security: carnal confidence, Psalm xxx. 6, 7; neglect of opportunities, Solomon's Song v. 2, 3, &c.; worldly-mindedness, Isaiah lvii. 17; 1 Timothy vi. 10.; cowardice in God's cause and service, Jonah ii. 4. Yet, sometimes he adds, pure love in himself is the reason, Isaiah l. 10. He has, hereby, several holy ends in view. To convince us of our dependence upon him for all the comfort we have; to quicken our desires after him. See Matthew xv.

h P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig. MS.
i Ibid.
k Ibid.
l P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.
m Ibid.
n P. Henry. Orig. MS.
o P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig. MS.
p *Seek first the kingdom of God;* first in time; not only chiefly, but early. It is best to begin with him who is best. Caryl on Job v. 1, p. 688, fol. 1676.

q Mr. Dod would frequently say,—That was well which ended everlastingly well; and that was ill which ended everlastingly ill. Life, by Clarke, *ut supra*, p. 174. See the Life of Mrs. Margaret Corbet, *ib.* p 417.
r P. Henry. Orig. MS.
s The estate of grace, and that of glory, are like one to the other; grace being glory begun, and glory grace completed. Archbishop Leighton, on 1 Peter i. 13. Works, *ut supra*, vol. I. p. 104.
t P. Henry. Orig. MS.

22, &c. to discover to us the worth of the light of his countenance; to prevent our being puffed up, 2 Corinthians xii. to stir up our longings after heaven.[t]

With reference to the Divine Being, he sometimes observed,—That God reserves three things to himself; the revenge of injuries, Romans xii. 19. the glory of deeds, Isaiah xlii. 8. the knowledge of secrets, Deuteronomy xxix. 29.

The will of God's purpose is the rule of all his actions; the will of his precept is the rule of all our actions.

God can provide for us without us; so cannot we for ourselves without God.[u]]

[Mr. Henry] said he had observed concerning himself, that he was sometimes the worse for eating, but never for abstinence; sometimes the worse for wearing too few clothes, but never for wearing too many; sometimes the worse for speaking, but never for keeping silence.[v]

As to his letters, he was very free in writing to his friends. A good letter, he would say, may perhaps do more good than a good sermon, because the address is more particular, and that which is written remains. His language and expressions in his letters were always pious and heavenly, and seasoned with the salt of grace; and when there was occasion, he would excellently administer counsels, reproofs, or comforts, by letter. He kept no copies of his letters, and it is impossible, if we should attempt it, to retrieve them from the hands into which they were scattered. Mr. Rutherford's[w] and Mr. Allen's[x] letters, that, like some of the most excellent of Paul's Epistles, bore date out of a prison, have a mighty tincture of their peculiar prison-comforts and enlargements. We have none such to produce of Mr. Henry's, no pastoral letters, or prison letters. He was himself, in his whole conversation, *an epistle of Christ*.

But we shall only glean up some passages out of such of his letters as are in our hands, which may be affecting and edifying.

To his son, when he was abroad, for improvement at London, in the year 1685, and 1686, with the common business of his letters, which was always written with a savour of religion, he would intermix such lines as these:—We are all well here, thanks be to God, the Divine Providence watching about our tabernacle, and compassing us about *with favour, as with a shield*. Our great inquiry is, What shall we render? Alas! our renderings are nothing to our receivings; we are like the barren field, on which much cost is bestowed, but the crop is not accordingly. Our heavenly Father is *loading us with his benefits*, and we are loading him with our sins, grieving him that comforts us. And how long, how long shall it be so? Oh, that it might be otherwise! that our mercies might be as oil to the wheels, to make us so much the more active and lively in our Master's work, especially considering how it is with our fellow-servants; they empty, and we full; they *Marah*, and we *Naomi*. There may a day come when it may cost dear to be honest, but after all,—*To fear God and keep his commandments is the whole of man*. I therefore commend it to you, and you to God, who is *a shield and buckler to them that fear him*.

We are well, but in daily expectation of that which we are born, and *born again* to, and that is trouble[y] in this world, yet rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, which we are reaching after, and pressing towards, as we trust you are also. Where you are, you see more of the glittering vanities of this world in a day, than we here do in an age; and are you more and more in love with them, or dead and dying to them? I hope dead and dying to them, for they are poor things, and perish in the using; make many worse that enjoy them, but none better. What is translated, *vexation of spirit*, Ecclesiastes i. 2. may be read, feeding upon wind; compare Hosea xii. 1. And can wind satisfy? The Lord preserve and keep you from all evil; the Lord preserve and keep your soul. We both send you our love, and bless you together and apart, every day, in the name of the Lord. Amen and Amen.

Be sincere, and humble, and choice in your company, always either getting good or doing good, gathering in or laying out. Remember to *keep the heart*[z] *with all diligence* and above all keepings, for there the fountain is, and if that be well kept and clean, the streams will be accordingly.

It is some short refreshment to friends and relations, to see and hear from one another, but it passeth away, and we have here no continuing city, no abiding delights in this world; our rest remains elsewhere; those we have, lose much of their sweetness, from the thoughts of parting with them while we enjoy them, but the happiness to come is eternal; after millions of millions of ages, if we may so speak of eternity, as far from an end as the first

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t P. Henry. Orig. MS.

u P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig. MS.

v Xenocrates, holding his peace at some detractive discourse, was asked, why he spoke not?—"Because," said he, "I have sometimes repented of speaking, but never of holding my peace." Stanley's History of Philosophy, p. 222. 4to 1743.

w Mr. Rutherford died in March, 1661. See his Life in the Biog Scotic. p. 206. oct. 1796.

x See *ante*. p. 85.

y As God hath hedged up our way with strict commands, so he hath strewed it likewise with thorns of affliction. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

"A narrow way,
Scatt'red with bushy thornes, and ragged breares."
Spenser.
The Faerie Queene, Canto x. xxxv. Works. Mr. Todd's edition, v. 3. p. 127.

z A Christian may have blows upon his back, but God will keep his heart. *My son, give me thine heart*; I will keep it for thee. P. Henry. Orig MS.

moment; and the last of glory will be glory,[a] so some read Proverbs xxv. 27. Keep that in your eye, my dear child, and it will, as much as any thing, dazzle your eyes to all the fading, deceiving vanities of this lower world; and will be a quickening motive to you, to abound always in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. The Lord bless you, who blesseth indeed.

See that you walk circumspectly, not as the fools, but as the wise; many eyes are upon you, his especially, who is all eye. *Cave Deus videt. Memento hoc agere;* our blessing with 1 Chronicles xxviii. 9.

The same which is yet the prologue of yours, is of ours also. *Omnia bene, laus Deo!* but he that *girdeth on the harness, must not boast as he that puts it off.* While the world we live in is under the moon,—constant in nothing but inconstancy,—and such changes are made in other families, why should we alone promise ourselves immunity from the common lot? There would be no need of faith and patience, which are winter graces, if it should be always summer time with us. We have three unchangeables to oppose to all other mutabilities; an unchangeable covenant, an unchangeable God, and an unchangeable heaven.[b] And while these three remain the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, welcome the will of our heavenly Father in all events that may happen to us; come what will, nothing can come amiss to us.

Keep the invisible things of the other world always in your eye. He that ventures the loss of an eternal crown and kingdom, for a cup or two of puddle water, such as all terrene pleasures in comparison are, makes a bargain, which no less a space than that which is everlasting will be sufficient to bewail and repent of. How much better it is to lay up in store now *a good foundation for time to come*, and to *lay hold on eternal life!* Doing those works which we would be willing should hereafter follow us, yet still making the blessed Jesus our all in all.

The further progress you make in your studies, you will find them the easier; it is so with religion, the worst is at first. It is like the picture that frowned at first entrance, but afterwards smiles and looks pleasant.[c] They that walk in sinful ways, meet with some difficulties at first, which custom conquers, and they become as nothing. It is good accustoming ourselves to that which is good. The more we do the more we may do in religion. Your acquaintance, I doubt not, increaseth abroad, and accordingly your watch must be; for by that oftentimes, ere we are aware, we are insnared. *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise.*

The return of the spring invites our thanksgiving for the mercy of it. The birds are singing early and late, according to their capacity, the praises of their Creator; but man only, that hath most cause, finds something else to do. It is redeeming love that is the most admirable love; less than an eternity will not suffice to adore it in. *Lord, how is it? Lord, what is man?* As the streams lead to the fountain, so should all our mercies lead us to that. We both of us send you our most affectionate love and blessing. Blessing! that is, we pray and beseech the most blessed God, even *our own God*, to give you *his* blessing, for he only can command the blessing; and those whom he blesseth are blessed indeed. Let us still hear to our comfort, that you *walk in the truth*, living above the things of the world, as dead to them. The Lord in mercy fit us for his will in the next providence, public and personal, for time is always coming.

Your improvement is our joy. Be sincere and serious, clothed with humility, abounding always in the work[d] of the Lord; and when you have done all, saying, *I am an unprofitable servant.* It was the good advice of the moral philosopher, in your converse with men, Μέμνησο ἀπιστεῖν,—Distrust; but I must add, in every thing towards God, Μέμνησο πιστεύειν,—Believe; expect temptation and a snare at every turn, and walk accordingly. We have a good cause,—a vanquished enemy,—a good second,—an extraordinary pay; for he that overcomes, needs not desire to be more happy than the second and third of the Revelation speaks him to be. The God of all mercy and grace compass you about always with his *favour as with a shield.*

I would have you redeem time for hearing the word in season and out of season; your other studies will prosper never the worse, especially if you could return immediately from it to the closet again, without cooling divertisements by the way.

See your need of Christ more and more, and live upon him; no life like it, so sweet,[e] so safe. *Christus meus mihi in omnia.* We cannot be dis-

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a See Dr. Goodwin's Works, v. 5. part iii. p. 117. *ut supra.*

b So,—There are three things that are unsearchable; the nature of God, the love of Christ, and the heart of man. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

c The beginnings of a strict and serious Christianity are not without much difficulty. The *worst is the first.* Bishop Hall. Works. v. 6. p. 296. *ut supra.*—The excellent Mr. Richard Rogers, urging to a daily course of watchful piety, remarks,—The beginning is the hardest. Seven Treatises. p. 359. fol. 1604.

So Spenser in the Faerie Queene. Canto x. VI.

Each goodly thing is *hardest to begin.*

Works, *ut supra.* v. 3. p. 109.

The way to heaven is most difficult to young beginners in godliness: the image of Pallas seemed to frown as one came in at the temple door, but afterwards seemed smiling and pleasant. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

d The life of a Christian is a life of action. It is not talking that will win the crown. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

e He is sweet food, 1 Pet. ii. 3. Cant. ii. 3. He is sweet in his pardons, his promises, his ordinances, his offices, his comforts, his communion. Those who have fed upon Christ are lively in the ways of God; their appetites are dead to the world; they are solicitous to bring in others; and they are desirous after more. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

charged from the guilt of any evil we do, without his merit to satisfy; we cannot move in the performance of any good required, without his Spirit and grace to assist and enable for it; and when we have done all, that all is nothing, without his mediation and intercession to make it acceptable; so that every day, in every thing, he is *All in all.* Though you are at a distance from us now, we rejoice in the good hope we have, through grace, of meeting again in the *land of the living;* that is, on earth, if God see good; however, in heaven, which is the true land of the truly living, and is best of all. The Lord God everlasting be your *Sun* and *Shield* in all your ways. See time hasting away apace towards eternity, and the Judge even at the door, and work accordingly; wherever you are, alone or in company, be always either doing or getting good, *sowing* or *reaping.* As for me, I make no other reckoning, but that the *time of my departure is at hand;* and what trouble I may meet with before I know not; the will of the Lord be done. One of my chief cares is, that no iniquity of mine may be laid up for you; which, God grant, for his mercy's sake, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Be careful of your health. Remember the rule, —*Venienti occurrere;* but especially neglect not the main matter. The soul is the man; if that do well, all is well. *Worship God in the Spirit; rejoice in Christ Jesus,* and *have no confidence in the flesh.* God be gracious unto thee, my son; redeem time, especially for your soul. Expect trouble in this world, and prepare for it.[f] Expect happiness in the other world, and walk worthy of it, *unto all pleasing.*

A good book is a good companion at any time, but especially a good God, who is always ready to hold communion with those that desire and seek communion with him. Keep low and humble in your thoughts and opinion of yourself; but aim high[g] in your desires and expectations, even as high as the kingdom of heaven itself, and resolve to take up with nothing short of it. The Lord guide you in all your ways, and go in and out before you, and preserve you blameless to his heavenly kingdom!

Immediately after his son was ordained to the work of the ministry at London, in the year 1687, he thus wrote to him;—

Are you now a minister of Jesus Christ? Hath he counted you faithful, putting you into the ministry? Then, be faithful. Out of love to him *feed his lambs.* Make it your τὸ ἔργον, as a workman that needs not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing the word of truth.* I hope what you experienced of the presence of God with you in the solemnity, hath left upon you a truly indelible character, and such impressions, as neither time, nor any thing else, shall be able to wear out. Remember Psalm lxxi. 16.[h] It is, in the eye of sense, a bad time to set out in; but, in sowing and reaping, clouds and wind must not be heeded. The work is both comfortable and honourable, and the reward rich and sure; and, if God be pleased to give opportunity and a heart, though there may be trouble attending it, it will be easily borne. *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.* I am, and shall be, according to my duty and promise, earnest at the throne of grace, on your behalf, that the Lord will pour out upon you of his Holy Spirit, that what he calls you to, he would fit you for; especially, that he would take you off your own bottom, and lay you low in the sense of your own unworthiness, inability, and insufficiency, that you may say, with the evangelical prophet,—*Woe is me, I am undone!* And, with Jeremiah, *I am a child;* and with Paul, *I am nothing.* Where this is not, the main thing is wanting; for God *resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* Now the Lord give you that grace to be humble; and then, according to his promise, he will make you rich in every other grace.

It were easy to transcribe many more such lines as these out of his letters to his son, but these shall suffice.

We shall next gather up some passages out of his letters to his children, after they were married and gone from him.

To one of his daughters with child of her first child, he thus writes;—You have now one kind of burthen more than ever you had before to *cast upon God;* and, if you do so, *he will sustain you,* according to his promise.

And when the time of travail was near, thus;—You know whom you *have trusted,* even him who is *true* and *faithful,* and never yet did, nor ever will, *forsake* the soul that *seeks* him. Though he be almighty, and can do every thing, yet this he cannot do, *he cannot deny himself,* nor be worse than his word. But what is his word? Hath he promised

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In looking over a diary of Mr. Philip Henry, in manuscript, that was lately put into my hand, I met with this passage;—The Christian's life is in Christ, on Christ, by Christ, to Christ, for Christ, with Christ, Mr. English. See Memoirs of the Rev. Thomas English, by John Griffin, p. 167.

f Mr. Greenham said,—"He never looked for a better estate than that wherein he was, but often prepared himself for a worse." Grave Counsels and Godly Observations. Works, p. 4. *ut supra.*

g Covet grace earnestly, but beware of coveting any creature earnestly, John vi. 27. Col. iii. 2. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

"Pitch thy behaviour low, *thy projects high;*
So shalt thou humble and magnanimous be;
Sink not in spirit. Who aimeth at the sky,
Shoots higher much than he that means a tree."
The Church Porch. Herbert's Poems, *ut supra,* p. 12.

h *I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.*

that there shall be always a safe and speedy delivery? That there shall be no Jabez, no Benoni? No; but, if there be, he hath promised, it shall *work together for good;* hath promised, if he doth not save *from*, he will save *through*. If he call to go, even through the *valley of the shadow of death*, (and what less is child-bearing?) he will be with you; his *rod* and his *staff* shall comfort you; and that is well. Therefore, your faith must be in those things as the promise is, either so, or so, and which way soever it be; *God is good, and doth good.* Therefore, my dear daughter, *lift up the hands that hang down;* cast your burthen upon him; trust also in him, and let your thoughts be established. We are mindful of you in our daily prayers; but you have a better Intercessor than we, who is heard *always*.

To another of them, in the same circumstances, he thus writes;—Your last letter speaks you in a good frame, which rejoiced my heart, that you were *fixed, fixed, waiting upon God;* that your faith was uppermost, above your fears; that you could say,—*Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let him do with me as seemeth good in his eyes!* We are never fitter for a mercy, nor is it more likely to be a mercy indeed, than when it is so with us.[i] Now the Lord keep it always in the imagination of the thoughts of your heart. And, he concludes;—Forget not 1 Timothy ii. last verse.[k]

When one of his daughters was safely delivered, in a letter to another of them that was drawing near to that needful hour, he observed, that, when David said, Psalm cxvi. 12.—*What shall I render?* He presently adds, verse 13,—*I will call upon the name of the Lord.*—As if, saith he, calling upon the name of the Lord for mercy for you, were one way of rendering unto the Lord, for the great benefit done to your sister.

On occasion of affliction in their families by the sickness or death of children, or otherwise, he always wrote some word in season.

In the furnace again, saith he, but a good Friend sits by; and it is only to take away more of the dross. If less fire would do, we should not have it so much, and so often. Oh, for faith to trust the Refiner, and to refer all to his will and wisdom, and to wait the issue;—for, I have been young, and now am old, but I never yet saw it *in vain to seek God*, and *to hope in him*.

At another time he thus writes;—Tough and knotty blocks must have more and more wedges; our heavenly Father, when he judgeth, will overcome. We hear of the death of dear S. T. and chide ourselves for being so often pleased with his little pretty fashions, lest we offended therein, by being too much so. No rival must sit with him in his throne, who deserves all our love and joy, and hath too little of it.

At another time, upon the death of another little one;—The dear little one, saith he, made but a short passage through this to another world, where it is to be for ever a living member of the great body, whereof Jesus Christ is the ever-living Head; but for which hope, there were cause for sorrow indeed. If he that gives takes, and it is but his own, why should we say, *What dost thou?*

At another time, upon the like occasion;—Our *quiver* of children's children is not so *full*, but God can soon empty it. Oh, for grace, grace, at such a time, which will do that that nature cannot! *The God of all grace supply your need*, and ours, *according to his riches in glory!* The Lord is still training you up in his good school; and though no affliction for the present be *joyous*, but *grievous*, nevertheless, *afterwards*, it yields well. Your work is, in every thing, to bring your will to the will of God.

To one of his daughters, concerning her little ones, he thus writes;—They are but bubbles.[l] We have many warnings to sit loose. The less we rely upon them in our joys and hopes, the more likely to have them continued to us. Our God is a jealous God; nor will he suffer the creature to usurp his throne in our affections.

Upon the death of a little child but a few days old, he thus writes;—The tidings of the death of your little one were afflicting to us, but the *clay* must not say to the *potter, What dost thou?* If he that took be the same that gave, and what he gave and took was his own, by our own consent, it becomes us to say, *Blessed be the name of the Lord.* I hope you have been learning to acknowledge God in all events, and to take all as from his hand, who hath given us to *know*,—I say, to *know*, for Paul saith so,—that all

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i Mark it, while you live, we are never nearer a mercy than when we can most freely resign up ourselves to the will of God, and say,—*Lord, here am I, do with me as seemeth good in thy sight!* But you will say,—'If my heart be dead to it, what good will do me?'

I answer, most good of all. Thus: the goodness of any mercy is in the enjoyment of the God of the mercy; the Giver, more than the gift; in heaven, God is instead of all to glorified saints; and it is their happiness. Now the more our affections are mortified to the thing itself, the more quick and keen they will be towards God; and, if so, the better. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

k *Notwithstanding, she shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety.*

l "Like to the falling of a star,
Or as the flights of eagles are;
Or like the fresh spring's gaudy hue;
Or silver drops of morning dew;
Or like the wind that chafes the flood;
Or *bubbles* which on water stood:
Even such is man, whose borrowed light
Is strait called in, and paid to-night.
The wind blows out; the *bubble* dies;
The spring entomb'd in autumn lies;
The dew dries up; the star is shot;
The flight is past, and man forgot."

Poems, Elegies, Paradoxes, and Sonnets, by Henry King, Bishop of Chichester, p. 139. 12mo. 1657. See Bishop Taylor's Works, vol. 4. p. 335. *ut supra.*

things *do* work together,—not only shall, but *do,—for our good*, that we may be more and more *partakers of his holiness*. He can make the two left as comfortable to you as all the three, as all your five could have been. However, if all the cisterns were drawn dry, while you have your *fountain*[m] to go to, you are well. You may also, by faith, look forward, and say, It was a covenant-child, and, through mercy, we shall see it again in a better world.

Upon the sickness of a dear child, he thus writes to the parent;—You and we are taught to say, *It is the Lord.* Upon his will must we wait; and to it must we submit in every thing; not upon *constraint*, but of *choice;* not only because he is the *Potter*, and we the *clay*, and, therefore, in a way of sovereignty he may do what he pleaseth with us and ours, but because he is our Father, and will do nothing but what shall be for *good* to us. The more you can be satisfied in this, and the more willing to resign, the more likely to have. *Be strong, therefore, in the grace which is in Christ Jesus;* it is given for such a time of need as this. I hope your fears and ours will be prevented, and pray they may; but, thanks be to God, we know the worst of it, and that worst hath no harm in it, while the *better part* is ours, which *cannot be taken away from us.*

To one of his children in affliction he writes thus;—It is a time of trial with you, according to the will of your and our heavenly Father. Though you see not yet what he means by it, you shall see. He means you good, and not hurt; he is showing you the vanity of all things under the sun, that your happiness lies not in them, but in himself only; that they and we are passing away, withering flowers, that, therefore, we may learn to die to them, and live above them, placing our hope and happiness in better things; trusting in him alone, who is the *Rock of Ages*, who fails not, neither can fail nor will fail those that fly to him. I pray you, think not a *hard thought* of him, no not one hard thought, for he is good, and doth good in all he doth, and therefore all shall work for good. But, then, as you *are called according to his purpose*, blessed be his name for it, so you must *love him;* and love, you know, *thinks no evil*, but puts the best construction upon all that the person loved saith, or doth; and so must you, *though now, for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness.*

And, at another time;—Your *times*, and the *times* of yours, *are in the Lord's* good *hand;* whose will[n] is his wisdom. It is one thing, as we read and observed this morning, out of Ezekiel xxii. to be put into a furnace, and left there as dross, to be consumed; and another thing to be put in as gold, or silver, to be melted for use, and to have the Refiner sit by. You know whom you have believed; keep your hold of the everlasting covenant. *He is faithful that hath promised.* We pray for you; and we give thanks for you daily, for the *cup is mixed;* therefore, *trust in the Lord for ever*, and *rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, Rejoice.*

To one of his sons-in-law, that was a little engaged in building, he thus writes;—Be sure to take God along with you in this, as in all other your affairs; for, *except he build the house, they labour in vain that build it.* Count upon troublesome occurrences in it, and keep the spirit quiet within. And let not God's time nor dues be intrenched upon; and then all will be well.

It was a little before he died that he wrote thus to one of his children;—We rejoice in God's goodness to you, that your distemper hath been a rod shaken only, and not laid on. He is good, and doth good. And should not we love him, and *rest in our love* to him? He saith, he doth in his to us, and *rejoiceth over us with singing*, Zephaniah iii. 17. And have not we much more cause? What loveliness in us? What not in him? I pray, let me recommend him to your love. Love him, love him with all the powers of your soul, and out of love to please him. He is pleased with honest endeavours to please him; though, after all, in many things we come short, for we *are not under the law but under grace.*

To one of his children, recovered from sickness, he gives this hint;—Remember, that a new life must be a new life indeed. Reprieves extraordinary call for returns extraordinary.

The last journey he made to London was in August, 1690. Before he went, he sent this farewell letter to his son at Chester;—I am going forth this morning towards the great city, not knowing but it may be Mount Nebo to me. Therefore, I send you this as full of blessings as it can hold, to yourself, my daughter, your wife, all the rest of my daughters, their husbands, and all the little ones, together and severally. If I could command the blessings, I would; but I pray to him that *hath*, and *doth*, and, I trust, *will.* The Lord *bless you*, and *keep you*, and *lift up the light of his countenance upon you.* As you have *received*, and you, for your part, preached *Christ Jesus the Lord*, so *walk in him;* keeping *conscience* always *void of offence, both towards God, and towards all men.* Love your mother, and be dutiful to her; and live in love and peace among yourselves;

m A saying of my dear father in a letter to one under weakness was,—The cordial which I give and take is this,—*The blood of Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin;* blessed be God for this fountain, and that it is open. Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig MS.

You have seene the comforts of the world, you see how all cisternes fail you, goe to the fountaine. Dr. Harris. Works, p. 77. fol. 1635. See Jer. ii. 13.

n Sir Robert Harley, in "his sharpest pains, would mollifie them with this consideration—that is best which God doth. He would often say,—the will of the Lord be done, above all and in all, for that is best of all." A Sermon, at the Funeral of the Hon. Sir Robert Harley, Knt. Dec. 10, 1656, by Thos. Froysell, duod. 1658, p. 115.

and the God of love and peace, that hath been, will be, with you. Amen.

To one who desired his direction for the attaining the gift of prayer he wrote the following letter of advice:

If you would be able in words and expressions of your own, without the help of a form, to offer up prayers to God, observe these following rules of direction, in the use whereof, by God's blessing, you may, in time, attain thereunto.

1. You must be thoroughly convinced, that, where such a gift is, it is of great use to a Christian; both very comfortable, and very profitable, and therefore very desirable, and worth your serious endeavours. This must first be, or else all that follows will signify nothing. For it is as the wise man saith, Proverbs xviii. 1.—*Through desire, a man having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom;* that is, till we are brought, in some good measure, to desire the end, we shall never, in good earnest, apply ourselves to the use of means for the obtaining of it. It is a gift that fits a person to be of use to others in the duty of prayer, according as there is occasion, either in a family, or in Christian communion.[o] It is also of great advantage to ourselves. For how can any form, though never so exact, be possibly contrived so as to reach all the circumstances of my particular case? And yet it is my duty, *in every thing, to make my requests known to God.*

2. As you should be persuaded of the excellent use of it, where it is attained, so also you should believe, that, where it is not, it may be attained, and that without any great difficulty. No doubt but many are discouraged from endeavouring after it by an opinion they have that it is to no purpose: they think it a thing so far above their abilities, that they were as good sit still, and never attempt it. This is of very bad consequence, as in other matters of religion, so particularly in this; and, therefore, watch against this suggestion, and conclude, that, though it may be harder to some than to others, yet t is impossible to none. Nay, this *wisdom is easy to him that understandeth,* where means are used in he fear of God.

3. You must rightly understand and consider who t is[p] with whom you have to do in prayer, for your ncouragement to come to him, though in the midst of many infirmities and imperfections. He is your Father, your loving, tender-hearted Father, who *knows your frame, and remembers you are but dust;* who is not extreme to mark what we do amiss in manner and expression, where the heart is upright with him. You may judge a little concerning his love, by the disposition that is in you towards your children, when they come to ask things needful of you. And, believe him to be infinitely more merciful and compassionate than the most merciful and compassionate of fathers and mothers are or can be; especially remembering that *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous,* who is the great *High Priest of our profession,* and whom he *heareth always.*

4. You must pray that you may pray.[q] Beg of God, the *Father of lights,* from whom every good and perfect gift comes, to bestow this gift upon you. We read, Luke xi. 1. that one of the disciples came to Jesus Christ upon this errand; *Lord, teach us to pray!* And he had his request granted presently. Go you to him on the same errand. You may plead the relation of a child, from that scripture, Galatians iv. 6.—*And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father!* And the promise also from that scripture, Zechariah xii. 10. *I will pour upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication;* which two, relation and a promise, if they be not sufficient to encourage your faith and hope in this address, what is or can be?

5. It is good, before you address yourself to the duty, to read a portion of Holy Scripture, which will be of great use to furnish you both with matter and words for prayer, especially David's Psalms and Paul's Epistles. The Holy Spirit hath provided for us a treasury, or store-house, of what is suitable for all occasions, and where both the word and the matter are his own, and of his own framing and inditing; if affections be stirring in us accordingly, we have great reason to believe he will accept of us. In divers places he hath himself put words into our mouths for the purpose; as, Hosea xiv. 2. *Take with you words;* Matthew vi. 9. *After this manner, therefore, pray ye;* and often elsewhere.

6. There must be some acquaintance with our own hearts, with our spiritual state and condition, our wants and ways, or else no good will be done in this matter. It is sense of need, hunger, thirst, cold,

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[o] An ingenuous man would be ashamed to pretend unto any rt or faculty, wherein he is grossly ignorant: so may that man e to profess religion, who neglects to attain this gift. A Christian that cannot pray, is like an orator that cannot speak, or a raveller that cannot go. Bishop Wilkins on Prayer, p. 23. *ut supra.*

[p] By prayer we honour God in the acknowledgment of our *dependence* upon him, and in the owning of him as *all-sufficient,* able o supply *all* our needs; also an all-seeing and all-knowing God. Therefore, to restrain prayer, is to deny him that service and homage which are his due. But then prayer is an inward thing. 'Tis *heart*-work. It must be done in the spirit, Ephesians vi. 18. He regards not what words, but what desires. Desires without words are prayers; but words without desires are but babbling. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[q] Do but think how a poor condemned creature would carry it, if he might but find so much favour as to be admitted into the King's presence, to speak for himself. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

nakedness, that supplies the poor beggar at your door with pertinent expressions and arguments; he needs not the help of any friend or book to furnish him. So if we know ourselves, and feel our condition, and set God before us as our God, able and ready to help us, words will easily follow wherewith to offer up our desires to him, who understands the language even of sighs, and tears, and *groanings which cannot be uttered*, Romans viii. 26.[r]

7. It is of use in stated prayer ordinarily to observe a method, according to the several parts of prayer, which are these four:

1. Compellation, or adoration, which is the giving of due titles to God in our addresses to him, and therein ascribing to him *the glory due unto his name*. With this we are to begin our prayers, both for the working of a holy awe and dread upon our hearts towards him, on the account of his greatness and majesty; as also for the strengthening of our faith and hope in him, upon the account of his goodness and mercy.

2. Confession. Sin is to be confessed in every prayer; original sin as the root, spring-head, and fountain; and actual sin as the fruit and stream proceeding from it. Herein you must not rest in generals, as the most do, but especially when you are in secret before the Lord, you must descend to particulars, opening the whole wound, hiding nothing from him, also aggravating the fault from the circumstances of it, judging and condemning yourself for it in the sight of God. And, for your help herein, you must acquaint yourself with the divine law, the precepts and prohibitions of it, especially their extent and spiritual nature, as the rule, and then bring your own thoughts, words, and actions to it daily, to be tried by it.

3. Petition, for such good things as God hath promised, and you have need of, both concerning this life and *that which is to come*. As to the latter, you are to pray for mercy to *pardon*,[s] and *grace to help in time of need*. As to the former, for *bread to eat*, and *raiment to put on*, and a heart to be therewith contented. You are to pray for others also, the church of God, the land of your nativity, magistrates, ministers, relations, and friends, not forgetting the afflictions of the afflicted.

4. Thanksgiving,[t] which should have a considerable share in every prayer; for our duty is, *in every thing to give thanks* for mercies received, public and personal, which is *the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us*.

This rule of method is not so necessary to be observed in prayer, as in no case to be varied from; but it is certainly very useful and expedient, and a great help to young beginners in that duty.

8. My advice is, that you would delay no longer, but forthwith apply yourself, in the strength of Jesus Christ, to this sweet and excellent way of praying; and, I dare say, in a short time, you will find, through the aids and supplies of divine grace, what is at first hard and difficult, will, by degrees, be easy and delightful. The promise[u] is, that, *to him that hath*, i. e. *that hath*, and useth what he hath, more shall be given. Though you cannot do what you would, yet fail not to do what you can, wherein the Lord will accept of you, according to his everlasting covenant in Christ Jesus, for *we are not under the law, but under grace*.

CHAPTER XI.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF SOME OF HIS FRIENDS, ESPECIALLY HIS BRETHREN IN THE MINISTRY, THAT DIED BEFORE HIM.

We think ourselves obliged to add to this account out of his own papers, partly as an evidence of the great esteem he had of the gifts and graces of others, to whom he delighted to do honour, (an instance of that humility which he was in all respects a great example of,) and partly that we may preserve the remembrance of some in that country, whose names ought not to be buried in oblivion. It is part of that honour which we owe to *them that fear the Lord:* to mention them with respect when they are dead and gone, that we may contribute something to the fulfilling of the promise,—That the righteous, and especially they who *turn many to righteousness, shall be had in everlasting remembrance*. While their glorified souls shine as *the stars in the firmament of our Father*, it is fit that their embalmed memories should, in these lower regions, go forth *as a lamp that burneth*. The Jewish Rabbins read Proverbs x. 7. as a precept,—*Let the memory of the just be blessed*. We will take them in the order wherein we find them in his Diary, according to the time of their death, premising only this note of his, occasioned by a particular instance,—Such a day I read the Life of old Mr. Bruen,[a] of Stapleford, in which I met with some things that shame me, some things that confirm me, and some things that quicken me. Blessed be God for that cloud of witnesses we are compassed about with.

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r Prayers not felt by us, are seldom heard by God. P. Henry. Com. P. Book. Orig. MS.

s Pardon of sin is set forth in Scripture by various expressions. Covering, concealing, as the nakedness and blemishes of the body by a garment, Ps. xxxii. 1. Prov. xxv. 2.—Easing, as from a burthen, Matt. xi. 28.—Ps. ii. 1.—Forgiving, Hebr.—lifted off,—healing as a disease, Ps. ciii. 3. Hos. xiv. 4.—*Blotting out*, as a debt, Isa. xliii. 25. Acts iii. 19.—Casting behind his back, Isa. xxxviii. 17.—Yea, into *the depths of the sea*, Mic. vii. 18, 19.—*Cleansing, as from filthiness*, Jer. xxxiii. 8. Ps. li. 2, 7, 10. Zech. xiii. 1, &c. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

t When our hearts and mouths are enlarged in praise to God, God's heart and hand will be enlarged in mercy to us. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

u Prayer is the echo of a promise. P. Henry. Orig. MS

a Duod. 1641.

[1661, January 14. At Wrexham, died my friend Captain Gerard Barber; he was a pious, prudent Christian, and had the good word of all, even the vilest.

On the 17th I went to Wrexham, where I performed the last office of my love to my dear deceased friend Captain Barber, the *saint of the Lord*, accompanying him to his grave, where he rests, as in a bed of spices, till the day of the *restitution of all things*. I hope to see him again, and so we shall *be together for ever with the Lord*.

Mr. R. W. said he could better have parted with his youngest son, than with his Captain; the week after, it pleased God, his youngest son died suddenly.[b]]

Mr. John Machin was buried at Newcastle, September 8, 1664, a worthy instrument in gospel work. Laborious, faithful, and successful above his fellows; taken away in the midst of his days. The first candle I have heard of put out by God, among the many hundreds put under a bushel by men.[c] An account of his holy, exemplary life, was printed many years after, drawn up, I think, by Mr. Newcome.[d]

Mr. Heath, late minister of [St.] Alkmond's Church, in Salop, was buried May 28, 1666. He was of Christ's College, in Cambridge, where he was much valued for his great learning, especially in the Oriental tongues,[e] in which he was one of the greatest masters of his age. He was employed to correct the Syriac and Arabic of the Polyglot Bible, which was sent down to him in sheets for that purpose, for which Bishop Walton gave him a copy. He read the liturgy till August 24, 1662, and then was silenced, because he could not come up to the imposed terms of conformity. When the Five-mile Act commenced, March 25, 1666, he removed to Wellington, and there, within a few weeks, died, and was buried. When he lay upon his death-bed, Mr. Lawrence asked him what reflections he had upon his nonconformity. Truly, said he, I would not but have done as I did for a thousand worlds. He had great confidence, that God would provide for his widow and children according to promise. The character Mr. Baxter gives of him is, that he was moderate, serious, quiet, and religious.[f]

Much about the same time, Mr. York died in Salop, a holy good man, and well approved in the ministry, who wasted his own candle in giving light to others,[g] even after he was removed out of the candlestick. Lord! Is this the meaning of Revelations xi. 12. concerning the witnesses?

Mr. Thomas Porter,[h] late minister of Whitchurch, died in Salop at a good old age, June 19, 1667. He was born in Northamptonshire, bred in Cambridge. He was settled minister of Hanmer, in Flintshire, long before the wars, by the means of Sir John Hanmer, the patron, who was a very worthy pious gentleman, and a great promoter of religion in that parish, but died in the midst of his days. Here Mr. Porter's ministry was blessed with wonderful acceptance and success, both in that and the neighbouring parishes, and a great harvest of souls was there gathered in to Christ. After the wars were over, during the heat of which he was forced to withdraw, he procured Mr. Steel for Hanmer, and he removed to Whitchurch, where he continued an instrument of much good, till the King came in, and then he gave way to Dr. Bernard, a worthy, moderate man. He preached his farewell sermon at Whitchurch, August 28, 1660, on Colossians i. 24. and spent the rest of his days in silence and affliction. He was exercised long with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain. If this be done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? His dying counsel to the Lord's people, was to stick to Christ, and not to let him go, come life, come death.

The worthy Colonel Thomas Hunt died at his house in Shrewsbury, April 12, 1669, a true Nathanael, an *Israelite indeed*, in whom was no guile. One that, like Caleb, followed the Lord fully in difficult trying times. He was a member of the Long Parliament for Shrewsbury, and very active for God in his generation, abounding in good works, and his memory is blessed. I was going to Shrewsbury upon an appointment of his, and by the way met the sad news of his death, which was sudden, but not surprising to one that was always ready. He was twice at public ordinances the day before, being Lord's day; worshipped God with his family in the evening; went to bed well as at other times; but, about two or three o'clock in the morning, waked very ill, and before five, fell asleep in the Lord. *Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth.*

[15. He was buried. Mr. Roberts preached. Text, Numbers xxiii. 10. *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.* Amen.

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b P. Henry. Orig. MS.

c See Job xviii. 6. Matt. v. 15.

d See Tong's Life of Matt. Henry, pp. 108, 273. *ut supra*. Mr. Newcome published Mr. Machin's Mem. in 1671. duod. It was reprinted by the Rev. George Burder. See also Clark's Lives of Eminent Persons, p. 81. *ut supra*.

e Especially by his fellow-collegiate, Mr. Shelton, who sent him down the Biblia Polyglotta in sheets. He was *trium linguarum peritissimus*, the best Hebrician in these parts of England. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra*.

Qu. In what capacity did Mr. Shelton act?

f Reliq. Baxter. Part iii. p. 94. *ut supra*.

g He was a burning and a shining lampe, spending himselfe like a candle, and making tapers of his owne marrow to give others light. Hieron's Works, p. 425. *ut supra*.

Another worthy drily remarks;—There are multitudes that grumble at the expense of a penny for the maintenance of those divine candles that waste themselves to give light to them. Brooks's Unsearchable Riches, p. 322. *ut supra*.

h See Reliq. Baxter, Part iii. p. 94. *ut supra*.

16. Fast kept in his house, now he is no more. The Lord fill up his place to all his relations, and to thy poor church in these parts, that hath lost a pillar.[i]]

Mr. George Mainwaring, a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, and my worthy friend, died in a good old age, March 14, 1669-70, gathered as a shock of corn in his season. He was born in Wrenbury parish, in Cheshire, supported at the University by Mr. Cotton, of Combermere,[k] where he had the reputation of a good scholar; he was brought acquainted with the ways of religion by means of Mr. Buckly, his uncle, a strict puritan. He was first chaplain to Sir Henry Delves, afterwards rector of Baddely, and chaplain to Sir Thomas Manwaring. After the wars, he was removed to Malpas, whence he was ejected upon the King's coming in. His conversation was exemplary, especially for plainness and integrity; he was eminent for expounding Scripture. While he was at Malpas, he constantly gave all the milk which his dairy yielded, on the Lord's day, to the poor.[l]

Mr. John Adams, of Northwood, was buried at Ellesmere, April 4, 1670; he was a faithful minister of the gospel.

Mr. Zechariah Thomas, my worthy friend, died of a consumption, at Nantwich, November 14, 1670, in the forty-first year of his age. He was bred up for a tradesman in Suffolk, but always addicted to his book, and was ordained a minister, after the King came in, and entertained curate at Tylstock, under Dr. Bernard; but by reason of his nonconformity, could not continue there long. On the Monday before he died, he said to those about him, that towards Wednesday he should take his leave of them, and did so. He was buried at Acton. Mr. Kirkes, Vicar of Acton, preached, and gave him a worthy character, and such as he deserved, for uprightness, humility, moderation, prayer, faithfulness in reproving, patience under affliction. And in saying he was an *Israelite indeed* without guile, he said all. The Lord make me a follower of him, and of all the rest, *who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.*

[1671, May 15. This day died Cousin John Madocks, of Llynbedith, in a good old age. I prayed with him, and about an hour or two after, he composed himself into a posture wherein, about five o'clock, he sweetly gave up the ghost, and fell asleep in Jesus. I hope heaven grows rich by it; by it, I am sure, Hanmer parish grows poor in men of piety and integrity. *Help, Lord,* Psalm xii. 1. On the 18th I accompanied him to his grave. Mr. Green preached. Text, Colossians iii. 4.[m]]

Mr. Joshua Richardson, my truly worthy friend and brother, died at Alkington in Whitchurch parish, September 1, 1671. Blessed be God for his holy life and happy death. He was several years minister of Middle, in Shropshire, and was turned out thence for nonconformity. He was a holy, loving, serious man. Dr. Fowler preached his funeral sermon at Whitchurch, on Daniel xii. 3. highly praising him, as he deserved, for wisdom, piety, and peaceableness.

Mr. Samuel Hildersham died near Birmingham, in April, 1674; the only son of Mr. Arthur Hildersham,[n] of Ashby, whose works praise him in the gates: Fellow of Emanuel College, in Cambridge; Bachelor of Divinity, 1623; settled Rector of West-Felton, in Shropshire, in the year 1628; and continued there till silenced by the Act of Uniformity. He was one of the Assembly of Divines; a father to the sons of the prophets in and about Shropshire. He was learned, loving, and charitable, an excellent preacher, an eminent expositor, and very much a gentleman. He was about fourscore years of age when he died. He ordered by his will this inscription upon his grave-stone;—Samuel Hildersham, B. D. Rector of West-Felton, in the County of Salop, 34 years, till August 24, 1662.

Mr. Richard Sadler, my worthy friend and fellow-labourer, died at Whixhall, in Prees parish, April —, 1675. He was born in Worcester; went, when young, with his father into New England; after the wars he returned into England; was ordained at Whixhall chapel, May 16, 1648, and was removed thence to Ludlow. Being turned out there upon the King's coming in, he spent the rest of his days in privacy, at Whixhall. A man of great piety and moderation.

Mr. Rowland Nevet died at his house near Oswestry, December 8, 1675, and was buried at Morton Chapel. I preached his funeral sermon at Swinny, on 2 Peter i. 14. Knowing that I must shortly put off *this my tabernacle.* Thence showing that the ministers of Christ must certainly and shortly die. He was born in Hodnet parish, *ann. Dom.* 1609, brought up at Shrewsbury School, was afterwards of Edmund Hall, in Oxford, commenced Master of Arts in the year 1634. He was episcopally ordained: and *anno* 1635, he was presented to the vicarage of Stanton, in Shropshire, where he continued many

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i P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

k See Ormerod's Hist. *ut supra.* v. 3. p. 211, 212.

l The learned historian of Cheshire, quoting this account from Calamy, insinuates that it is incorrect. He adds, however, "The question of its accuracy is only hinted at, from its being strongly opposed by local tradition." Hist. *ut supra.* v. 2. p. 340. It may be remarked, that Mr. Henry, who was a near neighbour and an intimate friend, mentions it as a *fact.*

m P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

n A divine of great worth, and of royal descent;—"Yet he was not," says Fuller, "like the proud nobles of Tecoa, who counted themselves too proud to put their hands to God's work." Worthies, Cambridgeshire, p. 158, fol. *ut supra.* Nat. Oct. 6. 1563. Ob. Mar. 4, 1631. See Clark's Lives annexed to Martyrologie, 114, *ut supra.*

years, with great success in his ministry. While he was single, he kept house, judging that more for the furtherance of his work among his people, than to table. After the war, he removed to Oswestry, where he laboured abundantly in the work of the Lord; and even after he was silenced for nonconformity, he continued among his people there to his dying day, doing what he could when he might not do what he would. He would say, he thought most of his converting work was done at Oswestry, the first seven years of his being there. He loved to preach, and to hear others preach, concerning the great things of religion, redemption, reconciliation, regeneration, &c.; for these, said he, are the main matter. When the plague was at Oswestry, he continued with his people, and preached to them, and it was an opportunity of doing much good.

His conversation from his youth was not only blameless, but holy and pious; he was exemplary for family religion, and great care and industry in the education of his children. He was looked upon as congregational in judgment and practice, and was not satisfied to join in the Common Prayer; but he was free to communicate with those that did. It was his judgment, that ministers should be ordained by ministers; and that a minister is not only a minister of the particular congregation in which he labours. He greatly bewailed the divisions of the church, and the intemperate heats of some of all persuasions. He was exceeding kind and loving to his friends; very frequent in pious ejaculations to God. Being often distempered in body, he would say, he was never better than in the pulpit, and that it was the best place he could wish to die[o] in. He often blessed God for a fit of sickness which he had, which he said he would not have been without for a world, the foundation of his comfort and hope of heaven being laid then. When he was sometimes much spent with his labours, he would appeal to God, that though he might be wearied in his service, he would never be weary of it. His dying prayer for his children, after many sweet exhortations, was, That the Mediator's blessing might be the portion of every one of them; adding, I charge you all see to it, that you meet me on the right hand of Christ at the great day. A little before he died, he had this expression, Go forth, my soul, go forth to meet thy God; adding by and by,—It is now done. *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.* One present saying to him, that he was now going to receive his reward, he replied, *It is free grace.* Mr. Henry was much importuned to print his sermon at Mr. Nevet's funeral, with some account of his life and death, which he was somewhat inclined to do, but was discouraged by the difficulties of the times, and it was never done. But some materials he had for it, out of which we have collected these hints.[p]

[1676, January 30. This day died at London suddenly, Mr. Edward West,[q] my very worthy good friend, pupil to Mr. Cole, at Christ Church, and tutor to Mr. Thomas Puleston, at St. Mary Hall. It was sabbath-day, and he had preached twice at his meeting-place. He was a person of great ability for learning, and of great prudence in conduct of affairs.[r]]

Mr. Robert Fogg, my old dear friend,[s] was buried at Acton, near Nantwich, April 21, 1676. He died in a good old age,—about eighty. He was minister of Bangor, in Flintshire, till after the King came in, and thenceforward, to his death, was a poor silent nonconformist, but of a bold and zealous spirit; giving good counsel to those about him a little before he died, he had this weighty saying, among others;—Assure yourselves, the Spirit of God will be underling to no sin.[t]

Mr. Andrew Parsons, sometime minister of Wem, died at London, October 1, 1684. He was born in Devonshire, and was minister there some years before the war; being driven thence to London, he became well known to Mr. Pym,[u] who sent him down to Wem, when that town was garrisoned for the Parliament: there he continued in the exercise of his ministry, till the year 1660. He was an active, friendly, generous man, and a moving, affecting preacher. Mr. Baxter, in his Life, Part iii. page 94, commends him for a moderate man, and speaks of his being in trouble,[v] for seditious words sworn against him, which were these. Preaching from 2 Timothy iii. 13. he said;—The devil was like a king, that courted the soul, and spoke fair till he was gotten into the throne, and then played pranks. The witnesses deposed contrary to the coherence of his discourse, that he said the king was like the devil.[w] He was tried at Shrewsbury, before my Lord Newport, Mr. Serjeant Turner, and others, May 28, 1662. It was also charged upon him, that he had said,—There was more sin committed now in England in a month, than was heretofore in seven years: and

o Dr. John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, "one of the brightest ornaments of the reformed religion," said,—It best became a Bishop to die preaching in a pulpit,—alluding to that of Vespasian, *Oportet Imperatorem stantem mori*: and thinking upon that of his Master,—Happy art thou, my servant, if when I come I find thee so doing. Clark's Marrow of Eccl. Hist. p. 700. *ut supra.*

p Appendix, No. XXVII.

q See Wood's Ath. Oxon. v. 3. p. 1059. *ut supra.*

r P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS. And see the Noncon. Mem. v. 1. p. 296. *ut supra.*

s See the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 480.

t Christ will be no underling to any base affection. Dr. Sibbs. *The bruised reed and smoking flax.* p. 121. *ut supra.*

u He died in December, 1643. See his Funeral Sermon, by S. Marshall, 4to. 1644.

v There is a full account of the transaction in the Conformist's Fourth Plea, 4to. *ut supra.* pp. 30—34.

w See Reliq. Baxter, part iii. p. 94. *ut supra.*—I heard of one that said he would swear treason against a nonconformist: and being asked, What he said, and whether ever he heard him speak? he said, No; but he heard him *whistle* treason. And being asked, How whistling could *be* treason? he said, That he whistled the

that there had been more and better preaching in England for twenty years past, than was ever since the apostles' days. He had a counsel assigned him, who pleaded that the time limited by the statute in which he was indicted, was expired. The court yielded it was so, allowing twenty-eight days to a month; but they would understand it of thirty days to a month. So he was found guilty, and fined two hundred pounds; and ordered to be imprisoned till it should be paid.

Mr. Hugh Rogers, a worthy faithful minister of Jesus Christ, turned out for nonconformity, from Newtown in Montgomeryshire, was buried at Welshpool, March 17, 1679-80. He was looked upon as congregational; but his declared judgment was,—"That ministers ought to be ordained by ministers, and to give themselves wholly to that work; and that none but ministers have authority to preach and govern in a constituted church; and that Christ's ministers are his ministers in all places; and that where the word of Christ is preached, and his sacraments administered, there is a true church." He was a man of excellent converse, and whose peculiar felicity lay in pleasant and edifying discourse.

July 2d and 3d, 1680. These two days brought tidings of the death of Mr. Haines, sometime minister of Wem, in Shropshire, and since at New Chapel, in Westminster; and of Mr. Richard Edwards, minister at Oswestry, both worthy conformists, pious, peaceable, and good men, whom I hope, through grace, to meet shortly in heaven. The Lord raise up others in their room to be and do better!

Mr. Robert Bosier,[x] my dear friend and kinsman, having just completed the twenty-third year of his age, died of a fever, September 13, 1680, at Mr. Doolittle's[y] house in Islington, whither he was gone but a few weeks before for improvement in learning; being formerly a commoner of Edmund Hall, in Oxford; and since, having spent some years in my family, and designed himself for the service of Christ, in the work of the ministry. He was a young man of pregnant parts, great industry, and exemplary seriousness and piety, and likely to be an eminent instrument of good in his day. His friends and relations had promised themselves much comfort in him, but we know who performeth the thing that is appointed for us, and *giveth not account of any of his matters.*

Mr. John Malden, my dear and worthy friend, turned out from Newport, in Shropshire, for nonconformity, died at Alkington, near Whitchurch, May 23, 1681, a man of great learning, an excellent Hebrician, and of exemplary piety, and a solid preacher; as he lived, so he died, very low in his own eyes; esteeming himself good for nothing, though really good for every thing; which was manifestly a prejudice, both to his comfort, and to his usefulness. He said, he was far from repenting his being a sufferer against conformity. The relics of so much learning, piety, and humility, I have not seen this great while laid in a grave. But blessed be God we had such a one so long.

Dr. Joshua Maddocks, a beloved physician, our very dear friend and kinsman, died of a fever at Whitchurch, in the midst of his days, July 27, 1682, a very pious man, and especially eminent for meekness; an excellent scholar, and particularly learned in the mathematics.[z] He lived much desired, and died much lamented.

Mr. Thomas Bridge, who had been rector of the higher rectory of Malpas about fifty-seven years, being aged about eighty-two years, was buried at Malpas, October 7, 1682. In his last sickness, which was long, he had appointed Mr. Green,[a] one of the curates there, to preach his funeral sermon on 1 Timothy i. 16.—*Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering;* and, to say nothing in his commendation, but to give a large account of his repentance upon his death-bed, &c. He was a taking, popular preacher, preaching often, and almost to the last. When old, he could read the smallest print without spectacles.[b]

Mr. William Cook,[c] an aged, painful, faithful minister of Jesus Christ, in Chester, finished his course with joy, July 4, 1684, in the midst of the cloudy and dark day. See Mr. Baxter's character of him in his Life, Part iii. page 98. And an honourable account given of him by Mr. Samuel Bold, of Steeple, in Dorsetshire, in a large preface to his book of Man's Great Duty.[d] He was eminent for great industry, both in public and private work; great self-denial, mortification, and contempt of the world;[e] and a strict adherence to his principles in all the turns of the times. He was first minister at Wroxal, in Warwickshire; there he published two treatises against the anabaptists. From thence he was, by the advice of the London ministers, removed to Ashby, in Leicestershire, whence he was turned out for refusing the engagement, and afterwards

same tune that a ballad was sung in, that they said had treasonable words in it. Baxter's Eng. Noncon. p. 185. *ut supra.*

x See Tong's Life of M. Henry, *ut supra*, p. 26, &c. and *ante*, p. 18.

y See *ante*, p 73.

z "The great Sir Isaac Newton's Friend." See Dr. Latham's Sermon for the Rev. D. Madock, (who was Dr. M.'s son,) *ut supra*, p. 27. The Appendix to that Discourse contains a letter from Sir Isaac Newton, superscribed, "For his honoured Friend, Joshua Madock, Doctor of Physic, at his house in Whitchurch, in Shropshire" p. 33.

a Mr. Green was buried at Malpas, Feb. 14, 1687-8. Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig. MS.

b The same is recorded of Dean Nowell. See his life by the Rev. Archdeacon Churton. p. 364.

c See Noncon. Mem. v. 1. p. 326. *ut supra;* and Dr. Calamy's Continuation, v. 2. p. 119. &c. oct. 1713.

d Duod. 1693. See the Noncon. Mem. v. 1. p. 329. *ut supra.* note.

e He is fit to preach a crucified Christ, who is himself crucified to the world. Mr. Steele. Philip Henry's MS.

settled in Chester, where he was minister of Michael's church, till he was outed by the Act of Uniformity. He was an active man for Sir George Booth, when he made that attempt to bring in the king, in 1659, for which he was brought up a prisoner to London, and continued long under confinement in Lambeth-house; and, had not the times turned, had been tried for his life. During the usurpation, his frequent prayer was;—"That God would pull down all usurped power, and restore the banished to their right." After he was silenced by the Bartholomew Act, he continued to his death in a pastoral relation to a society of many worthy eminent Christians in Chester; though during the heat of the Five-mile Act, he was forced to withdraw to Puddington in Wirral; where, as in Chester, till King Charles's Indulgence, he constantly attended on the public ministry; and he himself preached in the intervals. He would say sometimes to his friends, when he was in that retirement, that he thought "what little peace and quietness there was in this world, God's people enjoyed it in their corners." Soon after he was silenced he was committed to the common gaol of Chester, for preaching in his own house, by the mayor, at the instigation of the then Bishop Hall. He was very indefatigable in his ministerial labours, in which he never sought the assistance of any other minister; though, while he had liberty, he constantly kept a public fast in his congregation every month, as he did also a private fast in his own closet and family every week. He usually set apart one afternoon every week to visit the families of his congregation, and to catechise their children and servants, and discourse with them personally about their souls; his visits were short and edifying, (and he managed them as one that was a great husband of his time,) and he seldom, or never, parted without prayer. He was not free to join in the Common Prayer, and bore his testimony against prelacy, and the ceremonies, with something of zeal; but his great piety, integrity, mortification, and charity, recommended him to the respects even of many that differed from him.[f] If any asked his advice to any thing which might draw suffering upon them, he would be very tender, and desire them not to depend upon his judgment; but, since it was a matter of suffering, to be *fully persuaded in their own minds.* He was a great scholar, and a hard student to the last, and was far from *entangling himself in the affairs of this life, not knowing ought he had, save the bread that he did eat.* In worldly matters he was not very conversable, but in discourse of the things of God, none more free and affable, or more ready to do good. He lived and died a great example of strict and close walking with God, and a heavenly conversation; and his memory is very precious with many. He died in the seventy-third year of his age. When he lay on his death-bed, an aged friend of his, asking him if he had not comfort in reflection upon his labours in the work of God, he presently replied;—"I have nothing to boast of." He was buried in Michael's church, in Chester; and though, for some time before he died, such was the heat of the persecution, that he durst not show his face in the city, yet many considerable persons were very forward to do him honour at his death.

Mr. Jonathan Roberts, of Llvair,[g] in Denbighshire, my dear and precious friend, and a faithful minister of Christ, died at Mr. Titus Thomas's house, in West Felton, and was buried there, September 26, 1684.[h] A true Nathanael, *an Israelite indeed,* for plainness and integrity; a silent sufferer for his nonconformity, for which he quitted a good living in Denbighshire. He was a learned man, a Master of Arts of Oxford; he died with comfort in his nonconformity, and with confidence of a return of mercy in God's due time. The summer before he died, he had been at Oxford, Cambridge, and London, where he heard and saw that which much confirmed him in his dissent.

Mr. Zechariah Cawdrey, minister of Barthomley, in Cheshire, a learned and godly divine, was buried December 24, 1684;[i] a conformist, and formerly a great sufferer for the king, but in his latter times much maligned and reproached by some people for his moderation towards dissenters, for his book of Preparation for Martyrdom, and for his zeal in keeping up the monthly lectures at Nantwich, and Tarvin. But he is gone to the world of peace and love, and everlasting praises.

Mr. Titus Thomas,[k] minister of the Independent congregation in Salop, was buried at Felton, December 10, 1686. He was a worthy good man, and not so straight-laced as some others; we were six nonconformist ministers there at the funeral, and the seventh dead in the midst of us, saying to us,—*Therefore, be ye also ready.*

Mr. John Cartwright, my worthy friend and brother, a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, was buried at Audlem, in Cheshire, February 17, 1687-8; formerly minister of West Kerby, in Wirral; afterwards chaplain to the pious Lady Wilbraham, at Woodhey.[l]

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f Bishop Walton would speak civilly to Mr. Cook, but told him, he must conform, or he could not help him. The Conformist's Fourth Plea, *ut supra,* p. 109.

g Llanvaier or Llanfair. See Dr. Richards's Welsh Noncon. Mem. p. 356.

h His brother, Timothy Roberts, a learned faithful minister of the gospel, coming from London, when the plague was raging there, was taken ill by the way, not far from Felton, and none taking him into house, he died and was buried in the highway. Philip Henry's Diary, *in loc.* from Mr. Matthew Henry's transcript. See the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 354.

i See the History of Cheshire, v. 3. p. 163. *ut supra.*

k See the Noncon. Mem. v. 3 p. 139.

l See Ormerod's Hist. v. 3. p. 199, &c. Also at Weston, near

Mr. Edward Gregg,[m] of Chester, a worthy gentleman, and my dear friend, died July 9, 1689, of a fever, in the midst of his days. He was one that feared God above many, of a meek and quiet spirit, and eminently active and useful in his generation. The Lord is pulling our earthen props from under us, that we might lean upon, and trust in, himself alone, and might learn to *cease from man.*

Mr. Daniel Benyon, of Ash, my dear friend and kinsman, died June 25, 1690; a very serious, pious gentleman, and an *Israelite indeed;* a true lover, and ready benefactor to all good men, especially good ministers. He told me a little before he died, God had made use of me, though most unworthy, as an instrument of his conversion; for which I bless his holy name. He had a long and lingering sickness, which he bore with great patience.[n]

Mrs. Crew, of Utkinton, in Cheshire, an aged servant of the Lord, was buried July 8, 1690. She kept her integrity, and abounded in works of piety and charity, to the last, and finished well; to God be praise.

Mrs. Hunt, of Shrewsbury, the relict of Colonel Hunt, another rare pattern of zealous piety, abounding charity, and eminent usefulness in her place, finished her course October 23, 1690, after two days' sickness.

[In the house of this excellent lady, the dissenters in Shrewsbury, then of the presbyterian denomination, assembled for worship after the Indulgence in 1673. This was continued till her death, Mr. Tallents and Mr. Bryan[o] officiating as co-pastors. After Mrs. Hunt's decease, the congregation met, for one year, in Mr. Tallents's house, during which period a convenient place of worship was erected in the High-street.[p]]

The reverend, and learned, and holy Mr. Richard Baxter,[q] died at London, December 8, 1691, aged seventy-six, and one month; as much vilified[r] by some, and magnified by others, as most men that ever were. But it is a small thing to be judged of man's day. He was buried at Christ-church, London, with great honour.

Mr. John Wood, my good friend, died September 19, 1692, at Mitton, in Shropshire, aged about seventy; he was sometime Fellow of Magdalen College, in Cambridge, where he was outed for nonconformity; a learned man, but wanted the faculty of communicating; one that feared God, and walked in his integrity to the last; had no certain dwelling-place upon earth, but, I trust, hath one in heaven. *Hic tandem requiescit.*

Mr. Richard Steele, my old and dear friend and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, died at London, November 16, 1692, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. A man that had been greatly useful in his generation, both in the country, and at London.

Mr. Thomas Gilbert[s] died at Oxford, July 15, 1694, formerly minister of Edgmond, in Shropshire, aged eighty-three; a learned good man.

Luke Lloyd, Esq. of the Bryn, in Hanmer parish, my aged worthy friend, finished his course with joy, March 31, 1695, being Lord's day. He was in the eighty-seventh year of his age, and had been married almost sixty-nine years to his pious wife, of the same age, who still survives him.[t] He was the glory of our little congregation, the top branch, in all respects, of our small vine, and my friend indeed. When he made his will, under the subscription of his name he wrote Job xix. 25, 26, 27. On which text of scripture,—*I know that my Redeemer liveth*, &c.—Mr. Henry, at the request of some of his relations, preached a sermon at the licensed house near Hanmer, some time after his funeral; in which sermon he bore a very honourable testimony to that worthy gentleman, who, as he saith, went to heaven without a blot, held fast his integrity, and was lively and zealous in the Christian profession to the end of his days. He was very exemplary for his love to the ordinances of God, and his delight in attending on them, his living upon Christ for strength and righteousness, his great humility and condescending obliging carriage in all his converse. He was a man of great courage and resolution; and yet, in prayer, tender and self-abasing, to admiration, often

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Shifnall, in Shropshire, "the seat of that wise and religious lady, the Lady Wilbraham, a sincere and generous friend to all good ministers, whether conformists, or nonconformists, without any difference." Tong's Life of Matt. Henry, *ut supra*, p. 275.

1688. March. Thursday, 15. My father preached at Mr. Buttre's, and my dear went to hear him; brought me home the sad news of Mr. Cartwright's death; our neighbour; a nonconformist: the labourers are few, and God is making them fewer. Oh Lord God, cease, I beseech thee! Saturday. We were both at the funeral of Mr. Cartwright, at Audlem. There I saw many dear friends. Mr. Cole preached: gave him a high character. So he was laid in the dust. Oh that God would raise up many Elishas in the room of Elijahs. Mrs Savage's Diary. Orig. MS.

m See Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, *ut supra*, p. 99.

n Appendix, No. XXVIII.

o Palmer's Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 151. See Matt. Henry's Life of the Rev. F. Tallents, in this volume.

p MS. of the Rev. Job Orton. Authentic transcript.

q A miniature portrait in oil of this excellent man, now in the possession of Mr. Stedman, is said to have adorned Mr. Henry's study. It much resembles the best engravings of Mr. Baxter, by White.

"Our common usage or custome was ordinary in the olde age, to wit, that they had in their secret cabinets or studyes, the perfect image and purtrait of all suche as had in any sorte excelled in learning." The Forest, or Collection of Historyes, &c 1576, 4to. cited in the Bibliog. Decam. by the Rev. T. F. Dibdin, v. 1. p. 159. See Dr. Gibbon's Memoirs of Dr. Isaac Watts, pp. 163, 164.

r In the Biog. Brit. v. 2. p. 18. ed. 1780. fol. is preserved a specimen. It is an epitaph drawn up while Mr. Baxter lived, and published, that he might see how he was to be represented after his death. The author was Thomas Long, B. D. and Prebendary of St. Peter's, Exon.

s See the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 145.

t A daughter of —— Whitley, of Aston. Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

melting into tears in the confession of sin; and his charity and *moderation* were *known unto all men*. He lived and died a pattern of piety and primitive Christianity, and *still brought forth fruit in old age*; his vigour, both of body and mind, being wonderfully preserved to the last; and, by the grace of God, he finished well, and his sun set under no cloud. Such good men are intended to be to us as the star that led the wise men to Christ; and, as far as they do so, we are to follow them. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.*

Mr. Samuel Taylor, an aged minister of Jesus Christ, and my true friend and fellow-labourer, died at Wem, June 26, 1695. He was turned out from Edstaston chapel, near Wem, by the Act of Uniformity; choosing rather to beg his bread than to wrong his conscience. He continued in Wem ever since, and preached there as his strength and liberty would permit. He had his house burnt in the dreadful fire that was there in 1676, and had a child born that very night. He was a man of a very tender spirit, humble and low in his own eyes, of approved integrity, and finished well. Mr. Henry preached his funeral sermon[u] at Wem, on 2 Corinthians iv. 7.—*We have this treasure in earthen vessels.*

September 21, 1695. I heard of the death of two holy and aged Bartholomew witnesses, Mr. Richard Mayo, of London, and Mr. Henry Newcome, of Manchester. Psalm xii. 1.

Mr. Edward Lawrence, of London, my dear and worthy friend, and a faithful minister and witness of the Lord Jesus, died November, 1695, about the seventieth year of his age; born at Moston, in Shropshire, of Magdalen College, in Cambridge, turned out from Baschurch, in Shropshire, by the Act of Uniformity, in 1662, was driven from Whitchurch by the violent persecution of the Conventicle Act, in 1670, when he removed to London, and there spent the rest of his days.

He had many children, but great affliction in some of them, which gave occasion to his book, entitled, "Parents' Groans over their Wicked Children."[v] It is a very high, but just, character, which Mr. Vincent,[w] hath given of him in his sermon[x] at his funeral; of which, let me take leave to add some few instances that occur to us, which may be instructive, besides those which we have already mentioned occasionally. At his meals, he would often speak of "using God's creatures as his witnesses that he is good;" and we cannot conceive how much good our God doth every moment. An expression of his great regard to justice, was that common caution he gave his children;—"Tremble to borrow twopence;" and, of his meekness and tenderness, this;—"Make no man angry nor sad." He often said,—"I adore the wisdom of God, that hath not seen meet to trust me with riches." When he saw little children playing in the streets, he would often lift up his heart in an ejaculatory prayer to God for them, calling them "the seed of the next generation." When his friend chose to ride the back way into town, he pleasantly checked him, telling him, that his heart had been often refreshed, when he had looked out at the window, and "seen a good man go along the streets."[y] He used to say, that Cromwell did more real prejudice to religion by his hypocrisy, than King Charles the Second did, that never pretended to it. As, also, that he "feared the sins of the land more than the French."[z]

A friend of his, in the country, writing to him not long before he died, desired his thoughts concerning the differences among the London dissenters, to which he returned this answer;—"I can say little concerning our divisions; which, when some men's judgments and tempers are healed, will be also healed. But when will that be? They that have most holiness are most peaceable, and have most comfort."

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u Vide Eighteen Sermons by Mr. Henry, *ut supra*. Sermon XV. and the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 146.

1695. June 28. Friday. My dear [husband] was at Broad Oak. My dear father was gone to the funeral of a reverend aged minister, a nonconformist, Mr. Taylor, of Wem, who preached at the last fast, the 19th inst. Now, before the 29th, laid in the dust. God is making breaches on us, taking off old and young, that might (we should think) be serviceable in his church. But I would, with silence, adore his wisdom. His work shall go on in the world, notwithstanding the opposition of men and devils. Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig. MS.

Mr. Taylor "was a clean, nice, little, slender man." Hist. of Wem, p. 213. *ut supra*.

v Duod. 1681.

w See the Noncon. Mem. v. 1. p. 304. *ut supra*.

x 4to. 1696. At the end are given extracts from two letters, containing some interesting particulars respecting him. Mr. Matthew Henry writing to Mr. Tallents, Feb. 3, 1695-6, thus notices the production. "I could wish Mr. Vincent had drawn Mr. Lawrence's effigies in some proportion to the two letters, he might at least have let us know what countryman he was, and the day and year of his death. Surely so exemplary a life shall not be suffered to pass so." Orig. MS. See the Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 139.

y "Ipse aspectus boni viri delectat." Seneca. The very looks of a good man delight one. Brooks's Crown and Glory of Christianity, p. 618. 4to. 1662.

z It was said of Cardinal Mazarine, that he would change his countenance whenever he heard Oliver Cromwell named; so that it passed into a proverb in France, that he was not so much afraid of the Devil as of Oliver Cromwell. Welwood, p. 109. ed. 1700.

Over Mr. Henry's grave, in Whitchurch church, is a marble monument, with this inscription :—

M. S.

PHILIPPUS HENRY, de Broad Oak, in Comitatu Flint, A. M.
Sacri Minister Evangelii; Pastor olim Worthenburiensis;
In Aulâ Regiâ natus piis et honestis Parentibus;
Scholæ Westmonasteriensis, indèq; Ædis Christi Oxon.
Alumnus Regius:
Vir priscâ Pietate et verè Christianâ,
Judicio subacto et limato,
Memoriâ præstanti, magno et fœcundo Ingenio,
Eruditione perpolitâ, summo Animi Candore, Morum Venustate
Imprimis Spectabilis, et in exemplum natus:
Cui Sacra semper sua Fides aliorumque Fama:
Divini Numinis Cultor assiduus;
Divini Verbi Interpres exquisitissimus,
Aliorum Affectus movere non minùs pollens,
Quàm suis moderari:
Conscionando pariter ac Vivendo palàm exhibens
Christi Legem et Exemplar Christum:
Prudens peritusque rerum; Lenis, Pacificus, Hospitalis,
Ad Pietatis omnia Charitatisque officia usque paratus;
Suis Jucundus; Omnibus Humanus;
Continuis Evangelii Laboribus succumbens Corpus,
Nec tantæ jam par ampliùs Animæ,
In dormifbrium hîc juxtà positum demisit,
Jun. 24°. Anno Dom. M.DC.XCVI. Ætatis LXV.

Viro opt. multùmque desiderato
mœrens posuit Gener ejus J. T. M. D.*

* The following words were afterwards substituted :

Posuit hoc marmor in veris lachrymis
Katharina conjux viduata.

[The following translation is from a copy preserved by the family; and was most likely written by the author of the epitaph, Dr. Tylston :—

To the sacred memory
Of Philip Henry, of Broad Oak,
In the County of Flint;
Master of Arts, and Minister of
The Holy Gospel;
Some time Pastor of Worthenbury;
Born in the Royal Palace, of good
And honest Parents;
Of Westminster School, and chosen
Thence a King's Scholar
Of Christ's College, Oxford;
A man, early remarkable,
And born to be an example
Of truly apostolic and primitive piety,
A solid and well-polished judgment,
Excellent memory, and fruitful invention,
Most fine learning, candid temper,
And graceful behaviour,
Who always kept his own, and the
Reputation of others, inviolable;
A diligent worshipper of the Divine Majesty;
An exquisite interpreter
Of the Word of God,
And no less happy in moving the affections
Of others, than in tempering his own;
Who, both in preaching and living,
Openly set forth Jesus Christ,
And his Law, as a Pattern;
A prudent manager of his affairs,
Mild, peaceable, and hospitable;
To offices of piety and charity, ever ready;
Was pleasant to his friends,
And courteous to all;—
His body, wore out
With ministerial labours,
And so no longer a match
For so great a soul,
He dismissed to the adjacent repository,
June 24, 1696. Aged 65.

To the memory of this best
of men, his sorrowful son-in-law
erected this monument,
John Tylston, M. D.*

It appears from Mr. Matthew Henry's diary, that the mural tablet was subsequently obnoxious :—

"1704-5. I had a letter from Mr. Travers of Lichfield, that the chancellor there designed to attempt the demolishing of my father's monument."[a]

And afterwards, he writes :—

"1712, March 22. Wrote to Cos. Eddow, to return him thanks for his care this week of the remains of my dear father and mother in Whitchurch church, where they are laying the foundation of a new one, and have unworthily invaded my right there."[b]

"When, by a good man's grave I muse alone,
Methinks an angel sits upon the stone;
Like those of old, on that thrice-hallow'd night,
Who sate and watch'd in raiment heav'nly-bright;
And, with a voice inspiring joy not fear,
Says, pointing upward,—That *he is not here;*
That *he is risen.*"[c]]

a Orig MS.
b Ibid.
c Human Life; a Poem; by Sam. Rogers, p. 65. Mr. Rogers is descended from Mr. Henry, being the great grandson of his second daughter, Eleanor, Mrs. Radford.

* From Mrs. Brett's hand-writing.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT BROAD OAK,

JUNE 28, 1696,

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF

THE REV. PHILIP HENRY, M. A.

WHO FELL ASLEEP IN THE LORD, JUNE 24, 1696, IN THE 65TH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

BY HIS SON,

THE REV. MATTHEW HENRY, V. D. M.

HEBREWS xi. 4. LATTER PART.

And by it he being dead yet speaketh.

DEAD and yet speaketh, speaketh and yet dead! Is not this a paradox? We always took the grave for a land of silence; and they that are gone down to the congregations of the dead, are said to dwell in silence; *the dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence,* Psalm cxv. 17. And if praising God be silenced in the grave, every thing else should. It is fit there should be silence,—for there is no knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave where we are going, Ecclesiastes ix. 10. And yet my text tells you of one being dead, and yet he speaketh. If you ask how can this be? The answer is ready in the text; faith, which makes other paradoxes plain and easy, makes this so; for by it, *by faith, he being dead yet speaketh.* Faith is a quickening grace, a speaking grace. Faith calls things that are not, as though they were, by fastening upon the word of the eternal God, which doth so. Romans iv. 17. The person spoken of is he who stands here in the *imprimis* of the Old-Testament worthies, that did and got such great things by faith: the first of God's witnesses called to appear to testify the excellency of the grace of faith. He was, for aught we know, the first man that died, the first that trod that darksome valley, the first begotten to the dead as Christ, the first begotten from the dead.[a] He died a martyr. So early did martyrdom come into the world: the first that died died for his religion. That is, the man of whom it is here said,—that, *by faith he being dead yet speaketh.* That we may give the text its full extent of usefulness,—Let us apply it to Abel himself; to all the saints; to the martyrs; and, especially, to faithful ministers; and, particularly, to him, whom the Lord hath taken from our head this day.

1. Let us apply it to Abel himself; *he being dead yet speaketh.* The margin reads it, *he being dead* is yet spoken of; and then it is but a particular application of that to him, which is said, in general, of all the Old-Testament saints,—that by faith they *obtained a good report.* Dead men used to be forgotten, and being out of sight are out of mind, Psal. xxxi. 12. but faith reasons from this in death. Abel, though long since dead, yet is spoken of. Our Lord Jesus spoke of him when he dated the great era of martyrdom from the blood of righteous Abel. Matt. xxiii. 35. And it was no small honour to be spoken of by him who was the fountain of honour, to whom all judgment is committed, and from whom the decisive sentence will be received. He is yet spoken of by the universal church; for wherever this scripture is read, there shall this be told for a memorial of Abel, that, by faith, he offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain; and for it, indeed, lost his life, but by it obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts. Thus is the name of Abel made known and perpetuated as the

[a] The first who went to the grave, went to heaven. God would not let the devil have the first fruits. Those were to be God's. P. Henry. from Matthew Henry's MS.

days of heaven.—*Being dead he yet speaketh.* So we read, and so the generality of interpreters take it; he speaketh against his brother Cain: so some would make it parallel with that, Genesis iv. 10. *The voice of thy brother's blood cries.* The cry of blood, innocent and righteous blood, is very loud, it reaches the ears of that God to whom vengeance belongeth, to whom the life and death of his saints is precious, and who will not suffer a drop of their blood to be spilt, but upon a valuable consideration. *Being dead he yet speaketh.*—The dying words of Zechariah were, 2 Chronicles xxiv. 22. *The Lord look down upon it and require it;*—and the cry of the souls under the altar was, Revelations vi. 10. *How long, O Lord, holy and true.* Thus he yet speaketh. The cry of blood is a continual cry, and will not cease till the Lord cometh to make inquisition for it at the great day, and to complete the recompence for the controversy of Sion. Abel's blood yet crieth against all that have gone in the way of Cain, as persecutors. Abel, as the foreman of that great inquest of suffering saints, speaks to you all, to convict the bloody generation that have eaten God's people as they eat bread. Or, he speaketh *to us.* There are many excellent lessons that are taught us by the life and death of Abel. He speaketh for our instruction and consolation. Scripture stories speak a great deal, and particularly this concerning Abel, who, being dead in the beginning of the world, yet speaketh, *for our learning, upon whom the ends of the world are come,* 1 Corinthians x. 14.—*that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope,* Romans xv. 4.

2. Apply it to other martyrs, who being dead for the testimony of Jesus Christ, and for their constant adherence to the word of his patience, do yet speak for the comfort and encouragement of those that follow after them, in that narrow, afflictive way, which tends to life. What is here said of Abel, who led the van, may be said of all the rest, even of those that bring up the rear in that noble army of martyrs, who, *being dead, yet speak;*—speak to us, who are exhorted to follow them, and take them for our example. The martyrs of Jesus speak to us that the truths of God are precious and valuable things, and worth suffering for; and that there is a reality in future unseen things; for the prospect of them hath administered solid comfort to them when they have been *pressed above measure.* They tell us that Christ is a good Master, and his cause a good cause; and that, as *affliction* for Christ hath *abounded, consolation* from him *hath much more abounded.* The gospel of Christ being thus handed down to us, *sealed with the blood of the martyrs,* hath been, upon that account, so much the more cheerfully embraced. How many were *baptized for the dead,* 1 Corinthians xv. 29. that is, took upon them the profession of the Christian faith for the sake of the dead martyrs,[b] and upon the inducement of their patience and constancy in suffering for the truth. If there be no resurrection from the dead, nor a future state, that argument, which hath been cogent with so many, falls to the ground, and deceives them. This is the sense that a late learned interpreter gives of that difficult scripture. It were easy to give instances out of church history of those that were converted to the faith of Christ by the death of the martyrs; and the things which happened to them, though hard things, fell out to the furtherance of the gospel. Hence the *blood of the martyrs* became the *seed of the church;* and they *overcame the old serpent* by *not loving their lives unto the death, in defence of the word of their testimony. Being dead,* they *speak* to others, to expect sufferings, and yet not to fear them; to count upon them; to count them but *light,* and *for a moment.* For our own parts, we *have not* yet *resisted unto blood;* but, if we should live to see such a day, when he could not buy the truth at any cheaper rate, than the laying down of that, for which a man would part with skin for skin, that is, his life; if it ever should come to this dilemma, that we must either die for Christ, or deny him, (as who knows what event may be in the womb of time?—*let not him that girdeth on the harness boast as he that puts it off,*) then let us hear what the martyrs, *being dead, yet speak,* and take encouragement from them to choose affliction rather than iniquity; the greatest sufferings, rather than the least sin; for *this* yet speaks, and it is a *faithful saying,—If we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with him,* 2 Timothy ii. 11, 12. And, though we be losers *for* Christ, we shall not, we cannot, be losers *by* him in the end. Cruel persecutors sometimes, for politic ends, even then, when they thirst after the blood of the saints, think it enough to silence them, and not kill them. It was the course Julian,[c] the Apostate, took for the extirpating of Christianity: and the martyrs that were put to death in Queen Mary's days, in England, were forbid to speak to the people when they died. Nothing tormented the world more than their witness-speaking. But, let them do their worst, they may kill, but they cannot silence them; they may stop their breath, but they cannot stop their mouths; for, *being dead,* they *yet speak* to the confusion of their adversaries.

3. Apply it to *all saints;—Being dead,* they *yet speak.* The death of the saints is a very usual and common dispensation of Providence;—*The godly man ceaseth, the faithful fail, and the merciful are taken away.* Such providences as these have a loud voice, which crieth in the city to the survivors. The death of the saints speaketh the evil of sin, the remainder of which is in the best. It is owing to

[b] See the works of the learned Joshua Bingham, vol. i. p. 478. fol. 1726.

[c] A Roman emperor, born November 6, A. D. 331. Ob. 363. Mr. Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary. v. 19. p. 181, &c.

that they die; for *the body is dead because of sin.* It speaks the vanity of life, and the delights and enjoyments of it; for, if the favourites of heaven are dying daily, and going out of the world, it is a sign the things of the world are not the best things, else those whom God loves best would not be taken soonest from them. It speaks, that all things come alike to all, and that *one event happeneth to the righteous and the wicked*, so that none knows love or hatred by all that is before him in this world. But he that would know it must look before him into the other world. For, it is true of mankind abstractedly, from the destruction of saints and sinners, *one dies in his full strength, and another in the bitterness of his soul.* It speaks to us, that,—*whatsoever our hand findeth to do*, we should be doing it *with all our might;* and to *work the work of him that sent us while it is day*, because *the night cometh wherein no man can work.* Being dead, they speak to us what a cordial an interest in Christ is in a dying hour; and, therefore, death being found by them to be not the king of terrors, but one of the best friends they had next to Jesus Christ; the period of all their misery, and their passage to eternal glory; we cannot but wish to *die the death of the righteous, and to have our last end* (or, as some read it, "our future state") *like his.* And what greater inducement can there be than this, to live the life of the righteous, and to have our present state and way like his? If the saints die, then there is no discharge in that war; and it is not the stroke, but the *sting*, of death, from which righteousness delivers. And if, sometimes, they have *bands in their death*, they speak to us to prepare for the like; for, if this be done to the *green tree*, what may the *dry* expect? Lay your ears, this day, to the coffins and graves of departed saints, who, though they do not pray for us, yet preach to us, in the words of Christ, Matthew xxiv. 44.—*Be ye, therefore, also ready.* They are gone, and we are going; their glass is run out, and ours is running; and, therefore, it concerns us to be always on our watch, with *our loins girt, and our lamps burning;* that, if at *midnight the cry should be made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him*,—we may not have oil to buy when we should burn it; nor, with Saul, be hid among the stuff of this world, when we are sent for to enter upon the kingdom.

4. Let me apply it to the faithful ministers that have spoken unto us the word of God. They are God's spokesmen in the world; the *watchmen set upon your walls*, which are not to keep silence. But *we have this treasure in earthen vessels*, which are soon broken. What becomes of the treasure then? Why, the treasure is God's, and shall not be lost; the word shall be spoken though the minister be silent in the dust, for it endures for ever. Nay, *out of the eater comes forth meat;* for ministers, being dead, yet speak. Particularly, let me apply it to your minister, (or, rather, Christ's, for you,) whom God hath now, by a sad and sudden stroke, removed from you, after he hath long been speaking to you the word of God. You see, I hasten to what I principally intended, and you will not wonder why my thoughts, at this time, could not fasten upon any other subject, for, I am sure, yours cannot; and, to have spoken of any thing else to-day, would be a jar in the harmony of sorrow, wherein you and I are concerned. I confess, it may seem incongruous, that I, who stood in so near a relationship to him, should stand here to speak of him; and, truly, if his worth and honour were a matter of doubtful disputation, and were only to be found by secret search, it would seem so to me too. Were I to seek for his glory, it would look too much like seeking my own. But the matter is not so; we need not dig for it. He was one that had a *good report of all men*, yea, and of the truth itself; and, therefore, none can blame me, if I also bear record, since all of you, in this assembly, can bear witness that my record is true. Why should not I cast my mite into a common treasury? Nay, the general duty required in the fifth commandment, I think, obligeth me to take this opportunity of doing him honour at his death. I am sure I have as much reason for it, if I might speak the deep impressions of my own soul, as ever any son had. Those that have any sense of justice and gratitude, cannot but honour and respect a *father* that has been the instrument of their *being;* especially, if a kind and loving one;—cannot but respect a *tutor*, that has been the instrument of their learning; especially, if a skilful and faithful one;—cannot but respect a *minister* that hath been a spiritual father, that hath been the instrument of their regeneration; especially, if continuing a tender and faithful overseer. Now, if any one of these three relations challenge such a profound regard, what may justly be expected when these meet in one and the same person? Surely, I ought to reckon such a one worthy of double, nay, treble honour. The French have a proverb to this purpose, which I have many a time thought of with application to him;—"To father, teacher, and God All-sufficient, none can render equivalent." But, I must remember, I am preaching, not *before* you, but *to* you, and must therefore speak that which is profitable for you, and may be profitable to you, rather than that which may give vent to my own passions. Many a time he hath spoken to you in this place the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,—and now he is gone. The doleful accent of your sorrow is,—"Alas, we shall never hear good Mr. Henry more!" Yea, I am here to tell you, (Is it not good news to you?) that you may hear him again. He is dead, but not speechless; *being dead he yet speaketh.* What would you give to hear him preaching in this pulpit this Lord's

day, whom you had here but the *last*, teaching you to *add to faith virtue*, (which was his last subject, 2 Peter i. 5.) and to hear again those gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth? Why, my brethren, *by faith*, you may yet hear him. Faith, acting upon what you have heard from him, and upon the word of God compared with the providence of the day; for, by it, *he, being dead*, that is, notwithstanding his death; nay, he *being dead*, that is, by his death, *yet speaketh*. Now, to take in what I design, the products of a few broken thoughts, I shall observe both the readings of the text, which were hinted at before, with application to him.

I. He, *being dead*, is yet *spoken of*.

II. He, *being dead, yet speaketh*.

You see, the preacher of so many sermons among you must be the subject of this, so that it is to *him* that your serious attention is required.

I. He, *being dead*, is *yet spoken of*.

1. I shall hint at this as his *honour*;—that, as many eyes were fastened upon him while he lived, *(a city upon a hill cannot be hid,)* so many tongues do and will speak of him in this country, and neighbourhood, now he is gone, and shall be seen no more. All that knew him, knew very well, that he was as far from seeking, or affecting, honour among men, as any could be. Humility was his master-grace, and that which he was most eminent for. Honour is like the shadow, that, as it flies from those that follow it,—follows those that fly from it. And, in the honour which his friends and neighbours have done him at his death, and the honourable testimonies which are given to him by all sorts of persons, I cannot but read the fulfilling of that scripture,—*Before honour is humility*.[d] A great name, like the names of the great ones of the earth, is usually very much withered by death. We read of those that bear their shame when they go down into the pit, though they were the terror of the mighty in the *land of the living*. Ezekiel xxxii. 25. But a good name is out of the reach of death; is not buried in the grave, but rather grows up from it. It is not for nothing that Solomon hath joined, that, —*A good name is better than precious ointment*,—*with the day of one's death*, which, upon that account, among many others, *is better than the day of one's birth*,—it completeth the character of those that finish well. The sun may be a great part of the day under a cloud, and yet is the sun still; and, perhaps, his reflected rays in the evening, after he is set, may be more illustrious than any of all the day before. It is so with humble souls, whom honour shall uphold. God hath said it, and no word of his shall fall to the ground,—*Them that honour me I will honour*. And who can conceive what *shall be done to the man* whom the King of kings *delighteth to honour?* Commonly, that man is *Mordecai*, who least expects; not a *Haman*, who thinks, whom should it be but himself. Those that honour God by self-denial, and self-abasement, God will honour with that good report which *the elders obtained*, though the other promises they received not. Hebrews xi. 39.

2. I shall speak more largely to it *as your duty*. If God will honour those that honour him, it becomes us to be *workers together with him*, and to concur with his design herein. It is made one part of the character of the citizens of Zion, that he honoureth them that fear the Lord, not only while they live, but when they die. Why did the King of Babylon pay the respect of an embassy to Hezekiah upon the occasion of *his recovery*, and the wonder done in the land thereupon, but, perhaps, because the sun, which was the god the Babylonians worshipped, did him the honour to go back so many degrees for a sign to him? And shall not we, then, honour those whom our God honours; and confess them before men, whom Christ will confess before angels? That promise to the righteous,—That they *shall be had in everlasting remembrance*, doubtless speaks duty to those that survive. Take it as speaking your duty to the memory of your translated minister; and not to him *only*, (though to him especially, I shall take leave, at this time, to apply it,) but to all other faithful ministers and Christians whom we have known, that are gone before to glory; though not all of one mind, or all of your mind in little matters. Let the memories of all those be precious, whether conformists or nonconformists, in whom you have seen any thing of Christ;[e] for, in every nation, *he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him*, and should be so of us. While your faithful minister was with you, you know what a monitor he was to you, and a remembrancer at the throne of grace for you. I refer to that expression, Isaiah lxii. 6, 7. He did not, he could not, forget you, any more than a woman can forget her sucking child. It will therefore be ungrateful if you forget him now he is gone. There are four things which I would particularly recommend to you as profitable to be often spoken of concerning him:—

(1.) Speak of his preaching. What that was is manifest before God and your own consciences. Though he was often driven into corners, he never sought them, nor needed them. Now he is gone, you should *give the more earnest heed to the things you have heard* from him, and not *let them slip*. Speak often of the excellent subjects he preached upon; the choice and method, of which he had a peculiar facility in above any minister I ever knew. Very successful he was in seeking to find out *acceptable words*, which I hope have been as goads to

[d] An humble spirit inclines and enables a person to have low and mean thoughts of himself, and to carry it accordingly, both towards God and man. Mr. Henry. Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig. MS.

[e] See Mr. Baxter's Penitent's Confession, pp. 87, 88. 4to. 1691.

quicken you, and are, and will be, *as nails fastened in a sure place,* (not to be dropt, or drawn out,) by the hand of him who is *the great Master of assemblies.* Of all the subjects he has preached on in these last days of liberty, there was none that affected and filled him more than that concerning Christ, what he is made of God to true believers, in fourteen personal relations, and forty real benefits.[f] His heart was upon these things, and in them he was in his element; and those that heard him could not but *take knowledge of him that he had been with Jesus.* I know many of you wish that they were printed. Do you then print them upon the tables of your hearts, and that will do you more good than if they were *graven with an iron pen, and laid in the rock for ever.* Many other profitable subjects ıe handled; and you cannot forget how he endearoured, in the order of them, as well as in the nanner of his treating them, and his repetition- :ermons at the close of them, that, after his decease, ·ou *might have these things always in remembrance,*

Pcter i. 15. Let us not, therefore, *receive the rrace of God,* therein, *in vain.* Now, one good way o preserve in your memory what you have heard, s to be frequently *speaking* of it. Let it be known ›y your pious and good discourse, that you were he hearers of such a minister, whose sayings you ave treasured up; and bring out of that treasury, *hings new and old.* My advice, therefore, to you ;,—that you make much of what you have heard, ecause you are never likely to have more. Speak f his expositions on the Scripture, which were so ery pleasant and edifying, and are easiest remem- ered, because they attend the text so closely. peak of what you have heard from him in the ca- ·chizing of children. The strongest of you may ave occasion for the *milk* that was provided for *ibes.* Many of you have a good deal of his preach- ıg in writing, that may be of great use to you in ·membering what you have heard, and received, ıd learned; and, if it be preserved, and used as it ight be, it may be written *for the generations to ·me, that the people that may be created may,* for it, *raise the Lord.*

(2.) Speak of his pattern. It hath been said by any, that his life was a continued sermon; and, ıre, it was both the explication, confirmation, and ›plication, of his doctrine. Christianity, in the ›wer and reality of it, was exemplified in his whole ›nversation. Those that conversed with him, (and was no hard matter to do that, so easy he was of cess,) could not but see the Spirit and grace of God in him, which, wherever it is, *like the ointment of the right hand, betrayeth itself.* It may not be so proper in *me* to instance, in *every* particular, what you have both heard and seen from him, and those did not contradict each other. How exemplary was he in his *family!* An instance, I think, scarcely to be paralleled for constancy in all the parts of family worship. He was one who made that, as all other branches of religion, *his business;* and he was *not slothful* in it. How exemplary in his carriage to all men; and how much under the influence of that *meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price!* Many of you have had occasion, one time or other, for personal converse with him, and cannot but have observed many things well worth your imitation. He being dead, let these things be spoken of. Let him be mentioned among the cloud of witnesses with which you are encompassed about, that you may be quickened, and directed to *run with patience the race which is set before you.* This is the best way to remember our guides; to follow their faith, *considering the end of their conversation,*—that is, how well they finished, Hebrews xiii. 17. When he hath sometime been solicited to have his picture drawn, he would say,—"No; a minister's best picture is drawn in the hearts of his people." So a minister's best monument is in the hearts of his people. There let each of us erect a monument of love for him, and it will furnish us, —as the historian[g] saith the monument of David did those who opened it long after,—with a rich and valuable treasure, if we follow him *as he followed Christ.*

(3.) Speak of his profitableness, through grace, to you.

In other things, he used to say,—Let every man speak as he finds. When your deceased minister is to be spoken of, speak as you have found him; that is, as God hath made him to you; for that saying, he so often used, is applicable to himself;—"Every creature is that to us, and no more, that God makes it to be." So he was but the *earthen vessel,* the *excellency of the power* was *God's.* By the grace of God he was to you what he was;[h] and, as such, we should speak of him. To speak feelingly, and experimentally, is the surest way to preserve and promote the advantage we have had by him. There are some, nay, many, of you, to whom he was a spiritual father. Though you have many instructors in Christ, yet have you not had many fathers, for he hath *begotten you again through the gospel.* 1 Corinthians iv. 15. And it follows, verse 16. *Wherefore,*

See the Memoirs of Mrs. Savage, p. 59. *ut supra.*

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. Thus expressed in a rse by my dear father, who is now in that full enjoyment:-

Blest Guest, dwell thou awhile on earth with me;
And let me dwell for ever, in heav'n, with Thee!

Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig MS.

g Josephus. See the Antiquities of the Jews, book vii. c. 15. 3.

h See 1 Cor. xv. 10. It was the rule of Bonaventure, whom the Romanists honour for a saint,—*Hoc piarum mentium est, &c.* This is the part of pious souls, to ascribe nothing to themselves, all to the grace of God. Bishop Hall. Works, *ut supra,* v. 5. p. 303.

be ye followers of me. Not that he was the author and giver of your grace. No; it is the Spirit's prerogative to be so. What are Paul and Apollos, *but ministers by whom ye believed?* 1 Corinthians iii. 5. But, though he was only the instrument of your grace, the shaft in the hand of the Lord, the minister by whom ye believed, yet God having honoured him, in making him so, you ought to honour him, by a grateful remembrance, as your spiritual father. And, if he could witness the bowels of a father, surely you ought to witness the respect of children towards him, and his memory. Remember how your hearts were opened by the key of David in his hand; how the strong holds were brought down by the spiritual weapons of his warfare; and the powers of darkness vanquished and subdued *by the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.* Speak of the way he took in dealing with souls, not to terrify with thunder-claps from Mount Sinai, but to allure, and invite, in a *still* and *small voice* from Mount Sion; reckoning that the most kindly work upon the soul, which is the product of gospel grace, and redeeming love, revealed there. Others of you have found him a spiritual nurse, and a very skilful, careful, tender one, who had learned of the great Shepherd of the sheep to *gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom.* He hath fed you with *milk,* and with *strong meat* too, as you were able to bear it. Others of you have found him a faithful reprover, when at any time you had done amiss. Though it was much his temper not to make himself uneasy to any body, yet that did not hinder him from the discharge of his duty, in the rebukes of love, when there was occasion. You know how well he had learned to restore with the spirit of meekness, Galatians vi. 1.—to set in joint again,—so he used to observe the import of the word to be; alluding to surgeons setting broken bones, in which you have heard him say,—"There is need of the eagle's eye, the lion's heart, and the lady's hand;" that is, prudence, courage, and tenderness; and his practice was according to this spiritual operation. Others of you have found him a comforter in your sorrows, and a helper of your joys. Perhaps you have come to him labouring under doubts and fears; cast down, and disquieted; walking in darkness, and having no light; and have found his tongue so much *the tongue of the learned,* speaking a word in season to weary souls, that you have gone from him comforted and refreshed, and *your countenance hath been no more sad.* Well; he, being dead, let him, for this, be spoken of; and your former comforts, thus brought to remembrance, may be present cordials and support to you.[i]

(4.) Speak of the providences of God that were concerning him. If it be our duty to look not at our own things only, but at the things of others also, then, of theirs especially, who are *set over us in the Lord.* He often spoke of the comfortable events of Providence concerning him, with a thankful sense of the goodness of God to him in them, that others might join with him in his thanksgiving. You would do well to remember them now he is gone, that your praises may be continued, and even pass unmixed with your sorrows. Let it be still spoken of; for, it hath been many a time that his habitation was blessed. The adversary might suggest, with the same envious grudging as he did of *holy Job;*—Hast thou not made an hedge about him, *and about his house, and about all that he hath round about?* Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and *his substance is increased in the land.* It was often observed, that all that he had, and all that he put his hand to, remarkably prospered, and that *the dew lay all night upon his branch.* Let this, now he is dead, be spoken of as the fulfilling of that scripture, Matthew vi. 33.—*Seek ye first the kingdom of God,* and the *righteousness* thereof, and then *all these things shall be added unto you,*—as far as is for God's glory, and your own real good. *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is,* and many times the performance of it,—if not in kind, yet in kindness. It was a maxim, which, among many that I remember, (and I fear many more that I have forgot,) as the result of his comparing his own experience with the word of God, that,—"When we are doing God's work, we may let him alone to do ours; and, while we mind our duty, we may comfortably trust God with our safety and success." I confess, as to this, God dealt better with him than with many others of his faithful ministers. By this consideration alone no certain rules can be taken by which to judge of the divine favours;[k] but when, at any time, God is pleased to crown remarkable piety[l] with remarkable prosperity in the world, we are not to pass by such

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i "I am the more large and pressing upon this head, because I have been sometimes greatly delighted (I hope edified, in hearing the old disciples of Jesus Christ tell of their ministers that were dead before I was born, to hear them tell of their texts, and sermons, and sayings, the good counsels they gave them, the instructions and comforts they ministered unto them, and what they got while they sat under their shadow; (for commonly, the first impressions of the word in young converts, are the most lasting;) and of what use it hath been to them many a time since, one such spiritual receipt, with a *probatum est* annexed to it by one that speaks from experience, may do more good than twenty in a book. Thus you may be instrumental to comfort others, and to edify them with the same thing by which you yourselves have been comforted and edified under his ministry. And you will never have the less oil for ministering to others; nay, to him that hath, and thus useth what he hath, and what he hath had, more shall be given;—he that trades with five talents, makes them ten." Mrs. Savage's Transcript of the Sermon. Orig. MS.

k The hypocrite builds his hope upon such a thing as outward prosperity. I prosper in this world, therefore I shall be happy in the other world; as if a beggar should say,—Because such an one gave me a farthing, he will make me his heir. See Eccl. ix. 1. P. Henry, from Matthew Henry's MS.

l For my own part, I can truly say, whenever I have set myself to form an idea of the primitive apostolic spirit, from what has appeared of it in the good men of our own age, none ever more

a dispensation of providence unregarded. *Whoso is wise, and observeth these things*, may, from thence, *understand the loving-kindness of the Lord;* and infer, —*Behold, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.* Surely, in him, that scripture was remarkably fulfilled, Psalm xxxvii. 11.—*The meek shall inherit the earth.* His prosperity was likewise an instance of that truth;—That, doing good with an estate, is the only way to have the comfort of it; and there is that *scattereth* in bounty and usefulness, and yet *increaseth.* That good bond which we have under the hand and seal of the God of truth, still remains in full force, power, and virtue, and is not subject to any defeazance;—That *he who giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that which is given he will pay him again* with interest and rich advantage.[m] This scripture you have seen fulfilled in him, as in many others, who have dispersed and given to the *poor.* What good he did with that which the Lord had given him, notwithstanding his great humility in it, and care that his *left hand* should not know what his *right hand* did, you all know something of. I appeal to the poor concerning it, whose loins have blessed him, and whose hearts have blessed God for him. In this, according to the rule he was wont to give to others, he made his own hands his executors. And, when you speak of the providence of God concerning him, do not forget that measure of health and strength, that God graciously gave him, to go through such a great deal of work, at home and abroad, on sabbath days and week days, with so much vigour and constancy, to the sixty-fifth year of his age; and, even then, his *bow abiding in strength*, and renewed in his hands. This was *the Lord's doing*, and much beyond what all expected who knew the weakness of his body, and the liveliness of his spirit, at his first setting out. Nor will you forget the last scene of providence concerning him, (you all think now you will never forget it,)—his removal from you. Among other things, let him be spoken of as one whom *his Lord, when he came, found so doing;* who took a very short step from the pulpit to the throne; and was ravished out of your embraces, or ever you were aware. Speak of this to one another, not merely as a matter of talk, but as the *Lord's controversy* with you, which you are concerned to hear, and lay to heart. I doubt not, but you are all sensible now of the loss you sustain, as Israel was when Aaron was dead. Let not the sense wear off, but continue,—that the remaining impressions of this providence, and your frequent tender expressions, may appear to be deep and sincere; and that it may be said of you, as the Jews said of Christ,—*Behold, how he loved him!* You know how free he was of his pains among you; and his ministry was not chargeable to any, but all the pay he desired for his labours was, your spiritual profit by them. In gratitude for which you are the more obliged to remember, and continue the payment, now he is gone; keeping in remembrance the truths he taught you, and the copies he set you, that, as was said in the morning,[n] that,—"while religion lives among you, the name of that blessed man, that is now in glory, may flourish with you."[o] And, when I say, you must speak of your minister, who is dead, your doing it to *his* honour is the least that I intended. No; let him be spoken of,—

1. To the *glory of God*, whose instrument he was. I bespeak not a grain of that incense to be burned to his honour, which ought to be offered at God's altar. God forbid I should; for what is Paul, and what is Apollos?—(earthen vessels, while they live, and broken pitchers when they are dead;)—but what God is pleased to make them unto us. Do as Paul did, 1 Thessalonians i. 2. 3. that thanked his God upon every remembrance of his friends. Let not your praise terminate in your minister, but pass through him to the Lord Christ, in whose right hand he was so long a bright and shining star.

2. With application to yourselves, and for your own spiritual benefit and edification. For in all our discourse, we must study that by which we may edify one another. So speak of your minister as to increase one another's good affections, and confirm each other's resolutions for Christ and holiness; and thus you may find *meat* in the *eater*, and *sweetness* in the *strong;* the life of gospel grace by the death of gospel ministers.

I have but one hint more under this head, and it is this particular remark;—Since he came into the country, now almost forty-three years ago, you know that two places have had the benefit of his labours. The former enjoyed it about eight or nine years; and what a burning and shining light he was in that parish, we, that are young, have heard with our ears, and those of you, that are elder, do know, and remember. And yet, though he was so eminent an instrument of good there, within a few years after

dily occurred to my thoughts, than *Mr. Philip Henry* and William Bagshawe. Mr. Tong's Prefatory Letter to the e and Character of Mr. William Bagshawe, by J. Ashe, 12mo. 4.

I verily believe we all fare the better, even in this world, for dear father's charity to the poor. It appears by some of his ers of accounts, that, out of his small income, he gave, in money, en pounds in one year, besides all that were relieved at his r;—he *devised liberal things.* Mrs. Savage. Diary, 1732, Sept. 18. s. MS.

By the Rev. James Owen.

o "Thus I have suggested to you some things which you should be frequently speaking of him, and, I am conscious to myself, that, could he have foreseen I should have spoken thus much in his praise, such was his great humility and self-denial, that he would rather have prohibited it than have taken any pleasure in it, but I thought myself obliged to it; and, I remember, that, when our Lord Jesus said to those that he cured,—*See thou tell no man*, and they went and *told every body*, they were not reproved for it; because as Christ, in his humility, gave them that order, so it was in their *good will* that they went counter to it." Mrs. Savage's Transcript of the Sermon. Orig. MS.

his removal from thence, he was, in a manner, forgotten. Those few that were his *joy and crown* were removed by death, and, as he himself observed, a new generation soon sprung up which *knew not Joseph*. You have had the happiness of his ministry above three times as long; but, if it be so soon forgotten here, and the fruits so soon withered, I doubt not you will have a sad account to give another day. But I have a great deal of reason to hope better things of you, my brethren, and you will never forget what you went into the *wilderness to see*.

II. He, *being dead, yet speaketh;* that is, as some understand it, he yet *liveth*, and they think there is no more than that in it; that Abel, not only by faith, obtained witness that he was righteous, but by it, also, *being dead, obtained eternal life*. Cain killed his body, but he yet speaketh the praise of the Lord in heaven, with the blessed angels, those glorious *morning stars*, which *sang together*. We are told, Revelations vi. 9, 10. what was not only said, but *cried*, with a loud voice, by the saints under the altar, the souls which are slain; by which it is witnessed, that they live. Your deceased minister, being dead, yet liveth. If it be asked of *your fathers, where are they?* Blessed be God, we know where they are,—not lost, but gone before to glory. They are where the great Shepherd of the sheep is. They are no longer in our assemblies; they are where they longed to be, and where we, through grace, hope to be with them shortly. For, he that was our father's God, *is not the God of the dead, but the living;* and they live to him, and with him. But I shall take it more particularly. There are some that he, being dead, speaketh *against*. There are others, nay, all, that he, being dead, yet speaketh *to*. Surely, you will hearken; if not to *Moses and the prophets*, yet, when one speaketh to you *from the dead*.

1. Is it not a surprise to you, to hear that there are some that he, being dead, yet speaketh *against?* I will tell you, in short;—all those which sat under his ministry in their impenitency and unbelief; all who attended on his plain and powerful preaching, from time to time, with unconverted, unsanctified hearts; all the hypocrites of this congregation, who keep up secret haunts of sin under the cloak of a visible profession, and deny the power of godliness while they pride themselves in the form of it;[p] that have a name to live while they are dead in trespasses and sins; (and we have reason to fear there are such with you, even with you; it would be the happiest society on this side heaven if there were not;) *these* are they, he, being dead, yet *speaketh against*. Fair warning he gave, from the word of God, to every careless soul, and followed it with *precept upon precept, line upon line*. How often hath he called upon you to leave your sins, and turn to God, and close with Christ; and how did he order his cause before you, and choose out words to reason with you![q] He hath set before you *life and death; good and evil; the blessing and the curse*. And many a time hath he told you, if you did not return and repent, after such warning, he had *delivered his soul, and your blood would be upon your own head*. And, perhaps, your hearts have, with Felix, trembled under such reasonings as these. Whether you think it, or not, your minister is gone to give up his account, not only of himself,—that, no doubt, he hath done with joy,—but of you too. It is said, Luke xiv. 21.—that servant, who had been sent to invite to the marriage, came and showed his Lord how he had sped in his invitation. Your minister was wont to ask you, sometimes, when he was sincerely putting to you the grand case of your eternal salvation, and earnestly pressing you to consent to the gospel offer,—what answer he should return to him that sent him? What answer you gave him you best know; but he is now gone to give up his accounts, and to make his presentments at the great tribunal, before which we must all appear shortly. Nay, let me tell you, further, he will not only be a witness against you, but he will be an assistant with Christ in the judgment, to assent and subscribe to the sentence, which, at that day, will be passed upon you; for thus the saints will judge the world, 1 Corinthians vi. 2. especially ministers Luke xxii. 30. Though, while he was with you, he loved you well, and earnestly desired your welfare yet, if you perish in impenitency, the day is coming

p "We must not be hypocrites, nor do any thing we do in hypocrisy. Even *disciples* must beware of this. It is the cry of the world against us, that we are such, but let us *approve ourselves to God*, that we may *not*, and then no matter. We must not have a *form of godliness without the power*. Nor a *name to live* without being *alive indeed*. We must not do what we do to be *seen of men*. We must not draw near to God *with our mouths, when our hearts are far from him*. We must not *make clean the outside, and be careless what is within*. We must not look one way, and row another,* as Jehu did. Suspect this evil; search for it; watch and pray against it. Contrary to all this is sincerity and truth. They differ like shadow and substance,—like the *picture* of a man, and a *man*." P. Henry. Orig. MS.

q Consider, he would say, the *worth* of the *soul*, Matt. xvi. 26.—its original, Gen. ii. 7.—its operations, its duration, immortal;—its nature, spiritual. Consider how God the Father hath loved it in giving Christ for it! How Jesus Christ loved it, in coming to die! How Satan knows the worth of it, else he would never seek as he doth, to destroy it; alluding to Gen. xiv. 21. Consider the wants of the soul, blind, naked;—its dangers, likely to be lost its capacity, capable of heaven. Beware, then, of those things that hurt and wound the soul, Proverbs viii. 36. Ply those things that will make for its good, Prov. xi. 27. means of grace, opportunities. Be acquainted with it; discourse much with thy soul 'Soul, whither art thou and I going?'—Seek to advance it; put to a good service. Seek to adorn it; get on the best robe, righteousness, grace, Prov. xix. 8. Seek to enrich it; other riches are not soul-riches, Luke xii. Seek to save it, Phil. ii. 12, 13. Provide for it; wife, children, the body, can say, 'Here is for me;' but the poor soul hath nothing. It is the first thing thought of in conversion, Acts xvi. 30. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

* "All Christians looke to heaven: indeed, wee are all for the earth; this taketh up our thoughts and affections, that wee are like boat-men, that looke one way, but row another." Bayne's Christian Letters, p. 272. *ut supra*.

when he will be content to see you perish, and will join with glorified saints in applauding the sentence. *Hallelujah; just and righteous are thy judgments!* Revelations xix. 12. The dresser of the vineyard, that prayed so hard for another year's reprieve, and promised to take so much pains with the barren fig-tree, resolves, if he succeeds not, to say not another word in its favour. *If it bear fruit, well;* Luke xiii. 9. *but, if not, then, after that, thou shalt cut it down;* so shall its doom be, the dresser himself hath decided it. When the day of patience is over, the *wrath of the Lamb* will break forth, without remedy, against his enemies, who would not have him *to reign over them.* I speak this, if it may be, at last, to alarm and awaken some sleeping souls, and to revive what you have heard from him, that it may not be brought in evidence against you at the great day; and, if the death of your minister may but awaken some impressions upon you, so as to prevail with you to leave your sins, it will be, to such, a happy providence; and may Samson's story be again verified, that he slew more of the enemies of the Lord at his death than in his life.

2. There are those, and, indeed, all of us, that, being dead, he *yet speaketh to.* Your minister is, indeed, fallen, but the *word of the Lord endureth for ever:* even *that word, which, by the gospel, is preached unto you,* 1 Peter i. 25. Nay, not only notwithstanding his death, but *by* his death, he speaketh; he hath but exchanged this pulpit for another; the grave is now his pulpit; and methinks, I still hear him speak to us that are of his family and relations, —to you, that are of his congregation.—*Being dead, he yet speaketh.* These are words of truth. Let us *rightly divide them* among ourselves, and each of us take a portion.

He, being dead, yet speaks to us that are his relations, and are, of all others, most nearly concerned in the stroke. Something he saith to us to comfort us under our present sorrow;—*Weep not for me!* Our loss is his great and everlasting gain. I shall especially observe what he saith to us by way of *direction* and *exhortation.* We are all here, by the providence of God, before the Lord this day,—his children, and their yoke-fellows,—ten of us. We have observed, that, since we have been severally disposed of in the world into families of our own, we were never altogether here till yesterday; and a sad meeting it was; but, by this sadness, the heart will be made better, if we can but hear what our dear father, being dead, yet *speaketh* to *us.* Heard, therefore, because the word of the day sounds best in its day, and, perhaps, we may be never all together again, (for death seldom strikes single in a family,) give me leave to preach a little to myself, and my dear relations, in your hearing, that if, at any time, we, or any of us, walk unworthy of the relation we stand in to such a father, this place may be a witness *against us,* that it was not for want of knowing our duty. While he was yet with us, he was often speaking for us at the throne of grace,[r] *making mention of us,* and others, *always in his prayers.* And this is now not the least part of our grief,—that we shall have such an intercessor to pray for us no more. Yea, Lord, help us to pray so much the more, and so much the better, for ourselves! But, in reference to this part of our loss, I am comforted, not only with this thought,—that our Lord Jesus Christ *ever liveth to make intercession for us,* and he is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,* —but with this thought also, that the prayers of our dear father, who is gone, are upon the file, in heaven,[s] and, through the mediation of the great Redeemer, will receive an answer of peace. When the *prayers of David, the son of Jesse,* were *ended,* yet he and his views were remembered, and his seed had the benefit of them, Psalm cxxxii. 1, 2. *The vision,* in answer to prayer, *is for an appointed time,* and at *the end it shall speak, and not lie.* Though we cannot say, now he is gone to heaven, he there prays for us.—No; Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledgeth us not, yet we have reason to think, the many prayers of faith he put up for us while he was in the world of prayer, may be heard for us now he is gone, and we and ours may fare the better for them long after; and shall do so, if we do not, by our unworthy walking, forfeit our interest in them. And, shall the children of so many prayers miscarry? While he was yet with us, he did also speak to us, both by word and writing, as a faithful monitor, comforter, and instructor; but, we shall, in that way, hear from him no more. However, there are three things which he, being dead, yet speaketh to us:

(1.) He speaks to us to be followers of him in the way of holiness, because we *must* follow him to the grave, and that we *may* follow him to heaven. It is of great use to us, both for our direction and encouragement in our Christian course, to set before us the good example of the saints; for, blessed be God, as there is an old way, which wicked men have trodden, Job xxii. 15. so there is an old way, which godly men have trodden, Jeremiah vi. 16. But the nearer these examples are to us, the greater influence they should have upon us. If a *vain con-*

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[r] When I hear repeated prayers on my poor daughter's account, [du]r her confinement,] I cannot but think of what my dear father [o]: wrote to me when I was in her circumstances;—We are [o]y mindful of you, so that sometimes we are ready to fear our [h]eenly Father should be displeased, as if we doubted his [a]ence and acceptance,—as *we* should, if so frequently minded [o]e same business;—but, we well know, his ways and thoughts are as far above ours as the heaven is high above the earth. Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS.

[s] "Children of many prayers, which are all upon *the file in heaven.*" Mr. Case's Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Scott, p. 68. duod. 1659. And see Oliver Heywood's Closet Prayer, p. 29. duod. 1671.

Dr. Owen, noticing Genesis iii. 15. says;—"This promise hung

versation can, by this, recommend itself to some, as being *received by tradition*, 1 Peter i. 18.—compare Jeremiah xliv. 17.—Should not a holy and heavenly conversation, transmitted to us, be, with resolution, held fast by us? Let the life of such a father, especially, seeing the *end of his conversation*, recommend religion, in the power of it, to us, and engage us in the steady practice of it. We, who had the happiness of free and frequent converse with him, could not but see a great deal that was excellent and exemplary, and which our own consciences subscribed to the goodness of. Let us, then, set ourselves, in the strength of divine grace, to transcribe it in our hearts and lives. Sure, never any one that professed religion did more recommend it to others, as lovely and amiable, than he did. We saw in him, not only the power of holiness, but the *beauty* of it. I have thought it the unhappiness of some that, otherwise, I had reason to think were good in the main, that, by the moroseness or melancholy of their temper and converse, have greatly hindered the success of the good instruction they have given to their children; and have, thereby, rendered religion a dull, melancholy thing, and thus has religion been wounded in the house of her friends. But it was the felicity of our education, that we had a father, whose spirit and converse recommended a life of serious godliness to us, as the most sweet and easy, the most cheerful and charming, life that could be; which demonstrated to us that *wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths paths of peace.* Let us not, then, be slothful, but the willing, constant followers of him, who is now, *through faith and patience, inheriting the promises.* Let us tread in the steps of his humility[t] and meekness; his love and charity; his zeal and fervency in the best things; his self-denial and contempt of the world; his usefulness and beneficence to all; that those who see us may say,—Surely, these are the children of such a father.[u] Let us be mild and gentle in all our carriage; moderate in the use of all our enjoyments. Let us love the Scripture; *continue instant in prayer;* and maintain an even, quiet composedness of spirit under the varieties of providence; for, in all these things, we know very well, he set us an excellent copy. Let us, then, be followers of him so far as he was of Christ. It was the matter, both of his rejoicing and thanksgiving, that he saw his children walking in the truth; and it was his prayer, that they might continue so to do, and that none of his might be found at the left hand of Christ at the great day. Let us, then, as ever we hope to meet him with joy in the other world, follow him with diligence now.[v] Having begun *in the spirit*, let us not *end in the flesh;* having *laid our hand to the plough*, let us not *look back*, lest our latter end be worse than our beginning.

(2.) Being dead, he speaks to us, to be loving and helpful one to another. His common and undistinguished love to us all, was such that it could never be said which of us he loved best; and, it speaks to us, now he is gone, to *love one another with a pure heart fervently.* We know very well that our unity was the joy of his heart, while living; and many a time he hath, with us, blessed God for it. Let it, therefore, be the credit and honour of his family now he is gone. I find it is, I may call it, his dying prayer for us, his children, not only that we may be built up in holiness and comfort, but that we may be continued in brotherly love, and be a bundle of arrows, which cannot be broken. Now we have lost him, who was wont to pray for us, and be a common helper to us, let us pray so much the more, one for another, and be so much the more helpful one to another, especially in the things that pertain to the kingdom of heaven; and let all our bands of unity be strengthened and confirmed; and let it be our constant endeavour, each of us in our place, to be mutually serviceable to each other's comfort and welfare, and jointly serviceable to the glory of God, and to the comfort of our dear surviving parent; that the Lord of peace himself may command his blessing upon us, and our families, *even life for evermore.*

(3.) Being dead, he speaks to us,—to make death and the grave, heaven and glory, familiar to us; and, in other things, to converse much with them. This place used to be our father's house, but now the place that knew him knows him no more. The grave, the place appointed for all the living, is our father's

longest *on the file* before its accomplishment." Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, vol. v. p. 52. oct. ed.

t "A man truly humble is apprehensive of God's greatness, and his own vileness, when he appears before him, Gen. xviii. 27; Ezra ix. 6. He highly prizeth God's favour;—mercy is sweet unto him. He is easily brought to acknowledgment and remorse for sin. An humble heart is tender and melting, as Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27. He will worship God according to his own prescription, and dares not worship him after his own fancy, Col ii. 18, 23. He is much given to prayer, Ps. ix. 12; x. 17. He is often singing God's praises, 2. Sam. vii. 18. 1 Chron. xxix. 14. He desires God's glory, though with his own shame and disgrace, 2 Sam. vi. 22. John iii. 29, 30. It is not a nick-name, or a by-word, that will make him leave off his profession. He will ever rejoice in the good of others. It is nothing but pride which makes men envious, Ps. xxxiv. 2. cxix. 74. He will do all things without murmuring and reasoning, Phil. ii. 2, 3." Rev. Arthur Hildersam. Orig. MS. *Penes me.*

The reader will have no difficulty in applying the preceding sketch to Mr. Henry.

u 1731, Feb. 23. Read 1 Thess. ii. I could not but apply some passages to my dear and honoured father, verse 9, &c. I remember his labour and travel. I can witness how holily, justly, and unblamably, he behaved himself among us, charging us to *walk worthy of God, &c.* When he was forced from us to prison, as all the nonconformist ministers in that country were, at Monmouth's rebellion, his parting exhortation was that of the apostle;—*Work out your own salvation.* Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS. See *ante*, p. 8.

v If hope be right, it doth not work by pride, but by humility not by idleness, but diligence; not by loose and careless, but by close and circumspect, walking. P. Henry. From Matthew Henry's MS.

house. Let us, therefore, visit that house often in our meditations: take a walk, now and then, *into the valley of the shadow of death.* We could never say of this house, when at any time we left it, we were sure of coming to it again, but we may be certain that, sooner or later, we must go to the grave. Let us, therefore, be always ready. The nearer death approaches us, the louder are its calls to us to prepare for our change. It would help to *apply our hearts unto wisdom*, thus, to *number our days*; for if there were more of death in our thoughts, there would be more of life and liveliness in all our actions.[w] He who is removed from us, was one that was very industrious to familiarize death to himself; he frequently thought, spoke, and wrote of it, not, as many who are thus all their lives subject to bondage, with a certain fearful, but with a certain cheerful, looking for that change. Let us, in like manner, converse with it; it will come never the sooner, but it will be much the more easy, and welcome, and less formidable to us, when it doth come. Every one *in his own order*, that is, in the order appointed by him in whose hand our souls are.[x] We must shortly be gathered to our fathers, and have no reason to count upon an exemption from it. Since, as Elijah pleaded, when he so passionately desired to die, *we are not better than our fathers*, 1 Kings xix. 4. We see a generation rising up to stand in our room, as we do in the room of those that are gone before us. But it is only the body, that poor, despised, broken vessel, that is laid in the grave, the immortal soul is translated to the heavenly regions; with heaven, therefore, we should converse familiarly, and dwell more in our thoughts among those mansions of light, where not only our heavenly Father is, but, which should be some inducement to us, he also that was the father of our flesh. Many a time we have, with much delight and satisfaction, visited here at this house, and now we can visit him here no more. If we have but boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, we may visit him there, converse with that glory which he is in possession of. Let our conversation, therefore, be in heaven, not only where Christ is, but where so many of our dear relations are, with whom we have taken sweet counsel. Now here is one loadstone more in heaven to draw our hearts thitherwards. Methinks, he being dead, yet speaks to us in those words that came from heaven to John, Revelations iv. 1. *Come up hither*, —up hither in your thoughts and meditations; up with your hearts,[y] and live by faith in those serene, quiet regions above; and, blessed, blessed be God, *in our father's house are many mansions;* the place is not too strait for us; we need not scatter there as we do on earth; there is room enough for him who is gone, and all his family, him and his seed, and his seed's seed. God grant that a promise being left us of entering into his rest, none of us may seem to come short. To conclude this head;—being dead, methinks, he yet speaks to us in the language of Solomon, Proverbs xxvii. 10.—*Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not.* The God with whom we have to do, is our Friend, and was our father's Friend, Psalm xxii. 4. The God in whom our father trusted. He found him faithful, and, from his own experience, recommended him to us as a good Master,—*the God that fed him all his life long.* Let us, therefore, *avouch the Lord this day to be our God, and to walk in his laws, and to keep his statutes*, and never be prevailed with to leave him, or to turn from following him. If God loves the children for the father's sake, as he is said to do, Romans xi. 28. sure the children should love God, and serve him, for the father's sake. Our father's relation to God, we may plead with him in prayer, as 2 Chronicles xxvi. 6. and, therefore, plead it with ourselves, as a strong inducement to duty and obedience. If we are born in God's house, and are the seed of his servants, truly we should be his servants; if he be our father's God, we must exalt him. He, being dead, thus speaketh to his children, *Thine own God, and thy father's God, forsake not and forget not.*

2. He, *being dead, yet speaks to you* of this congregation. Long, and often, he hath been speaking to you in the *name of the Lord;* and an account must be shortly given for all that he hath spoken to you, or rather God by him. Above thirty years he hath been among you. Part of which time was, indeed, a *cloudy and dark day*, when such a man as he was *hid;* and yet, some of you know that even then his labours were little the less. When he durst not do what he would, he did what he could. But, blessed be God, the evening of his day was more clear and bright. His having been thirty years with you, brings to my mind a few lines which he penned on the death of a worthy minister, who had been the same number of years with his people, (Mr. Nevet, Oswestry.)[z]

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w The consideration of shortnesse of life, may be matter of consolation and comfort unto such as believe. What knowest thou, if that there is but a step between thee and heaven? Thou art here this yere; thou mayest be in heaven before the next. Thou art here this month, thou mayest be with Christ before the next. Yea, thou art here to-day; thou mayest be in blisse before to-morrow. Oh, this happy estate! How would men admire the happinesse of such a begger as were in possibility every houre to be advanced to a kingdome! The Monument, or Tombe-stone; or Sermon at the Funerall of Mrs. Elizabeth Juxon, by Stephen Denison, duod. 1620. pp. 22, 23.

x So.—all the events and occurrences of every day of our life are ordered by God,—are at his dispose, Ps. xxxi. 15. This is a great truth It was an expression oft used by my dear father; —We know in whose hands our times are. This should quiet us as to afflicting providences. Mrs. Savage. Diary. Orig. MS.

y In the ancient church, when the people began to bring their offering unto the altar, the priest was to say—Ανω τας καρδιας,— Lift up your hearts. Mede's Works, p. 293. *ut supra.*

z See *ante*, p 144.

The owner thought it much three years to come
To a *barren tree*, which hastened its sad doom.
What then may they expect, who ten times three
Had such a *dresser*, if they *barren* be?
A faithful, self-denying shepherd, who
Sought not the fleece, but flock; not yours, but you.

Thus, while he lived, he spoke to you; but, *being dead, he yet speaketh:* for, though he hath finished his testimony on earth, yet his testimony is not finished, but remains *speaking still.* When Elijah was translated, it should seem he left a *writing behind him* for a *remaining testimony*, so some understand it, 2 Chronicles xxi. 12. Five things there be which, being dead, he yet speaks to you. I shall mention them briefly, and so conclude.

1. He, being dead, yet speaks to you,—to *repent* of your sins. Especially, the sin of your *unfruitfulness* under the means of grace. It was sin that was the procuring cause of this calamity; it is that which now corrects you and reproves you; that is it which hath quenched your coal, and put out your light. If conscience be any wise awakened under this sad providence, you cannot but say,—*We are verily guilty.* Your unprofitableness and unfruitfulness, your barrenness, your barrenness; your *leanness*, your *leanness*,—though you have been fed in the fat pastures of the ordinances,—was the sin that provoked God to remove your minister from you. Turn your tears, therefore, into the right channel, and weep not for him, but for yourselves, and for your sins. Now is a time to reflect on your management and improvement of the means of grace you have had, and to be by that humbled before the Lord for your carelessness and neglect. Now you ought to remember against yourselves your vanity and hypocrisy, and how often you have come before the Lord as his people came, and sat before him as his people, and heard his words, but your hearts in the meantime have *gone after* your *covetousness.* He hath been to you as a *lovely song* of one that hath a *pleasant voice*, and can *play well on an instrument*, and, therefore, you have heard his words: but, have you done them? See Ezekiel xxxiii. 31, 32. and compare the next words, 33. When this cometh to pass, such a providence as you are now under, then shall you *know that a prophet hath been among you:* so easy is it to us to see the worth of mercies when we feel the want of them. Let this conviction take hold on your consciences now, and endeavour, henceforth, by the grace of God, to be more fruitful.

2. Being dead, he yet speaks to you,—to adorn your holy profession by a suitable conversation. I have been told he preached his farewell sermon at Worthenbury, upon that text, Philippians i. 27.—*Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ.* Will you take that scripture as his farewell to you, which, *being dead, he yet speaketh?* I doubt not but you have all a respect for his name and memory, and could not contentedly hear him reproached and evil spoken of. Then do not you reproach him by doing any thing that may give occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme the *name of Christ*, and his doctrine. If any of you leave your first love, and return, with the dog, to his vomit; if you do any ill thing at any time against the sacred laws of justice and sobriety, will it not be said, "This was one of Mr. Henry's disciples?" —And thus the just reproaches you bring upon yourselves, will unjustly fall upon him. Let the regard you have for his name be a bridle of restraint upon you. Many eyes are upon you, that watch for your halting; therefore, *see that ye walk circumspectly.*

3. Being dead, he yet speaks to you,—to hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering. Remember what you have received and heard, and hold fast. Let it never be said concerning you of this congregation, that your faith and religion were pinned upon your minister's sleeve, and that when he died, that died with him. God forbid; for we are built upon Christ, *the chief corner stone.* Ministers are the builders of the church, but not the foundation of it. Let me, therefore, exhort you all, in the words of Barnabas, that *with purpose of heart, you would cleave to the Lord*, Acts xi. 23. The shepherd is smitten, but it is only the *under*-shepherd of the sheep; the Great Shepherd is still the same, and will be with you while you are with him: to him, therefore, you must resolutely adhere, with a firm and unshaken constancy. I believe that God, who hath the residue of the Spirit, hath also such mercy in store for the congregation, that he will not leave it altogether destitute. When God hath work to do, he will never want instruments to accomplish his designs. Be not you wanting to yourselves, and the power and grace of God will not be wanting to you. Nor will the promise of the faithful witness fail,—*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*

4. Being dead, he yet speaks to you,—to prepare for death,[a] for sudden death. This is spoken plain enough if we do but consider the circumstances of his removal. For a man to be well and dead in fifteen or sixteen hours, may we not easily infer from hence, how much we are concerned to be always ready, that when our Master comes, we may chcerfully, upon the first intimation, *go forth to meet him.* We may, any of us, die as suddenly as he did, but are we prepared as he was? To him who was dying daily, it was but a short cut over a stormy sea; but if we continue unready, such a sudden death will to us have another aspect. It

[a] There is no real deliverance from death, but to be carried well through it. Dear father's frequent prayer was,—That God would go with us down to death, and up to glory. Mrs. Savage. Diary. Orig. MS.

will be like the arrest of a traitor; a hurry out of the world, like the surprise of that wretched worldling,—*Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee.* Let it, therefore, be our daily care, as we observed it was his frequent prayer, to be ready for that which will come certainly, and may come suddenly.[b]

Lastly. He being dead, yet speaks,—comfort and encouragement to those of you who belong to Christ, and are faithful to him. Is there any honey in the carcass of a lion? Any sweetness to be extracted out of so sad a providence? Yes, there is. If Christ's leaving his disciples was (though then sorrow filled their hearts) matter of rejoicing to them, John xiv. 28. why may not the removal of a faithful minister furnish us with some comfortable thoughts? He is gone before, as it were, to show you the way. His inheriting the promises is an engagement to those who (though they stay behind yet) have made those promises their *heritage for ever.* You that were his joy in this world, shall be his crown in the other. You know in his monthly lecture in this place, he was preaching over the four last things, viz. death, judgment, hell, and heaven: the three first of which he had spoken very largely and excellently to; and, in the course of his ministry, he was next to have preached concerning heaven;[c] and, it is likely, if God had continued him a while longer among you, you might have heard many good words and comfortable words from him on that subject. But, as if the great God should say,—"Come, my dear servant, you are not enough acquainted with that glory, you know but in part, and prophesy but in part; come up and see what it is; and leave your congregation to conclude what it is by the removal of one thither that was such a jewel in this lower world."—We may make some faint guesses at heaven's glory, when we consider that it is both the perfection and recompence of the holiness of the saints. That is certainly a blessed and glorious place, that is the receptacle of all those who were the blessings and glories of this earth. *Being dead, he yet speaketh to you;* that he is gone before, and is arrived, at last, into a safe and quiet harbour, and you shall not be long at sea. Though now we have parted with him in a melancholy shower of tears, yet, blessed be God, *we sorrow not as those who have no hope:* for we have *good hope through grace,* of meeting him again, and being for ever with him, and with all the saints,—and, which is best of all, *with the Lord.* Those who live up to these hopes in close walking, may live upon these hopes in comfortable walking. They who now *sow in tears* shall shortly *reap in joy;* and those who, by *patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality,* shall shortly return, as other the ransomed of the Lord, to the heavenly Sion, with *songs of praise* and triumph; and *everlasting joy* shall fill their hearts and crown their heads: they shall *obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.* With which words let all who mourn in Zion comfort themselves, and one another.[d]

b See the Fading of the Flesh, &c. by the Rev. George Swinnock, pp. 34, 36. 4to. 1662.

c See a like record in the Life and Death of the Rev. R. Bolton, p. 30 *ut supra.*

d From an authentic MS. in the possession of the Rev. T. Stedman. On comparing it with Mrs. Savage's MS. copy it appears to have had the benefit of the author's emendations; and it should seem, from their nature, for the press.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT BROAD OAK,

JUNE 4, 1707,

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF

MRS. KATHARINE HENRY,

RELICT OF MR. PHILIP HENRY,

WHO FELL ASLEEP IN THE LORD, MAY 25. 1707. IN THE 79TH YEAR OF HER AGE.

BY HER SON,

THE REV. MATTHEW HENRY, V. D. M.

PROVERBS xxxi. 28.

Her children shall arise up, and call her blessed.

THIS is part of the just debt owing to the virtuous woman, that answers the characters laid down in the foregoing verses; and part of the reward promised and secured to her by him, who, in both worlds, is, and will be, *the Rewarder of them that diligently seek and serve him.*

It is, indeed, enough to make them truly and eternally happy, that virtuous people are *blessed of God;* that the Lord Jesus is *raised up* in his gospel to *bless them,* will *arise up* at the great day to *call them blessed,—come ye blessed of my Father;* of him they are sure to be blessed. *He that sows righteousness, has that sure reward;* and *those whom he blesseth they are blessed indeed;* his pronouncing them happy makes them so. This is enough to engage us all to, and encourage us all in, the study and practice of virtue and piety, that the praise of it, whether it be *of men* or no, is *of God.* If men should be unrighteous, yet God will not, to *forget the work and labour of love;* though men should put slights, God will put honours, upon those that *fear his name.*

Yet, *ex abundanti,* over and above, this is *thrown in* as the reward of virtue, that among men also ordinarily it hath its praise; all that are wise and good, to be sure are of God's mind, and will say as he saith, and praise those whom he praiseth; and even in the consciences of others too, it is many times powerfully made manifest. *If there be any virtue,* saith the apostle, *if there be any praise;* which intimates that *virtue* is a *praise,* not only praiseworthy, and the real praise of those who wear that crown, but is attended with the praises of others who praise it, and praise God for it. What is heaven, but *holiness in honour,*—grace crowned with glory? shining in the perfection of lustre to the blessed inhabitants of the upper world; and such praise as a dark and weak capacity is able to give in this distant and imperfect state is made likewise to attend virtue, and is one of the present recompences of obedience in obedience. *In keeping of them there is this great reward.* Phil. iv. 8.

It follows here, verse 30.—*A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised;* which is, (1.) A promise to those who are virtuous, that they shall have not only the *comfort of it* in their own bosoms, living and dying, but the *credit of it* also among their relations, friends, and neighbours, of whom they shall be had in honour, both present and absent. (2.) It is a *precept* to those that are about them, that they give them the praise of it. That of Solomon the Jews read as a precept, Proverbs x. 7. *Let the memory of the just be blessed;* and, therefore, when they make mention of any eminent saint, they add, *Sit memoria ejus benedicta,* Let his memory be blessed. We call the burying of our dead friends, the *last office of our love* to them, but it is *not so,* there is a *further* office of love owing to them, a debt to their memories, which we must always be *paying,* and must not, while we live, think ourselves discharged from.

Though we must not make the praise of men our chief end, far be it from us to do so. If we seek honour from men, we implicitly slight that which comes from God, as not sufficient to reward our services, and balance our losses; yet in order and subordination to the glory of God, we must have an eye to our reputation with men. *Let your light so shine before men,* in a good conversation, which is both pleasing and guiding as the light, *that they may* not only hear your good words, but *see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,* from whom *proceeds* every grace, and *every good and perfect gift,* and who, therefore, is *the Father of* all those *lights.* Not that they may see your good works, and *glorify you;* you must expect to be abased and vilified, and not seek your own glory; but *see your good works, and glorify your Father,* and that from him all *your* glory may *result* and be *reflected.*

Matthew v. 16.

James i. 17.

We are to value things as they are rated in God's books, and there we are told that a good name is better, not only than *precious ointment,* but than *great riches,* not only than all the pleasures, but than all the profits, of this world. A good name[a] is a *name for good things with God and good people;* and this is therefore to be valued, desired, and pursued, because it is an honour to religion; gives occasion for the thanksgivings of many to God; it is an advantage to us in serving God and our generation; and when we are gone will be an encouragement to those that shall come after us, to keep close to the ways of God and godliness. And, therefore, *whatsoever things are honest and lovely, amiable and of good report,* let us *think of those things,* and abound in them.

Eccl. vii. 1.

Proverbs xxii. 1.

The praise which particularly attends the virtuous woman, is here described to come, among others, from her own children; *her children shall arise up and call her blessed.* This virtuous woman, then, is not a recluse, one shut up and cut off from the business of this life, and the affairs of a family, under pretence of devotion, and separation to God. The Church of Rome makes such only their religious, as they call them, and celebrates their sanctity, who abandon the relations they have, and abjure those they might have, as if none but they entered into religion and professed it. But the scripture canon gives other measures by which to judge of religion, and other rules by which to steer in it, than their canons do. *I will,* saith the apostle, *that they marry, bring up children, guide the house, and give no occasion to the enemy to speak reproachfully,* as they do, who, under pretence of overcoming the world, overrun it. And they that in these things faithfully serve God and their generation, not only give no occasion to the enemy to *speak reproachfully* of them, but give occasion to all to speak honourably of them; and, among the rest, *their children shall arise up and call them blessed.*

1 Timothy v. 14.

1. It is here implied, that it is a great comfort to those who are good themselves, to see *their children rising up,* risen up. Many good people are taken away, and see their children but just come into the world, putting forth like flowers, when they that should have nursed them up are removed from them, leave them in the cradle, or leave them, as we say, to the wide world; this occasions them some sad thoughts upon their death-beds, and if other difficulties be got over, yet this makes them loth to die; but in that case, it is a comfort that the fatherless, motherless children, may be, must be, left with one that will preserve them, and who has many a time remarkably owned and blessed the orphans, and proved himself the best of guardians; *he is the Helper of the fatherless* that *commit themselves to him.*

Psalm x. 14.

But if God prolong the days of his people in the land he has given them, so that they live to see their children grown up, and applying themselves to the service of God in their generation, likely to honour God in their day, as the parents did in theirs; it is very comfortable, and makes it easier to them, when they are called, to bid farewell to this world, and very comfortable to think that their children will be praising God on earth, when they are praising him in heaven. You that are parents, who see your children risen up, and bidding fair for usefulness on this earth, and happiness in a better place, bless God for it; look upon it as one of the comforts of the lengthening out of your life, that as you yourselves, through grace, grow riper for heaven, so you live to see your children, by the influence of the same grace, setting their faces thitherward. This may encourage you to say,—*Now let thy servant depart in peace.*

When godly parents are removed by death, and the place they adorned and filled up must know them no more, it is a very happy thing, and bodes well to the land, to the age, to the next age, if their children rise up in their room, a generation of humble, holy, serious Christians, followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises. It is very threatening, and an ill omen to the public, when (as Moses saith to the two tribes and a half, Numbers xxxii. 14.) a *generation of sinful men riseth up,* in the room

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[a] Be careful to walk so that you may get and keep a good name, not by unlawful means, Gen. xi. 4. Many discommend themselves to draw on others' commendation. Provide honest things, Rom. xii. 17. 2 Cor. viii. 21. Phil. iv. 8. Avoid all appearance of evil. Eccl. x. 1. 1 Thess. v. 22. Sin stains a good name,—*Judas, not Iscariot.* If you honour God, he will honour you, 1 Sam. ii. 30. Walk humbly.—This is a grace very much adorning, Prov. xviii. 12. Phil. ii. 8, 9. Be tender of the good name of others, Matt. vii. 1, 2. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

of their sinful parents, to fill up the measure of their iniquity, and *augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord.* But, on the contrary, it is comfortable to those who are concerned for the honour of Christ, and the prosperity of his church, to see a generation of godly people rising up in the room of their godly predecessors, to bear up the name of Christ in his truths, ordinances, and laws, and to be to him for a name, and a praise, and a glory, *a seed to serve him*, and the interests of his kingdom among men, which shall be *accounted to him for a generation;* when it may be said, as it is of the church, Psalm xlv. 16. *Instead of the fathers shall be the children.* It is for the honour of God's promises concerning the *seed of the upright*, and of his covenant with them; it is for the credit of good education, and an answer to many prayers, when the children of religious families are religious, when the entail is preserved, and piety becomes an *heir-loom to a house;* but if it should be interrupted or cut off in particular families, we may, with comfort, assure ourselves that the sacred line shall be as long as the utmost line of time. *Children shall rise up* to bless the Lord, if not our children; though there be a degeneracy in some families, we hope there shall be an improvement in others to balance it. So that in every age the Son of David shall not want those that will be his witnesses, though not always alike numerous, or alike conspicuous, yet *one generation shall certainly praise his works to another; children* shall be *created*, rather than fail, to *praise the Lord;* children raised up out of stones to Abraham, even out of the stones of Jerusalem, to cry *Hosanna.* The promise is sure, it is inviolable, it is what we may depend upon, that the name of Christ shall endure for ever, whether in our families or no we cannot tell, but somewhere it shall, and his throne as the days of heaven; so that as long as the world stands, there shall be a people in it, in one place or other, that shall fear God, and work righteousness, and be accepted of him. Let God alone, to secure his own interest, do his own work, and fulfil his own counsels. When the mystical body is completed then cometh the end.

Her children shall rise up. We will suppose the virtuous woman described here to have finished her course, and then *her children rise up*, i. e. stir up themselves, with so much the more vigour and zeal, to pursue the same course, and do so much the more and better service to God and their generation. *Note*, The dying of old Christians should be the quickening of young ones. When our godly parents are removed, and an end put to their usefulness, it is time for us to *rise up*, to put forth ourselves with so much the more liveliness and resolution in serving Christ and striving against sin, that we may do something towards making up the breach, and repairing the loss. When good people are removed, it is time for those that are left behind to stir up themselves, and contrive what they shall do more for God, that those that are gone may be the less missed; to apply themselves with a double diligence to all the services of religion, that though there be fewer hands, there may not be less work done. *Moses my servant is dead*, saith God. *Now therefore, Joshua, arise.* Joshua i. 2. Such and such good Christians are dead, that prayed much, and did much good, *now, therefore, let us arise*, that are left behind, and take so much the more care and pains in religion; that though there be fewer praying, teaching, giving people, yet there may be no less praying,[b] no less teaching and exhorting one another, and no less good done. Holy Job, speaking of his own afflictions, and approaching death, saith, *upright men shall be astonished at this*, Job xvii. 8. astonished to see such a useful man as Job removed in the midst of his usefulness; and many such astonishing breaches have been made upon us; astonished to see those soon removed, that could be ill spared. Sometimes the *sun goes down at noon*, and no marvel if at that we stand astonished, and know not what to make of such dispensations; the flowers are plucked up, while the weeds are left to grow. But shall we then succumb and sit still in astonishment? Shall we lie down and despair of keeping up the work of God? By no means. The innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite, and resolve to make his part good with him; shall neither desert the cause, nor despair of success, but exert himself so much the more for the glory of God, that religion's righteous cause may not sink for want of hands to bear it up.

2. The children of the virtuous woman that *rise up*, shall *call her blessed.* It is her honour that she shall be praised by them, by them that were best acquainted with her, and most indebted to her. It is their duty to praise her in return for all the care she has taken of them, the pains she has taken with them, and the pleasure she has taken in them; *give her of the fruit of her hands*, so the honours paid her by her children are, and *let her own works*, those she bore, those she nursed, those she taught, *praise her in the gates.*

That this place has lately parted with a virtuous woman, I believe you will all own; one that was here a pious, prudent, generous, charitable housekeeper about threescore years; born here, and that here spent almost all her days, and here ended them in a good old age, with a great deal of holy security and serenity of mind. One of whom it might be said as it was of Ruth, All the children of my people do *know that she was a virtuous woman.* Ruth iii. 11. You have been told of it from the

[b] Dear father would tell us;—It is not enough to be where prayer is, (that is easy,) but we must *pray*—put a shoulder to every petition to help to heave it heavenward. Mrs. Savage. Diar Orig. MS.

place already,[c] and have been stirred up (God grant the excitement may not be in vain) to follow her and others, who are gone before us to the better country, Hebrews vi. 12.

3 John 12. But *we must also bear record*, and we may do it with the more assurance, because you know that our record is true; nor can we be suspected of partiality herein, but might rather be charged with injustice and ingratitude should we neglect to pay this debt. You then will witness for us in this matter, that now the virtuous woman is gone to receive the reward of her virtue in a better state; her children, those of them that are left behind, rise up and *call her blessed;* while those of them that are gone before, are sharers with her in her blessedness. It is a comfort to us, and we reckon it a great instance of the distinguishing mercy and favour of our God, that we are the children of those whom we have reason to call blessed. The greatest honour that some children can do to their parents, is only, like Shem and Japhet, to conceal their shame, and cast a mantle over their follies: but, blessed be God, we need not that. Nay, we may go further than the daughters of Zelophehad did in the account they gave of their father, of whom they could say that he had not been any of the plagues of his generation, Numbers xxvii. 3. We can say more than that of our parents, that they were not only blessings to their family, but blessings to the country, blessings to the age in which they lived; and for this their children shall rise up and *call them blessed.*

Doctrine. That the children of virtuous and godly parents ought to rise up, when they are gone, and call them blessed.

Here I shall endeavour to show,

1. What is the character of those parents to whom this honour is due from their children.

2. What is the duty of the children, that they may, in a right manner, discharge this debt to the memory of their good parents.

For the first. What must the parents be, that their children, when they are gone, may *call them blessed*? If the parents be atheistical and profane, drunkards and unclean, swearers and sabbath-breakers, and scoffers at religion, or if they be mere carnal worldlings, if covetous and contentious, deceitful and oppressive, the children have no reason to *call them blessed.* If the way of the parents be their folly, let not their *posterity approve their sayings*,

Psalm xlix. 13. nor *like* a vain conversation ever the better for its being *received by tradition from their fathers.* They who train up their children in ungodliness and immorality, in prejudices against religion, and enmity to the serious professors of it, and so help to ruin them, the day may come, when their children will rise up in judgment against them, and call them cursed. But such black instances make ours shine the brighter.

Her children! Whose? Why, the children of the virtuous woman here described. *Her husband, he praiseth her*, for his heart *safely trusts in her*, and that gives her no small commendation; yet that is not all, he takes all occasions to speak well of her. The children do the same, and both concur in the matter of praise. Now let us briefly inquire after some of the characters of those whose children must *rise up and call them blessed;* and this inquiry I intend, not only for a just encomium of her that is gone, and indeed of both our parents, but for instruction of myself, and others of you that are parents. Let us learn so to qualify ourselves, by the grace of God, and so to carry ourselves, that our children may *rise up and call us blessed.* As children should be afraid of losing their parents' good wishes, so parents should be afraid of doing any thing justly to lose their children's good word and good will.

Now for the drawing of the character of those whose children shall call them blessed, I shall look but little further than the two verses before the text, and the two verses after it; and there we shall find that such as are wise, and such as are kind, such as are industrious, and such as are charitable, such as are virtuous, and such as are truly pious and religious, their children shall *rise up and call them blessed.* Such, by the grace of God, our parents were. May the same grace make us such.

1. Those that are *truly wise* deserve praise. And this is part of the character of the virtuous woman here, that she *opens her mouth with wisdom*, verse 26; she is not doomed, nor hath she doomed herself, to *perpetual silence;* but what she doth say, wisdom has the dictating of it, and it turns to her praise. Wisdom not only *makes the face to shine* for the present, but leaves a good report to succeeding generations, like the after-beams of the sun when he is set, surrounded with which he lies down in honour

If we be wise, we shall not only be *wise for ourselves*, but wise also for our children, and for their good, especially if we *open our mouth with wisdom*, and so instil into their minds what they will afterwards have use for; if we know when to speak, and what, and how; if we speak calmly and considerately; if our heart study to answer; if our lips bring forth wisdom out of a good treasure of it in the heart; if we put away all that foolish talking which corrupts good manners, and debaucheth the minds, especially of young people, and *keep our mouth as with a bridle* at all times, particularly when our children are before us, they will have reason to call *us blessed* for setting them an example of the good government of the tongue. Children learn to speak

[c] In the funeral sermon, by Dr. Benion. See *ante*, postscript, and Appendix, No. I.

from their parents and nurses: let them from us learn to speak well, and not to mix the language of Ashdod with the Jews' language. We have the bending of the bough when it is yet young and tender, let us be wise in managing it, that we may set it right. We know how long a word [d] from a parent to a child, that is just coming to years of understanding, will be remembered. I know it by experience. What the vessel is then seasoned with, it will retain the savour of. Let us then open our mouths with wisdom, that our lips, if they do not *feed many*, yet at least may feed our own children, *with wisdom and understanding*.

Some of you will say, that you have now lost, I am sure I have lost, a very discreet and prudent counsellor, that not only ordered her own affairs with wisdom, but knew very well how to advise others, and was many a time *eyes to the blind;* one that was very well versed in Solomon's Proverbs, and the rules of wisdom which may be fetched from thence for the conduct of human life, and knew how to apply them, and to *use knowledge aright*. Let us in like manner stock ourselves with the principles of wisdom, govern ourselves by the rules of wisdom, submit ourselves to the laws of wisdom, and be ready, on all occasions, to speak pertinently and to the purpose; that, *opening our mouths with wisdom*, our children may suck it in when they are young, and show it forth when they are old, and then they will have reason to rise up and *call us blessed*.

2. Those that are *truly kind* deserve this honour. I say *truly kind*, for many are very *fond*, as David of Adonijah; but are therein really *unkind*. Those are truly kind that are wisely so; that are tender of their children's comfort, but not indulgent of their children's follies. That also is the character of the virtuous woman here, that *in her tongue is the law of kindness*, not the humour of kindness, or the pang of it, but the *law* of it, such kindness as receives law from wisdom, and gives law to the whole conversation. Those parents that have this law in their tongues, in their hearts, and are always under the commands and regulations of it, gain their children's love, and are entitled to their good word; those parents who make conscience of that command, which we have more than once among the laws of Christ,—*Parents, provoke not your children to wrath*, by haughtiness and moroseness, and keeping them at an unreasonable distance, by constant chiding, and severe correction, *lest they be discouraged;*—but who are *gentle towards them*, as becomes parents towards those that are parts of themselves, and that derive their follies from them; who reprove with the meekness of wisdom, restrain with reason and a due consideration of all circumstances, counsel and admonish with compassion and affection, and rule with a steady, gentle hand; such parents as these the children will *rise up and call blessed*.

And for this I am sure we have reason to call our parents blessed; never were any more under the government of the law of kindness, kindness particularly to their children, than they were. To be kindly affectioned is of good report with all men, recommends religion as that which softens and sweetens men's tempers, fits them for all relations, and makes them the joy of all the societies they are members of; by this, among other things, they *obtained a good report*.

Would we then be called blessed, let us study the art of obliging, and not only be pitiful, but be courteous; pitiful to the miserable; courteous to all; let us be governed at all times by that wisdom from above, which is gentle and easy to be entreated; let our passions be always under the check and conduct of religion and right reason; let all bitterness, and frowardness, and peevishness be put away from us, and every thing that is sour and supercilious; let us not be like Nabal, whose character it was, that he was such a son of Belial, that a man could not speak to him, —they that are so, trouble their own houses. But let us study how to put a due respect upon all, and particularly to convince our children that we love them, and seek their good; let the law of love rule in our hearts, and the law of kindness in our tongues, and let us study to make ourselves and all about us easy, always easy: be pleasing; be pleased; then shall our children *rise up and call us blessed*. James iii. 17.

3. Those that are industrious and careful deserve this honour. This is the character of the virtuous woman here, verse 27.—That she *looketh well to the ways of her household*. And most of the characters given of her in the verses before fall under this head, where she is commended for her diligence and consideration, in the management of her house and the affairs of it, which is her particular calling, and that in which she is to abide with God. It is not made her praise that she spends her time in reading and contemplation; no, nor that she spends all her time in devotion neither, though she has her stated time for that. But that she *looks well to the ways of her household*, appointing them their portion of meat, and work too, in due season; has her eye upon all under her charge, to see that they both do and have what is fit. It is required from wives, that they guide the house, and they have need of wisdom to do it well. That is their place, their post. *Man goes forth to his work* 1 Timothy v. 14.

[d] See an instance in Mrs. Savage's Memoirs, p. 167. *ut supra*;—1696. Monday, Nov. 24 I went to Broad Oak.

Tuesday. One expression of Mr. Steel's I had from dear mother, which I daily find the truth of. Speaking of the backwardness of our hearts to duty;—When we have time, we want hearts; when we think we have hearts to seek and serve God, then we want time;—*The heart is deceitful above all things; Who can know it?* Mrs. Savage's Diary, Orig. MS.

and to his labour, but the woman stays at home to hers. *Where is Sarah thy wife? Behold, in the tent;* where should she be else? The virtuous woman is a good housekeeper; one that in magaging the affairs of the house, prudently avoids both the extremes of undue sparing and undue spending; that doth not on one hand over-work her household, and yet, on the other hand, suffers them not to mispend their time and neglect their business; that orders every thing to its proper time and place, and yet is not over nice or troublesomely curious: that is neither anxiously careful with that fear which has torment and amazement, nor yet careless and thoughtless of the morrow. This is the wise woman that *buildeth her house*, while the foolish, by neglecting it, doth, in effect, *pull it down with her hands*, and let it go to wreck and ruin. This is she that knows and observes a due proportion between laying up for her children, and laying out upon them, so as that neither unduly exclude or entrench upon the other, but both according to their place. Such a mother in Israel hath this place now lost, that provided well for her household, with a great deal of ease and order, and looked well to all the ways of it, and answered all the characters of the virtuous woman here described; and if her children that reap so much benefit by her good example, and the good education she gave them, do not call her blessed, let every body call them unrateful, and you can call them no worse.

Proverbs xiv. 1.

And let all parents thus merit their children's respects, by consulting the prosperity of their family, and providing for them food convenient, both for the present and for hereafter, so as that there may be an equality, so far as human prudence, in dependence upon God's providence, can order. If all be laid out, and none laid by, they must afterwards come down,[c] and that will be a temptation one way; if all be laid by, and none be laid out, they will afterwards rise, and that will be a temptation another way. It is neither the wisdom nor the kindness of parents to their children, to make it all their care and business, either to hoard for them,—we have seen riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt, or, on the other hand, to set them off with advantage to the world, by their making a show,—that unwise has been of fatal consequence to many,—but to give them an education according to their rank, to do all they can to fit them for business, for the service of God, and their generation according to the will of God; to give them good instructions, and good examples of humility, industry, benefidence, and honesty, to put up good prayers for them, and with them. And this is that care of children for which we must rise up and call our parents blessed.

4. Those that are charitable, and *do good in their places*, are worthy of this praise; and this is here made part of the character of the virtuous woman, verse 20.—*She stretcheth forth her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.* Her prudence and diligence find out the poor and needy, the proper objects of her charity, and she leaves not the distribution of her alms with others, as if she thought it below her, but with her own hand relieves and succours the necessitous. Her charity is extensive to those at a distance, intimated in the stretching forth of her hand to them; it also intimates, that she doth it cheerfully and heartily, with a willing mind, and not grudgingly; drawing out her soul first to the hungry, and then reaching out her hand to them.

Isa. lviii. 10.

Those who do this, set their children a good example, going before them in good works; they likewise leave them, if not a *great*, yet a *good*, inheritance, which will be sweet and sure to them; and, though they may leave them so much the less of this world's goods, yet they will leave them so much the more of the blessing of God, which *maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow.* He that disperseth and giveth to the poor, has not only a *righteousness which endureth for ever*, but *wealth and riches*, also, *shall be in his house*, with which his posterity shall be blessed. What is so laid out is *bread cast upon the waters*, which will be *found again after many days;* it is good seed sown in good soil, which will come up again with a great increase; it is put out to the best interest, and upon the best security, for it is *lent to the Lord*, and shall certainly be repayed more than a thousand-fold. This is another thing for which we have reason to rise up, and call our parents blessed; for they were *rich in good works*, as you very well know, yet without noise or ostentation. The *loins of the poor blessed them*, and, therefore, we should, in concurrence with the *blessing of him that was ready to perish.*

Ps. cxii. 2, 3, 9.

And let us, in like manner, recommend ourselves to those we shall leave behind, as Dorcas, who was celebrated for the *alms-deeds which she did*, not which she put others upon doing, or which she purposed hereafter, or which she would do by her will; no; but which she *did* herself out of her own estate,—making her own hands her executors. *To do good, and to communicate*, let us never *forget; for, with such sacrifices*, both *God* and man are *well pleased.*

Acts ix. 36.

5. Those that are *virtuous*, their children shall *rise up and call* them *blessed*, especially those that *excel in virtue*, as it follows here, verse 28.—*Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.* Those we call virtuous, that are sober and temperate, just and righteous in their conversation, con-

[c] If a man keep but of even hand, his ordinary expenses ought not to be but to the half of his receipts; and if he think to wax rich, but to the third part. Lord Bacon's Essays. Essay xxviii.

scientious in all they say and do, in all they design and endeavour, fair and honest in all their dealings, that have no blot cleaving to their hands, or to their hearts; that have been exemplary for that *integrity and uprightness* which doth become Christians, and will *preserve* them, and study in every thing to conform to the laws of natural religion, which are not repealed, but confirmed and improved by our Christianity. Devotion towards God, without justice and sobriety, meekness and compassion towards men, comes far short of that universal righteousness which is requisite to our acceptance with God. Hands lifted up will not reach heaven, unless they be *pure hands*, and *lifted up without wrath and contention*.

Virtue may be taken more strictly for vigour and boldness, and resolution in that which is good; courage and spirit in doing our duty, in facing difficulties, giving reproofs, bearing reproaches, improving opportunities, and pressing forwards towards perfection. The virtuous are those who are lively and cheerful in religion, that *sing in* its *ways*, and are *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;* and, in this sense, she was a virtuous woman whom we have now lost.

Philip. iv. 8. Now, where there is *virtue*, there is *praise;* there is that which ought to be praised, that for which the children must rise up and call the parents blessed, especially those who *excelled in virtue*, as ours did. Those who have only made a profession of religion, who have rested in the shows and formalities of devotion, while their lives and conversations have been disagreeable, little reason will either their children or their friends have to *call* them *blessed;* for the name of God, and his doctrine, is evil spoken of through them; but those who beautify their profession by that which is *lovely* and of *good report*, who thereby bring honour to their families, and set them a good example, their children, who shall be blessed for their sakes, must *rise up and call* them *blessed*.

6. Those that are pious and religious towards God are entitled to this honour; verse 30;—A *woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised*. Moral virtue is a blessed thing, but it will not make us blessed without serious godliness. As righteousness towards men is an essential branch of true religion, so religion towards God is an essential branch of universal righteousness. It is the *fear of God* that crowns the character of this virtuous woman, without which, all the rest was of small account. Those that hereby *honour God, he will honour*, and will have us to honour.

Those that keep up a holy awe and reverence of God upon their minds, that set him always before them, and have their eyes ever towards him, that have a regard to his authority over them, and, with an eye to that, submit themselves both to his precepts and to his providence; that make conscience of their duty to him, and are afraid of offending him; that devote themselves to his praise, and make it the business of their lives to glorify him, as the greatest and best of beings, and evidence it in all the instances of a steady, uniform, and undissembled devotion.

Those that make conscience of prayer in secret, and in their families; make a business of it, and take a pleasure in it; that delight in the holy word of God, and make it their meditation day and night; that converse much with it, and converse with others out of it; that call the sabbath of the Lord, *holy* and *honourable*, and honour God on that day; that call his courts amiable, and desire to *dwell in his house*, where they may be *still praising him*, and thus do the work of heaven while they are here on earth; that live a life of communion with God, conformity to him, and complacency in him; that have such a holy dread of God and his wrath, as drives them to Christ and his mediation, without which there is no standing before the just and holy God. Those that in their whole conversation, exemplify the fear of God dwelling and ruling in their hearts. Those that, not only by such a good example as this, but by their prudent and pious instructions, *teach* their *children also the fear of the Lord*, train them up in the ways of *pure religion*, under Psalm xxxiv. 11 the conduct of the principles of catholic Christianity not biassed to a party, nor soured with animosity and uncharitable prejudices; and in subjection to that *kingdom of God*, which is *not meat and drink* but *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. They that do thus, as they are *accepted of God*, so they shall be *approved of men*, and their children, in a particular manner, have reason to rise up and call them blessed. And such you know the parents were whom we are this day calling so.

And let this engage all that are parents to do likewise. Live in the fear of God, be in that fear every day, and all the day long. Bring up your children in that fear; look upon true devotion to be true wisdom;[f] and do all you can to preserve the entail of it in your families, that your children may be praising God for you on earth, when you are gone to heaven, and you and they may be for ever calling one another blessed.

For the second.—What is *the duty of children* that they may discharge this debt, which they owe to the memory of their good parents? How must we

[f] It is recorded of Mrs. Hanmer, that she very much preferred the spiritual welfare of her children before their temporal; looking on the former as the true felicity, and on the latter, without it, but as a pleasant voluntary misery The last Work of a Believer, prepared for the Funerals of Mary, the Widow, first of Fran Charlton, Esq., and after of Thomas Hanmer, Esq. By Richa Baxter. p. 148. duod. 1662.

perform this service to those who have recommended themselves by those characters? I shall open this in six things.

1. We ought always to maintain a grateful remembrance, and take all occasions to make an honourable mention, of our godly parents. We cannot keep them from the grave, but we may keep them from the *land of forgetfulness;* let their memories live with us when they are dead; live while we live, and be transmitted to those we leave behind; let them be always dear and precious to us, and being dead let them be like Abel, yet *spoken of.* Some think Laban's teraphim were the effigies of his ancestors, which, therefore, he would by no means part with. Let the remembrance of them be preserved in our minds, and then we have the best pictures of them, and such as we cannot be robbed of. This is part of the duty required by the fifth commandment, (which is the *first commandment with promise,)—Honour thy father and thy mother;* honour their memories when they are gone.

Heb. xi. 4.

This we ought to do in gratitude for all their kindness to us, both as parents, and as godly parents,—their kindness to our bodies and our souls.

(1.) As parents, they took care of our natural life, and preserved that lamp from being extinguished when it was first lighted, and a little thing would have blown it out.—*Why did we not die from the womb? why did we not give up the ghost when we came out of the belly?* It was because the *knees prevented us,* and the *breasts, that we should suck.* That tender, that earnest, care, which the God of nature put into the hearts of our parents concerning us, when we were in the helpless state of innocency; the pains they took with us, when we were unable to do any thing for ourselves, and perhaps froward with those that did any thing about us, is what we can never make a sufficient return for, either to them while they live, or to their memory when they are gone.

Ezekiel xvi.

The great favours God bestowed upon his people Israel, are represented by the compassionate relief given to an infant, which intimates that that is a kindness never to be forgotten.

(2.) As godly parents, and upon this account much more, we ought to do honour to their names, and their memory should be doubly precious to us; remembering, that, in the sense St. Paul writes it to Philemon, we *owe unto them even our own souls also,* under God. What should we have been that were *born like the wild ass's colt,* that brought into the world with us so much sin, and folly, and corruption, if we had not had good parents, who took early care, to the utmost of their power, to form us to that which is good? What should we have been if we had not been catechized and instructed in the principles of religion,—which we sucked in with our milk,—if we had not been restrained from sin, and the springing up of the *root of bitterness* checked betimes? And, if we had not been directed and quickened in the way of our duty, and told plainly,—*This is the way, walk in it?* Notwithstanding all the advantages of our education, it is bad enough with us, and we have reason to complain of our ignorance and mistakes, our defects in our duty, and our proneness to sin. But how much worse would it have been with us, if we had never had those advantages! Perhaps we should never have learned to pray, if our good parents had not taught us when we were young, and trained us up to it; should never have been acquainted with the word of God, if they had not made us acquainted with it, and taken care, that, *from our childhood, we should know the Holy Scriptures,* as Timothy did, who, being so conversant with the Scriptures when he was *a child,* when he became a man, a *man of God,* was by that means thoroughly furnished for every good word and work; and if we, by the same means, be not so, in some measure, it is our own fault. They did their part.

Blessed were they of the Lord that took pity on us in our folly, and taught us the good knowledge of the Lord, of the Lord Jesus, and led us into an acquaintance with Jesus Christ, and him crucified; showed us the difference between good and evil, that we might *abhor that which is evil,* and *cleave to that which is good;* reasoned with us many a time about our souls and another world; set before us life and death, the blessing and the curse; followed us with precept upon precept, and line upon line; dealt with us as *reasonable creatures,* showing us what a rational thing religion is, and so *drawing us with the cords of a man;* dealt with us according to the capacities of our childhood, teaching us the things of God as we were able to bear them, with tenderness, and a gentle conduct, and so *drawing us with the bands of love.* This is what we ought always to retain the remembrance of, not only for our own benefit, but for their honour.

Blessed were they of the Lord, who followed the good instructions they gave us with constant and earnest prayers to God for us night and day; having presented us to Christ in our baptism, pursuant thereunto they oft presented us to him in their addresses to the throne of grace, and pleaded our baptism. A good stock of prayers they laid up for us,[g] which we hope are upon the file in heaven, and that we, and ours after us, shall reap the benefit of them; for, it is true of prayer, what we say of winter, that it never rots in the skies. Such parents as these ought not to be forgotten, but to be daily remembered, and spoken of with respect, who daily remembered us, and whose prayers, like Cornelius's, came up before God for a memorial.

2. We ought to give God thanks for them; and

Philemon 19.

[g] See Flavel's Fountain of Life. Works, vol. i. p 227. *ut supra.* And, Life of the Rev. T. Cawton, p. 45. *ut supra.*

that is the best way of calling them *blessed;* blessing God for them, and for the benefit we had by them. They were themselves, and were to us, what the free grace of God made them, and no more; and, therefore, that grace must have all the glory. Whatever is blessed to us we must bless God for, for he it is that blesseth it, and so maketh it a blessing; he is the Author and Fountain of all that which is worthy to be praised; and, therefore, in him, as the Centre, all the lines of praise must meet. All is of him, and therefore all must be to him. We are not to pray to God for the dead, but we are to *praise* God for them.

Let us, then, who had godly parents, look far back in our thanksgivings, and bless God,

(1.) For his grace in them, which carried them on with comfort, and enabled them to finish their course with joy. Now, we have seen *the end of their conversation*, and with what a holy security and serenity of mind they put off the body, and removed to the world of spirits, we have reason to give glory to him who was the *Author and Finisher of their faith;* who led them on in their way, and bore them as *upon eagles' wings*, till he had brought them safely and comfortably to their journey's end,—to that blessed state, where they *receive the end of their faith* and hope, even the *salvation of their souls.*

We have reason to bless God for her that is now removed, who bid farewell to the world[h] so very cheerfully,—said she had enough of it, and longed to be with Christ;—would not have her sickness called an affliction, but a welcome messenger to fetch her home;—and said, a little before she died, she hoped she knew, in some measure, by experience, what it is for a believer to *have eternal life abiding in him;* having little doubt of her future happiness.[i] For this she blessed God, and so should we.

(2.) We must bless God for our benefit by that grace. Though they could not give us grace, no more than they could give us being, yet God was pleased to make use of them, as instruments in his hand, in the beginning and carrying on of that good work. God enabled them to teach us, and pray for us; he made them guides to us, and faithful monitors, and made their words to be to us as goads and nails. Now, *Thanks be to God, who put that carnest care into their hearts* for us, even to travail in birth again, till they hoped they saw Christ formed in us. Has there been in the hearts of our parents, ministers, or friends, an earnest care for the welfare, the eternal welfare, of our souls? Blessed be God, that *put it into their heart*, and made it such a blessing to us!

2 Cor. viii. 16.

David thanked God for sending Abigail to meet him, and, with her wisdom, to stop him from going on in a sinful way. Surely, we have much more reason then to thank God for our parents, who directed us into the good and right way. Blessed be God, that sent them; and blessed be their advice; and blessed be their memory.

3. We must own the goodness of that way of religion and serious godliness, which they chose, and wherein they walked,—even to the end, till they finished their course. We *call them blessed*, in calling that blessed which they so highly valued, and valued themselves by; in calling religion's ways, *ways of wisdom*, and those ways of wisdom, *ways of pleasantness.* It is a great matter to us, in the government of ourselves, whom we call blessed; whom we think well of, as in the best and most desirable condition; whose *sayings we approve*, and with whom we wish to take our lot. Even Balaam desired to die with the righteous, and have *his end* with them; but we must think it desirable to *live* with the righteous, and have *our way* with them. The fundamental error of a carnal world is, that they *call the proud happy, whom God resists*, Malachi iii. 15. and *bless the covetous, whom God abhors*, Psalm x. 4. They think worldly people, that have abundance of the wealth, and mirth, and gaiety of this world, are the only happy people; now, it is necessary that this mistake be rectified, as the Psalmist rectifies it, Psalm cxliv. 6. where he owns it to be the sentiment of the most,—*Happy are the people that are in such a case,*—that live at ease, and grow rich,—but pronounceth it his sentiment, that, rather,—*Happy are the people whose God is the Lord.* There are, then, hopes of young people, that they will do well, when they call their godly parents blessed, and reckon that, though they made no great figure in the world, were not dignified with pompous titles, did not raise estates, nor obtain a name like the names of the great ones that are in the earth, yet they were truly honourable, truly happy.

Psalm xlix. 13.

(1.) We must reckon that they were truly honourable; and value ourselves more upon it, that we are a seed of saints, than if we were a seed of nobles. This will quicken us to pursue honour in the same way in which *they obtained a good report.* Though there were those, perhaps, of the fools in Israel, that might reproach and despise them, and say all manner of evil against them, for Christ's sake, yet we

[h] Thus beautifully expressed by Mr. Baxter, as a motto for his own picture.

Farewell, vain world! as thou hast been to me,
Dust and a shadow, such I leave to thee.
The unseen life and substance I commit
To him that's substance, light, love to it.
Some leaves and fruit are dropp'd for soil and seed;
Heaven's heirs to generate; to heal and feed:
Them also thou wilt flatter and molest,
But shalt not keep from everlasting rest.

Poems, new ed. p. 114.

[i] Good old Mrs. Doughty, sometime of Shrewsbury, who had long walked with God, and longed to be with him; and was among us an excellent example of holiness, blamelessness, contempt of the world, constancy, patience, humility, and (which makes it strange) had a great and constant desire to die, though she was still

must reckon it was their honour, and honour enough, that they were accepted of God, respected and valued by all wise and good men, and perhaps made manifest also in the consciences even of those that were bad; and even the reproach of Christ was their praise, their riches, *greater riches than the treasures in Egypt*; it is an honour to be dishonoured for Christ, much more to be loved and esteemed for his sake. They that live and die in Christ, live and die in honour. Do we believe this?—Let us then but have the same honour our godly parents had,—a name for that which is good with those that are good, the honour of doing good in a low and narrow sphere,—and we covet not to *make a fair shew in the flesh.*

Hebrews xi. 26.
Acts v. 41.

(2.) We must reckon that they were truly happy,—happy in the enjoyment of themselves, and of what God had given them in the world; happy in the quiet and repose of their own minds; and happy in the prospect of better things in the better country.—We have reason to say,—That the ways of God and godliness, in which our good parents walked, were good ways,—*ways of pleasantness and peace*,—that the yoke of Christ is easy and gentle, and very sweet. They told us many a time, and abode by it to the last, that they had found the Lord Jesus a good Master, and his work good, even its own wages, and a present great reward of obedience in obedience. Let us set to our seal that this is true, and account that true holiness is true happiness; for, in heaven, where there is the perfection of happiness, there will be the perfection of holiness; and, let us account them happier in the love and favour of God, the comforts of the Spirit, the testimony of a good conscience, and the earnests of eternal life, than if they had had all the delights of the sons and daughters of men, and the peculiar treasure of kings and provinces. And let us put in for the same happiness, by following them as they followed Christ.

4. We ought to be very sensible of our loss, when such parents are removed from us. If we call them *blessed*, we call them *blessings*, and reckon that we were greatly blessed in them while they were continued to us, and therefore, that now they are removed, the hand of the Lord is gone out against us, and he is contending with us. It concerns us, therefore, to accommodate ourselves to such a providence, to *hear the rod, and him that appointed it*,—to understand the meaning of it, and answer its intention.

(1.) Wherein we have been in the least defective in our duty to our parents, or other relations, when they are removed from us, that is a call to us, a loud call, to renew our repentance for it, and to pray for pardon in the blood of Christ. This is a time to bring to remembrance; it is sin that provokes God to take our dear relations from us, that were comforts to us; and, therefore, when we mourn for death, we must mourn for sin, for *the wages of* our *sin is* their *death.*

(2.) We ought by it to be minded of leaving the world, too; for *we are not better than our fathers*; they are gone, and we are going, drawing after them apace;—*Thou shalt be gathered to thy people*, saith God to Moses, *as Aaron thy brother was gathered.* We must leave the world, as our parents left it. Let us, therefore, learn of them to die, and let their removal to the grave help to make it the more familiar to us, and engage us to converse more with it, that we may get more ready for it.

(3.) Now we want our parents to pray for us, God calls us to pray so much the more for ourselves and for our children. Now we want them to instruct and advise us, we must meditate more in the word of God, that best of counsellors, and keep a stricter guard over our own hearts and ways, that thus we may the less feel the loss of them.

5. We ought to think much of that happy state to which our godly parents are removed. We must *call them blessed*, not only for what they *were*, but for what they *are*; think and speak much of the blessedness of that world into which God has now sent for them from this world of ours. We have a great deal of reason to be *confident of this very thing*, that now, they are *absent from the body*, they are at home *with the Lord. Call them blessed*, then;—blessed indeed; for, they are not only at rest from all their labours, but are *entered into the joy of their Lord.* In this sense it may be asked,—*Your fathers, where are they?* (Zechariah i. 5.) Your godly parents, ancestors, and friends, that are fallen asleep in Christ; *where are they?* And what a comfort is it to think where they are; not lost, not perished; not cast, as they suspected concerning Elijah, *upon some mountain*, or in *some valley.* No, though we are much in the dark concerning the particulars of the state of separate souls, yet we are sure, in general, that, to them, to whom *to live* was *Christ*, *to die* will be *gain.* *Where are they?* Why, they are where they are perfectly and perpetually blessed in the immediate vision and fruition of God within the veil; infinitely more happy where *they are*, than where *they were.* *Where are they?* Why, they are in the mansions of light and bliss, that are in our Father's house above; in the New Jerusalem, in the paradise of God, where they *hunger no more, nor thirst any more, neither doth the sun light on them, nor any heat.* They are in the best company, employed in the best work, and enjoying a complete satisfaction. *Where are they?* Why, they are where there are no complaints, nothing to interrupt their communion with God, or cast a damp upon their spirits. Death has

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complaining of doubtings, and weakness of assurance. Mr. Baxter's Last Work of a Believer, *ut supra.* Address to the Reader, pp. 4, 5.

done that for them which ordinances could not do,—has perfectly freed them from that body of sin and death which was here their constant burthen; and hath set them, for ever, out of the reach of Satan's fiery darts, which were here their terror. The spirits of the just are there *made perfect*, beyond the perfection of Adam in innocency, for they are immutably confirmed in it. *Where are they?* Why they are where they would be; in their centre, in their element. They are where they have longed to be in that blessed state, towards which, while they were here, they were still reaching forth, and pressing forwards.[k] Let us, then, *rise up, and call them blessed;* for, blessed, thrice *blessed, are the dead, which die in the Lord.*

And this will be of use to us;—

(1.) To comfort us in reference to them now they are gone; for we *sorrow not as those that have no hope;* blessed be God, we do not. *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me;*—there is no occasion for it. While our friends are here with us, in this vale of tears, it is our duty, when they are in distress, to weep for them,—for, therein we weep with them; and it is our duty to *weep with them that weep;* but they need not be wept for upon their own account, that are not only not weeping, but have for ever taken their leave of weeping, and have had *all tears wiped away from their eyes.* While *one member suffers*, it is fit *all the members* should *suffer with it;* but, if that member be honoured, let all the members think themselves honoured with it. *If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go to my Father.* While we are here in the dark, and at a distance, they are *made nigh*, and *see face to face.* While we are struggling with our difficulties, and groaning under our burthens, *without are fightings, within are fears,*—they are easy and safe, and abundantly satisfied.

(2.) To encourage us in our Christian course, work, and warfare, let the consideration of that happy state into which they are gone before, make us always to abound in the work of the Lord, because our labour will not only not be in vain, but will be abundantly recompensed. *In due season we shall* thus *reap;* and, therefore, *let us not be weary in well-doing.* If we *sow to the Spirit*, as they did, we shall *reap life everlasting*, as they did. Say then, *We will go with you*, for we have heard God *was* with you, and we believe you *are* with him; and, therefore, let nothing turn us from following after you.

6. We ought to tread in the steps of their virtue and piety, and imitate them in every thing that was praiseworthy. To commend that which was good in them, and not to copy it out into our own hearts and lives,—to commend the way they walked in, and not to walk in it ourselves, is to give ourselves the lie, and *out of our own mouth shall we be judged.* Are not we under the same obligations to be religious that they were? Is it not as much our concern as it was theirs? Are not we as much bound to serve God, and our generation, in our day, as they were in theirs? May not our children expect we should take the same care of them, that our parents did of us,—set them as good examples, and pray as much for them? Let us resolve, then, to walk in the same spirit, in the same steps; and, in the strength of divine grace, to *follow them, who are now, through faith and patience, inheriting the promises;* and endeavour *not to come behind in any gift*, in any grace, in any duty.

We are concerned thus to follow them,—

(1.) In pursuance of the good education they gave us. They laid a good foundation by the lessons they taught us, the counsels they followed us with, and the good exercises they trained us up in; let us, therefore, while we live, be building upon that foundation, till the *top-stone* be at length *brought forth with shouting.* We have been led into green pastures by still waters; let us, then, by our holy strength, and serviceableness, praise our keeping, and commend our education by living up to it, and giving the like to our children, and thus *call them blessed*, to whom we owe so great an advantage.

(2.) In compliance with the good example they set us, and in conformity to that, by which the instructions they gave us were both explained and enforced, and we were both directed and encouraged in the way of our duty. It is the praise of all the godly kings of Judah, that they *walked in the way of David their father, and turned not aside.*

(3.) In kindness to the world we now live in, and the generation in which our lot is cast. There is a great gap made by the removal of good people, let us endeavour to fill it up, by doing good in the place where God has cast our lot, as they did that are gone that it may be said, while we survive,—They are not gone, but they still live in us.

(4.) In expectation of the bliss of that world they now live in. Their serious piety was found unto praise, and honour, and glory, in this world, and will be much more so at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Let us, therefore, having an eye to the same *joy set before us, run with patience* the same *race set before us;* let us proceed with holy vigour and resolution, and persevere with an unshaken constancy. We serve the same Master, have a promise of the same Spirit, and a prospect of the same recompence. Let every one of us, therefore,—Hebrews vi. 11.—*shew the same diligence unto the full assurance of hope unto the end.*

[k] The above beautiful passage may remind the reader of Mr. P. Henry's remarks at the funeral of Mr. W. Lawrence, referred to in the Life of Mr. Samuel Lawrence, in this vol.

THE

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX, No. I.

MRS. KATHARINE HENRY died May 25th, 1707, æt. 79.

The only obituary of this excellent person forms No. I. of the Appendix to the life of Mrs. Savage, *ut supra*.

The following extracts are from Mr. Matthew Henry's diary:

1707, May 25. This morning I received the sad tidings of my dear mother's death, a little after twelve o'clock in the night. At the entrance of the sabbath she entered upon her everlasting rest. I endeavoured to do the work of the day, in much weakness and heaviness, because Christ would not suffer him, whom he called to preach the gospel, to go first and bury his father. I expounded Zechariah xiv. Philippians iv. Psalm xxv. 15.—*Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord.* I went in the evening to the bereaded family at Broad Oak, where we wept and prayed together. My wife and two sisters were with my mother when she died, which was a comfort to me, though I was absent.

26. Spent at Broad Oak, in preparation for the funeral, which I desire to do in the actual belief and expectation of the resurrection of the dead, and the *commandment* which will be given *concerning the bones.*

27. Spent as the day before; many thoughts of heart, which are known to God. Friends are strange, but I hope our God is nigh at hand.

28. This day my dear mother's remains were decently conveyed to Whitchurch, and deposited in the silent dust, close by my dear father's. Before we set out, Dr. Benyon preached, *ad rem*, and very affectingly, on Hebrews vi. 12.[a]

Dr. Benyon's funeral sermon had reference also to Mr. Pell, who was placed over the congregation at Broad Oak when the Dr. removed to Shrewsbury. Mr. Pell died May 21, 1707, æt. 25. See Memoirs of Mrs. Savage, Appendix, No. I. The notice taken of Mr. and Mrs. Henry, together with the honourable memorial of Mr. Pell, seem to unite in rendering it desirable that the following extract from the sermon should be preserved. The transcription is from an authentic manuscript.

"Shall I run eleven years backwards to the ever-memorable consort of that excellent person, whose dear remains we are now going to inter? I would do so, did I not think his bright graces, and endearing service, must needs have left impressions upon you that cannot wear off as long as you have souls to retain them; and yet I cannot but excite you to follow him in his second self; for, they both thought, and spoke, and did, *the same things* in religion, and, *being dead, yet speak.*

"I must add, too, that Divine Providence hath ordered the melancholy event of an intervening death—Mr. Pell—to enforce the instruction of the other two more powerfully.

"He, I doubt not, *inherits the promises;* follow him; imitate him; he was industrious in his great Master's service, and pleaded not, as he might have done, the excuse of a crazy and dying body. *Be not weary in well-doing;* he reaps already; and you *will reap, in due time, if you faint not.*

"He was very penitent for sin, and spoke of it with a mighty passion; and, though he hoped God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven him, he could never forgive himself.[b] He entertained the prospect of death with great composure. It was his dependence on Christ that made him able to do so. He often said he had nothing else to trust to, and he trusted to that so far as to say, cheerfully, when he found his expiring hour was at hand,—'Come now, death, and do thine office.' How agreeable was the reflection, the excellent believer, whose funeral we now attend, made on the report of this hopeful preacher's death. 'And,' says she, '*is* Mr. Pell got to heaven before me?' It was like her.

"There was so much to be *followed*, that, in pro-

[a] Orig. MS. See also Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, p. 138. *ut supra.*

[b] It is recorded of Mr. Baxter, that, such was his abhorrence of himself for his sins, that he said,—"I can more easily believe that God will forgive me, than I can forgive myself." Dr. Bates's Works, v. 4. p. 340.

posing *her* to your imitation, the only difficulty is what is to be omitted.

"In general, she made it her business to regulate her life by the word of God, the efficacy of which she experienced betimes in the ministry of that now happy divine whose name is precious with some of you."[c]

APPENDIX, No. II.

The will of the Rev. Philip Henry, transcribed from an original, (supposed to be a counterpart,) among his Title Deeds, and in his own hand-writing.

In the name of God; Amen! I, Philip Henry, of Broad Oak, in the County of Flint, an unworthy minister of Jesus Christ, having attained, this day, to the sixty-fourth year of my age, in bodily health; God be praised!—but, sensible of the decays of nature, and desirous to be found ready, when death comes, that I may have nothing else to do but to die, do, with my own hand, make this my last will and testament, in the usual manner and form following. First, I recommend my soul into the hands of God, my heavenly Father, trusting only to the merit and mediation of Jesus Christ my Lord, whose I am, and whom I serve, for acceptation and salvation; my body to the earth, whence it was taken, to be laid up there, as in a bed of rest, to sleep in Jesus, till the last trump shall sound; my wife and children to the divine blessing and providence, together with all my children's children, to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and, out of the worldly estate, which God hath given me, I give and bequeath to each of my four daughters, Mr. Poole's English Annotations upon the Bible, in two volumes, of the last and best edition that shall be to be had at the time of my decease, together with Mr. Barton's last and best Translation of the Singing Psalms, one to each of them, requiring and requesting them to make daily use of the same for the instruction, edification, and comfort of themselves, and of their families; and, to each of all their children, that shall be alive when I die, I bequeath a well-bound English Bible, together with an English Practical Divinity Book, in quarto, out of my books, such as their fathers shall please to choose for them, praying that the word of Christ may dwell richly in them, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. To my son Matthew I give and bequeath all my books and papers, except what is otherwise by this my will given, and except what my dear wife will please to have for her own use, and except the four following, of which I give one to each of my four daughters, according as in seniority they shall choose; viz. the Sermons upon the Parable of the Prodigal; The Baptismal Covenant Explained; The Four-and-Twenty Good and the Four-and-Twenty Naughty Spirits; and, What Christ is made of God to True Believers, in Forty Particulars; each to be transcribed by them, in their own hand, if they have leisure, and see cause; however, to be transcribed into their hearts and lives. To my dear daughter-in-law, and to each of my dear sons-in-law, I give twenty shillings to buy each of them a ring, or what else they please, as a small remaining token of my great love to them, beseeching the Lord as he hath begun, so to go on to build them up into families, but especially to build them up in holiness and comfort, and to continue them still in brotherly love, as a bundle of arrows which cannot be broken. To each of my servants living with me at the time of my death, that can read, I give a good book, or to each of them five shillings to buy one, at my dear wife's discretion. To each of my three dear sisters, I give and bequeath as followeth;—To my dear sister, Ann Henry, I give a gold ring, with this posy, *Thy brother shall rise again*, John xi. 23. And, to my other two sisters, Mary Dyer, widow, and Sarah Wade, I give and bequeath the profits of my small tenement in Iscoyd, called Kaywilkin, which I purchased lately of John Probart, to be divided equally between them, when taxes and repairs are first discharged and allowed for, so long as they both shall live; and, when either of them dies, then the whole to the survivor, during her natural life, to be paid quarterly; the first payment to commence from the quarter's end from the time of my death. And from and after their decease, and the decease of the longest liver of them, I give and bequeath the inheritance of the said tenement, with its appurtenances, and all my estate and interest therein, and all my right and title thereunto, to my dear wife, to be disposed of by her to such of my dear children or to such of their children, as she shall think, in her discretion, to have most need of the same, whether by will, deed, or otherwise, as soon as she shall please, after my decease, and not deferring the making of the said settlement till my said sister's decease. And, lastly, my will is, that, all my just debts, and funeral expenses, being first discharged, the remainder of all my goods, cattle, and chattels whatsoever, shall be to my dear wife, to whom accordingly, I do give and bequeath them, acknowledging her past, and relying upon her future, faithfulness to me in all things; and I do nominate and appoint her, my said dear wife, Katharine Henry, be the sole executrix.

Witness my hand and seal, this twenty-fourth day of August, 1695, being the day of the year in which I was born, 1631, and also the day of the year

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[c] The Rev. Mr. Steel. See *ante*, p. 148.

which, by law, I died, as did also near two thousand other faithful ministers of Jesus Christ, 1662.

Declared and published, &c.

PHILIP HENRY, L. S.

APPENDIX, No. III.

THE title of the volume referred to is thus expressed:

Musarum Oxoniensium Ἐλαιοφορία, sive, ob fœdera auspiciis Serenissimi Oliveri Reipub. Ang. Scot. et Hiber. Domini Protectoris inter Rempub. Britannicam et Ordines Fœderatos Belgii feliciter stabilita, Gentis togatæ ad vada Isidis Celeusma Metricum.

Oxoniæ excudebat Leonardus Lichfield, Academiæ Typographus: 1654.

Mr. Henry's Latin verses, transcribed from the volume above mentioned, are as follows:

Noli timere, Musa! Quid trepido pede
Scazontis instar claudicas?
I, pende ventis carbasa et totos sinus;
Tranquilla jam sunt omnia,
Nulli tumultus, nullus hostium furor,
Pax undique, et mare liberum est:
Mercator avidus, dum silentium videt
Serenioris Œquoris,
Se somniare putat, et haud credit sibi,
Sollicitus et plenus metu,
Ne forte fallax error aut evanidæ
Felicitatis umbra sit;
Gemmas, Smaragdos, orbis alterius opes,
Nunc ultro securus petit,
Et post tot annorum otia, laboris sui
Majora sperat præmia,
Sperat, coloni more Messem duplicem
Post sic peractas ferias.
Toto Britannos orbe divisos adhuc
Tandem coire vidimus,
Terrasque pelago separatas arctior
Compensat animorum unis;
Et quam negant Terra, juncturam facit
Melior Amoris Copula,
Bellique lites nuperi (bono omine)
Pacis redintegratio est.

Philip Henry, A. M. ex Æde Christi. p. 22,

APPENDIX, No. IV.

THE following more minute account of the solemn service will not be uninteresting, especially as it is transcribed from Mr. Henry's own hand-writing; and contains, no doubt, an accurate statement of all that took place:—

1657, July 6. I made addresses to the presbytery in Shropshire for ordination.

They met at Prees. There were present Mr. Porter, President; Mr. Houghton, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Binney, Mr. Steel.

Inquiry was made:—1. Concerning the work of grace upon my heart.

Whereunto I replied, the Spirit had been dealing with me while I was very young, not only in the public ministry, but by the private instructions of a godly mother also; and, I hoped, had convinced me of my sin, and discovered to me my need of Christ; and bowed my will, in some measure, to close with him, upon his own terms, in sincerity, unfeignedly; and that, having taken him to be mine, I had also resigned myself up to him to be his, to be guided and governed by him; and resolved, by his grace, to continue in his ways unto the death.

2. Concerning my skill in the original languages of the Scripture;—for the Hebrew, I read and construed Psalm ii. 1, 2.—for the Greek, I read and construed Luke xvi. 1, 2.

3. For logic, I was asked,—*Quotuplex est syllogismus?* I answered,—*Vel categoricus vel hypotheticus. Item, probabilis vel demonstrativus. Quæ sunt leges legitimi syllogismi?* Resp. *Nihil concluditur nisi altera propositio sit universalis, &c.*

4. For philosophy;—*Quid est elementum?* Resp. *Est substantia pura (potius est corpus simplex) ex quâ omnia fiunt.* (I should have added, *et in quam ultimo resolvuntur.) An sit eadem materia, cœli et terræ?* Resp. *Non, materia cœli est incorruptib. Err. An detur elementum ignis? Imo. Ubi? Sub concavo lunæ, ut probas quid e elem. levissem, &c. &c. &c.*

5. What authors in divinity I had read.

Answer. Something in Wollebius, Amesius, Calvin.

Question. What are the parts of Christ's Mediatorship?

Answer. Three; his priestly, kingly, prophetic offices.

Question. What doth Christ do as Prophet?

Answer. Teaches his church.

Question. Immediately?

Answer. No. By his Spirit, in his word.

Question. What are the parts of his priestly office.

Answer. Two; his death, and his intercession.

6. What was my judgment in reference to infant baptism?—

Question. Ought any children to be baptized?

Answer. I believe they ought; and I am clear in it.

7. What, in reference to the controversy between presbyterian and independent?

Answer was made for me;—If I had not approved of the presbyterian way, I would not have come thither. I replied,—In most things according to my

present light, I did, but I had not had opportunity to search to the bottom of the controversy.

8. The place of Scripture proposed was, 1 Corinthians x. 26, 28.

Question. How came the same words of the psalmist to be a reason why they should eat and why they should not?

Answer. In a different sense:—1. You may eat; for, *the earth is the Lord's.* q. d. Every creature of God is good, if received with thanksgiving by them that know the truth. 2. If your brother be offended, you may forbear; *for the earth, &c.* q. d. there are other things enough which you may eat freely of without offence.

9. This case of conscience was propounded;—

Suppose one should come to you, and make complaint of his condition,—"Oh, Sir, I am undone; it is to no purpose for me to wait upon the means of grace; I am a reprobate; and, if a reprobate, there is no salvation!"

Answer. I would deny his minor, and endeavour to show him, that though a man may know his own election, yet he cannot his reprobation.

Objection. Suppose he should reply, "I have the mark of a reprobate, much guilt, a hard heart, a seared conscience."

Answer. I would endeavour to convince him, there is nothing that befalls a reprobate but may befall one that is elect, before conversion, except the guilt of the sin against the Holy Ghost.

10. Concerning church-history, I was only asked whether I had read Eusebius, &c. I answered, I had read some of him, but not all over.

These were the occurrences of that day's meeting.

They gave me a query to provide a thesis upon against the next meeting.

Query. *An providentia divina extendat se ad omnia?* Aff.

There were examined, the same day, Mr. Hall, of Newcastle, in Staffordshire, and Mr. Jones of Llanarmon, in Denbighshire.

The Lord prosper all my undertakings, that are according to his will!

August 3. I exhibited my thesis upon the aforesaid question:—

An providentia divina extendat se ad omnia?

Concerning which, disputation was held for about the space of half an hour, or more. There opposed, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Binney, Mr. Houghton; and Mr. Porter moderated. The main thing insisted on was:—If God concur, by his providence, to every action, how is he not then the author of sin? To which answer was given;—The materiality of the action is from God, but the formality, which is the sinfulness of it, is from the sinner himself.

Lord, I desire thou mayst have the glory of all my abilities, natural, moral, spiritual. If they were more, thou shouldst have more glory. And I beg of thee to overlook my failings, especially the pride and selfishness that is often stirring itself in my soul, for Christ's sake.

I left two certificates with Mr. Brean, the registrar to the classis; one from Oxford, subscribed by Dr. Wilkinson, Dr. Langley, Mr. Cornish, Mr. Button. The other, subscribed by Mr. Steele, Mr. Orl. Fogg, Mr. Jenkyn; both testifying of my conversation, &c. The Lord forgive me, that it hath not been more exemplary, as it ought, for piety and industry! Amen, Lord, in Christ!

The day for ordination was appointed to be, Wednesday, September 16; the place, Prees.

I would fain have been ordained at Worthenbury, the place where God hath cast my lot, (which, I believe, comes nearest the institution,) but it might not be *rebus publicis sic stantibus.* Hope thereof was one main motive to me to defer being ordained so long. The Lord prosper me in his work.

APPENDIX, No. V.

THERE were special reasons and ends of Christ's being made man; viz.—That the same nature that sinned might suffer; and, by suffering, satisfy, Hebrews ii. 14. As God, he could not. Without blood there was no remission, Hebrews ix. 22. That the same nature, which was under the law, might yield obedience to the law, Romans v. 10. That man's nature might be advanced to the dignity from which it fell. Made but little lower than angels, Psalm viii. 5. but fallen as low as beasts, Psalm xlix. 20. Now Christ hath restored, yea, bettered it, Ephesians i. 20, 21, &c. Hebrews i. 6. That he might be a merciful High Priest, Hebrews ii. 17, 18. Hebrews iv. 15, 16. That he might set before us an example of holy living, 1 Peter ii. 21.

But, though Jesus Christ was truly man, yet he was not a *mere* man, but God-man. Isaiah ix. 6. Christ, our Redeemer, is God. This is a main doctrine of the gospel. If this fail, all fails, 1 Corinthians xv. 14, 17. There were those, betimes, in the church, who denied it, 2 Peter i. 1. which occasioned the writing of St. John's Gospel, John i. 1.

The Saviour's deity is proved;—From the names and titles attributed to him in Scripture, John i. 1 1 John v. 20.—God. The great God, Titus ii. 13 The mighty God, Isaiah ix. 6. Romans ix. 5. Jehovah, Jeremiah xxiii. 6. An incommunicable name to any creature, signifying as much as having being of himself. Lord of all; Acts x. 36. Lord of Hosts; the Son of God. So are believers; but he is his *only* begotten Son, John iii. 16. Philippians ii. 6 Hebrews i. 3. John v. 18.—From divine properties and attributes, not only communicable, such as holy righteous; but incommunicable, as eternity, fro

everlasting to everlasting, Micah v. 2. Before John, chapter i. 15. Before Abraham, John viii. 58. Before the creation, Proverbs viii. 23. Omnisciency; knowing the heart, John ii. 24. Omnipotency; infinity, John iii. 13.—From divine works. Creation, John i. 3. Providence, John v. 17. Colossians i. 16, 17. Redemption; he forgives sins, Matthew ix. 2, &c.; he gives the Spirit, John xvi. 7. he gives eternal life, John x. 27, 28.—Miracles; which he much insists on, John v. 36; John x. 37, 38.—From divine worship ascribed to him; inward, outward. Faith, Acts xvi. 31. John xiv. 1. Absolute obedience, Matthew xvii. 5. Prayer, Acts vii. 59. Praise, 1 Timothy i. 12. Adoration by angels, Hebrews i. 6. Revelations v. 11, 12.

It was necessary that our Mediator should be God, because none else could be competent for the work, Psalm lxxxix. 19, 20.[d]

APPENDIX, No. VI.

The following specimen is taken from a volume, in the editor's possession, embracing the Book of Genesis, and in Mr. Henry's hand-writing.

Exp. Gen. xxii. Oct. 24, 1658.

The story of this chapter is very remarkable; it contains an instance of the most eminent act of faith and obedience.

God tempts Abraham, verse 1. To tempt, is no more, properly, but to try;—to bore a hole, as into a vessel, to know what liquor is in it. Himself knew before; but, that Abraham might know, and that others might know, therefore doth he put him upon this hard service; *Take, now, thy son, &c.*

There are several circumstances which make it a hard service, and, by consequence, advance the faith and obedience of Abraham.

1. Take thy *son*. If it had been a stranger, or a servant, in his house, it had not been so much; but, thy *son*.

2. Thy *only* son; viz. by Sarah. He had another son, Ishmael; he was by Hagar.

3. Thy only son *Isaac;* the child of promise; that son, concerning whom I have told thee, that, *in him*, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

4. Whom thou *lovest*. He loved Ishmael, but Isaac more, because he was the son of his old age, and given in a miraculous way; had it been a son hated, though an only son, it had not been so much.

5. Get thee into the *land of Moriah*,—three days' journey:—it was to be done,—not presently,—but in cold blood. What a conflict must Abraham needs have had between faith and unbelief!

6. Offer him there for a *burnt-offering*. It had been a great trial if only to take his leave of his son, never to see him more; but to kill him; nay, to burn him; and, to do it himself!

This was the temptation;—Abraham readily yields at God's command;—*he rose up early*, verse 3.

Free obedience is acceptable obedience.

Observe. The angel of the Lord calls to him, and bids him hold his hand; verse 11, &c.

A ram was ready, and that was offered, verse 13.

Isaac and the ram were types of Christ. Isaac, in two respects:—

1. In his willingness to be offered; there was no resistance: so Christ,—*Lo, I come.*

2. He was laid upon the altar, but rose again; a type of Christ's resurrection.

The ram also, in two respects:—

1. He was caught in a thicket; Christ was crowned with thorns.

2. He was sacrificed; so Christ was a Sacrifice of God's providing.

Hereupon the promise is renewed, verse 17. There is nothing lost in being willing to lose for God, Matt. xix. 29. Abraham was contented to part with one son, and God assures him of ten thousand thousand sons instead.

God accepts the will for the deed, Hebrews xi. 17.

Abraham's love to God in offering up Isaac, was nothing to God's love to us in offering up Christ. *Behold, what manner of love!* God called, and had right to call, for Isaac. He gave him. We neither called, nor had right to call, for Christ.

Have we no Isaac to offer? no beloved sin to sacrifice? Assuredly, he that will not part with a beloved sin for Christ, when he requires it, will not part with a beloved son for him. Let us not deceive ourselves.

APPENDIX, No. VII.

On those occasions the records of inspired truth were the basis of communications, as interesting as they were conducive to edification. A manuscript of Mr. Henry's, commencing July 1, 1656, ending August 7, 1660, and embracing observations on the first forty-four psalms, affords a satisfactory illustration of the plan adopted during the period referred to. From that source of information it appears, that, after a brief exposition of the psalm, a question was "propounded for conference." A brief selection of the topics, with Mr. Henry's remarks, are as follow:—

Thus; on the 10th psalm, the inquiry, from the fourth verse;—*The wicked through the pride of his*

[d] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

countenance, will not seek after God, was;—What is it that keeps men from seeking after God; from seeking after friendship with God, from seeking after the glory of God? To this Mr. Henry replied;—Pride, Luke xix. 14. Ignorance, Romans iii. 11. Psalm lxxix. 6. John iv. 10. Solomon's Songs, v. 9. compare vi. 1; strong inclinations after something else; things of the world possessed, or laboured after; credit with men of the world; and a reproach feared, Mark x. 22. Luke xiv. 16, &c.; presumption; evil company. Hence, see the apostle's counsel to young converts, Acts ii. 40.

On the first verse of the 18th psalm;—*I will love thee, O Lord, my strength;* the question was;—What are the fruits of the true love of God? It will appear in reference to sin. Where the true love of God is, there is hatred of sin, Psalm xcvii. 10; universal, without exception; constant, without intermission; implacable, without reconciliation. There is also sorrow for sin, Zechariah xii. 10; xiii. 6. In reference to duty. Where love is, there is willingness to it, 2 Corinthians v. 14; delight in it, Psalm lxxxiv. 1 John v. 3. Where love is, it causes the heart to run out after God, Psalm lxiii. 8; he is highest in the thoughts, oftenest, dearest; sincerity, Canticles i. 4. Ephesians vi. 24. Love is boundless; it never thinks it hath done enough. In reference to suffering, it is ready for it; it is patient under it, Romans v. 3, 5. Canticles viii. 6, 7. To these may be added,—Love is tender of God's honour; it loves all that belong to God; see 1 John iii. 20. That love to the brethren, which will evidence love to God, 1 John iii. 14. must be, to *all;* poor, as well as rich; strangers, as well as acquaintance; to those that differ in opinion from us, as well as those that agree with us; wheresoever we see the image of God; it will show itself when the brethren are persecuted; it will be willing to cover their infirmities; the more godly, the more we love them. It eats up the love of the world, 1 John ii. 15. Romans viii. 7. There is no looking upon heaven with one eye, and earth with the other. It longs for the appearance of Jesus Christ, Canticles viii. 14.

From the drift and scope of the twenty-second psalm, the inquiry was;—What may, and ought, a Christian to learn from the sufferings of Jesus Christ? We learn the great love of God to mankind, John iii. 16. Romans v. 8. We learn how just he is; we learn the great evil that is in sin; a lesson of godly sorrow, Zechariah xii. 10; humility, Philippians ii. 5, 6, &c.; holiness, 2 Corinthians v. 15; hatred of sin, 1 Corinthians v. 7. 1 Peter iv. 1, 2. Patience in afflictions, Hebrews xii. 1, 2, 3. 1 Peter ii. 20, 21, &c. Consolation against accusations, Romans viii. 33, 34. John i. 29. Courage against the fear of death, 1 Corinthians xv. 55, &c. Hebrews ii. 14. Love to our brethren, Ephesians ii. 13, 14 Thankfulness. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

Upon Psalm xxix. it was inquired;—How many ways may we become guilty of other men's sins? By command, 2 Samuel xi. 2 Samuel xxiv. By counsel, 2 Chronicles xxii. 2, 3. Numbers xxxi. 16. By consent, Psalm l. 17. Acts xxii. 20. 1 Kings xxi. 16, 19. By provocation, Ephesians vi. 4. Habakkuk ii. 15. By example, Jeremiah xxxii. 19. By neglect to warn, Ezekiel xxxiii. 7, 8; to restrain, 1 Samuel iii. 11; to punish, 1 Kings xx. 42; to reprove, Leviticus xix. 17; to mourn, 1 Corinthians v. 2.

On Psalm xxxi. the question was,—What are the common sins of professors in these days? Empty, vain discourse, James iii. 2. Lukewarmness, Revelations iii. 15, 16.[e] Hypocrisy, formality, Matthew xv. 7, 8. Want of love[f] one towards another, John xiii. 35. Debates, quarrellings; want of meekness to bear injuries; neglect to watch one over another, to reprove, exhort; easiness of belief of slanderous reports; abatement in first love to Jesus Christ, Revelations ii. 4. Worldliness, pride, sensuality, flesh-pleasing, Luke xvii. 26, &c. Itching ears, 2 Timothy iv. 3, 4.

And, on Psalm xxxv. it was proposed;—Wherein consists the power of godliness? See Psalm cxix. 104.—*I hate every false way.* A hypocrite doth not hate every false way. Naaman, 2 Kings v.; Matthew viii. 19, &c. He has a Rimmon to bow to, a father to bury, some secret lust. But the true Christian can let all go. See Philippians iii. 20. *Our conversation is in heaven.* A hypocrite hath not his conversation in heaven; but, either in hell, or earth, at best; it may be, now and then, he may take a turn in heaven; whereas, the heart, thoughts, affections, desires, trading, discourse, are all *heavenly,* where there is the power of godliness. See Habakkuk iii. 17, 18. A hypocrite cannot rejoice in God in the want of creature-comforts; his form withers in winter, Job xx. 20. He is in straits in the fulness of his sufficiency, whereas, a child of God hath a fulness of sufficiency in his straits. See Proverbs iv. 23. The power of godliness consists in keeping the heart; not the eyes, feet, hands, only, but the *heart.* See Psalm i. 2.—*His delight is in the law of the Lord.* He can call *the sabbath a delight.* Romans vii. 24.—*O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* The Christian has complaints about, and combats with, the whole body of sin. He looks on his heart as his worst part. A hypocrite counts it his best. Where the powe

[e] See a Sermon by Mr. P. Henry, on this passage. Evan. Mag. v. xxix. p. 55.

[f] When Cardinal Campeggio presented the letters of his legation at the Diet of Augsburgh, he made an oration in Latin; the substance whereof was, that the cause of so many sects, which the reigned, was want of charity and love. The History of the Council of Trent, p. 53. fol. 1620.

of godliness is, there will be endeavours to promote it in others, especially in such as are under our charge, Genesis xviii. 19. Joshua xxiv. 15. There will be willingness to part with any thing if God calls for it, Genesis xxii. Also, willingness to be tried, Psalm cxxxix. 20. Tenderness of God's honour, Psalm cxv. 1. Care in second-table duties, even as in first; and, in all we do, to do it with an upright heart. Here the true Christian and the hypocrite part. Both do duties:—they pray, hear, &c. but, in the manner, they differ. The one does all from love to God, with an eye to his will and glory; the other, from form. Evenness of conversation is a part of the power of godliness.

APPENDIX, No. VIII.

The following is a specimen:—

That there is one God, 1 Timothy ii. 5. That there is a mutual enmity between God and man, by reason of sin, Zechariah xi. 8; that Christ is the Mediator, 1 Timothy ii. 5; that he was made man, being in the form of God, Philippians ii. 5, 6; that, being made man, he became obedient to the law, Matthew iii. 15; was, *The Lord our Righteousness*, Jeremiah xxiii. 6.

Therefore, put on Christ, Romans xiii. 14; who has left us an example, 1 Pet. ii. 21; he gave himself to die the death for us, Acts ii. 23.

The particulars of his sufferings, at large, from several scriptures. He was buried, Acts xiii. 29. His resurrection, 1 Corinthians xv. 4.

The benefits flowing from his death;—God *well-pleased;* Matthew iii. 17; for he died as a Sacrifice, 1 Corinthians v. 7. Believers are justified, Romans v. 9; *i. e.* their sins pardoned, Isaiah xliii. 25, 26. Christ's ascension, Acts i. 9; sitting at God's right hand, Psalm cx. 1; his intercession, Romans viii. 34; as a Priest, Psalm cx. 4; and, in all this, our hope, 1 Timothy i. 1.

The work was thus wrought for us, to reconcile God to us. There is a work to be wrought in us, which is, to reconcile us to God, Colossians i. 21; the Author of it, the Spirit, John xv. 26.

The work of the Spirit in reference to sin;—he worketh,

1. Conviction of sin, John xvi. 8; for which the means used are, the preaching of the word, Isaiah lviii. 1; which is a lamp, and a light, Proverbs vi. 23; private personal reproof, Proverbs vi. 23; afflictions, Psalm cxix. 67; the conversation of those that are godly, 1 Corinthians vii. 16.

2. Contrition for sin, Zechariah xii. 10. (Digression,—of the Spirit, as a spirit of supplication, from several other texts.) This contrition is giving a *heart of flesh*, Ezekiel xxxvi. 26; breaking up *fallow ground*, Jeremiah iv. 3; rending the heart, Joel ii. 13.

3. Conversion from sin, Acts iii. 26; from all sins; from beloved sins; and, to a course of godliness, Hebrews xii. 1.

In reference to grace. Sanctification in general, 1 Thessalonians, v. 23. 2 Corinthians vii. 1. Particulars:—

1. The sanctification of the mind, or understanding, Ephesians iv. 23; in respect of knowledge, Colossians iii. 10; motives to get knowledge,[g] Colossians i. 9; directions, Hosea vi. 3. 2 Timothy i. 13. Luke viii. 18; in respect of wisdom, Ephesians i. 7, 8; exhortations to get wisdom, Proverbs xvi. 16; in respect of thoughts; vain thoughts hated, Psalm cxix. 113; good thoughts loved, Psalm civ. 34.

2. The sanctification of the memory, John xiv. 26.

3. Of the conscience, Hebrews ix. 14.

4. Of the will, Psalm cx. 3; willing to submit to the will of God, Acts xxi. 14; willing to die, 2 Corinthians v. 8; unwilling to sin, Genesis xxxix. 9.

5. Of the affections, Colossians iii. 2. The affection of love;—love to God, 1 John iv. 19. Mark xii. 30. Revelations ii. 4; love to ourselves and to our neighbour, Mark xii. 31. Of hatred, Psalm cxxxix. 21, 22. Job xlii. 6. Of desire after God, Isaiah xxvi. 8, 9; after righteousness, Matthew v. 6; against inordinate desires, Genesis xxx. 1. Of joy, Hosea ix. 1. Philippians iv. 4. Of grief; not to grieve at the good of others, Acts xiii. 45; not to grieve inordinately at any thing, Psalm xlii. 11; sorrow according to God, Matthew v. 4; for the sins of sinners, Psalm cxix. 136; for the sufferings of saints, Amos vi. 6. Of hope in God, Psalm cxlvi. 5; for heaven, Romans v. 2; against presumption, Job xxvii. 8. Despair,[h] Ezekiel xxxiii. 10, 11. Of fear, Luke xii. 4, 5. Ecclesiastes viii. 12, 13. Of anger, Ephesians iv. 26, 27; its opposite, meekness, 1 Peter iii. 4. Of zeal, Galatians iv. 18.

6. The sanctification of the body, Romans xii. 1; sensual appetite subdued, Hebrews xi. 25. The eye sanctified, Psalm cxix. 37; the hands, Psalm xxiv. 3, 4; the tongue, Psalm xxxix. 1. Against lying, Psalm cxix. 163; swearing, Jeremiah xxiii. 10; slandering, Psalm l. 20. Of good discourse, Colossians iv. 6.

The summary of these sermons about sanctification, he gave in two sermons from 2 Corinthians v.

[g] So divine a thing is wisdom, and so excellent is knowledge, (how much soever it be despised by carnal hearts,) that innocency itself was so ambitious of it, as to choose rather to incur the highest displeasure of an offended God, than want of it; nay, than want greater degrees of it. P. Henry. From Matthew Henry's MS.

[h] You must despair before you can have a good hope;—despair of being saved in yourselves. He that is out of his way, must despair of reaching his journey's end, except he turn. P. Henry. From Matthew Henry's MS.

17; and observed, that, while he was upon that subject, about three years, there were more than forty of that little parish that were removed into eternity, who, when he began, were alive, and in health, &c.

The Spirit's work, in reference to grace, is, having implanted it, to excite and actuate it, Canticles iv. 16; to strengthen it against corruption; to increase it, Proverbs iv. 18. Exh. 2 Peter iii. 18.—to perform it, Philippians i. 6. Exh. Philippians iv. 1.

The work of the Spirit, in reference to peace, John xiv. 27. And that was his last subject in the course of his ministry at Worthenbury.

These were the subjects and texts of about six years' sabbath sermons; only, that once he spent about two months in preaching over the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, before his setting up that ordinance there; and once he spent about half a year in preaching over the epistle to Laodicea, Revelations iii.[j]

APPENDIX, No. IX.

Mr. Henry, noticing assurance, has thus expressed himself:—

Assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, are the glorious privileges of true believers. Justification is the root, and these are the branches from it.

There is a low and weak degree of assurance, where the evidences of the love of God to our souls are not full and clear; a mixture of much doubting and fear. Even this produces peace.

There is a strong and high degree, which is called *full assurance;* clear evidence, and little doubting. This produces joy.

Peace and joy differ thus;—peace stills and quiets the soul, but joy stirs and transports it. Peace is joy in the bud and blossom; joy is peace in the ripe fruit. There are more believers who have peace than have joy, because there are more whose evidences are dark and weak,—and it is their own fault.

There is the assurance or certainty of the object; that is, God's love is sure and certain to a believer. He doth love him now, Proverbs viii. 17. He did love him *from everlasting*, Jeremiah xxxi. 3. He will love him *to the end*, John xiii. 1.

There is also the assurance and certainty of the subject; that is,—this or that particular believer is certain that God loves him now, and hath loved him from everlasting, and will love him to everlasting.

Many a child of God gets to heaven who is never able to say,—I am sure I have an interest in the love of God. Yet *this* assurance is attainable, as may be proved from those scriptures which make it our duty to labour after it, 2 Peter i. 10. and from scripture instances of such as did attain it, both in the Old Testament, Job xix. 25. and in the New, 2 Corinthians v. 1. Galatians ii. 20. 1 John iii. 19; iv. 13.

Where it is attained, it sweetens all conditions.[k] We then see all our mercies, and all our crosses, not only consist with, but flow from, the love of God. It is a great furtherer of obedience. None walk so close with God as those who have clearest evidences of his love. Assurance makes a man truly willing to die, 2 Corinthians v. 1, &c. Luke ii. 29.

Labour after it. How? Not without diligence. Bring thy condition to the word of God. See what it saith of those who shall be saved, and then inquire,—Am I such an one? John iii. 36.—Do I believe?—Do I accept of Jesus Christ? Romans viii. 9.—Have I the Spirit of Christ? 1 John iii. 14.—Do I love the people of God?[l]

Reading in some of my dear father's [Philip Henry] diary, kept in a little almanack, I find excellent things; e. g. From,—*The rather give diligence to make your calling and election sure*,—he notes: This has many sweet advantages. It promotes godliness, keeps humble, is got with pains, &c. A man may be a child of God who hath it not; yet such will seek and press after it. To which he adds;—I have both sought, and found it, in some poor measure. Lord, increase it every day, more and more, unto *full assurance!*[m]

APPENDIX, No. X.

Among Mr. Henry's papers the following statement has been preserved; and, as it appears to have been placed in the hands of Miss Matthews, and may be of use to others, especially in like circumstances, it is here introduced. It may be regarded as a gratifying specimen of the prudence, the simplicity, and devotional frame of mind, for which the writer is so deservedly eminent:—

April 16.
Day of Prayer and Fasting.

What warrant for this duty?

Answer. From Philippians iv. 6;—*In every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.*

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i Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

k Grace, with assurance, is no less than *heaven* let down into the soul. Bishop Hopkins. Works, v. 3. p. 72. ed. 1809.

l Scripture marks of those who shall be saved, are, *Faith in the Lord Jesus*, John iii. 16; vi. 47. Love to God, 1 Corinthians ii. 9; obedience to his commandments, Hebrews v. 9. Matthew vii. 2 John x. 27, 28; faithfulness in his service, Matthew xxv. 21, 2 perseverance to the death, Revelations ii. 10. P. Henry. Orig. M

m Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS.

If in every thing, then, surely, in a thing of so much weight as marriage, Colossians iii. 17.

But why are friends called?

Answer. We are commanded, Galatians vi. 2. to *bear one another's burdens;* to sympathize with each other in all our concernments; to *weep with them that weep,* and to *rejoice with them that rejoice.* David's practice, calling others to join with him, Psalm xxxiv. 3. The command, in case of sickness, James v. 14, 16. Besides, *Vis unita fortior;* Many hands make light work.

For what end is this duty?

Answer. There are many ends of it. These are some of the chief, which are fit to be communicated:—

1. To bless God, who hath ordered things so in his providence, as to bring things to the pass they are at; in this plain way,—more comfortable to us, less offensive to others, who, not knowing the grounds we proceeded on, might have drawn ill consequences from it, and sinned by our example.

2. To make atonement for sin in the *blood of Christ,* James v. 15. In general, for all the sins of our single state. In particular, for miscarriages in the carrying on of this affair;—distrust of God, unbelief, impatience; distractions occasioned by it; irregularities of affection. It being my desire, that no guilt may go with me into that condition, which may be as poison and gall, but that I may enter into it as innocent as Adam, in the day when he was married in the garden.

3. To beg the presence, and the favour of God, which is the happiness and sweetness of every condition and relation, that he will own and bless us.

4. To beg a frame of heart suited to the condition; that, as Saul had another spirit given when he was crowned, so we may have when we are married. As cares and burthens will be new, so strength may be renewed also to bear them; as temptations will be new, so sufficient grace may be bestowed to resist them; as comforts will be new, so a heart may be given to enjoy God in them, and to sit loose from the creature; as duties will be new, so we may be enabled to perform them, that we may live together as heirs of the grace of life.

5. In reference to events as to outward things; that the Lord will take into his own hand the disposal of them, and quiet our hearts in what he determines, whether it be for the worse, or for the better. That, if he see good, he will please to grant us the comfortable fruits and pledges[n] of marriage.[o]

[n] So children were simply called by the Latins;—*pignora,*—*pledges.* See Milton's Poetical Works, *ut supra,* v. 6. p. 36. note.

[o] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

APPENDIX, No. XI.

Some of these records being still preserved, the following selection will not be unacceptable:—

How far may a man go towards heaven, and yet fall short?

In general; a great way, Mark xii. 34. *Almost* a Christian, Acts xxvi. 28.

In particular; a man may have a great deal of knowledge, 1 Corinthians xiii. 1, 2; even so much, as to teach others, Matthew vii. 22. He may be free from many, nay, from any, gross sins, Luke xviii. 11. He may perform, not only some, but all manner of external duties of religion;—pray, fast, give alms, Matthew vi. 1, 2, &c. He may be a lover of good men, as Herod, Pharaoh, Darius. He may repent, after a sort, as Ahab; and believe, after a sort, as Simon Magus. He may suffer much for religion, as, no doubt, Judas did, while a retainer of Christ. If a man may go thus far, and yet fall short, then what will become of those who go not near so far? Then, what need have we to look about us, and to make sure of regeneration, and sincerity, which are things that certainly accompany salvation!

What are the common hinderances of men's salvation?

Ignorance, John iv. 10; unbelief, John v. 40; love of the world, 2 Timothy iv. 10; pride,[p] men will not stoop to be saved by the righteousness of Christ, Romans x. 3. nor to be ruled by his laws, Luke xix. 14. prejudice against the ways of God, and against the company that walk in them; their paucity, their poverty; presumption upon God's mercy, and upon long life. See that none of these things hinder us, especially now being forewarned.

What are evidences of love to God?

Hatred of sin, Psalm xcvii. 11; and that, especially, because it dishonours him; care to keep his commandments, John xiv. 15; and that of choice, and with delight, 1 John v. 3; love to the people of God, as such, 1 John iii. 14; willingness to part with any thing for his sake, Genesis xxii. 12; desire of fellowship with him in his ordinances, Canticles i. 2; grief when he withdraws; love to, and longing for the appearance of, Christ; mourning that we can love him no more.

How are we to express love to our neighbour?

By praying for him, for all men, 1 Timothy ii. 1; even for enemies, Matthew v. 44. By reproving him, Leviticus xix. 17; unless he be a scorner, which we are not rashly to conclude. By not envying him because either of what he is, or hath, or doth, 1 Corinthians xiii. 4; but, rather, rejoicing, Romans xii. 15. Doing to him as we would have him to do

[p] See a striking illustration of this subject, in "The Christian in Complete Armour, by William Gurnall, M. A." 2nd part. p. 73 4to, 1658.

to us, Matthew vii. 12. Being tender of his name, neither to raise, nor receive, an ill report against him, Psalm xxv. 23. If a superior, we are to honour and respect him;[q] if an equal, or inferior, to be affable, and courteous, and condescending towards him. If good, to associate with him, Psalm xvi. 2; if bad, to pity him, and pray for him, but not be over-familiar with him.[r]

It may be here added, that Mr. Matthew Henry, in a little volume, in his own hand-writing, has preserved some copious *memoranda* of another, and important, series of "Questions of Conference in the Family." The following list of them will show how his venerable father studied the welfare of those around him:—

What are the scripture attributes of God the Father?

What are the scripture names, titles, and attributes of God the Son?

What are the scripture names, titles, and attributes of the Holy Ghost?

What doth the scripture say concerning the omnisciency, power, wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, mercy, truth, and faithfulness of God?

These are respectively answered by an extensive selection of inspired statements, and concluded by a deduction of uses. Those which close the last mentioned question are thus stated:—

This is terror to us to consider, that God will be true to his threatenings; they are not bugbears, to frighten children and fools, but such as he will be true to. Then, *stand in awe, and sin not.*[s] This is comfort also, that, seeing he is true and faithful to his promises, we may trust in him, and rely upon him. There is duty also; we must labour, as well as we can, to be like God; to be true to our words, especially in witness-bearing, and to be faithful to all our entrustments. Our yea must be yea, and our nay, nay. We must be punctual in every thing; not off and on, cozening and cheating, and deceiving; for, that God, whom we profess to believe in, and serve, is not so. Those who were afterwards called puritans, were, in King Henry the Eighth's time, called *fast-men.*

APPENDIX, No. XII.

Another instance occurred in the address delivered by Mr. Henry, at Boreatton, on occasion of his son Matthew, and the only son of his friend, Mr. Hunt, leaving the country for a residence in London, A. D. 1687.[t] The following is the substance of it; *And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever,* 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. These words are the pious advice of an aged father to his young son to be religious.

To be religious is to know God, John xvii. 3; that he is, Hebrews xi. 6; and what he is, as far as he hath revealed himself in the books of creation, and Scripture. He hath revealed himself to us in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians iv. 6. Those who are diligent in the use of the means,[u] shall attain this knowledge, Hosea iii. 6.

This knowledge is such an act of the understanding, as includes the will and affections. We must own and acknowledge him as the first cause of all things, and see our absolute and universal dependence upon him, as our benefactor, who hath preserved and provided for us; as the chiefest good, and love him with all our heart, soul, mind, and might; as our highest end, and aim at his glory in all things; and as our God and Father in Jesus Christ. This is the most comfortable: his New-Testament title. If he be our Father, we must carry it as children.

To know God is to be acquainted with him, Job xxii. 21; to have *intimate* acquaintance with him; and this includes all religion; it is walking with God.

To be religious is also to *serve God.* You cannot serve a better master; you cannot be employed in better work; you cannot have better wages.[v] *The gift of God is eternal life.* There are wages in hand. There is the testimony of a good conscience; there are the smiles of God; there is the reward of the inheritance.

This service of God is to wait upon him daily and duly in the duties of his immediate service and worship. If you do not pray, and read, and hear, you are not God's servants. And it is to walk in all holy obedience before him. Serious inquiries into the will of God, and sincere endeavours to do it, are the properties of his servants. You must look into the word of God if you would know his will.

A servant of God must be lowly-minded and humble, diligent and industrious, not only do his

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q Besides the mantle of love that is to be thrown over the faults of all, there is a robe of reverence and honour to be cast over the faults of superiors. The emperor, Constantine, did not think the imperial purple too precious to make a veil to cover the infirmities of his bishops. P. Henry. From Matthew Henry's MS.

r P. Henry. Orig. MS.

s Sins are like circles in the water when a stone is thrown into it, one produces another. When anger was in Cain's heart, murder was not far off. P. Henry. From Matthew Henry's MS.

t Tong's Life of the Rev. Matthew Henry, p. 55. *ut supra.*

u Labour after knowledge in the use of means. These are prayer. James i. 5. Prov. ii. 3, 4. David, Ps. cxix. Solomon.—Reading and meditating in the word of God. This is the tree of knowledge, 2 Timothy iii. 15, 16.—Practice, John vii. 17. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

v Dr. Sibbs would say, could we suppose sorrow in heaven, this would be our sorrow there, that we did no more work for God, before we came thither to receive so great wages. A Sermon at the Funeral of Mr. Jeremiah Whitaker, by Simeon Ashe. 4to, 1654. p. 43.

work, but abound in it,—and patient, to undergo the difficulties of the work, and the delays of the reward.

All this must be with a perfect heart; that is, with truth and uprightness, Genesis xvii. 1. Job i. 1. If you would be thus perfect, be sure to lay a good foundation. Take heed of double-dealing with God; of vain thoughts[w] in duty, Matthew xv. 7, 8. See that you pray in praying, and hear in hearing, &c. Approve yourselves to God. Do all to his glory. Let his word be your rule, 1 Corinthians x. 31. See your imperfections, and bewail them daily. Here is the difference between the true Christian and the hypocrite. The hypocrite acts in hypocrisy, and it never troubles him. He thinks he merits. The godly man bewails the imperfections of his sincerity, and that is a pitch no hypocrite can attain to.

A willing mind too is of great consequence. It is that which God looks at very much. In conversion, the great change is on the will. Now, when there is a willing mind, vain excuses will not be made. See Luke xiv. There will be forwardness in good works, Titus iii. 1. *Ready to every good work;* the original is, go before in good works. When the mind is willing, duty is done cheerfully. When the heart is enlarged, then we run in the way of God's commandments. There is a great difference between a volunteer and a pressed soldier.

Now every day take notice of the willingness and unwillingness of your minds to that which is good. Look up to God, and beg of him to make you willing. Draw me. Consider how willing he is to do you good, and let that make you willing to do him service. Consider how willing Christ was to come and die to save us. Think of this when you are unwilling to duty.

Remember the omniscience of God. He searches all hearts. He understands all the imaginations of the thoughts. He understands the unobserved motions of the fancy. Do you believe this? Improve it, as a bridle to keep you from all sin;[x] as a spur to put you on your duty, especially secret duty, especially sincerity in duty. There may be hypocrisy that you do not see, but he sees it. There may be also sincerity that you do not see, but he sees that. When you are from under the eyes of your parents, remember,—God sees.[y]

Consider the promise. *If thou seek him, he will be found of thee.* He hears prayer. Be not sparing in that duty. If you seek the pardon of sin, you shall have it. If any thing burthens us, he will either support or deliver us. We must seek him with our whole heart; early and earnestly. Observe how the promise is applied to Solomon.—If *thou* seek, *thou*, though a child,—if *thou* seek him, he will be found of *thee*. Promises must be particularly applied.

Recollect the threatening. If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off,—though thou art Solomon, *my son*. It is best that we be drawn to duty, but it is better to be driven than not to do it at all. Adam in innocency was awed by a threatening. You who have given up your names to God, take heed that you do not forsake him. Do not forsake his truths. Do not forsake the ways you have walked in. Do not forsake the people of God. *Go by the footsteps of the flock.* Unbelief causes departing. It may be you are thinking you will never forsake God, as Peter, *though all men forsake, yet I will not.* Take heed of resolving in your own strength. It is by faith you stand. Fear, lest you should be a cast-away.

There are some who are especially concerned to know God, and serve him.

Those who are young are so. Solomon was young when this counsel was given him, and he counsels others, Ecclesiastes xii. 1. *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.* God must have the flower of our age.[z] The beloved disciple was the youngest of the disciples.

The children of godly parents are especially concerned to know God. *Know the God of thy father.* Thy father hath served him, and doth not repent it. Godly parents dedicate their children to God in a special manner,—*the son of my vows.* The children of many prayers should seek and serve God; indeed, every prayer for them will turn to a curse if they do not. God is a tried friend.

Those also who are advanced above others, in honour, or estate, in the world, are especially concerned to know God. Thou, Solomon, my son. David had other children, but we do not read of any such charge to them. Solomon was to sit upon the throne. Those who have more than others, should render accordingly. Others will be apt to

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[w] See Charnock's Works. v. 8. p. 501, &c.

[x] An ancient divine urging a "careful attention unto, and a needful hiding of the word in our hearts,"—says, it "may retraine as a bridle from sinne," and "quicken us as a spurre to every good duty." Sermons by Alexander Grosse, B. D. p. 237. quod. 1640. And Dr. Barrow remarks, "Did we only believe the future judgment, with the results of it, that alone would be an effectual both *spurr and curb* to us." Works, vol. 2. p. 40. *ut supra.*

[y] This may be of use to us, when the thoughts of it are kept live upon the heart in reference to these great concernments of our lives. In reference to *sin*,—it may teach us watchfulness. Beware of doing that which you would not have the Lord see you do, Genesis xxxix. 9. Apply it to the sanctification of the sabbath.—In reference to *duties*. It concerns us to look to our ends in coming to duty, and to see after what manner we perform, Hebrews xii. 28, 29. Servants work hard when the master stands by. Soldiers fight stoutly when the general is present. And when we have done duty, it may support us in expectation of our reward; though unknown to men. Matt. vi. 4, 18.—In reference to *wants*. Despond not. Be not careful. Matt. vi. 32.—In reference to *dangers*, Ps. xvi. 8. P. Henry. Orig. MS. See P. Henry's Eighteen Sermons, *ut supra*, p. 87.

[z] See 1 Sam. ii. 33. 1 Cor. vii. 36.

do as they see them do, the higher the place is, the greater is the danger if we are not religious. And consider the advantage to be gained by it; those who *honour God he will honour.*

Suffer the word of exhortation. Labour always to keep up right and good thoughts of God. He is not a hard master, but a good master. He accepts the will for the deed. Let Jesus Christ be always precious to you. Let him be your Alpha and Omega, your strength every day. Take him along with you in all your studies, in all you do. Let him commend his word to you; it is the book of books. He is not a true Christian that doth not love the word of God. The more of this love there is, the more is the evidence of a good work wrought upon the soul. Be sure you practise prayer! You have need of strength from God in every thing, and that must be fetched in by prayer. Pray continually. The praying Christian will be the thriving Christian. Beware of bad company; choose such as are good for your companions:—say, *Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the commandments of my God*, Psalm cxix. 115. I cannot keep in with you, and keep in with God too. Be watchful; we walk in the midst of snares.[a]

APPENDIX, No. XIII.

It was, possibly, in reference to this, that the following testimonial was written.

These may certify whom it concerns, that Mr. Philip Henry, Master of Arts, and Minister of the Gospel at Worthenbury, in the County of Flint, is orthodox in doctrine, well-qualified with learning, parts, gifts, and graces, for the work of the ministry, laborious and successful in his calling, unblamable in conversation, and hath continued well-affected to his Majesty.

N. Bernard.[b]
William Holland of Malpas, R.
Robert Fogg, Minister at Bangor.[c]
R. Steele, Pastor of Hanmer.[d]

APPENDIX, No. XIV.

It was about this period, A. D. 1668, that the Rev. John Evans settled at Wrexham, as pastor of the Independent church. He was of Baliol College, in Oxford, and successively master of the free schools, in Dolgelly, Merionethshire, and Oswestry, in Shropshire. His father and grandfather were both clergymen and rectors of Penegos, in Montgomeryshire, but, notwithstanding the zealous interference of relatives, his inquiries resulted in nonconformity; and though, like his brethren, an implicit follower of the dictates of conscience, he partook largely of the sufferings of the times. He was a man of good learning, great gravity, and seriousness; of a most unblamable conversation, and a laborious and judicious preacher.[e] Mrs. Evans, his second wife, was the daughter of Colonel Gerrard, Governor of Chester Castle; a woman of an excellent spirit, and of a strong understanding.[f] Their son, Dr. John Evans, was the author of the well known Discourses on the Christian Temper.[g] Mr. Evans was "strictly congregational,"[h] and "a high Dissenter:" there was, nevertheless, an intimacy kept up between him and the family at Broad Oak. Mr. Matthew Henry has thus recorded the termination of his course, which event took place, July 16, 1700.[i] A little while before he died, which was in his seventy-second year, he spoke with more apprehension than usual, rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ as his only rock: and when it was said to him that he was going to his Father's house, he cheerfully answered,—It will not be well with me till I am there. Some present desired him to leave some good counsel with them to whom he replied,—Go to God by prayer.[k]

The reader will pardon the continuance of this narrative, for the purpose of perusing, in connexion with it, the following letter. It is transcribed from Mrs. Savage's hand-writing, and appears to have been copied by her in early life, while under the direction of her father. It presents an interesting specimen of the pastoral vigilance and affectionate care of those holy men who have been, and are, too much spoken against.

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a From Mrs. Savage's MS.

b D. D. See *ante*, pp. 143, 144. "1661. Oct. 15. Upon the evening of this day, Dr. Bernard, parson of Whitchurch, died, it seems suddenly. Nov. 7. I was at Whitchurch, at the burial of Dr. Bernard. Mr. Bridge preached. Luke xix. 44." P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

c See *ante*, p. 145.

d From the Orig. MS.

e The Noncon. Mem. v. 3. pp. 523-4.

f Wilson's History of Dissenting Churches, v. 2. p. 213.

g See Dr. Harris's Funeral Sermon for Dr. Evans, pp. 31—44. ed 1730.

h Mr. Tong's Life of Mr. Matthew Henry, p. 278. *ut supra.*

i 1700, July 20. Satt. I heard of the death of Mr. Jenks, of Widinbury, a high conformist, formerly curate of Whitchurch, and also, of the death of Mr. Evans, of Wrexham, a high Dissenter —both, I hope, good men, yet of such principles as that my dear father (of blessed memory) hath had many sharp censures from them both: from the one for complying so far, from the other for complying no further. Saith he in his diary,—Lord, which of them shall I seek to please! Neither, but thyself alone.—I hope they are now all happy together in that blessed vision, where Luther and Calvin are both of a mind. Mrs. Savage's Diary, Orig. MS.

k Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, p. 278. *ut supra.* See also the Welsh Nonconformist's Memorial, p. 210. *ut supra.*

A Letter from Mr. Evans to his people in the time of persecution.

To the saints and faithful brethren in and about Wrexham, with whom I have walked in the fellowship of the gospel.

My dearly beloved brethren;

Though the circumstances of the present day take me off from the main work of a watchman over your souls, in visiting, preaching to, and praying among you; yet, being taken from you in presence only, not in heart, I desire still to be a faithful remembrancer of the Lord for you, that ye may be taught of him, and holpen by him to feed upon the truths, promises, and precepts of the gospel; and experience the same to be a *green pasture*, and *still waters*, to renew and strengthen your inward man, and further your growth into him,—into him in all things, who is the only head and lawgiver to the church, even our Lord Jesus Christ. What the apostle said with respect to the Corinthians, I may truly say, in some measure, with respect unto you, my desire with my poor weak endeavours have been to espouse you unto one husband, and to present you a chaste virgin unto Christ. Pardon me if my love to you make me jealous over you, and to fear (as he did) lest your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ; and so another, to wit, a subtle, formal, lukewarm, self-seeking, men-pleasing, worldly, carnal frame of spirit grow upon you, to the wearing off the gospel savour, that sometimes hath appeared in you, and to the beguiling you of all you have hitherto done and suffered. I speak not this, as having any demonstration hereof from most of you; but as considering the day of temptation and trial that hath overtaken both you and me, and earnestly desiring that herein both I and you, our knowledge, faith, love, patience, self-denial, sincerity, integrity, stedfastness, and constancy, may, when tried, be found to praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, that in such a day I may not be wholly wanting to you in point of advice, consider and improve the particulars following, which, under present circumstances, not so much I as Christ himself requires of you. Hearken not to the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge, Proverbs xix. 27. nor to those that by reproaches, contempt, and scorn, would make you forget what of God you have seen and experienced in his own appointments, Jeremiah xxiii. 16. compare with verse 27. Let your most familiar converse be, not with those that make it their study and discourse to palliate the neglect of God and conscience in their compliance with evil, nor with those that are mainly solicitous how they may shift off the cross, but with those that are most careful to keep themselves from sin, and to grow in grace, to the pleasing of that God from whom they expect the crown.

Be much in searching the Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation, and thoroughly to furnish you with what is suitable to your case and condition, whatever it be. Pray and wait for the Spirit's teaching through them. Neglect no means[1] God affords you to discover his mind and will in them, yet admit of no interpretation or gloss on them, but what is consonant to the main scope of the whole of them, which always and unchangeably is,—the advancing of the grace of God in Christ; the debasing of man in himself, with the bringing of him to a sole dependence on Christ for wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; the destruction of sin; the furtherance of holiness; and, therein, the everlasting happiness of the soul. When you cannot take forth new lessons, learn the old better. Watch over your hearts, lest, through unbelief, they draw back from any thing of God or Christ that once you have received; or, through the deceitfulness of sin in them, they turn you aside to any crooked path. Acquaint yourselves well with the state of your own souls, especially, whether they grow or decline in their esteem of, love to, and delight in, Christ and holiness; in their hatred of sin and vanity: as also in their weanedness from the world, and preparedness for the cross. Let every defect you find in yourselves still lead you to a more naked dependence on Christ, and be as a fresh incentive to lift your souls with more earnestness to God in prayer. In your addresses to him, forget not

Your fellow-servant and brother, who desires
so to be found with you waiting for the gracious
and glorious appearance of our Lord Jesus,

JOHN EVANS.

1 "To convince those of error who say that believers need not trouble themselves further with reading and hearing,—if they believe, they are justified; if once justified, always justified. Consider;—such have cause to suspect they have no true faith, for a true believer hath that in him, which will stir him up to use all means to know Christ better, and grow in faith,—The best are ignorant of many things concerning Christ, Prov. xxx. 2, 3.—Though justification be an act absolved in one instant, yet the manifestation and assurance of it increaseth according as we increase in faith, Rom. xiii. 11. Our salvation is nearer than when we believed,—though such as believe are sure to be saved, Rom. viii. 1; yet a true believer, negligent in seeking to grow, shall be greatly abridged of his comfort in this life, and afflicted with many outward crosses, and inward terrors, so as he may lose his assurance and joy, and comfort in prayer, and be like a tree in winter. Yea, it may be he shall never, while he lives, recover his comfort. Though he shall go to heaven in the end, yet he shall have a hell here all his life." Mr. Herring, Oct. 14, 1619; on 1 John v. 13. From a MS. of the Rev. Arthur Hildersam. *Penes me.* See Mr. Herring's Life, in Clark's Lives, annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 160. *ut supra.*

APPENDIX, No. XV.

ANOTHER which was delivered not long after, shall be added more at length. The text was, Jeremiah vi. 16. *Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and you shall find rest, &c.* The first words,—*Thus saith the Lord*, should be sufficient to engage attention; for, wherever God has a mouth to speak, we should have an ear to hear. Here he looks upon the children of men as a company of travellers out of the way,—he calls after them,—Come to me, I will put you in a better way. The way is Christ, John xiv. 4, 5, 6.

The ways of religion, like others, have an entrance, —the strait gate. They are hedged in with the commandments of God. They are tracked by others who have gone before; and they have an end,—life and salvation. The way of godliness is the *old* way, and it is the will of God that we should walk in it. It is also a *good* way, and those who walk in it shall find *rest*.

Many look upon *these* ways to be upstart, and the way of sin to be old. It is true, the way of sin has been of long standing, and in it we all set out; but the way of godliness is older. The devil was not up so soon, but God was up before him, Ecclesiastes vii. 29.

There are four remarkable periods of time,—two concerning the old world, and two concerning the new; but in both, godliness had the start.

The first edition of the old world was when Adam was created. He was made upright, and walked in uprightness. The way of religion was the *first* way. The second edition was in Noah's time, 1600 years after. The old world was filthy and vile, and it was drowned; eight persons were saved, to be the seed of the new. Then godliness got the ascendancy, *Noah walked with God;* so did Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.

The first edition of the new world, was in the days of the incarnation; called, in the Old Testament, the world to come. Jesus was the great exemplar. There were also his apostles, divers holy men and holy women. Inquire how *they* walked. The second edition may be dated at the Reformation. Between the apostles' time and Luther's there was a great apostasy, but God raised him up, and the Spirit was then working. Many were eminent for piety, and strict and holy walking. This was the way of the blessed martyrs in the days of Queen Mary; and of the good old Puritans[m] in the days of Queen Elizabeth and King James. Some of whom some of us have known. Oh, walk in their way. Nay, it may be, you may be sent to your own old ways —not your first: they were wicked; but, ask, What were my ways when first *converted?* Most Christians have their *first love*, and too many leave it.

The way of doctrinal faith is a good old way. The Papists ask us in scorn, Where our religion was before Luther? We answer, It was where theirs was not, before or since; namely, in the word of God. We must try all doctrines by the Scripture. Those doctrines are likely to be according to truth, and not error, which abase men, and lift up God.

The way of divine worship, in all the ordinances, is a good old way. The way of sabbath religion, Genesis ii. 1, 2. is as old as paradise. Adam kept the sabbath. The disciples kept the sabbath, and Christ appeared to them again and again, Acts xxii. 6. They remained till midnight, praying and preaching. John was *in the Spirit on the Lord's day.*[n] This was the way of the old Puritans; they were up early on the sabbath morning, diligent in the ways

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m In the preface, a like phrase was introduced from the pen of Mr. *Matthew* Henry, and it is gratifying to observe the representation as the joint testimony of two such witnesses. Though the idea conveyed is opposed to that which, for reasons best known to the promulgers, the persons called Puritans commonly receive, it appears in full consistence with truth; indeed, it seems to the writer, as the result of diligent investigation, that due allowance being made for defects, incidental to the times, and otherwise, without invidious distinctions easily accounted for, it would be difficult to find a body of men more loyal, useful, or devout. "Be not ashamed," said the pious Rector of Weston Favell, "of the name of Puritan; they were the soundest preachers, and, I believe, the truest followers of Jesus Christ. I esteem them as some of the most zealous Christians that ever appeared in our land." See Mr. Brown's Memoirs of Mr. Hervey. pp. 223, 224, *ut supra.*

It may be remarked, that, in proportion as contemporary authorities, distinguished by their religious excellence, or attention to the simple verity, are consulted, and the assertions so frequently reiterated, watchfully scrutinized, the more wariness of observation will be discerned in the description given of a Puritan by Dr. Watts,—a separatist from the vain and dangerous courses of a vicious world. Works. v. 7. p. 565. *ut supra;* the more candid and favourable also, commonly, will be the judgment.

The following extract from an original relic, is a satisfactory corroboration of many others.—"The Puritanes, whose fantastical zeal I mislike, thoughe they differ in ceremonies and accidents, yet they agree with us in *substance of religion*, and I think all, or most of them, *love his Matie.*" Letter from Archbishop Hutton, to Lord Cranborne, 18 Dec. 1604. Printed in Dr. Whitaker's History of Richmondshire, vol. 2. p. 315. See the "Character of an old English Puritane, or Nonconformist," by John Geree, M. A. 4to. 1646.

n It is an excellent thing, and very desirable, and to be laboured after, that we be *in the Spirit on the Lord's day;* and that is, not to be,—either in the world, or in the flesh, or in the devil. Sabbath time must not be spent in worldly employments,—no manner of work, except necessity and mercy. It is a good rule, to defer what may as well have been done before, or be left alone till after. Neither must we be in the flesh, in recreations. There should not be feasting on the Lord's day; nor in the devil, in wrath and malice, in strife and envy. But we should be in the *Spirit*, that is, in a spiritual frame of heart, as walking, living, in the Spirit; worshipping God in holy ordinances,—public, private, secret; and also we should be *spiritual* in them; that is, sincere and serious. When we are out of actual worship, we must be spiritual in our thoughts and words. If we are doing works of necessity or mercy, eating, drinking, travelling to and fro to ordinances, attending sick people, taking care of cattle,—we must not do it as at other times. The day is holy, and must be sanctified. Learn to keep sabbaths better. Christian resolution, care and watchfulness over ourselves, and one another, will do something. Let us so act for the *command's* sake,—an easy, sweet command; for the *consequents'* sake; the promise and threatening sake wherewith the command is backed; for the *conversation* sake the week following; for the Redeemer's sake, whose day it is. The

of God, and went far in denying lawful liberties. Many suffered much against the proclamation for sports on that day.[o] But now there is a new way. Many look upon family worship as an upstart. But it was in Adam's family, in Noah's, in Abraham's, Isaac's, and Jacob's. Abraham catechised his family, Genesis xviii. 18. In the New Testament we read of the church in the house; of families walking together hand in hand in heaven's way. As for public worship. *Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord*, Genesis iv. 26.—that is, *publicly*,—before it was in families. Or; Then men began to be called by it—to make profession. In the New Testament, we read that they *continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers*, Acts ii. 42. The old Puritans saw many corruptions in worship, yet they waited upon God in it.

The way of holiness and close walking is a good old way; as old as Adam, before he fell; as Enoch, as Noah. The primitive Christians *so* walked; not only in ways of worship, but in all manner of obedience, Hebrews xi. 5. The way to please God is to walk with him.

The way of heavenly-mindedness, and contempt of the world, is a good old way. The patriarchs lived like pilgrims,—here to-day, and gone to-morrow. So the primitive Christians, Acts iv. 37. How many professors now carry it otherwise, as if they had a mind to have the world for their *portion*.

The way of plainness and simplicity is a good old way. In it Jacob walked, and Nathaniel, and the old Protestants, and Puritans.

The way of peaceableness and patience under the cross, is a good old way. The martyrs prayed for the Queen. The old Christians *took joyfully the spoiling of their goods*. This is according to rule; *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers*.

The way of brokenness and tenderness of heart is a good old way,—the way of godly sorrow for sin. I have heard an old Christian say, I think Christians do not come in at the same door that we did, for we were long under terrors of conscience, sound humiliation, before we tasted joy,[p]—but now it is otherwise. I fear, lightly come, lightly go. This made them more watchful.

The way of brotherly-kindness, and love one to another, is a good old way. The way of unity and unanimity. See how they *love one another*, was the old remark. But now; see how they hate one another;—what strangeness and distance. There is no telling one another's experience; but jealousies and heart-burnings, Acts ii. 46, 47. The way of love is called the old commandment and the new, 1 John ii. 7;—old, because from the beginning; new, because a new edition of it, a new example in Christ and the apostles, and a new argument to enforce it.

Oh, love this old religion; strive to excel one another in good ways. You have *a cloud of witnesses*. You have Jesus Christ, who was a traveller in this way. Endeavour to make this new bad world like the old good one. There is a promise of a *new heaven, and a new earth*. Be earnest with God to hasten it, and endeavour, in your own practice, to hasten his coming.[q]

APPENDIX, No. XVI.

With such sentiments Mr. Henry's remarks, on the case of Job, evidently accord, and may be fitly introduced. They occur in a lecture delivered at this time in the neighbourhood of Broad Oak.[r] His text was, Job xiii. 26;—*For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.*

Considering Job as a good man, it may be noted, that, even against such, God, sometimes, writes *bitter things*. Regarding him as an old man, it is observable, that youthful sins are oftentimes the smart of old age; they are so when God is pleased to make us *possess* them. Viewing him as an afflicted man, we are taught, that, times of affliction are times of smart, often, for forgotten sins. Job was a remarkable instance. He was perfect and upright; one that *feared God, and eschewed evil;* and yet against him bitter things were written; or, as the word is, *bitternesses*. Many others of God's dear saints and servants have drank, in their several ages and generations, of the same cup, though some deeper than others; and Job, as deep as any. God had one Son,

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ing's friends are known by keeping the king's holiday; for *religion's* sake, which is adorned by it; for the *reckoning-account's* sake hereafter. It is supposed that Christ will come to judgment on the Lord's day. Remember the sabbath, and prepare for it before-hand. Set out well; the Lord is risen. Look up for the Spirit's help. Do what you can. See to your families. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

o A striking instance is recorded by Mr. Baxter in his Divine Appointment of the Lord's day, p. 116. oct. 1671.

p In connexion with the above passage, the following observations by Dr. Doddridge may have their use. "Some sense of sin, and some serious and humbling apprehension of our danger and misery in consequence of it, must indeed be necessary to dispose to receive the grace of the gospel, and the Saviour who is there exhibited to our faith. But God is pleased, sometimes, to begin the work of his grace in the heart, almost from the first dawning of reason, and to carry it on by such gentle and insensible degrees, that very excellent persons, who have made the most eminent attainments in the divine life, have been unable to recount any remarkable history of their conversion; and so far as I can learn, this is most frequently the case with those of them who have enjoyed the benefits of a pious education, when it has not been succeeded by a vicious and licentious youth." Preface to the Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul. Works. v. 1. p. 215. *ut supra.*

q P. Henry. From Mr. Matthew Henry's MS.

r At Danford Hall, near Whitchurch, on the road leading thence to Wem. It is yet standing. See *ante*, p. 58.

and but one, without sin, but none without sufferings.[s] He, *who had no sin*, was *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs*.

Against Job, as against others, were written bitter things of *affliction*. He was afflicted in his estate, in all his family relations, in his servants, in his children, in his wife, and in his body. He endured the bitter things of persecution. His friends sharply and severely censured him; they charged him with the blackest crimes and enormities; called him wicked, a hypocrite, an oppressor, Job xix. 13. This was the more grievous, because they were good men; as for the jeers and scoffs of the multitude, he made nothing of them. To be the *song of the drunkard* was nothing; but that so many grave, wise, knowing, religious persons should combine to vilify him, was *bitter* indeed; especially, considering that they were his *friends*, from whom he expected different treatment, Psalm lv. 12. When God lets loose our brethren to persecute us, either with hands, or tongues, or both, in our names, liberties, livelihoods; and that without cause, only that we will not say as they say, where our conscience tells us they say amiss; these are *bitter things*. He suffered also the bitterness of desertion. This, by what goes before, in the 24th verse, should seem, especially, to be meant. Whatever his professed enemies had done against him, or his professed friends had said against him; whatever losses, crosses, calamities, or distempers, had befallen him; if God had carried it as a friend,[t] all had been well; the burthen would have been light. But for God, at the same time, to appear as an enemy,—to take him by the collar, and shake him,—to withdraw the light of his countenance, and to leave him in darkness and horror, must have been grievous indeed. This made him cry out,—*Thou writest bitter things against me*. This put a sting into all the rest;—the fire, says he, was *the fire of God*, chapter i. verse 16.

The phrase, *writest bitter things*, intimates deliberation, duration, and determination. The allusion, some think, is to a judge or magistrate, to the king or his secretary, signing an order for the apprehending, imprisoning, arraigning, executing a malefactor. q. d. Lord, there could nothing have been done against me, but by thy warrant, and that thou hast granted; not a verbal order only, but a *written* warrant, under hand and seal. *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks*. Thus God deals with others of his dearest children.

And it is not because he hates them, but because he loves them. It is hard to reconcile bitter things with the love of God, but they are reconcilable. Job was greatly beloved, even when he was sitting upon a dunghill; and so it appeared afterwards. The sun broke out from behind the cloud. See chapter xlii. 7, 8, &c. He is called again and again,—*My servant Job*. See Revelations iii. 19.

Nor is it to hurt them, but to do them good. This also is hard to be believed; but it is so, Hebrews xii. 10. It is like a bitter recipe under the hand of a skilful physician.

It is done to purge out their corruptions. That which doth this is certainly for *good*. Is it not? Doth not thy soul really think so? Is it not the thing thou art praying for, and longing for every day? as Paul, Romans vii. 24. Now afflictions, persecutions, desertions, are marvellously useful this way. As aloes, and such like purgatives, though bitter, are beneficial to the body, so are these things to the soul, Isaiah xxvii. 9. xlviii. 10;—*I have refined thee; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction*. The reference is, especially, to captivity in Babylon, when very bitter things were written against them; but they were thus cured of their idolatries. See Psalm cxix. 67.

It is done to purify and brighten their graces. We had never heard of the famous patience of Job, but for the bitter things which were written against him. His *tribulations worked patience*. The remark applies to the courage and fortitude of holy Jacob; to the meekness and humility, the constancy and perseverance, of David, when Saul persecuted him. These bitter things are like frosts in winter, which, when clothes are laid out all night, whiten them, Daniel xii. 10.

It is done to imbitter sin, and to make himself sweet to them. Afflictions put us in mind of the past,—of the *sins of youth*. And is not the remembrance bitter? Zechariah xii. 10. They render the present pleasures of sin distasteful; whatever they have been formerly, now they are insipid;[u] and we never know what a friend God is till we have tried him in adversity. He is a friend, to whom we may safely and freely unbosom ourselves in hearty prayer. He is a friend at hand, to support us, when we cast our burthen upon him, Psalm lv. 22. Then he affords his choicest visits. He is a friend to save and deliver us out of our trials;—that he can do, and he doth and will do it. Now this we know, at other

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[s] *Deus unicum habuit filium sine peccato, nullum sine flagello.* Aug. in Confess. P. Henry's Common Place Book. Orig. MS.

[t] *Carried it as a friend.* The friendship existed. Mr. Henry, noticing this, would say,—There are three evidences of God's being at peace with us. Are you friends with God, and at peace with him? If so, he is at peace with us, Colossians i. 21. We were born enemies; are we reconciled? Reconciliation is not yet perfected; but is it *begun?* There was enmity; but is there friendship? Proverbs viii. 17.—Are you at war with sin? You cannot keep in with sin, and keep in with God too.—Have you taken hold of Christ? If so, God is at peace with you. P. Henry. From Mr. Matthew Henry's MS.

[u] Let the bitternesse of punishment make us all distaste the sweetnesse of sinne. Say sinne what it will, believe thou the word of God, which saith,—*The wages of sinne is death*;—believe thou the well-experienced in godlinesse, which say,—*Dulce peccatum, amar mors.* Salves for the Soule's Sicknesse, by Robert Lovell. 4t 1621, p. 30.

times, doctrinally; but, in affliction, we know its use and application.

It is done to imbitter earth, and make heaven sweet. Though the world be that to us, which Sodom was to Lot, a place of trouble, and temptation, and vexation, yet, like him, we are loth to go out of it till it be fired about our ears;—then we can say, Farewell. Bitter things are, to us, what wormwood is to the breast, for the weaning of little children. Heaven to an afflicted saint is heaven indeed. It is as the sun-shine after a storm. How pleasant is rest after labour! The blessed angels find not that sweetness which the saints do, because no bitter things were ever written against them.

We must not, therefore, think, concerning the *fiery trial*, personal or public, that doth, or may, at any time, try us, *as though some strange thing happened*. It is the common road,—the highway. We must not, from thence, infer, that we are not God's children, or are not beloved of him. Such thoughts are apt to arise, Isaiah xlix. 14.

But, say you, my afflictions are extraordinary for kind, for continuance. And were not Jonah's? Was ever any one so afflicted before, to be coffined alive, in the belly of a fish, in the depths of the sea? And yet he was beloved of God. And were not the Jews' afflictions extraordinary for continuance, when they were seventy years captives in Babylon? Yet they were the Lord's dear people; nay, his *only* people.

Sometimes the love of God is questioned, because persons are *without* affliction, and a conclusion is drawn, that they are *bastards, and not sons*. Alas! What would we have the great God to do? But, as we must not make wrong inferences concerning ourselves, so neither must we concerning others; as if, because God is pleased, in his providence, to write bitter things against them, therefore they are none of his. God hath been a great while writing bitter things against the protestant churches. How long have they been afflicted, *tossed with tempests, and not comforted?* Yet, certainly, he hath mercy in store. So, also, against his ministers and people, in these three nations, *bitter things* have been written; though, blessed be his name, not without some mixture. The same is true as to particular persons. Now, when the arrow is fixed in the deer's side, the rest of the herd thrust him from them.[v] But we must not do so. Take heed how ye carry it at such a time. Times of affliction are critical times. They are called *trials*, because they find what metal we are of.

Do not you write bitter things against God while he is writing them against you. Be sure you entertain no hard thoughts of him, of his love, wisdom, faithfulness, or providence. Say,—All is well that God doth.[w] Neither write nor speak bitter things against instruments. Remarkable is that of David concerning Shimei, 2 Samuel xvi. Look to the bitter root that is in you; the corrupt nature, that it bring forth no gall, nor wormwood, as at such a time it is apt to do. There should be no murmuring, no repining, no complaining.[x] There is great danger in this respect. When the water is upon the fire it is very apt to send forth its filthy scum. The Psalmist said, his *heart was grieved*; Hebrew, *soured, leavened.*

Labour to answer the ends before mentioned. Is love at the bottom, notwithstanding? Then let us love him. Doth he design to do us good? Does he aim, by weaning us from the world, and its enjoyments, to win us to himself, and to make us long to be with him? Then let it have that effect. Sanctified afflictions are good promotions;[y] that is, when they further us in sanctification. Believe,[z] and pray, and wait, and ere long, God will arise for deliverance and salvation. There is no such remedy against inordinate dejections and despondencies, in an afflicted condition, as a lively faith, and a lively prayer. Psalm xxvii. 13; xlii. and xliii. 5. James v. 13. To bring us on our knees is one end, sometimes, wherefore God afflicts. See 2 Samuel xiv. 29, 30.

Those of you against whom God writes, at present, sweet things, and not bitter, should be very thankful. His ways towards you, in this respect, are distinguishing; with some he deals otherwise. Be very faithful; summer time is fruit-bearing time. While he is doing for you, you should be doing for him,—improving opportunities. Be very merciful and pitiful; *remembering those who are in bonds, as bound with them.* Be very watchful. Expect and prepare for changes.

Let the whole be applied in the words of the Apostle—*For the time is come, that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?* If God write such bitter things against his Jobs, what will he write against the Cains, Pharaohs, Ahabs, Judases, of the world? Take heed that none of you be such, 2 Corinthians v. 11.[a]

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[v] When the deer, pierced with the arrow, and pursued by the hounds, runneth to the herd for shelter, they will not admit her among them, out of a principle of self-preservation, lest the dogs, fetching her out, should fall on *them*. Swinnock's Christian man's Calling, part i. p. 97. 4to. 1665.

[w] See Clark's Lives, annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 171. *ut supra.*

[x] When God's hand is on our back, our hand should be on our mouth. P. Henry. Common Place Book. Orig. MS.

Dear brother (Matthew Henry) would say, if you have the use of reason, and peace of conscience, do not complain of any other affliction. Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS.

[y] A saying of Mr. Dod's. Life, *ut supra*, p. 171.

[z] Faith is that to the soul, which the cork is to the net, when the lead sinks it:—which the anchor is to the ship in a storm. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

So Dr. Sibbs says of hope,—It will "as corke, keep the soul (though in some heavinesse) from sinking" The Soule's Conflict, p. 486. *ut supra.*

[a] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

APPENDIX, No. XVII.

THE following notes of this discussion, though evidently incomplete, having been preserved, are here inserted, from an authentic MS.

Bishop. Mr. Owen, to enter into that matter as soon as I can which is the cause of our meeting, I do desire you here that you would give some satisfactory account of your title to the ministry which you exercise, and also of the reason of your separation from the Church of England. I call that the Church of England which is by law established. I desire you to give account in the first place, by what right it is that you take upon you the ministry.

Owen. My Lord; I judge myself every way unfit to manage a discourse of this nature before so great an auditory. I am a child in years and knowledge, and your lordship a father in both respects; my converse hath been with a few modern authors, and your lordship's with many venerable and ancient; and, therefore, you have every way the advantage; I can speak but very little, and possibly to little purpose; but the reasons are in print, and to nominate them will be but *actum agere*. There is Ames's Fresh Suit, [b] Alsop's Melius Inquirendum; the answer of the London divines, who were commissioned to debate with the bishops; there is Mr. Baxter's Plea, and his late Reasons, why ejected ministers ought to preach; and what Dr. Owen hath written; and none of these, that I have heard, answered. These strenuously vindicate our cause, and might effectually vindicate my silence at this time; but, my lord, having had more satisfying experiences of your candour and goodness, I cast myself at your feet, not as an opposer, but as a learner. You were pleased to promise me protection with reference to the laws, that I may fully speak my thoughts. Your lordship knows that we cannot speak our reasons, but we render ourselves obnoxious to the severity of the law, and it would be satisfactory to me if you would please to move the magistrates present that they will manifest the same candour towards me, if I should, by unwary expressions, transgress the limits of the law. My lord, to come to the business;—I have been three times with your lordship, and have given you, as I thought, a pretty full account of my call to the ministry, and of the lawfulness of it. I was ordained by presbyters, whose ordination I look upon as valid; [c] that which I insisted upon, as one of my first arguments.

Bishop. You go on and leave me some things to say, which I cannot say, unless I will speak them now presently. Those books that you mentioned, I have not read one of them. I am not so happy to have time to spare to read all the late books that come forth. I hope I shall not need the reading of any of them. We have abundantly enough out of those books that have been anciently written. For that which you speak of, that you desire that whatever you say, you may not suffer any prejudice by it; that, as for my own part, I do promise you, and I desire of the magistrates here, that whatever you say, by way of dispute, (I only promise as to my own part,) you shall not receive any prejudice by what you say; and I do not think you can speak within the compass of the magistrates; the matter doth not require it. I will preserve you from suffering any prejudice, so far as I am able, in way of dispute. Now to what you say as to your reason.

Owen. As to my ordination, I acquainted your lordship I was ordained by presbyters. My argument is this,—presbyter and bishop are identitive; both as to name and office.

Bishop. That is, both those names of bishop and presbyter are used of one and the same person.

Owen. They have the same commission, the same work, and, therefore, are the same order.

Dodwell. They who receive their order from them, which are the same with bishops, are the same with bishops. But, *ergo*.

Roberts. I suppose there is no time to form syllogisms.

Dodwell. Without a syllogism, it is easy to evade one argument, with starting a new.

Bishop. When you find yourselves hurt with syllogisms, you may wave the argument.

Owen. They that receive their order from those that are the same with bishops, have the same call that those have who are bishop

[b] See Reliq. Baxter. part i. pp. 13, 14

[c] Mr. Baxter, referring to an interview with Archbishop Usher, says,—"I asked him his judgment about the validity of presbyters' ordination; which he asserted, and told me, that the King asked him at the Isle of Wight, wherever he found in antiquity, that presbyters alone ordained any? And that he answered, I can show your Majesty more, even where presbyters alone successively ordained bishops; and instanced, in Hierom's word *Epist. ad Evagrium*, of the presbyters of Alexandria choosing and making their own bishops, from the days of Mark till Heraclus and Dyonisius." Reliq. Baxter. lib. i. part ii. p. 206.

But those persons have received their order from those that are the same with bishops, *ergo*.

Bishop. The minor will be denied, that presbyters and bishops are of the same order.[d]

Owen. Acts xx. 17, 28. Paul came to Miletus, sends for the presbyters of Ephesus, and gave them a charge of the flock, calls them bishops; and that we may not conceive that it is only the mere name that is given them, he bids them rule the flock.

Bishop. You produce that text, Acts xx. 17, 28. when the same persons,—

Dodwell. Methinks it were convenient that that hypothesis were understood. I say there are several times, of Scripture, when we say, presbyters are not the same with bishops, we mean, that when there was a church government established, to last to the end of the world, they were distinguished; we suppose that in the first age. In the second, the church was governed by ————. In the third degree, there were churches imperfectly constituted; and possibly, in this time, there might be some instances. But, in the last age of the apostles, when churches were perfectly constituted by them, and left as a precedent for them to imitate, presbyters and bishops were left distinct.

Roberts. We urge that they were the same at that time in acts;—prove any rule for the alteration.

Bishop. The reason why they are all one, is because the same persons and officers are called presbyters, and afterwards bishops, and the same word ascribed to them, they were then all one. We do grant, that the same persons, the same officers, were called *presbyteri*, and *episcopi*. So the same apostles were called *apostoli*, and *diaconi*.

oberts. But not in point of office.

ishop. I will show you that, in point of office, they were the same, Acts i. *Apostoli* and *episcopi*, who are all of the same office.

enry. That makes for us. If one and the same office may have several names, that *apostoli* were *diaconi*, why may not *presbyteri* be *episcopi?*

shop. If the apostles were called *apostoli* and *diaconi*, they were distinct offices.

nry. The presbyters succeed the bishops.

shop. You will say the same of the deacons.

nry. No, not so, they were to take care of the poor.

berts.

Bishop. If you will refer it to St. Jerome, we shall soon determine it.

Dodwell. This is the case you are concerned in, if you will refer it to St. Jerome, we will refer it to him.

Owen. Leave St. Jerome.

Henry. If your lordship please, we are upon the foundation of the Scripture. Please to give a satisfactory answer to that objection, that the same persons are called presbyters and bishops.

Bishop. I say, while the apostles were the sole officers in the church, they had all those names in themselves. I showed you the apostles were called *episcopi*, and *presbyteri*, and *diaconi*.

Henry. They had them all virtually and eminently in themselves.

Roberts. When they made standing officers for the church, they made only presbyters and deacons.

Bishop. It is denied that they made no other officers besides.

Henry. Be pleased to tell us what officers.

Bishop. The apostles made single persons to be governors of churches.

Dodwell. A single presiding presbyter.

Henry. If there were no more but this one place, it makes it as clear as the sun, that the same persons were presbyters and bishops.[e]

Bishop. It makes it as plain as the sun, that they were called so before they were distinguished; by the same rule, deacons may be applied to them.

Henry. Jesus Christ is called the deacon,—minister of the circumcision.

Bishop. He is called All; that I showed you that these words at first, before there were distinct offices in the church, were promiscuously used.

Dodwell. If you would please to say in those times wherein churches were imperfectly planted; for proving of the distinction, I suppose you will not make a difference about words; if there were one of these presbyters or bishops, that had a presidency over the whole presbytery, and did preside for term of life, and had the power of calling and dissolving of assemblies; this is all we desire to examine the ministry by, if you will grant that one of these presbyters were president over the assembly.

Henry. We are to distinguish between *episcopus præses* and *episcopus princeps*.

Dodwell. There were nine arcontes among the Athenians. I showed that in the same office;

[d] See Dr. M'Crie's Life, of Knox, vol. I. p. 386.

[e] See Fox's Acts and Monuments, v. 2. p. 411. fol. 1641. The Answer of John Lambert to the Bishop's Articles.

yet there have been presidents that have had some prerogative by virtue of their place.

Henry. As the chairman of a committee, the presbyters that ordained us, had a moderator. You are pleading for the bishop. There was never a bishop to be found when I was ordained.

Dodwell. There were bishops, but they must not ordain out of their own diocese.

Bishop. For that which you produce, Acts xx. it was before there was any single person settled in that church, while it was under the power of the apostles themselves; but, afterwards, there was a single person placed in that church, with a superiority over those persons that you call bishops and presbyters.

Henry. Prove that.

Bishop. 1 Timothy i. 3. the church of the Ephesians, of which we read, Acts xx. and there, after that which was spoken by the apostle, there he writes this Epistle to Timothy, wherein he minds Timothy wherefore he left him at Ephesus. He left him there with such a power as to govern the presbyters, and to ordain, govern, reward, and punish; therefore, there was afterwards a person set over those presbyters, with such a power, as we ascribe to the bishops.

Roberts. That power comprised no more than the power of an ordinary presbyter.

Bishop. It hath a greater power than you ascribe to single presbyters.

Roberts. The power lies in the minister to declare God's judgments and mercies, and church censures.

Henry. There is no power committed to Timothy, but what did agree to him as a presbyter.

Bishop. Hath every individual person the same power that was here committed to Timothy?

Henry. I see no passage there that doth not agree to the office of a gospel minister *as such.*

Bishop. Here is first a power given to him who should have a greater or lesser maintenance among ministers; at first, all was in the hands of the apostles; whatever was given to the church, was laid at the apostles' feet; afterwards, it was committed to the governor of the church, and Timothy, as a governor, had power to judge who of the elders should be most rewarded; the labourer is worthy of his reward, chapter v. 17.

Henry. Those things, which I say were committed to Timothy, were committed to gospel ministers as such; your lordship mentions this verse there, which says,—*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour*, &c. I suppose your lordship doth not question whether it belongs to the office of a presbyter to preach, but now, that verse that you mention doth expressly ascribe rule to presbyters.

Dodwell. I question that—there are several gifts of the Spirit,—and among them government, which is one gift, for them that rule well, then for labouring in word and doctrine, there was *prophetia* and *didascali*, and *logos didakos*, there was a different gift of the spirit for preaching and ruling. Some presbyters had the gift of preaching, some the gift of government; so it is the rule of the apostle, that every one that had a gift, should apply himself wholly to it; they, therefore, that had the gift of government, were to apply themselves wholly to it.

Henry. Prove it that the apostles did observe men (there were several gifts) that had these gifts, and according as they were endued with these gifts, accordingly they employed them; that some persons that had the gift of government, and not the others, were to employ themselves that way.

Bishop. Romans xii. 6, 7. 8.

Henry. Doth this prove that these might not be in the same person.

Dodwell. They were not always in the same person, that is enough for our purpose; and, therefore, where there was the gift of government, there the person.

Henry. If it should be said, he that hath a gift of memory, let him make use of his gift of memory, he that hath a gift of ——— is not this.

Bishop. Is that denied?

Henry. I understand him that the apostles did observe who had the gift to rule, and made them rulers, and what persons had the gift of teaching, they made them teachers. Show us that the same persons there have the same gifts there mentioned.

Dodwell. But they had not always the same gifts, some had not the gift of government. I will not make them always separate.

Henry. If you please, I will prove. Hebrews xiii.

Roberts. The lay-elders may as well come in, as the distinct office of a bishop.

Bishop. I bring it for this purpose, to show a single person, Timothy, that had the judging of this, who should be counted worthy of double honour,—he was that judge.

Owen. That he might as the apostle's substitute.

Bishop. So then every thing he might do as the apostle's substitute, a single person was to judge of the presbyters, and to that purpose to receive accusations against them, chapter v. 19. receive them.

Dodwell. You are opposing now,—that argument may be framed thus,—They by whom accusations are to be received against presbyters, are more than ordinary presbyters; but they who are endued with authority over ordinary presbyters, are more than ordinary presbyters; accusations were to be received by Timothy, therefore, he was more than an ordinary presbyter.

Roberts. We deny the major. We will show you a reason. A person might have power to receive accusations against presbyters, and be one himself; for one judge may receive accusations against another judge, and yet both have equal power. His having such power did not put him in any degree, but a presbyter might have done all that.

Dodwell. The proposition is this:—They by whom accusations are received against presbyters, are more than ordinary presbyters. The proposition is undoubtedly—

Henry. A superior order of presbyters?

Dodwell. We do not say so.

Bishop. Reduce questions to as few as you can.

Dodwell. I will not wrong you if I can avoid it. The proposition, as it lies, is undoubtedly true,—that they who are to receive, that is, the whole body, according to the hypothesis, and in the whole body particular presbyters are contained, and by this means, particular presbyters, not acting as parts of the body, may receive accusations, and so are superiors, as parts of the body, they are above ordinary presbyters. Single presbyters, as parts of the presbytery, may have power over other presbyters, considered in their private capacity, where this is, the whole direction of the epistle would not be directed to particular presbyters, for it is not one particular presbyter that hath constantly this power. Here is a whole epistle directed to one person,—they who have a constant superiority and power of receiving accusations without mention of any other, are more than ordinary presbyters. But St. Timothy, a single person in the church of Ephesus, hath this constant authority. If he had been written to as a presbyter, it would have been written to the whole presbytery.

Bishop. I charge thee that thou observe these things.

Henry. Do you think that doth not belong to every presbyter?

Bishop. No.

Dodwell. Give me leave to tell my medium. This you say, that St. Timothy had a power of hearing accusations against presbyters as a private presbyter. I prove not; that power which it supposes to be constant in Timothy, cannot be the power in particular presbyters, therefore not the power.

Henry. I deny your major.

Dodwell. I will prove it. Every particular presbyter may become a *reus* as well as a judge, that is no constant power which doth not always agree to the office. I deny that bishops may be *rei* before presbyters.

Owen. We spoke of the college of presbyters.

Bishop. I say a bishop is not to be *reus* in a synod of presbyters, but only in a synod of bishops.

Dodwell. A common presbyter may sometimes be a judge, and sometimes *reus* himself.

Bishop. He is not only to receive the accusations, but to judge.

Henry. That is only to reprove, I conceive.

Owen. *Elenchyn* is to cut off from the church.

Henry. It is to reprove sharply.

Owen. 2 Corinthians xiii. that I may not use *apolomos*.

Henry. But your lordship uses *elenchyn*; it is that which is fraternal: an equal may reprove his equal.

Bishop. The authoritative is called *elenchyn*.

Owen. Against an elder receive not an accusation.

Dodwell. That is an elder in age. Let no man despise thy youth, in age not in office, the younger as brethren.

Henry. You were speaking of Timothy, as a superior officer in the church, and now your lordship grants it may be meant of elder in age.

Bishop. Take heed, Mr. Henry. I expected better from you. It is the apostle's charge, —*against an elder receive not an accusation*, &c. those that are found guilty, *elenche*, correct that others may fear.

Henry. Will your lordship give me leave to read the words?

Bishop. That place spoken of by Mr. Owen, was spoken of elders in age; pray go to the other place, chapter v. 19, 20, 21; that spoken of preferring one before another may be meant of rewards spoken of in the 17th verse, it is spoken with relation to the power he had over presbyters.

Henry. Why may not presbyter, in that place, be taken in the same sense that it was in the first verse concerning elders in age?

Bishop. Because it follows what is spoken in the 17th verse, of elders in office.

Henry. He speaks of elders offending, it is necessary I should grant that, verse 19.

Bishop. After that which is spoken in the first

verse, there are twenty verses spoken in the chapter concerning ecclesiastical affairs, which he considers as all in the hands of that single person, for that may deserve to be taken notice of; he gives him, as a single person, still rule concerning those women that belonged to the ecclesiastical body, verse 11, the younger women refuse;—do not receive them into the rule of the office, so verse 16 and verse 17, he goes on to other ecclesiastical officers, those which indeed were the principal.

Henry. Under your lordship's favour, this proves what was before asserted, that there is nothing said to Timothy by the apostle, but what belongs to a particular minister over a particular congregation, and lays before him his duty; suppose a particular member of a congregation offend, suppose he be an aged person, complaint is to be made to the minister concerning this man, he is not to receive an accusation, but before a witness; in his reproving of him, he is exhorted to carry himself towards him, not as a younger, but as his elder, especially he being himself Timothy, a young man.

Dodwell. This seems to proceed somewhat rationally, if the case in the apostle's time were the same as now.

Henry. The Scripture is our rule.

Dodwell. If every particular presbyter in the apostle's time had had a particular portion of the flock allotted to his charge, as parish-ministers have now, you speak something, you read not of any government among presbyters, but only in the whole body; not one presbyter for one place, and another for another; they are always mentioned together in the Scripture. Ignatius in the—

Henry. This makes directly against episcopacy, and for presbytery.

Dodwell. This was the case in the apostle's time, it was not as now, that every particular presbyter had a particular parish by himself, but the whole governed by the common body. Now judge, whether it were requisite for the apostle to write a whole epistle, particularly of that which belonged to him only in common with others.

Henry. Do not you think,—

Bishop. Lay hands suddenly on no man.

Henry. I believe it belongs to presbyters, you do not lay hands yourself alone, you have your authority from these words, I do not know where else; their power was given by Jesus Christ.

Dodwell. Christ doth not give by immediate revelation.

Henry. It is inherent in them by virtue of their office.

Dodwell. This government being, as it was in the apostle's time, administered by a whole body of presbyters, whether you, in such a case, would have written to one of this body only, and not the rest.

Bishop. Ordain elders in every city; it is not a thing done one time.

Henry. If the government of the church in the apostle's time were by common authority, it ought to be so now. But it was so according to this gentleman's argument.

Dodwell. As far as I say, it is so still, for I only mentioned common authority, in opposition to particular presbyters not having particular proportions of their flock committed to their particular charge; that is not now your doctrine.

Henry. The apostle's doctrine is my doctrine, that I am to be ruled by those that preach to me.[f] Obey them which have the rule over, that preach to you, &c. That is one argument we have against diocesans, that *they* rule us that do *not preach* to us.

Bishop. Show this to be Scripture, or else wipe it out.

Dodwell. I have showed the office of government and preaching to be different, and, therefore, they may govern you that do not preach to you.

Henry. Hebrews xiii. 7. Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, compare it with verse 17, for they are the same persons.

Bishop. Those in the seventh verse, are those that were dead, those in the seventeenth verse, are those that were living.

Henry. They were such, as while they did live, did rule and preach.

Bishop. That cannot be proved. Put that into a syllogism.

Henry. Remember them which have the rule over you, verse 17, obey them.

Owen. *Egoumeni*,—it is the same word.

Henry. Your lordship supposes them dead,—that is not the argument. Grant them to be either dead or alive, the argument is the same; when they were alive, they did rule over them, and did preach to them the word of God.

[f] In scripture we find, what ruling any minister hath, it is over such people as he speaks the word of God to, Hebrews xiii. 7. See Gospel Conversation, by Jer. Burroughs, p. 30. 4to. 1648. See *ante*, p. 63.

Bishop. That did the Apostle James, and James, Bishop of Jerusalem.

Henry. Doth your lordship think nobody else did preach to them?

Bishop. I know none that did but those.

Henry. The argument is still the same; those that had the rule over them, were those that preached to them the word of God.

Bishop. You saw in that text, 1 Timothy v. 17. they are spoken of as distinct offices.[g] Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially, &c.

Henry. By your lordship's favour, that is the thing that is urged against those, against lay-elders; you make use of that interpretation in that place. Let the elders, &c. especially they who labour, &c.; that is, if they are such rulers as are preachers; therefore ruling and preaching are in the same person.

Bishop. Therefore there may be rulers that are not preachers.

Henry. It is a presbytery that is spoken of there, and not bishops.

Bishop. You infer hence, that those only are to be their rulers, that are their teachers.

Henry. Yes. Why should they be called by the same name, and the one be apostles, and the other, ordinary presbyters?

Bishop. The Hebrews, if they are to speak of a Christian bishop, call him *egoumenos.*

Henry. So is every minister to his flock.

Dodwell. Those distinctions were really distinctions of government, and of teaching. So there are distinct offices.

Henry. That doth not follow. What, so many offices as gifts? An office of memory then.

Dodwell. The Scripture doth not mention that; utterance it doth. I am showing the names of the offices; as these are distinct gifts of the Spirit, so there are offices suitable to those as distinct, they that had the gift of government, they are called ——, they that had the gift of teaching, are called pastors or teachers.

Henry. Resolve to lay by names, and speak of things.

Dodwell. They that were both pastors and teachers, were particularly to be respected.

Henry. I think every pastor is to be a teacher.

Dodwell. I say not. *He ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men, &c.*

Henry. It is some pastors and teachers; it is not some pastors and some teachers.

Dodwell. They seem to be in that place as much distinct pastors and teachers, as apostles and evangelists.

Bishop. All this is not worth the while.

Henry. What is gathered from thence, that is, as in the government of the Church of Scotland, they have their doctors, that is, teachers, that is to manage controversies, and preach on such subjects. Pastors are to apply themselves to practical preaching. I do not know what the gentleman would infer thence.

Dodwell. That text, that those which rule, count worthy of double honour, especially, &c. shows that they might be very separable offices; as they were separable offices, so the rulers might be distinct from the labourers in word and doctrine; some might do one, and some the other, and some both.

Henry. I do not understand any thing you drive at by that.

Dodwell. That consequence that you spoke of just now, I overthrow, wherein you made governing and teaching synonymous,—none to govern you, but those that taught you, this proves that the same persons were not necessary to do both.

Henry. No. Let the elders that rule, &c. but if they be rulers, and do not labour in the word and doctrine, they are to have but single honour; and, therefore, both might be in the same person.

Bishop. We have been about that which is of little moment. Here is plainly a command to Timothy, to see to that matter of distributing honours and rewards among the elders of the church, and to receive accusations, and judge upon them, and to punish whatever it is that *elenchyn* signifies. Here is also a power of ordination given to the same single person, (for that is in the same singular number,) the apostle charges him to lay hands suddenly on no man; the same is given to another single person, Titus. These epistles were written to Timothy and to Titus, after Paul came out of prison.

Owen. Be pleased to prove that the 1st of Timothy[h] was written after his coming out of prison at Rome.

Bishop. I will prove it. That which was written by St. Paul, going into Macedonia, to Timothy, abiding still at Ephesus, must be written after his coming out of prison.

Owen. I deny the major.

Bishop. Paul was but twice at Ephesus, he could not be there sooner than we read, Acts xviii.

Owen. You speak of Macedonia. I deny your major, that it was written after his coming out of prison.

[g] See Baxter's Nonconformist's Plea for Peace, p. 194. oct. 1679.

[h] As to the controversy respecting the date of this Epistle, see Dr. Doddridge's Family Expositor, v. 5. pp. 356–362.

Bishop. That which was so circumstanced, I must prove that by texts;—that which was written by Paul, going into Macedonia, and leaving Timothy at Ephesus, must be after he was at liberty, because there could be no such thing before he went into prison; before that, he was only twice at Ephesus, and it could not be either of those times.

Owen. You say it was neither the first nor the second journey, therefore, it was not till after. I suppose it might be.

Bishop. He was so far from leaving Timothy at Ephesus, that he being there, sent Timothy into Macedonia, and there met Timothy.

Owen. But, my Lord, you will find that after Paul sent Timothy to Macedonia, he designed speedily to go after him, but there fell out an uproar, that detained him a considerable time; and Grotius thinks Timothy did return to Paul, to Ephesus, before he went into Macedonia; and so Paul leaves Ephesus, goes to Macedonia, thence to Greece,—stays there three months, comes to Macedonia again, and Timothy came to meet him there.

Bishop. I grant you that Paul went into Macedonia, and all that which follows, that there he did meet with Timothy; but that he returned to Ephesus, I do not at all sit down by Grotius's opinion. Pray give me a reason. His opinion is, that the 2nd of Thessalonians was written before the 1st of Thessalonians, which is a senseless thing.

Henry. He had his faults.

Owen. It is the opinion of most writers on the text. You can hardly produce any author that will stand by this notion of yours; that it was a third journey that was intended in the Epistle to Timothy. Hammond. Lightfoot is of another mind.

Bishop. He wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians at that time. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, was preached among you by us, &c.—2nd of Corinthians was written by Paul and Timothy.

Owen. It was so, my lord.

Bishop. There are several things to be considered in the proof of this, being a point of chronology, he sent Timothy from Ephesus into Macedonia; he finds afterwards, Timothy in Macedonia; it lies upon you to prove that Timothy was at Ephesus between; and you should prove also, that St. Paul left Timothy at Ephesus, when he went into Macedonia. Here it appears to be quite contrary. I will show you another argument; it appears,—

Owen. I have produced several authorities to prove it, which I thought sufficient. Capellus.

Dodwell. There are chronologers of many minds.

Bishop. All their authorities do not weigh with me against one word of Scripture.

Owen. I will show that it is a new way you go. I cannot find any one that times this Epistle so late as your lordship mentions. Baronius quotes several authors.

Bishop. The Epistle which was written after Timothy's suffering for the Christian faith. I have showed that St. Paul sent Timothy from Ephesus into Macedonia, you do not bring him back again. I will show you further.

Roberts. Let that lie, and go to another argument.

Bishop. That Epistle which was written after Timothy had been a sufferer for the Christian faith, was written after Paul's imprisonment at Rome; this was written after Timothy had suffered for the profession of the faith.

Owen. What does this prove?

Bishop. Therefore it was written after Paul was set at liberty.

Owen. Prove that consequence.

Bishop. St. Paul being at Rome, we find Timothy with him. What is said in this Epistle of Timothy's sufferings, makes it appear that it was written after he was set at liberty.

Owen. What is said of Timothy's sufferings?

Bishop. Chapter vi. 12. *Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses;*—it is the same which follows in the next verse,—even as Christ before Pilate had witnessed a good confession, so had Timothy before this time.

Owen. My lord, you are to prove that this was at Rome. He was Paul's companion in many of his troubles; it is conceived, Timothy went with Paul to Rome, and he suffered much by the way, and it is like he might suffer with him. This is no clear proof.

APPENDIX, No. XVIII.

Afterwards, Mr. Henry despaired to see an accommodation; and, among his papers, the following document, in his own hand-writing, is preserved. It bears internal evidence of being his composition but to whom it was sent cannot now be ascertained. Probably it was a communication to the ecclesiastical commissioners, who, in 1689, were appointed

for making alterations in favour of the dissenters.[1] His friend, Dr. Lloyd, the Bishop of St. Asaph, was of the number. It is an interesting specimen of the catholic moderation which pervaded all his feelings and deportment; and it conveys his sentiments on some points which were, at the time, the occasion of angry controversy.

1. Concerning Ministers.

It is our humble desire that all those that have received ordination by ministers, with imposition of hands, by fasting and prayer, whether of late, or heretofore, may be declared to be true ministers of the church of Christ, and equally capable, with others, of ecclesiastical employment and preferment.

That when they shall any of them be called to any particular charge, they may be admitted freely thereunto without oaths other than those of allegiance and supremacy, whereby to evidence themselves good protestant subjects; and without subscriptions, other than such as are unquestionably clear and scriptural.

That, being so admitted, in case of failure in their duty afterwards, either by error, negligence, or other immorality, they be liable to censure and suspension for it, by such ecclesiastical superiors as shall be thought fit; which ecclesiastical superiors, our opinion is, should be a single person, assisted with other ministers, grave, pious, and experienced, residing, if it may be, in some one the most convenient place in each shire or county; which same society may henceforward be concerned both in ordinations, and in the placing of ministers also where they are wanted in those precincts.

We are likewise inclined to think it may do well, that that single person be, as now he is, styled the bishop, and those assistants in the stead of deans and chapters; and their vacancy, from time to time, to be supplied by the substituting of such aged ministers, in the said precincts, whose infirmities disfit them for the ordinary parish work, especially if they be themselves desirous thereof; there to be comfortably accommodated till their death.

Our desire is, that each minister may have so much authority over his own people, as to call them together in assemblies as oft on week-days as he shall think fit, not compelling any to join with him therein, but as volunteers in such duties, according as they find it profitable to them for their spiritual improvement and edification.

Also, that he may himself, with the advice of the churchwardens, or parish eldership, both admit adult people, after trial of their fitness, to the communion of the Lord's supper: and also, in case of unquestionable scandal, and wilful persisting therein, to suspend offenders from the said communion; exhorting the congregation, till they repent, to withdraw from them, as from disorderly walkers, that they may be ashamed.

More than this, in this matter, we desire not; for we are taught that the *weapons of our warfare are not carnal.*

2. Concerning Worship.

The ordinary parts and ways of worship, are, the word, and prayer, and sacraments, and singing of psalms, &c.

1. For the word, our way is, and we desire to be allowed in it, not only to read the Scriptures without being imposed upon, either what, or how much, but also to expound it to the people, and to give the meaning, which is found to be for edification. To preach also, according to the ability given to us of God, *for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness.*

2. For prayer; (concerning which we differ, whether by form, or no form; if by form, whether by the established Liturgy only, or by some other joined with it;) that which we desire is this, that ministers may be wholly left to their freedom, to do as they shall judge best, and most conducent to the good of their congregations.

3. For the sacraments, our method and way in the administration of them is well and sufficiently known.

(1.) In baptism, we conceive the parents' profession of the Christian faith gives the child its title to it; and, therefore, we use not godfathers and godmothers; and in baptizing we use no other dedicating sign than washing with water. In both which particulars, if our brethren be otherwise persuaded, let them do as they see cause; we shall not be against them in it.

(2.) In the Lord's supper, we prefer the gesture of sitting as most agreeable to the nature of the ordinance, being a feast of remembrance, and to the practice of Christ and the apostles at the first institution, yet we deny it not to communicants standing or kneeling. We use no words of prayer in the time of the administration, therefore we kneel not; and, as for the people's either taking it immediately from the minister, or handing it from one to another, whether at a table, or in seats near adjoining within view, we lay no stress, either one way or the other.

4. For singing of psalms, we use it after the accustomed way, only forasmuch as the common translation, in many things, is defective, and the words, divers of them, obsolete, we desire we may have the liberty of such other translations as we find better,—as Barton's, Patrick's.

5. For catechising, we have found much good done by the use of that of the assembly, and desire we

[1] Abridgment of Baxter's History of his Life and Times, by Calamy, vol. I. p. 452. *ut supra.*

may be still allowed the use of it till we find a better.

6. In marrying, we dislike some of the words made use of and enjoined, and do desire they may be altered, and that the use of the ring may be either wholly omitted, or the reason of using it better explained.

7. In burying, we would desire not to be required, either to meet the corpse, or to read, or say, or sing any thing at or over the grave, or to do what is to be done in the usual place of worship.

3. Concerning Ceremonies.

We desire there may be no law to impose them either on ministers or people, and do not desire a law to forbid them; but, *let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.* Such as wearing the surplice in worship; bowing to the east, or at the name of Jesus; churching of women; observation of holy days; consecrating of churches; keeping of Lent.

4. Concerning the Sabbath.

We desire that all possible care may be taken for the due sanctification of the Lord's day, not only by laying restraint upon unnecessary travelling, worldly labours, and especially upon riot and recreations, but also by appointing, that all persons whatsoever, not disabled by age, sickness, or other justifiable reason, do attend ordinarily upon some public place of protestant worship, of one kind or other, if within their reach.

5. Concerning Courts.

Our desire is, that a difference may be put between those things that belong to and are of a spiritual concern, and other things that are not. The former to be managed by ministers only; the latter, only by others. We think (if authority so please) it may do well, that, in every county, there be a trust in the hands of lay-persons with power, such as justices have, to inflict secular penalties:—

1. In things pertaining to churches and church-yards, pews, and burying-places.

2. In tithes, and other church-duties, and dues of that nature, for ministers' maintenance; and also monies left for charitable uses, and for schools.

3. In register of baptizings, marriages, and burials, to be transmitted thither, and lodged there for particular parishes.

4. In proving wills, and granting letters of administration.

Concerning the regulating of all which, as they are to hold their power immediately from the civil magistrate, so to him only we desire they may be accountable in case of mal-administration.

These are the things we do desire; which, if granted to us, we will be thankful; if denied, we pray we may be protected from violence and persecution in the circumstances of liberty and indulgence wherein we are. The act against conventicles, and the act for excluding ministers from corporations, being repealed, and as much of the act of uniformity, as makes it penal to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments without episcopal ordination, and the use of the liturgy.[k]

k P. Henry. Orig. MS.

APPENDIX, No. XIX.

The following are specimens:—

An Alphabet of good Spirits.

An active spirit. 1 Corinthians xv. 58.

An active spirit is an excellent spirit,
Always abounding in the works of God;
'Tis Christ-like, angel-like; such shall inherit
Heav'n's highest glory; sloth invites the rod.

A bold spirit. Proverbs xxviii. 1.

The bold in spirit are the lion-like men,
That turn not back for ought in duty's way;
That run and fight, and fighting, conquer; when
The timorous coward never wins the day.[l]

Another mode of arranging subjects for the assistance of his hearers may be here introduced. The transcripts are from a manuscript in the hand-writing of his daughter, Mrs. Savage, and a volume believed to be the hand-writing of Mrs. Tylston:—

Alphabetical Precepts.

A. *Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee.*

B. *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*

C. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.*

D. *Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart.*

E. *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of the evil man.*

F. *Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.*

G. *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.*

H. *Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase.*

l From an authentic MS. See also the Evangelical Magazine, v. 25, p. 349.

I. *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.*
K. *Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of the Lord, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools.*
L. *Let not thy heart envy sinners, but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.*
M. *Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go.*
N. *Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.*
O. *Offer unto the Lord thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High.*
P. *Pray continually.*
Q. *Quench not the spirit.*
R. *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, wherein thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.*
S. *Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near.*
T. *Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*
U. *Unto man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.*
W. *Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*
X. *'Xamine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.*
Y. *Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary; I am the Lord.*[m]

What are the promises?

A. Articles of the covenant of grace.
B. Breasts of consolation.
C. Christians' charter.
D. Declarations of the good will of God to poor sinners.
E. Effects of the merit and mediation of Jesus Christ.
F. Foundation and food of our faith and hope.
G. Gifts of divine power.
H. Heritage for ever.
I. Joy and rejoicing of our hearts.
K. Knit with the precepts, and the precepts with them.
L. Legacies left us by the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus.
M. Means of grace and sanctification.
N. Number, numberless.
O. *Ordered in all things, and sure.*
P. Powerful pleas in prayer.
Q. Quickeners to quietness under the cross.
R. Ready refuge.
S. Salve for every sore.[n]
T. Truest treasure.
U. Universally useful, every day in every thing.
W. *Wells of salvation.*
X. *Exceeding great and precious.*
Y. *Yea and amen in Christ Jesus.*
Z. Zion's peculiar.[o]

What is prayer?

A. Access to the Father.
B. Breath of the new creature.
C. Caterer.
D. Desires that should be offered up to God by us.
E. Enemy to every evil work and way.
F. Friend to faith and godliness.
G. Guard against all temptations.
H. Heart's ease.
I. Incense in the ears of God.
K. Key, to unlock all our treasure.[p]
L. Letter to heaven.
M. Music in the ears of God.
N. Nurse of holy joy.
O. Ordinance of all ordinances.
P. Privilege.
Q. Quickener to all holy obedience.
R. Remedy against care and fear.
S. Salve for every sore.
T. Terror to the devils.
V. Voice of the Spirit of God.
W. Wrestling with God.
X. Exercise.
Y. Yielding of ourselves to God in holy obedience.
Z. Zion's artillery against all the Zamzummims[q] of the world.[r]

APPENDIX, No. XX.

His subjects, besides those mentioned before, of the good and bad spirits, in 1688 and 1689, were, what Christ is made to believers. He was about a year (the whole year 1690) preaching over the history of

m Mrs. Savage's MS.

n "Give salves to every sore, but counsell to the minde."
Spenser. Faerie Queene, b. vi. canto vi. st. v. Works, *ut supra*, v. 6. p. 464.

"Christ Jesus is a salve for every sore, a remedy for every malady."
Beames of Divine Light, by Dr. Sibbs. p. 6. 4to. 1639.

"St. Austin doth witness that the Holy Scriptures be the 'salves for every man's sore.'" See Strype's Life of Archbishop Parker, App. b. iv. Numb. lxxxiii. p. 135, fol. 1711.

o Mrs. Tylston's MS.

p "Though prayer be the key to open God's treasures, yet faith is the hand that turnes the key, without which it will doe no good." The Saint's Daily Exercise, by John Preston, D. D. p. 105. 4to. 1630.

q See Deuteronomy ii. 20.

r P. Henry. From the MS. of his daughter, Mrs. Tylston.

Christ in twenty heads His forerunner; his conception and birth; his circumcision and name; his being presented in the temple; his flight into Egypt; his dispute with the doctors; his being baptized of John; his being tempted of the devil; his disciples and followers; his preaching; his miracles; the obedience of his life; his sufferings at his death; his death itself; his burial; his resurrection; his ascension into heaven; his sitting at the right hand of God; his intercession; his second coming to judge the world;—which he closed up, and made a short rehearsal of, in one sabbath-day's work, from 2 Corinthians iv. 5.—*We preach not ourselves, but Christ.* Then, what Christ is made of to believers, in 1691 and 1692. Afterwards, in the years 1692 and 1693, what the church is to Christ, in twenty-four particulars, alphabetical, from so many texts, each of them a sabbath-day's work. His army, Canticles vi. 10; his building, 1 Corinthians ii 9, &c After that he preached, in 1693 and 1694, upon the most remarkable passages in Christ's sermon upon the mount. And then, in like manner, went over, in the years 1694 and 1695, Christ's last sermon, in John xiv. and xv. and xvi.; and his prayer, John xvii. Then he preached over the beginning of 1 Peter i.: and, the winter before he died, having had occasion in a lecture-sermon to warn people against four common and scandalous sins;—dishonesty, drunkenness, uncleanness, and unquietness;—and, finding them all together in one scripture, in the same order, he preached it over, Romans xiii. 13, 14; subjoining to it Galatians v. 16. Then he began 2 Peter i.; and, when his Lord came, he found him thus doing.

A little before he died, he said,—he scarce knew now what subject to choose that he had not preached upon already.[s]

APPENDIX, No. XXI.

Truth, he would remark, is a jewel of inestimable value; and we should prize it accordingly. We must buy it, and not sell it, Proverbs xxiii. 23. Hold it fast, and not let it go, 2 Timothy i. 13. Abide in it, and not fall from it, 2 John 9. 2 Peter iii. 17. And, as a mean of all the rest, we must love it, Zechariah viii. 19. 2 Thessalonians ii. 10. We must love it *more than thousands of gold and silver*, Psalm cxix. 127.

Errors, on the other hand, are sins; sins, because transgressions of the divine law. *Do not err*, because errors are works of the flesh, Galatians v. 20; and because they are invasions upon God's rule and government. He has authority over our understanding; we owe the same subjection to his truths as to his commands. Errors in judgment are the causes of sins in practice, Matthew vi. 23. Epistle of Jude. It is said that fishes first putrefy in the head;—so do many.

Error is very bewitching, Galatians iii. 1. It works like poison, silently and insensibly; it drinks up the good spirits, the sap and savour of a man. It is infecting, like the leprosy. A leper in the head was utterly unclean, Leviticus xiii. 44. It is destroying; a shot, or cut, in the head, will as surely kill as in the heart. See Psalm, xcv. 10, 11.

Lay a good foundation in being well acquainted with the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Take heed of pride and conceitedness. The low shrubs in the valley escape the storm when the tall cedars on the hill-tops are up-rooted; weather-cocks, set high, turn. Seek grace, and special growth in it, Hebrews xiii. 9. 2 Peter iii. 17, 18. Take heed of living in any known sin, or indulging any secret lust against light. Avoid needless familiarity with false prophets, 2 John 10, 11. Romans xvi. 17, 18. 1 Timothy vi. 5. Give yourselves to the word and prayer, Acts vi. 4.[t]

APPENDIX, No. XXII.

The cultivation of the memory, with a view to religious improvement, Mr. Henry both felt, and urged, as being of special importance. Of this his manuscripts furnish the following illustration.

In reply to the inquiry,—What means are we to use, that we may remember spiritual things better, to carry away with us more of what we hear, and to keep it more faithfully? He says:—

Get the heart filled with love to the things of God. I never yet saw a covetous old man forget where his money lay.[u] The reason is, his heart is upon it; see Psalm cxix. 16. Labour to see the worth and excellency of heavenly truths; so many truths, so many jewels. Jewels we lay up. See your own concern in them, Deuteronomy xxxii. 46, 47; get a clear and distinct apprehension, Psalm cvi. 7; and the more distinct the better. A man may carry a great deal more upon his back, if the things be well-ordered and packed up,[v] than if they lie loose and confused. So it is with the memory. Hence catechisms are exceedingly useful. Submit to the power of the word; the sermon that doth us most good we shall best remember, Psalm cxix. 93.

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[s] Life. Orig. MS. *ut supra.*

[t] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[u] "*Nec vero quemquam senum audivi oblitum, quo loco thesaurum obruisset.* Cicero de Senect. p. 155. Op. tom. 8. *ut supra.*

[v] "One will carrie twice more weight trussed and packed up in bundles, than when it lies untowardly flapping and hanging about his shoulders. Things orderly fardled up, under heads, are most portable." Fuller's Holy State. p. 164. *ut supra.*

Attention is a special help, Hebrews ii. 1. It is said the people hanged on Christ while he was preaching to them, Luke xix. 48. See Luke viii. 18.

Meditation,[w] Luke ii. 19. A garment that is double-dyed, dipped again and again, will retain the colour a great while; so a truth which is the subject of meditation. What harrowing is after sowing, the same is meditation after hearing,—it hides the word.

Conference. See this and the former in one scripture, Psalm lxxvii. 11, 12. As an orange, by being tossed to and fro, from hand to hand, leaves a scent behind it,—so doth truth.

Prayer. We should turn sermons into petitions. Pray for the Spirit. There is great encouragement from promises, Luke xi. 13.

The memory is a lazy faculty, unless rubbed up, 2 Peter i. 12, 13. Exercise your memories. The way to have limbs is to use them.

Consider the great advantage we shall get by it; by the help of a faithful, sanctified memory, truths may do us good long after we have heard them. See John x. 41, 42. Psalm cxix. 52. Lamentations iii. 21.

But there are some things which God would have us especially to remember. In general, every part of his revealed will. Particularly, our Creator, Ecclesiastes xii. 1; *To keep holy the sabbath-day*, Exodus xx. 8.

Also, our *latter end*, Deuteronomy xxxii. 29. *Shortly, we must put off this our tabernacle;* the thing itself is certain, the *time* uncertain. Could I be contented death should find me in my present state, in this place, company, so employed? Forgetfulness of our latter end makes us careless and secure, Isaiah xlvii. 7. Lamentations i. 9.

The *days of darkness*, Ecclesiastes xi. 8; not only that we must die, but also what comes *after* death; our state after death is to be an abiding state. If we die in sin, eternal darkness follows. Think of this. What a misery were it to be shut up in a dungeon, though in ease, for a few years; much greater, to be shut up in hell under *chains of darkness*,[x] and flames of brimstone,[y] and that for ever! We have little cause to envy wicked men those merry days which they now enjoy, for they are but few; the *days of darkness*, which are coming, are like to be *many*.

Those who are in bonds, Hebrews xiii. 3; our poor, distressed, afflicted brethren; those, especially, who *suffer for righteousness' sake*. When we are at meat, we should think of those who are hungry, for whom nothing is provided; when at ease in our beds, of those who are sick, and in pain. Such a thought may conduce much to seriousness, sobriety, and thankfulness. Their condition might have been ours, and ours theirs. They are our fellow members. See Psalm cxxxvii. 5, 6. We must remember them so as to relieve them, when we have opportunity, Hebrews xiii. 16; which God will remember, Acts x. 31.

Our past sins, Deuteronomy ix. 7. The sins of our youth, of our unregenerate state; not barely to talk of them, much less to please ourselves in the remembrance of them, but for holy, spiritual ends and purposes; as to mourn over them that they may be pardoned, if that be not yet the case. If they are forgiven, the remembrance of them may be useful to keep us humble and low in our own eyes, 1 Corinthians xv. 9. Ezekiel xvi. 63; to provoke thankfulness, 1 Timothy i. 12, &c.; to quicken us in our obedience. See 1 Peter iv. 2, 3.

The mercies we have received, Psalm cii. 2. Deuteronomy xxxii. 6, 7; though long since. Herein the people of God have been very careful; sometimes compiling long songs of remembrance, Exodus xv. Judges v.; sometimes setting up monuments of remembrance, Exodus xvii. 15. 1 Samuel vii. 12; sometimes imposing names of remembrance, Genesis xli. 51, 52. Exodus xviii. 3, 4.

There is good reason why it should be so; for God remembers our kindness towards him, Jeremiah ii. 2.

The judgments of the Lord. Towards ourselves, Lamentations, iii. 19, 20. Thus and thus the Lord chastened me, and my sin was the cause. Shall I then continue in sin? Towards others, Luke xvii. 32. so as to be warned.

The *words of the Lord Jesus*, and of those whom he hath sent, Acts xx. 35. Jude, verse 17.

What are those special things which God would have us to *forget?* Injuries done to us, Romans xii. 19, 20; *our own people, and our father's house*, Psalm xlv. 10; *i. e.* the persons of our nearest, dearest relations, when they seek to keep us from Christ, Deuteronomy xxxiii. 9; the customs, fashions, usages, of those with whom we conversed in our ignorance, —*those things which are behind*, Philippians iii. 13.[z]

APPENDIX, No. XXIII.

The following specimen of Mr. Henry's paternal counsel will not, it is presumed, be unacceptable.

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w Meditation keeps out Satan. It increases knowledge, Psalm cxix. 99. 1 Timothy iv. 15. It inflames love, Psalm xxxix. 3. It works patience, Psalm cxix. 23; lxxvii. 6. It promotes prayer, Psalm lxiii. 5, 6. It evidences sincerity. See Proverbs xxiii. 7. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

x 2 Peter ii. 4.

y Revelations xxi. 8. See Bishop Jeremy Taylor's Works, v. 3. p. 517. *ut supra*.

z P. Henry. Orig. MS.

Advice to the Rev. Matthew Henry, and Mrs. Henry, newly married, 1687.

Dear pair, whom God hath now of two made one,
Suffer a father's exhortation.
In the first place see, that with joint endeavour,
You set yourselves to serve the Lord together.
You are yok'd to work, but for work, wages write,
His yoke is easy, and his burthen light.
Love one another, pray oft together, and see
You never both together angry be.[a]
If one speak fire; t'other with water[b] come;
Is one provok'd? be t'other soft or dumb.[c]
Walk low, but aim high, spotless be your life,
You are a minister, and a minister's wife.
Therefore as beacons, set upon a hill,
To angels and to men a spectacle.
Your slips will *falls* be call'd, your falls, each one
Will be a blemish to religion.
Do good to all, be affable and meek,
Your converse must be preaching all the week.
Your garb and dress must not be vain and gay;
Reckon good works your richest, best array.
Your house must be a Bethel, and your door
Always stand open to relieve the poor.
Call your estate God's, not your own, engrave
Holiness to the Lord on all you have.
Count upon suffering, or you count amiss,
Sufficient to each day its evil is;
All are born once to trouble, but saints twice,
And, as experience shows, ministers thrice.
But if you suffer with and for your Lord,
You'll reign with him according to his word.[d]

On the marriage of Mrs. Savage, March 28, 1687, he founded an address, on Genesis ii. 22. *And brought her unto the man.*[e]

Weddings are likely, he observed, to be comfortable, when God brings the married couple to each other. All who come together, do so by his common providence. A sparrow doth not fall to the ground without him. But there is a special providence to be owned, when people marry *in the Lord*. That a marriage may be *in the Lord*, it is necessary that the proceedings be according to rule.—In respect of parties, they must not be too near in relation, nor too far off in age, quality, and profession. The more suitableness, the more likely is it that they were brought together by God. Solomon missed it in marrying strange wives, and it was his ruin. Sons of God should not match with the daughters of men. Be not unequally yoked. There should be free consent of both parties, and parents also. Parents are not to infringe children's right, by forcing them, nor children theirs, by disposing of themselves. It should be managed as an ordinance of God, *sanctified by the word of God and prayer*.

What God brings, he will bless to us, and what he blesses, must needs be comfortable. When God blows upon any thing, it never prospers, Psalm cxxvii. 1.[f]

At Mrs. Hulton's marriage, he selected as a topic for advice, Ephesians v. 24, 25. *Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, &c.* And thus pleasantly remarked;—I am loth to invert the apostle's method and order, and, therefore, shall keep to that. Though the husband be the superior, and have the pre-eminence in other things, he must not be offended, if his wife go before him learning her duty. The church (that is, of the first-born, considered as such, all the true saints in the world) is subject to Christ. He is owned by them as their Lord and Ruler, both in word and deed. They have learned to deny their own wills, whereinsoever they come in competition with his, both as to what they must have, and as to what they must do. Now just thus, in like manner, are wives to be subject to their own husbands. It is called reverence, 1 Peter iii. Their speech is to be accordingly, 1 Peter iii. 5, 6. They are to be obedient to their lawful commands and appointments. I am unwilling to call them *commands*, unless in a soft sense, 1 Peter iii. 6. They are to be patient under their rebukes; be never both angry together, 1 Peter iii. 4, 5. Thus God will have it; your place requires it, 1 Timothy ii. 12, 13, 14. Gen. iii. 16. You will have most comfort when it is so. Observe one caution,—it must be *in the Lord*, not absolutely and universally without exception, but, —*in the Lord*.

Husbands must learn to love their wives, by Christ's love to his church, that was, a sincere, upright, unfeigned love; a special, singular, superlative love; a permanent, abiding, and fruitful love. The husband should show his affection to his wife, by dwelling with her, by bearing her infirmities, by going in and out before her, by guiding her way, and providing all things that are fit for her.[g]

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[a] If an offence be given by one, it must not be taken by the other: for if both be angry together, the fire will be the greater. Shute's Sarah and Hagar. p. 85. fol. 1649.

[b] "A good man, being vehement with the 'Reverend and faithfull servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. Richard Greenham,' he said,—'You are fire, and I will be water.'" Greenham's Works, p. 742. *ut supra*.

[c] See Discourse concerning Meekness, *post*. The Supplement to the Morning Exercise at Cripplegate, *ut supra*. p. 297. Sermon xvi.

[d] From a copy, in the hand-writing of Mrs. Savage.

[e] Dear father preached at family prayer that night, from that scripture in Genesis,—*and brought her to the man*. Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS.

[f] From Mrs. Savage's MS.

[g] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

APPENDIX, No. XXIV.

THE following memoranda respecting the duties of the aged,[h] drawn up by Mr. Henry, in his latter days, will serve, still further, to illustrate his views in the nearer prospect of eternity.

God expects old persons to be very penitent for past sin. Repentance is unravelling our ill-spun thread;[i] going back our missed way,—and this, when old, should be our special work,—our repenting work is almost done. Some are never merrier than when telling stories of their youthful extravagances. But this must not be,[k]—it is to act them over again. Never think nor speak of them, without a tear, or a sigh, and that towards God; see Psalm xxv. 7. As you should never think of a friend without a praying thought, so you should never think of sin without repenting. And this should extend to present sins also. The pump of repentance must be kept going continually. It is a rare sight to see old people melt in tears for sin.

The aged should be strong in faith, giving glory to God. Abraham was so when he was one hundred years old, Romans iv. Zechariah believed not the angel's message, and he was struck dumb, Luke i.

The whole word of God, particularly concerning Christ, the Saviour, is to be believed, and by old people especially. Though others have as many promises, yet they have more experiences. It aggravated Zechariah's unbelief, to have had the instance of Abraham, who had a son when old, before him. Be exhorted then, by faith, to close with the Lord Jesus as yours, though with a trembling hand. Close with him for pardon, peace, acceptation. Live by faith in all things, setting the word before you; eyeing unseen things. Be filled with joy in believing, and be not doubting and disquieted.

They should also be dead to the world.[l] All its riches, honours, and pleasures, are the vainest vanity. Now to be dead to them, is to be weaned from them, to see in them no such beauty, excellency, or desirableness, as most persons think there is; and to carry it accordingly; see 2 Samuel xiii. 19—35. It is commonly said, that covetousness is one of the reigning sins of old age. How strange that it should be so! Especially considering what they have seen, and known, and it may be *felt*, of the emptiness and uncertainty of riches. They have witnessed how often they make themselves wings. What! and not yet convinced? What! almost at the end of thy journey, and yet loading thyself with thick clay?[m] Think of the time of day. It is almost night: even sun-set. And art thou unmindful of the grave? Thy body is bending downwards, let the heart be upwards. Remember,—covetousness is idolatry. Set *your affections on things above.*

God expects them to be very meek, and gentle, and patient. Old people are apt to be hasty and angry. But they should put on meekness. Sometimes distempers and infirmities are a cause of frowardness. Old age is often attended with deafness, blindness, lameness; but to quarrel with these, is to quarrel with God. They are the fruits of sin. Sometimes the disappointments and disasters which happen in the estate, the family, the relations, children, or perhaps children's children, occasion fretfulness. Remember in all these things to acknowledge God; Psalm xxxix. 9. Lamentations iii. 39. Only by pride comes frowardness. Old people are apt to think themselves wise, whether they are so or not, and to despise the young. The cure for this is

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h See "A Discourse concerning Old Age, by Richard Steele, M. A. 1688."

i How wilt thou untwist the former web, which thou hast been so long a weaving? Dr. Manton. Works. vol. 2 p. 76. fol. 1684.

k See the Works of Bisnop Taylor, *ut supra*, v. 8. p. 505.

l Though your affections are not only upon earthly things, yet are they not principally so? This appears, when we affect earthly things in the first place. (The rule our Saviour gives, is to seek *first the kingdom of God*, and to trust him for other things,)—when we affect earthly things for their own sakes, and not in subordination to a higher end. It is only right, when we find the comforts which God hath given us, excitements to obedience.—When heavenly things must give way to earthly.—When we can be content to forfeit a good conscience, that we may gratify our affections towards earthly things. Herod affected John the Baptist, and heard him gladly. But Herodias must be gratified.

It may be you can say,—"I bless God, I am in Christ;—I have chosen him,—earthly things shall not keep me from him." Be it so. But if thy affections are towards earthly things, thou mayest, nevertheless, wrong thy soul. You will be exposed to a multitude of temptations and snares, 1 Timothy vi. 9. A man, whose affections are upon *things above*, is like a bird flying in the air; whatever gins are laid, she is out of danger. It is the earth that is the devil's walk, Job i. 7. Here he lays his snares. Many a good man hath met with temptations to pride, security, carnal confidence; which, if his heart had been in heaven, he would have escaped, Ps. xxx. 6. 2 Kings xx. 13.—It will exceedingly hinder thy communion with God. Earthly things are prejudicial to our fellowship with God in duty,—when they put us by it, when they indispose us to it, when they distract us in it, when they choke it, as thorns, Matthew xiii. 22.—It is the very root of apostasy. Though a child of God cannot finally fall away,—for the foundation of God stands sure, having this seal,—*the Lord knows them that are his;* yet he may fearfully backslide, both in opinion and judgment, from truth to error; and also in affection and conversation, from his first love, and former zeal, and forwardness in the ways of God. Therefore, *let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall, &c.* 1 Tim. vi. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 10. It unfits us for death. A Christian should always be in such a frame of mind, as he would be willing for death to find him in. Now, if death should find thee drunk with cares, it were as bad a case as if he should find thee drunk with wine, or ale; the one would make thee as unfit as the other, to *go forth to meet the bridegroom*, Luke xxi. 34.

Let us use God and the world, as God and the world use us. God is our daily friend,—the world our daily enemy. A man that hath friends, must show himself friendly, Prov. xviii. 24. Is God thy friend? Show thyself friendly towards him. Love him. Delight in him. Beware of displeasing him. Is the world thy enemy? Watch against it. Stand upon thy guard, lest it insnare thee. Take heed of it. It hath slain thousands. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

m Hab. ii. 6. Gravioribus sumptibus se onerare festinat cum jam pervenerit quo tendebat. Augustine. Ser. de temp. 247. See Steele on Old Age. p. 61. *ut supra.*

humility, 1 Peter v. 5. Consider how sinful it is in the sight of God, how much uneasiness it causes relations, and how much hurt it does to yourselves. Moses's meekness prolonged his days, and made him young when he was old.

The aged should be knowing in the things of God, and communicate what they know. Many old people are shamefully ignorant in the Scriptures: blind spiritually. See Hebrews v. 12. Think how often you have read, and heard the Scripture read over; think how many sermons you have heard. What! and all gone? Has nothing remained? How will you answer it? What a shame it was to old Nicodemus, not to know what regeneration meant. Bestir yourself yet to grow in knowledge. Be often speaking to the young. Tell them what you have learned concerning God and Christ, and holiness and sin; what you have seen of the wisdom and righteousness of God in past events. See Psalm lxxviii. 1, 2, &c. Titus ii. 2, 3. You should be teachers of good things.

I have known several, who are dead; and do know some in this neighbourhood, yet alive,—aged men, of such competent knowledge, and so well experienced in the things of God, that I could wish they were made ministers, as being more likely to convert and save souls, than many youths who can talk Greek and Latin, but have little savour of God upon their hearts. There is a reverend prelate, yet living, in the Church of England, who hath lately, in print, declared himself of the same mind.[n] See the Bishop of Hereford's Naked Truth.[o]

The aged should redeem as much time as may be for their souls, and the duties of God's worship. All time is our soul's time, principally and ultimately, and it concerns us all to use, and improve, and redeem it accordingly. But it especially concerns the aged, for they have lost much, and they have little remaining. They know not how little, perhaps, less than we are aware of. How busy then should we be in praying, reading, hearing, meditating, sanctifying sabbaths, communicating in the Lord's supper. See Luke ii. 25, 36, 37. This would be work for your souls,—work in which you would have comfort to eternity. Many aged persons have, in a great measure, put off their worldly business to children and grand-children; they can do little in the fields, or in the barn. The more then should be done in the closet, and in the assembly. And let me warn you of one fault, and that is,—drowsiness in the duties of God's worship. I know what may be said from bodily infirmities,—the spirit willing, and the flesh weak. But yet we should strive all we can against it, and grieve that it should be so.

Old people should be mindful of death and judgment, and careful always to prepare and make ready for it. Two things are to be set in order,—the house and the heart. The house,—by settling our worldly estate. We shall die none the sooner, but we shall certainly be readier for death.[p] Isaiah xxxviii. 1; The heart, by settling our spiritual estate; that is, making our calling and election sure; repenting of sin, receiving Christ Jesus the Lord, walking in all his commandments blameless. He who hath done this, is ready for death. Romans viii. 1. It is delay in doing it that spoils all. Nobody says they will *never* do so; nobody says they will never make their will;[q] but they say, Not yet; not till such an affair be settled. And, alas! death comes, and prevents both the one and the other.

Now, consider what a mercy it is that we have lived to be so old, when so many have been cut off. How many have died, who never saw the sun. And how many thousand suns hast thou seen. How have thy days been multiplied. As many three years as thou hast lived, so many thousand days, and upwards, have been given to thee. As many twenty years as thou hast lived, so many thousand sabbath-days hast thou enjoyed. And should not this engage us? Lord, thou hast been good to me,—in reprieving, and sparing, and prolonging, and shall I forget thee?

Consider what an honour he hath put upon us. Old age is a ray or beam of the divine image. God is called the *Ancient of Days*, Daniel vii. 9, 13, 22. But he is not, therefore, to be pictured as an old man.[r] As magistrates bear the image of his authority and sovereignty, he says,—they are gods. So in a sense old men are gods. Yea, they are all children of the Eternal. Oh, then, make sure of his other image, which is called the image of his son, and consists in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness.

Consider what an encouraging example it will be to others. Our neighbours and relations will take occasion from thence, both to glorify God, and to reverence us. The hoary head is a crown of glory,

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n And see Fuller's Church History, book viii. pp. 24, 25.

o "The Naked Truth, or the True State of the Primitive Church," 4to. 1675. See particularly the chapter concerning preaching. *Ib.* p. 25. The worthy bishop (Dr. Croft) styled himself in the title page, "An Humble Moderator." And, says Baxter, "because he wrote to heal us, and strengthen us against popery, they gnash their teeth at him." English Nonconformity, pp. 221, 222. *ut supra.* See Walton's Lives, by Dr. Zouch. v. 2. pp. 349, 391. where there is some account of this celebrated pamphlet, and its effects.

p Setting a man's house and heart in order, will not make a man die the sooner; it will help the man to die the better. Canaan's Flowings, by Ralph Venning. p. 47. *ut supra.*

q One of the three things of which Aristotle repented, was,—That he had lived one day, not having his will made. Stanley's History of Philosophy, *ut supra.*

r Alluding, probably, to the celebrated picture in the window of St. Edmund's Church, Salisbury. See Prynne's Canterburie Doome. fol. 1646. p. 102.

if it be found in the way of righteousness; otherwise, it is a crown of shame. Noah was drunken but once, and then he was mocked. The apostle, exhorting Timothy, said,—*Let no man despise thy youth.* So I would say to you,—Let no man despise thy *age.* Do nothing to be despised. Watch against sins you may think you are in no danger of. Be an example of the believers. The young will dress themselves by you, as by their glass.[s]

Consider how comfortable it will be to yourselves, living and dying. Old age is attended with many evils. But much of their effect is taken off by religion and godliness.[t] *He that is of a merry heart, hath a continual feast.* A merry heart, that is, a good conscience, bearing testimony to our integrity, 2 Corinthians i. 12. This will lighten all our burthens. We shall have the smiles of God's face, and favour, and we may boldly entreat for them, as David, Psalm lxxi. 17, 18. Isaiah xlvi. 3, 4. Psalm xxiii. 4.

Consider what a foundation it lays for a happy eternity. All the good fruit we bring forth now, will be fruit abounding to our account for ever. I say, for ever.[u] Thou thinkest seventy, eighty, ninety years a long time, and so it is. But what then is *eternity?* An ocean, without bound or bottom. A circle, without beginning or end. Oh, eternity, eternity! How should the thought thereof fill us. To be miserable to *eternity!* How miserable! To be happy to *eternity!* What happiness!

Shall I prevail with you to bring forth fruit in old age? You will not repent it. *Your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.* Not a prayer, a tear, an alms, a good thought, a good word, a good work, shall be in vain.

In all your fruit-bearing, see your need of Christ. See your need of his grace and strength to enable you, John xv. 5. And come to him for it daily. See your need of his merit and righteousness, to make you and your fruit accepted, Ephesians i. 6. And let his love to you, in suffering and dying, be the prevailing motive in every thing, Philippians i. 21.[v]

[s] So Mr. Swinnock, in his Heaven and Hell epitomized, addressing, in an epistle dedicatory, his friend, Richard Beresford, Esq. says of great men,—You are the looking-glasses by which others dress themselves, *ut supra.*

[t] In all the troubles and afflictions that befall us, it is matter of some comfort, they are to last but a while. *Behold, thou hast made my days as a hand-breadth.* At furthest, death will set us free, and that cannot be far off; then sinning will cease, and sorrow and sighing will flee away. They that are in Christ, as David was, may comfort themselves with this. Others cannot. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[u] It is said of holy Mr. Ward, that being in the midst of a dinner, very contemplative, and the people wondering what he was musing about, he presently breaks out, *For ever, for ever, for ever;* and though they endeavoured to still him, yet he still cried out,—*For ever, for ever, for ever.* Oh, eternity! to be for ever in heaven with God and Christ, how shall this swallow up all other thoughts and aims! Looking unto Jesus, by Isaac Ambrose. 4to. 1658. p. 594.

[v] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[w] 1665. Jan. 17. Exchanged with Mr. Thomas my common-place book, wherein something written for a larger of clean paper.—19. New common-place book, ruled and prepared, wherein I purpose to take pains. *Non sera si seria.* P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

[x] In the possession of Joseph Lee, Esq. Jun., Red Brook Farm, near Broad Oak.

[y] See *ante*, p. 110.

APPENDIX, No. XXV.

It may be gratifying to some readers to know, that Mr. Henry was an advocate for common-place books. He used two. The one was adapted for the pocket, being merely a volume of reference: titles were placed on each leaf, and a blank left underneath, in which to note the names of authors and pages, The other was a large folio volume, divided into 1250 pages.[w]

The volume[x] thus commences.

"Quod legis intentè meditare ac imprime menti,
Ne si charta cadat, tunc cuncta scientia vadat."

I read a book the first time, to see and like it; the second time, to note and observe both method and matter; the third time, to carry away and make use. A saying of Sir Edward Maunsell, cited by Mr. H. Holland, in his Preface to the second part of Mr. Greenham's Works.[y]

The first part of the volume is miscellaneous, and is arranged under the ensuing titles.

Holy Scriptures. Their excellency; the love and study of them, *et contra;* their authority; their perspicuity; their harmony; translation; interpretation; apocrypha.

God. There is a God; names of God; attributes of God; will of God; holiness; wisdom of God; power of God; mercy of God; justice of God; omnisciency.

Trinity of persons.

Holy Ghost.

Decrees of God.

Election.

Reprobation; creation; providence.

Angels. Their creation and nature; their number and orders; their offices; not to be worshipped; their fall.

Devils. Given to the devil; possessed; apparition.

Man. Woman. Man in innocency; man in misery.

Christ. Godhead of Christ; incarnation; life of Christ; sufferings of Christ; death of Christ; burial;

descent into hell; resurrection of Christ; satisfaction of Christ; intercession of Christ; kingdom of Christ.

Covenant. Covenant of works; law; covenant of grace.

Gospel. Decalogue; promises; threatenings; redemption; idleness; vocation; calling; conversion; regeneration; adoption; justification; sanctification; mortification; assurance-wanted; growth in grace; perseverance; apostasy; good works; obedience; perfection; spiritual gifts; grace; knowledge; ignorance; of self; faith; repentance not to be deferred; godly sorrow; tears; confession of sin; sincerity; hypocrisy; humility; pride,—in clothes,—in long hair; meekness; charity; forgiving injuries; lending; not judging; fidelity; patience; impatience; contentment; discontent; justice; liberality; frugality; fortitude; sobriety; temperance; gluttony; drunkenness; of healths; self-denial; public spirit; unity; division; differences; duties; meditation; occasional prayer,—a duty; prayer,—fervent; success of prayer; secret prayer; family prayer; posture and gesture in prayer; Amen; thankfulness; thanksgiving; alms'-giving; watchfulness; reproof taken; oath; vow.

Sin. None little; excuses of sin; others' sins; evil of sin; reigning sin; God not the author of sin; original sin; inherent.

Atheism. Idolatry; blasphemy; swearing; perjury; cursing; superstition; will-worship; temples.

Sacrilege. Punished.

Murder. Prevented; discovered; revenged.

Duels. Uncleanness; adultery; fornication; incest; sodomy; bestiality; chastity; theft; restitution; bribery; lying; equivocation; dissimulation; slander.

Flattery. Checked; courted.

Envy. Covetousness; prodigality.

Usury. Heathen; canons.

Ambition. Omissions; presumption; despair; sin against the Holy Ghost; temptation; desertion.

Persecution; judgments on persecutors.

Martyrdom. Martyrs; courage of dying martyrs.

Soul. Understanding.

Will. Free will; *contra.*

Memory. Defect; vast memory.

Conscience. Thoughts; affections.

Love. Of God; of self; of friends; of enemies.

Hatred.

Joy. In tribulation.

Grief. Desire; hope; fear and boldness.

Anger. Yielding pacifies; revenge.

Zeal. Examples.

Sympathy. Antipathy.

Body of man. Eye; face; hands; veins.

Tongue.

Recreation. Plays; gaming; tables, cards, and dice; chess; dancing.

Melancholy. Infancy; childhood; youth; old age; health.

Sickness. Stone; king's evil; French disease.

Honour. To be denied for Christ; nobility; riches contemned.

Poverty. Prosperity; afflictions; life.

Death. Desirous of death; afraid of death; of the godly; to be thought of.

Burial. Resurrection of the body; last judgment.

Heaven. Shall we know one another there.

Hell. War.

Peace. Peace-making.

Plenty. Famine; company; solitude; time; eternity.

Fathers. Schoolmen; Christian religion; church; government; toleration; church reformation; censures.

Excommunication. Who are to excommunicate; who are to be excommunicated.

Councils. Synods.

Ordination.

Ministers. Dignity; duty; industry; skill in languages; conversation; success; opposition; contentions; pluralities.

Lay elders. Deacons; prelacy; prelates; ordinances; public worship; liturgy; Lord's Prayer.

Ceremonies. Bowing at the name of Jesus; surplice.

Christian liberty. Preaching; hearing; catechising; psalm-singing; confirmation; sacraments; baptism.

Godfathers and godmothers. Of infants.

Lord's supper. Names; nature; elements; abuse; preparation; administration; place; gesture.

Lord's day. The doctrine of it; the love and practice of it.

Fasting. Feasting; festivals.

Tithes. First fruits; impropriations; mortuaries.

Marriage. Polygamy; divorce; husband and wife; parents and children; master and servants; magistrate and subjects; minister and people; residency; respect.

Heresy. What it is; qualities; necessity; refutation.

Heretics. Cunning; seeming holiness; pride; sin and punishment.

Schism. What is it?

Schismatic. Antichrist; pope's supremacy; pope's infallibility; indulgences; purgatory; extreme unction; transubstantiation; mass; image worship; relics; prayer for the dead; praying to saints; merit; supererogation; traditions; miracles; truth; error; papists; protestants.

Popish orders. Cardinals; jesuits.

Arminians. Socinians; Antinomians; Ana-baptists; Quakers; Jews.

Jewish rites. Sabbath; circumcision; passover.

Jews' conversion. Schools; universities; learn-

ing; grammar; rhetoric; poetry; philosophy; history; mathematics; music; optics; politics.

Laws. Lawyers; judges; physic; physician; astrology; meteors; dreams; witchcraft; jests; riddles; proverbs; emblems; anagrams; chronograms; mottos; epitaphs.

The Second Part is geographical, and thus arranged:—

World. Europe; Asia; Africa; America. England,—London, Oxford, and Cambridge. Wales; Scotland; Ireland. France,—Paris; Spain; Italy; Naples; Florence; Siena; Verona; Milan; Geneva; Venice; Padua; Rome, Old, New; Germany; Low Countries; Denmark; Swedland; Hungary; Poland; Transylvania; Russia; Greece; Turkey; Palestine; Jerusalem; Tartary; China; Persia; East Indies; Arabia; Egypt; Islands; Crete; Cyprus; Zante.

The Third Part is biographical, consisting of four sub-divisions.

Viri celebriores.

Ab orbe condito ad Christum natum.

Adam; Eve; Homer; Lycurgus; Hesiod; Romulus; Thales; Socrates; Pythagoras; Æsop; Pindar; Heraclitus; Democritus; Hippocrates; Euripides; Sophocles; Herodotus; Thucydides; Aristophanes; Isocrates; Xenophon; Demosthenes; Plato; Euclid; Aristotle; Alexander; Theocritus; Aratus; Zeno; Berosus; Diogenes; Hannibal; Cato; Polybius; Archimedes; Chrysippus; Plautus; Ennius; Terence; Lucretius; P. Scipio; Cicero; Catiline; Pompey; Julius Cæsar; Augustus Cæsar; Ovidius; Virgil.

Viri celebriores.

A nato Christo ad Constantinum.

Peter; Andrew; James of Zebedee; John; Philip; Bartholomew; Thomas; Matthew; James, of Alpheus; Lebbeus, *alias* Thaddeus; Simon, the Canaanite; Judas Iscariot; Philo; Simon Magus; Menander; Nicolaus; Plinius Secundus; Lucan; Tiberius Cæsar; Caius Caligula; Claudius Cæsar; Nero Cæsar; Sulpitius Galba; Salvius Otho; Aulus Vitellius; Flavius Vespasianus; Titus Vespasianus; Flavius Domitianus; Coccejus Nerva; Ulpius Trajanus; Ælius Adrianus; Lucius Ælius Verus; Antoninus Philosophus; Antoninus Pius; L. Aurelius Commodus; Helvius Pertinax; Didius Julianus; Pescennius Niger, a usurper; Clodius Albinus, another usurper, with Niger; L. Septimus Severus; Ignatius; Justin Martyr; Irenæus; Clemens Alexandrinus; Tertullian; Origen; Cyprian.

Viri celebriores.

A Constantino ad Lutherum.

i. e. ab A. D. 307. *ad A. D.* 1517.

Constantine, surnamed the Great; Julian, the Apostate; Lactantius; Ambrose; Augustine; Monica; Hierome; Athanasius; Chrysostom; Hilary; Germanus St. Germane; St. Patrick; Columba; St. Kintigern, or Mungo; Mahomet; Joannes Duns Scotus; Columbus.

Viri celebriores.

A Luthero ad usq. nunc.

Martin Luther; Joannes Capnio: Henry the Seventh, of England; Zuinglius; Œcolampadius; Melancthon; Erasmus; Scaliger; Paulus Fagius; Charles the Fifth; Philip the Second; Henry the Eighth; Edward the Sixth; Queen Mary; Lady Jane Grey; More; Wolsey; Paracelsus; John Calvin; Peter Martyr; Roger Ascham; Ursin; Beza; Junius; Francis; Patrick Hamilton; George Wischart, *alias* Wishart; John Knox; Mary Stewart, Queen of Scots; John Rogers, martyr; Cranmer; Latimer; Ridley; Brown; Queen Elizabeth; Leicester; Cecil; Drake; Rawleigh; Sidney; Greenham; Faustus Socinus, hœresiarcha; Bancroft; Whitaker; Perkins; John Craig; George Abbot; John Welsh; Heinsius; Henry the Fourth, of France; Jacobus Arminius, al, Van Harmin; Hugh Broughton; King James; Camden; Rogers; Gustavus; Jansenius; Francis Bacon; John Preston; Grotius; Herbert; Selden; Salmasius; John Spotswood; John Cotton; Abraham Cowley; Mary Boyle, Lady Warwick; Robert Foulks; James Sharp; Mr. Thomas Gouge; Sir George Booth; Lord Delamere; Mr. John Flavel; King William the Third.

This interesting volume contains a variety of valuable and curious reading, selected principally from the writings of Ovid; Terence; Juvenal; Horace; Martial; Tacitus; Cicero; Quintilian; Velleius Paterculus; Seneca; Pliny; Plutarch; Augustine; Tertullian; Nazianzen; Chrysostom; Cyprian; Lactantius; Basil; Origen; Bernard; Ambrose and Epiphanius; Luther; Calvin; Melancthon; Beza; Scaliger; Erasmus, and Grotius; Melchior Adam; Bacon; Camden; Stow and Spelman; Jewel; Rivet; Peter Martyr; Musculus; Thuanus; Fox; Bishop Hall; Dr. Harrison; Ames; Nehemiah Rogers; Perkins; Bolton; Dr.

Harris; White; Quarles; Arrowsmith; Stoughton; Strong; Hildersham; Taylor; Burroughs; Gouge; Trapp; Shepherd; Greenham; Capel; Burgess; Tuckney; Rutherford and Blake; Heylin; Newcome; Hales; Baxter; Case; Caryl; Cudworth; Reyner; Bridge; Calamy; Clark; Howel; Sanderson; Reynolds; Lightfoot; Stillingfleet; Leigh; Hammond; Prideaux; Mede; Spurstowe; Dr. Owen; Polhill;[a] Gurnal; Rycaut, and Gale.

Much of the volume still remains unwritten, scarcely a sentence having been added to it since Mr. Matthew Henry's decease. It served as a common-place book to that gentleman, as well as his venerable father.

To the volume are added three indexes. The first biographical; the second miscellaneous; the third geographical.

From the preceding analysis, Mr. Henry's taste and habits, as a student, will, in some degree, be apparent. It has been much desired to ascertain his judgment upon the authors he consulted; but the search has been, as, at this distance of time, might be expected, almost ineffectual. The following are the only instances, and though brief, can scarcely be omitted. They may serve as specimens, and being transcribed from his own hand, are genuine.

Herodotus. Tully calls him the father of history, which title he deserves in regard of antiquity, being the oldest Greek historian extant.

Thucydides. A most grave and accurate Greek historian, than whom scarce any Grecian ever discovered a more impartial love to the truth in what he wrote.[b]

Fathers. It is a good rule in reading the Fathers, to begin with the most ancient: to know which of their works are genuine, and which spurious; consult Photius Μυριόβιβλον; Possevin's Apparat; Bibliothec; Bellarm. de Script. Eccl.; Abbas Trithemius. And among the Protestants,—Scultetus Medull; Rivett's Critic. Sacr.; Cooke's Censur. Patr; Erasm. in his Prefaces, Epistles, and Annotations on all those Fathers put forth by him.

To know the best edition of the Fathers, it is a general rule, those which Erasmus set out are freest from corruptions: and in particular, Clemens Roman. edit. Oxon. A. D. 1633. Ignatius by Dr Usher. Oxon. 1646.[c]

APPENDIX, No. XXVI.

What am I? In sin, or in Christ? Am I effectually called, or am I not? If not, it is dangerous coming. Ask what am I, that if I am not as I should be, I may mend my state. If not alive, then go to God for spiritual life. And when God gives life, then away to the sacrament for the support of the spiritual life. Those mentioned in Acts ii., as soon as they were converted, were presently in church-fellowship.

What have I done? Here is work for self-examination. To consider our sins; the sin of our nature; the sins of our hearts and lives; the sins of our particular relations; sabbath sins; tongue sins, &c. When we have found out our sins, then we must repent. Repenting includes contrition, hearty sorrow; contrition is the breaking of the heart, pounding it as in a mortar. Confession, telling God what we have done. Conversion, turning from sin. With all these, hearty prayer must be joined.

What do I want? A condemned malefactor wants a pardon; a hungry soul wants bread; a debtor wants a surety; a traveller wants a guide; a guilty person wants a city of refuge; a blind man wants eye-salve; a weak soul wants strength; a graceless heart wants grace; a sinner wants a Saviour. Now all these are to be had with Christ. All these are offered in the sacrament. In one word, Christ and all his benefits. When we are going to a market, we look about the house to see what is wanting. The sacrament is the market. When we have found out our wants, we must represent them to God in prayer.[d]

In reference to this subject he would say;—Self-examination is required before the communion; and he was urgent in pressing it. He frequently explained the nature of the duty, and pointed out the hinderances of it; such as laziness, self-love, pride, and ignorance of its necessity. Many think, he remarks, every man is bound to believe his sins are pardoned, and that God is his Father;—that it is a fault to question it. They are ignorant of the nature and way of the duty; know not how to examine, where to begin, nor what to inquire after. Some are hindered by a desperate resolution—To what purpose should they try?—They resolve to continue as they are, come what will; this preciseness will not suit them: they must have liberty. The world is a snare to many. False persuasions, that the work is done already, hinder others.[e] Many who

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[a] I read in Polhill's Precious Faith; of which book, dear father once said,—It was hard to say which excelled, the gentleman, or the divine. Mrs. Savage. Diary, Orig. MS.

[b] Common-place Book. Orig. MS.

[c] *Ib.* See Horne's Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. 4th edit. v. 2. Appendix. p. 739.

[d] P. Henry. From a MS. in Mr. Matthew Henry's hand-writing 1683-4. See Matthew Henry's Communicant's Companion, chap. IV. post.

[e] They are fully persuaded that Christ died for them, and that they shall be saved. How they came by this persuasion they cannot tell. But it is suspicious to have goods, and know not how one came by them. The Doctrine of Faith, by John Rogers, p. 32 [illegible] 1624

do examine, yet do it by halves; they go about it in their own strength, and so miscarry.

As motives to it, he would urge, that multitudes perish who thought all was well, Proverbs xiv. 12. Luke xiii. 25. xviii. 10, 11; Revelations iii. 17; —it is an easy and a common thing to be mistaken; there are many bye-ways; *the heart is deceitful.*

The least despairing are most desperate, Isaiah xliv. 20. What if death should come before thou hast tried? Thou wilt be lost for ever;—there will be no trying in the grave. Shortly, God will try you. Besides, there is great advantage in it. If unconverted, it will be a means to bring thee out of that condition. If in Christ, it will marvellously further consolation; in this way, and no other, thou mayst attain assurance, 2 Peter i. 10; which will produce admirable sweetness;—sweetness in every condition, let public troubles be what they may. It will abate the terribleness of death and judgment, and add wings to obedience.

He would say, by way of direction;—Art thou resolved to set about it? Sequester thyself from all other employments. Implore the Spirit's assistance by hearty prayer, Psalm cxxxix. 20. Pitch upon such a time when you are fittest for the work,—best disposed. Have in readiness some scripture marks of truth and grace, and then try,—Is it thus with me, or is it not? Give not over till it be brought to some issue; let the sentence pass without fear or flattery. When thou knowest thy condition, be affected accordingly. If thou find thou art, to this day, in thy sins, oh, tremble, and make haste! Do not conclude it is in vain to turn. If otherwise, *rejoice, and be exceeding glad.*

On another occasion he writes;—Are ye *passed from death unto life?* There is such a thing, and it may be known, and we can have no comfort in living the life of nature, if we are not spiritually alive; if we do not live the life of grace. Now, one good mark to know it by, is the *end* that we live to. Is that God, or self? Another, is by the *food* that we live upon. Is that Christ?—His merit and righteousness for justification; his Spirit and grace for sanctification? Another is by the *rule* that we live by. Is that the rule of the new creature,—the word of God? Is that the card and compass we sail by,—the light and lamp we walk by? Or, is it something else,—the dictates of our own corrupt nature, carnal reason, fleshly appetites, the course and custom of this vain world? Try by this.[f]

[f] P. Henry. Orig. MS.

[g] The evening before the death of the Rev. Daniel Burgess, a friend, who came to see him, speaking of public affairs, said, it was feared there would be a storm; he answered with cheerfulness,—

APPENDIX, No. XXVII.

At this distance of time, any fact is interesting which illustrates the character, and perfumes the memory, of such men as Mr. Nevett. The Elegy, composed on his death, by Mr. Henry, being the only additional document that can be found respecting him, will, therefore, form a fit appendage to the narrative; and if it adds no honours to the writer as a poet, it will furnish the reader with a pleasing relic of Christian friendship.

Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes
A spring of tears, like melting Jeremy's;
That I might weep, and weep, and weep again
O'er the sad hearse of a dear prophet slain.
Slain by an arrow, darted from above;
Tow'rds us in anger; towards him in love.
A star is fallen, not from God to sin,
But from this lower orb he shined in:
Rather from sin to God; from wandering here,
To fix with him in a more holy sphere;
New storms are rising, he's put into shore;
A deluge coming, he is ark't before.[g]
Oh, earth, earth, earth, hearken what heaven saith;
Each rod, a voice, this rod a loud one hath.
The owner thought it much, three years to come
To a barren tree, which hastened its sad doom;
What then can they expect, that ten times three
Had such a dresser, if they barren be?
A faithful, self-denying shepherd, who
Sought not the fleece, but flock; not yours, but you.
Many a time he to the pulpit went,
Pain'd as a gorged breast, till he had vent;
And then his zeal so eat him up, that pain
Being strait forgotten, all was well again.
How far unlike those ministers, to whom
A burthen 'tis; their only martyrdom.
'Tis hard to say, whether he rather was
A Boanerges, or a Barnabas.
Not one but both; he did both wound and heal;
Preach law and gospel; sin and Christ reveal.
But his delight was chiefly to distil,
Not from black Sinai, but from Sion's hill,—
Such sweet refreshing showers of holy dew,
As would at once both melt and comfort too.
Great love, rich mercy, and free grace to all
That truly do embrace the gospel call.
This was his text, this was his doctrine, this
The burthen was in every song of his;
Ev'n to the last, for when his master came,[h]
So doing he was found,—found in this frame;

"But God will house some of his children first." Matthew Henry's account of Mr. Daniel Burgess, *post.*

[h] His last subject was, Ephesians ii. 4, 5

And by his constant breathing in such air,
His spirit, his converse, strangely sweeten'd were.
You'd think, sure he had lean'd upon that breast
Where that disciple lean'd, that love so press'd.
Jonathan's love, greater than woman's was,
But his did even Jonathan's surpass.
And one good argument it is to prove
Him greatly lov'd, himself that did so love.
Flaming affections, bowels that did stir,
As husband, father, brother, friend, minister;
This was his fiery chariot, in this
Living he rode, as th' dying prophet in his.
'Mongst all his other graces, 'twere most fit
That *loving* Nevett be his epithet.
Methinks I see him, ever and anon,
Casting up eyes and hands to heaven's throne;
Darting ejaculations thither; where
Heart-words are understood, and silent prayer.
His conversation was above, and he
Hath chang'd his place, but not his company.[i]
That sacred knot tied between him and you,
Law upon law did not, could not undo.
Still he was yours, you his, he would not part,
For Oswestree was written on his heart.[k]
But death hath done it, death the knot hath cut;
And those whom God hath join'd, asunder put.
Yet 'tis for present only; time *shall* come,
When you shall meet again at Father's home
And be together ever,—with the Lord;
Souls, take the comfort that these words afford.
And may those hopeful young ones each inherit
A double portion of their father's spirit:
Copies of him, that so it may be said,
While they survive, he is not wholly dead.[l]

i An allusion, probably, to the death-bed scene of Dr. Preston. Expressing his belief of a "sudden change," he said,—"Not of my company; for I shall still converse with God and saints, but of my place, and way of doing it." Clark's Lives, appended to the Martyrologie, pp. 112, 113, *ut supra*.

k Queen Mary "letted not to say, that the loss of Callis was written on her heart, and might therein be read when her body should be opened." Speed's Hist. of Great Britain, p. 1131. fol. 1632.

APPENDIX, No. XXVIII.

Mr. Benyon's mother is distinguished by Mr. Henry, in his diary, by a special memorial, of which the following is a transcript.

1663. May 5. At ten o'clock, I was sent for to Ash, where I came at eleven, and found my worthy, dear aunt Benyon alive, and that was all. We went to prayer,—and her life and prayer ended together. She was, without comparison, the best friend I had in this country, and it is no small loss to lose such an one. Lord, make up the loss to me, and all her relations, and humble us for sin, that kill-friend.

7. My dear aunt Benyon was buried at Whitchurch, Mr. Thomas preached. Text, 1 Corinthians iii. 22. Lord, take up the children, and come in her stead to all her relations, and to me. Amen.

She was daughter to Mr. Knight, of Shrewsbury, and had been married twenty-seven years to my uncle Benyon, by whom she had issue, now living, Daniel, Martha, Mary, Sarah, Elizabeth. She was the fittest wife for him in the world, being patient and prudent, in opposition to his passion and rashness. She was, I verily believe, one that truly feared God, and was taught to do it from her youth. She was of the mourners of Sion, laying much to heart the sins and sufferings of the times. She was provident and diligent in family affairs, *laying her hands to the spindle, and her hands held the distaff.* She was an inward, real, true-hearted friend. Eminent for humility and self-denial. Witness that expression of hers, when speaking of her children. I said,—I did not doubt but God had a kindness in store for them for her sake. She answered,—"For my sake! Alas, poor things, if it be not for another's sake than mine, they are undone."[m]

"—Had he opened been by surgeons' ert,
They had found London burning in his heart."
Dr. Wild, on the Death of Mr. Calamy.
Iter Boreale, &c. p. 80. duod. 1671.

l From Mrs. Savage's MS.

m P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

NOTES.

Sir H. Ashurst,—p. 3.

THIS excellent person was descended from the Ashursts of Ashurst, in Lancashire. His father, best known as Alderman Ashurst, appears to have been eminent for piety, and every Christian virtue. His character was drawn at large by Mr. Baxter. Works, v. 4. p. 189, &c. fol. Reliq. Baxter. Part. I. 290. Part. III. 17. 189. The alderman died in 1680, æt. 66. A similar testimony has been borne by Dr. Bates, in the preface to his funeral sermon for Mr. Benjamin Ashurst, Sir Henry's brother. Works. 4. p. 390. Sir Henry Ashurst trod in the steps of his venerable parent, and distinguished himself on the trial of Mr. Baxter,* as a steady, faithful friend. Reliq. Baxter. Preface, &c. Biog. Brit. v. 2. p. 16, &c. He published the Life of the Rev. Nath. Heywood, who was ejected, by the Act of Uniformity, from Ormskirk, in Lancashire. His intimacy with Mr. Henry, and also with Mr. Matt. Henry, was constant. Mr. Matt. Henry, in his Diary, May 8. 1707-8, notices the following incident. "Wrote to Sir H. Ashurst, who writes me, that last Saturday, he presented the Queen [Anne] my father's Life, and my book of the Sacrament;—sapless things, I fear, at court, and, I am sure, unworthy to be so regarded." †

"Sir Henry died at his seat at Waterstoke, near Coventry, 13th April, 1710-11." Matt. Henry. Diary. Orig. MS. Afterwards, he notes: "He left £800, to be paid to me 3 years after his decease, to be disposed of by me, as I should think most for the glory of God. It is a surprise to me. God give me wisdom and grace to use it well." Ibid. May 26. Orig. MS.

See John Dunton's encomium upon him in his Life and Errors, v. 1. p. 350. *ut supra.* See, also, *ibid.* p. 273.

Object his nonconformity,—p. 4.

His non-compliance, observes a distinguished Clergyman, was a great injury to the Church, for he was eminently qualified, as a divine, a scholar, and a gentleman, for one of its ministers. Noble's Continuation of Granger's Biog. Hist. of England, v. 1. p. 124.

The origin of the distinction between conformists and non-conformists must be sought for "in the conduct of those persecuted fugitives, who, to save their lives, their families, and their fortunes, from the bloody rage and inhuman tyranny of Queen Mary, left the places of their nativity, in the year 1554, and took refuge in Germany. Of these fugitive congregations, some performed divine worship with the rites that had been authorized by Edward VI. while others preferred the Swiss method of worship, as more recommendable, on account of its purity and simplicity. The former were called conformists, on account of their compliance with the ecclesiastical laws enacted by the Prince now mentioned; and the denominations of non-conformists and puritans were given to the latter, from their insisting upon a form of worship more exempt from superstition, and of a more pure kind than the Liturgy of Edward seemed to be." Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. v. 4. pp. 87, 88. ed. 1774. oct.

Two of his four daughters died,—p. 7.

The one, Mrs. Radford, who died, Aug. 1, 1697. See a Memoir of her in Mrs. Savage's Life, Appendix, No. V. *ut supra.*

The other, Mrs. Hulton, who died, Sept. 6, 1697. A Memoir of her, also, is appended to the third edition of Mrs. Savage's Life.

In reference to those affecting events, their eldest sister, Mrs. Savage, thus wrote to another sister, Mrs. Tylston.

Dear Sister, Sept. 17.

I thank you for your letter, though loaden with heavy tidings. Dear brother wrote to me on Saturday, which would have prepared me for worse, but it came not till to-day. I too much discover that my heart is not fixed as it should be. God's will is done, and my judgment is satisfied, but breach upon breach causes double sorrow; that which comforts, is,—hopes of a glorious meeting in the other world, to be together for ever, and with the Lord. How shall we do to search and discover the Jonah that hath raised this storm? Certainly we have deserved worse. I find my heart too much glued to creature-comforts, whereby I have procured this to myself, and, in particular, as to dear sister Hulton, now in glory. I did too much rejoice, and please myself with her correspondence; for, next to communion with God, (in whose favour is life,) converse with those that have acquaintance with him is the most desirable happiness that this world affords; but even this must not be overvalued. Indeed, we wither our flowers by too much smelling them. Blessed be God, that hath mixed the cup as to both you and I. We and ours are yet spared. And, wherefore? But because the work we have to do is not finished. This morning, as I lay on my sorrowful bed, that call of God to Joshua came to my mind,—*Up: Wherefore liest thou thus on thy face? Israel hath sinned, &c.* From whence I gather, that it is more proper work, when under the tokens of God's displeasure, to search for the cause, and humble myself under his mighty hand, than to lie down in despondency.

I think it an aggravation of my grief, that I am confined, and cannot come to pay my last respects to one so dear to us; but the wise God sees it best that thus it shall be. If not two sparrows, sure not two dear sisters, fall, without his providence. Why should not I expect to pledge the cup also?—God prepare me!—Welcome sickness, welcome death, if the sting be out. Blessed be God, that you are in any measure recovered;—the same hand that wounds, must heal. I trust he will heal the rest that are sick, and preserve the sound. Sister Hulton, in her last letter but one, writes thus:—Oh, we want our Aaron, our prevailing intercessor, the priest of the family, who would have stood between the living and the dead, that the plague might have been stayed. Blessed be God, we once had such a relation, who had so much interest in heaven as he had; but, especially, blessed be God for Jesus Christ,—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, seeing he ever lives to make intercession. My dear love to brother, and all yours, and believe me to be, as indeed I am,

Your affectionate, though sorrowful,
S. S.*

Matthew Henry,—p. 8.

Ob. June 22, 1714, æt. 52. See an Account of his Life and Death, by W. Tong, oct. 1716. Also the Dissenting Doctors, by John Dunton. Life and Errors, v. 2. pp. 726, 727.

Mr. Henry of Chester. He is son (if I do not mistake) to that famous Henry, whose "Life" was lately printed in London. I am told he does patrizare; for all his actions appear to be perfectly devoted to God, strictly observing St. Paul's rule, in the fourth of the Philippians,—"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things;" which Mr. Henry does, with that exactness and sincerity, the very churchmen love him; and even malice is angry she can find no cause to be angry with him. The Life and Errors of John Dunton, *ut supra*, v. 1. p. 376.

Philip Henry was so pre-eminent in worth, that it would have been high honour to any man to have been his son; but he was blessed with such a son, that posterity reveres him as the father of Matthew Henry. History of Dissenters, v. 2. p. 209.

* "The pretence for this prosecution was a supposed reference of some passages, in one of his works, to the Bishops of the Church of England;" but "the real motive was the desire of punishing an eminent Dissenting Teacher." History of the Early Part of the Reign of James II. by the Hon. Charles James Fox, p. 97.

† Orig. MS.

* Orig. MS.

Magdalen Rochdale,—p. 10.

She was the daughter of Mr. Henry Rochdale, was born, Oct. 19, 1599, and married to Mr. John Henry, Dec. 10, 1623.

Mr. Henry thus records her death:—

1644-5, Mar. 6, Thursday. My dear mother departed this life between the hours of 12 and 1 in the morning, and lies interred in Margaret Church, Westminster. Note. She was a woman of extraordinary piety and prudence, very careful in bringing up her children in the fear of God, a loving wife, a kind neighbour, a good mother. The memory of her virtues remains exceedingly dear and precious with all that were acquainted with her. P. Henry's Diary, Orig. MS.

Gave him his name,—p. 10.

Mr. Henry's name has been often adopted, and the custom, it is probable, will long continue.

The learned and excellent Dr. J. P. Smith, in an elegant memorial of his beloved son, Philip Henry Smith, assigns an instructive reason. "The name was given, not from the honour of relationship, nor from affectation; but solely with the hope that, under the blessing of divine grace on the association of ideas, he might be trained up to feel a peculiar interest in the character of that distinguished servant of Christ, and to love, admire, and imitate it." Evan. Mag. vol. 26. p. 378.

Assembly of divines,—p. 11.

Usually styled the Westminster Assembly. They were convened by Parliament for the Settlement of the Government, Liturgy, and Doctrine of the Church of England. They first met July 1, 1643, in Henry the Seventh's Chapel. See Fuller's Church Hist. *ut supra*, Book XI. p. 197, &c. Dr. Lightfoot's Works, *in vit.* fol. 1684. vol. 1. p. 8. Hearne's Works, Peter Langtoft's Chronicle, v. 1. p. clii. &c. And Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those eminent Divines who convened in the famous Assembly at Westminster, by James Reid, 2 vols. oct. 1811.

Mr. Marshal,—p. 11.

Stephen Marshall, B. D. ob. Nov. 1665. The Lives of the Puritans, v. 3. p. 241, &c. "Going to hear Mr. Marshall, whilst I was nodding, and almost asleep, his powerful voice awakened me, thundering in my ears the dreadful danger of such as were drowsie, and slept and slumbered away their salvation; which I thought was spoken directly to me, and had such prevalency upon me, that I started up with an aching heart, being much terrified at his words, which he still pursued, and wounded me to the very heart, when he told us,—that, when time was passed, it could never be recalled again, and then there was no other way but to double our diligence, and redeem the time we had lost by making more haste, and taking more care and pains, or else we should be utterly lost and undone." Dyer's Heaven upon Earth, p. 6. ed. 1697. duod. In 1680 a quarto pamphlet was printed, entitled, "The Godly Man's Legacy to the Saints upon Earth, exhibited in the Life of that great and able Divine, and painful Labourer in the Word, Mr. Stephen Marshall, sometime Minister of the Gospel at Finchingfield, in Essex." The object is to revile, and, by partial statements, so to represent, Mr. Marshall, as to check esteem, and lower the standard of his worth. It contains many curious things, and the title, though sarcastic, conveys a stronger testimony in his favour than the writer intended.

Mr. Palmer, &c.—p. 11.

The Rev. *Herbert Palmer*, B. D. He was born in 1601, and died in 1647. See Clark's Lives, annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 183, &c. fol. 1677; and the Life of the Rev. T. Cawton, p. 12, &c. *ut supra*.

The Rev. *Charles Herle*, A. M. was born 1598, ob. Sept. 1659. See the Lives of the Puritans, v. 3. p. 324. Mr. Herle was one of the Licensers for printing Books of Divinity. The order for regulating printing is preserved in Rushw. Hist. Coll. v. 5. p. 335.

Edmund Staunton, D. D. was born, 1600, ob. 1671, July 14. Life, duod. 1673.

The Rev. *Philip Nye* was born about 1596, ob. Sept. 1672. Wilson's History of Dissenting Churches, v. 3. p. 71, &c.

Jeremiah Whitaker, A. M. was born, 1599, ob. June 1, 1654. See the Sermon preached at his Funeral, by Simeon Ashe, *ut supra*.

Thomas Hill, D. D. died Dec. 18, 1653. Lives of the Puritans, v. 3. p. 170.

Chosen from Westminster School,—p. 14.

In May, that year, I was chosen to Oxford with four others, John Busby, nephew to Mr. Busby; *John* Vincent, brother to Mr. Vincent, Second Usher; John Carrick, and George Annesley, son to the Viscount Valentia, brother to him who was afterwards Earl of Anglesey and Lord Privy Seal. Of these I had the second place. Five more were chosen, at the same time, to Cambridge,—Palmer, Wickham, Stone, Stacey, Chandler. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

In the List of Scholars of St. Peter's College, Westminster, by Joseph Welch, 4to. 1788. p. 30. it is stated, that "*Thomas* Vincent, Rector of St. Mary Magdalen, Milk-street, London," was the person elected to Oxford with P. Henry. But Wood says, that that "*Thomas* Vincent, of St. Mary Magdalen, was made a Student of Ch. Ch. in 1648, by the favour of the Parliamentarian Visitors," v. 3. p. 1174. *ut supra*; whereas P. Henry, and his colleagues, were elected from Westminster,—and the year before. The minute description above given renders Mr. Henry's correctness the more probable, especially as the office of Second *Master* was filled from 1645 to 1656, by a Mr. Vincent. See Welch, *ut supra*, p. 6. The same person was, most likely, usher prior to that appointment. See *ante*, p. 11.

Visitation of the University,—p. 15.

See Neale's History, v. 3. p. 395, &c. and Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy, Part I. p. 123, &c.

Dr. Edward Reynolds,—p. 15.

Afterwards Bishop of Norwich. Nat. Nov. 1559, ob. 28th July, 1676. Middleton's Evang. Biog. v. 3. p. 424. See Reliq. Baxter. Lib. 1. Part II. p. 283. *ut supra*.

Dr. Wall,—p. 15.

Dr. Wall, elected a Student of Christ Church, A. D. 1604. æt. 17. Wood's Ath. Oxon. v. 3. p. 734. *ut supra*.

Mr. Wilkinson,—p. 15.

The Rev. Henry Wilkinson, jun. commonly called Dean Harry. Nat. A. D. 1616. ob. May 13, 1600. Mr. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 32. p. 84.

Mr. Pocock,—p. 15.

Edward Pocock, S. T. P. Life and Writings of Dr. Pocock, prefixed to his Theological Works, 2 vols. fol. 1740. vol. 1. pp. 1—84. Dr. Pocock died in 1691, in his 87th year.

Mr. Finmore,—p. 16.

Rev. William Finmore. Wood says he was afterwards Archdeacon of Chester. He died, A. D. 1686. Wood's Fasti. Ath. Oxon. v. 4. p. 121. *ut supra*. Walker says he died in 1681. Sufferings of the Clergy, Part II. p. 111.

Bishop of Oxford,—p. 16.

Dr. Fell was born in 1625, and died 10th July, 1686. Mr. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. 14. p. 176, &c.

"1665. Feb. 24. Dr. Fell, Canon of Christ Church, preached before the King, a very formal discourse, *and in blank verse*, according to his manner: however, he is a good man." Mem. of John Evelyn, Esq. v. 1. p. 356.

When the King was beheaded,—p. 17.

See Dr. Parr's Life of Archbishop Usher, p. 72. *ut supra*.

Wherein appeared, says Baxter, the severity of God, the mutability and uncertainty of worldly things, and the fruits of a sinful nation's provocations, and the infamous effects of error, pride, and selfishness, prepared by Satan to be charged hereafter upon reformation and godliness, to the unspeakable injury of the Christian name and Protestant cause. Ministers preached and prayed against disloyalty. They drew up a writing to the Lord General, (Fairfax,) declaring their abhorrence of all violence against the person of the King, and urging him and his army to take heed of such an unlawful act. But pride [and probably fear also] prevailed against their counsels. Reliq. Baxter. p. 63. *ut supra*. See the Life of Dr. Owen, by the Rev. W. Orme, pp. 93, 94; and also, the Christian Observer, vol. 19. p. 811, &c.

In *Vesperiis*,—p. 18.

Vespérie. Thèse qu'on soutient dans les Colléges les après-dinées par un simple exercise, et sans cérémonie. C'est aussi le dernier acte que soutient dans les Universités un Bachelier la veille du jour qu'il doit prendre le bonnet de Docteur, où celui qui préside donne quelques avis au Répondant; et cette Thèse a pour titre "pro actu vesperiali." Dictionnaire de Trévoux.

The University of Oxford borrowed the Vesperiæ, name and thing, (which must not be confounded with Vesperæ, vespers,) from that of Paris. Vesperial Disputations were, in Oxford, formerly performed once a year, on the Saturday evening preceding the Act, which was held on Monday. There is a full account of them in the Statutes, Tit. vii. Sect. 1. in which it is provided, that the respondent of the Vesperiæ of one year, shall the next year be appointed magister replicans of the comitia or Act, i. e. of the Monday morning disputations. This appointment (which was esteemed honourable) vested with the Senior Proctor.

In comitiis,—p. 18.

The Comitia are the stated times at which the University meets, or comes together for the purpose of *conferring honours*. Plutarch, re-

cording the ratification of certain articles during the government of Romulus, states that the place where it was done "is still called *Comitium*, from the Latin word *coire*, which signifies *to assemble*." Lives, v. 1. p. 71. *ut supra*.

No less a poet than an orator,—p. 19.

Mr. Palmer remarks in this connexion,—"Wood says not a word about Mr. Henry, though he was a noted Oxonian." Noncon. Mem. v. 3. p. 489. Had not the Athenæ and Fasti included living characters, the death of "Toney," the year before Mr. Henry, might have accounted for the omission. It may be said that the work, at least the most important part, professes to record "the *writers* and bishops who have had their education in the University of Oxford." But Mr. Henry having published the Latin Poem, would, therefore, strictly speaking, come within the arrangement. Had he, however, printed nothing, the omission is observable, inasmuch as many names, equally distant with his from the mitre and authorship, are there perpetuated. See Ath. Oxon. v. 1. p. cxlv. *ut supra*. Note 2.

Dr. Calamy, in his Abridgment of Baxter's Life and Times, v. 2. p. 708. has, indeed, assigned a cause, and too accordant with the historiographer's celebrity, but its incivility is such as to render an application objectionable, even to a more universal contemner of the non-conformists, not to mention "some of the greatest men in the Church of England." See Calamy's Abr. *ut supra*. v. 2. pref. pp. vii—xiii.

It has been excellently noted, that "God would have us judge the best in matters doubtful;" and the same writer adds,—"Beware how thou judgest of actions, for thou mayest judge amisse, and speake amisse."—The Watchful Shepherd, by Nehemiah Rogers, p. 104. 4to. 1632.

The work of the ministry,—p. 23.

What is meant by the work of the ministry! *Something is presupposed.*—Godliness. 1 Tim. iv. 7, 12. Our lives should be the book of the ignorant. This is essential to save ourselves, though not others. It will be small comfort to us to be as conduits, and have no relish of what they convey to others; or to be as one who opens a gate the wrong way. Others go in; he remains out. *Something is preparative.* Reading, meditation, prayer. *Something is practical* in private exhortation. 1 Tim. iv. 13. 2 Tim. iv. 2. Reproof, in public, preaching, sacraments, discipline. Mr. Steel at an ordination.—From a MS. in the hand-writing of Philip Henry.

An edifying form of "serious self-examination before ordination," is preserved in Tong's Life of Matt. Henry, p. 58, &c. *ut supra*.

Constituted by ordinance of parliament,—p. 23.

By way of probation. See Neal's History, v. 3. p. 274, &c.

"The Parliament, though they had early abolished episcopal authority, had not, during so long a time, substituted any other spiritual government in its place, and their Committees of Religion had hitherto assumed the whole ecclesiastical jurisdiction; but they now established by an *ordinance* the presbyterian model in all its forms of congregational, classical, provincial, and national assemblies. All the inhabitants of each parish were ordered to meet and choose elders, on whom, together with the minister, was bestowed the entire direction of all spiritual concerns within the congregation. A number of neighbouring parishes, commonly between twelve and twenty, formed a classis; and the court which governed this division, was composed of all the ministers, together with two, three, or four elders chosen from each parish. The provincial assembly retained an inspection over several neighbouring classes, and was composed entirely of clergymen; the national assembly was constituted in the same manner, and its authority extended over the whole kingdom." Hume's Hist. vol. 7. p. 420, 421.

Mr. Houghton,—p. 23.

He published "An antidote against Henry Haggar's poysonous pamphlet, entitled the Foundation of the Font discovered," 4to. 1658. The volume is dedicated "to the truly honoured, and his indeared friend the worshipful Thomas Hunt, Esq. Major of the Corporation of Salop. A praiseworthy patriot, and professed pattern of piety, without respect of persons, even of all that love the truth in sincerity." See *ante*, p. 143.

He set up a monthly lecture, &c.—p. 29.

It appears that the lecture thus referred to occasioned offence; at this Mr. Henry expresses his regret; but it being "owned by a good attendance," and as it would be "matter of great rejoicing to the ungodly there if laid down," he was encouraged to go on. And, "*for myself*," he writes, "if I am allowed to preach to them on the Sabbath day, why not on a week day?" "*For Mr. Lewis*," he proceeds, "he is a godly man, a scholar, intending the ministry, approved of by those who are able to judge; desired often by Mr. Fogg himself, to preach, and others." P. Henry. Orig. MS.

Mr. Lewis was evidently a lay-preacher. The following notices are curious:—

When the Select Assembly met at Windsor Castle, various questions were propounded for their resolution. Their judgments were accurately summed up by their venerable head—Cranmer, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. One query was, "whether, (if it fortuned a prince christien lerned, to conquer certain domynyons of infidells, having none but the temporall lerned men with him,) it be defended by God's law, that he and they should *preche and teche the word of God* there, or no, and also to make and constitute priests, or noe." The answer follows,—"It is not against God's law, but contrary; they ought in dede so to do, and there be historyes that witnesseth, that some christien princes, and other laymen unconsecrate, have done the same." Orig. MS. cited in the Irenicum, by Dr. Stillingfleet, p. 392, 393.

Secretary Fowler in a letter to the Earl of Shrewsbury, 3 Oct. 1604, says,—"My Ladye Arbella [Stewart] spends her tyme in lecture, reiding, hearing of service, and *preaching*." Lodge's Illustrations of British History, &c. v. 3. p. 236.

He laid by the tenth of his income for the poor,—p. 35.

See Riches increased by giving to the Poor, or the surest and safest Way of Thriving, by the Rev. Thomas Gouge, duod. 1700, of which a reprint has lately appeared. Dr. Fell's Life of Dr. Hammond, p. 139. duod. 1662, and the Life of W. Stephens, Esq. by the Hon. Mr. Justice Park, p. 32.

It appears from Mr. Henry's papers, that he distributed many books. The Life of Mr. Nathaniel Mather was of the number. See Memoirs of Dr. Increase Mather, p. 14. oct. 1725.

In their judgments episcopal,—p. 35.

Those are said to maintain the divine right of diocesan episcopacy, who assert that Christ has appointed an order of ministers in his church, superior to the pastors of particular congregations, who are to exercise the highest acts of jurisdiction, especially ordination, excommunication, and confirmation; these they suppose to be, properly speaking, the successors of the apostles, in such a sense as no other ministers are; to whose authority, therefore, neighbouring churches with their pastors are to submit themselves in all matters which are not apparently contrary to the will of God. Doddridge's Works, v. 5. p. 300. *ut supra*. See Buck's Theol. Dict. v. 1. Title, Episcopacy.

Others congregational,—p. 35.

Those who hold every pastor to be so a bishop or overseer of his own congregation, as that no other person or body of men have, by divine institution, a power to exercise any superior or pastoral office in it, may, properly speaking, be called (so far at least) congregational; and it is by a vulgar mistake that any such are called Presbyterians; for the Presbyterian discipline is exercised by synods and assemblies subordinate to each other, and all of them subject to the authority of what is commouly called a general assembly. Dr. Doddridge's Works, v. 5. p. 300. *ut supra*. See Buck's Theol. Dict. v. 1. Tit. Church.

Others classical,—p. 35.

The union of many particular congregations under one presbyterial government. See Neal's History, *ut supra*. Appendix, No. VIII. pp. 84—86.

Mismanagement of that difference,—p. 36.

See Hope and Fear balanced; a Sermon, in this vol.

Excellent was the advice of Dr. Richard Gilpin:—"If you are not perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment about some disputable things, yet censure not one another for differences. All of you may hold the Head, though your consciences be not alike satisfied in all things; nay, be not over-confident of your own understandings. I am speaking of the disputes about discipline and government." The Temple Rebuilt; a Discourse on Zech. vi. 13. preached at a General Meeting of the Associated Ministers of the County of Cumberland, at Keswick, p. 39. 4to. 1658.

The Cheshire Rising,—p. 37.

In the month of August, 1659, Sir George Booth, appearing in arms in Cheshire, at the head of an army of upwards of three thousand men, he was accompanied by the Earl of Derby, Lord Cholmondeley, Lord Kilmorey, and several of the principal gentlemen of the county: they mustered upon Rowton Heath, the spot which had proved unfortunate to King Charles I. and there read and published a Declaration, setting forth that they took up arms for a free Parliament, and to deliver the nation from the slavery they then laboured under. General Lambert being sent by the Parliament, with an army against Sir George Booth, they met at Winnington Bridge, near Northwich, on the 16th of August, when an action ensued, in which Booth's forces were soon defeated, he himself escaped from the field in disguise, but was taken at Newport Pagnell, and sent to the Tower." Lysons's Magna Britannia, v. 2. p. 315. See also Ormerod's History of Cheshire, v. 1. pp. xl. xli. and pp. 210, 404; and the Earl of Clarendon's State Papers, v. 3. p. 552. Many of the nonconformists took an active interest in this measure for the restoration of the King, for which they suffered imprisonment. See Fawcett's Life of Heywood, p. 62; and the Select Nonconformist's Remains, p. 13, &c.

Sir George Booth,—p. 37.

He had two wives, the former out of Lincoln, the latter out of Stamford family, who survived him. He owned religion in the closet and

family, especially during his first wife's time. He sided with the cause of the Long Parliament, but not in the death of the King. He had a Commission from Charles II. dated Aug. 9, 1659, at Bruxels, whereby he was made Commander in Chief of all His Majesty's Forces in Cheshire, Lancashire, and North Wales; and was in arms accordingly, that month, but soon quelled by Lambert, near Northwich.

One of the Regicides said, he had conjured up the old monarchical spirit in the nation, which he feared would never again be suppressed.

Shortly after, when the King came in, he was made Baron of Delamere. These words, in his patent, were read by Mr. Cawdry, at his funeral, and by his son, at his trial for high treason, in Westminster Hall, in Jan. 1685-6. *

Idem Georgius summis majoribus nequâquam virtute minor, crudelissimo Patris nostri Augustæ memoriæ Parricidio, nec non nostro miserrimo longoq; Exilio Sævisq. Regnorum calamitatibus, barbara et inhumana Regicidarum crudelitate. Mancipatorum gravissimè affectus, singulari in nos Amore in ruentem Patriam memorabili pietate impulsus incredibili virtute, Rei familiaris vitæq. summo cum periculo, coacta fida et nobili fortium virorum manu e Comitatibus Cestriæ et Lancastriæ Arma sumsit, nos Regnis, nobis Regna redditurus Quibus Ausis Ingentibus licèt tunc temporis ceciderit, restaurationis tamen nostræ tam felicis, tam diù exoptatæ Ansam præbuit.

Towards his tenants, according to the hereditary virtue of his family, he was one of the best of landlords.

He was buried at Boden, in Cheshire, September 9, 1684.

It was his pious custom, not only to search the Scriptures and meditate on them, but also to refer the Scriptures to their proper subjects, that they might be of ready use to him on all occurrences. I have seen three books in quarto, writ by his lordship's own hand, of that kind: under the head of "certainty of salvation," was Rev. xiv. 13. his funeral text. P. Henry. Com. P. Book. Orig. MS. See the Life and Errors of John Dunton, v. 1. p. 178. *ut supra.* "He left it upon record to his children,—That whenever he happened, which was very seldom, to omit his secret devotions, though upon never so urgent an occasion, he always found some cross interruptions and disappointments in the business of that day." Dunton, v. 2. p. 541, 2.

See, also, Ormerod's History of Cheshire, v. 1. pp. 404, 405; and Mr. Turner's Remark. Provid. ch. lxxii. *ut supra.*

He wrote the notes of his sermons, &c. —p. 39.

And most of them twice over; the first short, and, as he would call it, the bones of his sermons. Life of P. Henry by Matth. Henry. Orig. MS.

See Observations on some Specialties of Divine Providence in the Life of Bishop Hall. Works, v. 1. p. xxxiv. ed. 1808. Mr. Baxter, noticing the objection, as put by the Quakers,—You read your sermons out of a paper, therefore you have not the Spirit,—says, It is not want of your abilities, that makes ministers use notes, but it is a regard to the work, and good of the hearers. I use notes as much as any man, when I take pains; and as little as any man, when I am lazy, or busie, and have not leisure to prepare. It is easier to us to preach three sermons without notes, than one, with them. He is a simple preacher, that is not able to preach all day without preparation, if his strength would serve; especially if he preach at your rates. Church History, 4to. 1680. p. 471.

God gave him six children,—p. 43.

Philip Henry was born at Whitehall, Aug. 24, 1631, London. Katharine Mathewes, was born at Broad-Oke, March 25, 1629.

Philip Henry and Katharine Mathewes were married at Whitewell Chapel, April 26, 1660.

And had issue, which are the heritage of the Lord,

John Henry, born at Worthenbury, on Friday, May 3, 1661, about 5 of the clock in the evening. †

Matthew Henry, born at Broad Oke, on Saturday, Oct. 18, 1662, about 3 of the clock in the morning.

Sarah Henry, born at Broad Oke, on Lord's day, Aug. 7, 1664, about sun-sett.

Katharin Henry, born at Broad Oke, on Thursday, Dec. 7, 1665, about one of the clock in the morning.

Eleanor Henry, born at Broad Oke, on Tuesday, July 23, 1667, about two of the clock in the afternoon.

Ann Henry, born at Broad Oke, on Wednesday, Nov. 25, 1668, about eleven of the clock in the forenoon. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

He put his children to write these expositions,—p. 47.

I had almost forgot to mention the practice of my dear friend and correspondent, Mr. Henry, spoken of in the last chapter: ‡ (which I am very unwilling to omit, because I would provoke myself, and others, to some degree of emulation in the case:) besides his exercise on the Lord's days, mentioned before, every day of the week his custom was every morning and night to read a chapter to his family, and expound it distinctly and clearly, and after singing a psalm, and prayers, to appoint his children to retire by themselves, and write over a copy of his Exposition; by which means, as himself once told me, every one of his children, five in number, (one son, and four daughters,) had the Exposition of the whole Bible by them, written with their own hands. This custom he kept up constantly in his own house for above twenty, if not above thirty years, together, without any intermission, except in cases of absence from home, which happened but seldom. Turner's History of Remarkable Providences, ch. lxvi. p. 83. *ut supra.*

* See Hargrave's State Trials, v. 4. p. 210.

† I was then at Chester, but God was here, at Worthenbury, a present help. P. Henry. Diary, Orig. MS.

‡ See note, in next column.

He would never be persuaded, &c.—p. 47.

Mr. Orton, in his copy of the Life, and from which his edition of it was printed, has written here. "This his wish was fulfilled to the utmost, by his son, Mr. Matthew Henry, in his well-known and excellent Exposition of the Bible." Orig. MS. The best edition appeared in 1828, in 3 large vols. 8vo. published by J. O. Robinson, 42, Poultry. An esteemed living author, noticing M. Henry's Comment. says, "Others may excel it in profound discussion, in ancient lore, or elaborate criticism; but none has yet equalled it in the ingenuity, the richness, and the beauty of its practical reflections. This book should have a place in every Christian family." Sketches of Life and Character, by the Rev. H. Belfrage, [now D. D.] p. 42.

The proper gesture for prayer,—p. 47.

One would think that no body should be so absurd as to dislike the gesture of kneeling in prayer. But because I have seene with mine eyes, and that not seldome, whole troops of men and women, and those not of the meanest, in the time and place of divine service, while prayers and supplications were made unto God, *sit* all the while, I think not altogether needlesse, to free the gesture of kneeling in God's worship, from all suspition of superstition. And that by precept, practice, and reason; for precept, take the words of the Psalmist, *O come, let us worship, and fall downe, and kneele, before the Lord our Maker.* Ps. xcv. 6. For practice, we will looke upon the farest president. Our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ *kneeled down, and prayed.* Luke xxii. 41. If men will be ruled by reason they will not, when they are to petition the King of kings, omit such a gesture of humility, as kneeling is, being the most suitable for a man at his prayers. God's Holy House and Service, by Foulke Roberts, pp. 78, 79. *ut supra.*

Mindful of providences,—p. 48.

A new parliament to be chosen. My dear father usually prayed at such occasions that God would be seen in elections, that faithful men might be chosen. Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig. MS.

He closed his sabbath work, &c.—p. 50.

His friend and pupil, the Rev. W. Turner, has thus preserved Mr. Henry's habits. "Before I went to the University, from the month of August, till the latter end of February following, I was a boarder in the house of one Mr. Philip Henry, where I had the opportunity of observing his manner of life and conversation. He was formerly Student of Christ Church, in Oxford, Junior of the Act, Chaplain to Judge Puleston, and Minister of Worthenbury. But afterwards not conforming, he married an heiress, and lived at Broad-Oke, in Hanmer Parish, in Flintshire. Bishop Wilkins sent twice for him in my time, with a design to draw him over to conformity, as he had done many of his brethren before in his own diocess. Dr. Bridgman, Bishop of Man, and his successor, at Worthenbury, spoke very honourably of him to Major Trevers and me, at his own table at Chester. Bishop Fell, of Oxford, lamented his going off from the communion of the Church of England, as by law established; and the present learned and ingenious Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry * is ready to give an honourable testimony to his sincerity, I doubt not, (having some knowledge of the correspondence between them.) This man (ever since I knew him, and whilst I was his neighbour) was careful to rise early on Sunday mornings, to spend a considerable portion of his time in his private devotions and preparations, then to come down and call his family together, and, after some short preparatory prayer, to sing a Psalm, (commonly the 100th,) and then read some part of the Sacred Scripture, and expound it very largely and particularly, and at last kneel down with all his family and pray devoutly; with particular references to the day and duties of it, and the minister that was to officiate. After which, a short refection for breakfast, he made haste to church, and took care that all his family that could be spared, should go in due time likewise: sometimes he was before the preacher, and often before the rest of the congregation; (as once particularly, when I gave them a sermon in that place, he and I walked together a considerable time before the people came;) he behaved himself reverently and very gravely in the church during the service; stood up commonly at prayers, and always, in my time, wrote a sermon after the minister: when the morning service was ended, he commonly invited the minister to dine with him, who seldom refused; and many others, who either lived at a distance, as Mrs. Hanmer, Sir Job Charleton's daughter, married to a Justice of Peace in that country; or else such as were poor and needy. His discourse homewards was sweet and spiritual; at table it was seasoned as well as his meat; edifying, and yet pleasant, and taking; never wild or offensive. After meat, and thanks returned, they commonly (I think constantly) before departure from table, sung the 23rd Psalm. Sometime after, when the servants had dined, he propounded to such guests as he thought in prudence he should not be too free with, to retire into the parlour for a while, till he had attended upon his family, repeated over the sermon, and prayed with

* Dr. Lloyd. Le Neve's Fasti, p. 126. *ut supra.*

them; after which he returned to his guests again, and having entertained them with some short discourse, he retired awhile himself, and by and by called upon his family to go to church. After evening service and sermon ended, he retired again till six o'clock, (then called for prayers, catechised, took an account of children and servants of what they remembered at church, which accounts were given sometimes very largely and particularly,) sung a Psalm, kneeled down to prayers, (which consisted more of praise and benediction than at other times,) and at last his children kneeling down before him, (to beg his blessing,) he blessed them all, and concluded the service of the day with the 123rd Psalm; save that after supper, he retired for about half an hour more into his study before bed time. Sometimes after the public service ended at church, he gave some spiritual instructions, and preached in his house to as many as would come to hear him: and in his last years, when the incumbents grew careless in providing supplies for two or three neighbouring churches and chapels, and the people cried out for lack of vision, he set up a constant ministration and preaching at home, never taking any thing by way of reward for his pains, unless with a purpose to give it away to those who were in greater necessities." Turner's History of Remarkable Providences, ch. lxv. p. 80. *ut supra.*

Religion, &c. did prevail,—p. 54.

See Neal's History, vol. ii. p. 553. *ut supra.* A sensible writer, with the above reference in view, has remarked,—"It hath been intimated by some historians, that the religion of these times was all hypocrisy and dissimulation. The censure itself is ignorant and uncharitable. Hypocrisy and dissimulation there might be among them, but I should rejoice to see, in our day, such an appearance of religion." Religious Exercises recommended by Job Orton, p. 230. duod. 1769. A similar testimony is borne by Mr. Baxter, Reliq. Baxter. part i. p. 97.

Fifty years ago family religion was a fashionable thing. You could not go along some streets without hearing psalms sung, &c. but now it is not only neglected, but become reproachable. Men are ashamed of it. They are forced to retire for fear of being made a proverb and reproach. Sermon by Dr. Benion. See *ante*, p. 8. Nov. 1702. From the MS. of Mrs. Tylston, Mr. P. Henry's second daughter.

Christmas day,—p. 54.

See a curious collection of facts and customs respecting Christmas, in Brand's Observations on Popular Antiquities, v. i. p. 350, &c. In 1664, both Houses of Parliament issued an order for the observance of Christmas day as a day of fasting,—"because it may call to remembrance our sins, and the sins of our forefathers, who have turned this feast, pretending the memory of Christ, into an extreme forgetfulness of him, by giving liberty to carnal and sensual delights, being contrary to the life which Christ led here on earth, and to the spiritual life of Christ in our souls, for the sanctifying and saving whereof God was pleased, both to take a human life, and to lay it down again." Rushworth, v. 5. p. 817. Some time afterwards, this was succeeded by an ordinance for abolishing the observation of Christmas as a festival, altogether. Neal's History, v. iii. p. 390. In 1663, Mr. Henry thus notices the return of the season. "Dec. 24. As busy as people are to prepare their houses for Christmas, so much more busy should I be to prepare my heart for Christ. 25. No preaching at chapel, (viz. Whitewell chapel, where he attended when silenced,) wherefore I stayed at home, making no conscience of the day as a day to be kept holy, for want of divine institution." Diary, Orig. MS.

All the parts of public worship,—p. 57.

Concerning a practice not uncommon in public worship, he thus expressed himself;—"Secret prayer is that which is performed between God and ourselves alone, which no eye or ear is a witness to, Mark i. 35. Acts x. 9. Of this our Saviour speaks, Matt. vi. 5, 6. From hence we derive a word of reproof to those who visibly address themselves to secret prayer in the public congregation. Such are so far from shutting the door, that they rather throw it wide open, which our Lord Jesus plainly condemns as savouring of hypocrisy. It is not only lawful, but necessary to lift up our hearts to God in prayer, mentally,—for enlargement to him that speaks, for a blessing upon his ordinances to our souls, and yet so as to do it without those external expressions of worship, kneeling, &c. which, if we were alone, we might and ought indeed to make use of, but before others, we may and ought to forbear." P. Henry. Orig. MS. See Baxter's Christian Directory, Part iii. quest. cxxi. Practical Works, v. 5. p. 490. oct. ed.

Submit to be re-ordained,—p. 58.

See Reliq. Baxter. Part. iii. p. 38. And "A petition for peace with the reformation of the liturgy, as it was presented to the Right Reverend Bishops, by the Divines, appointed by His Majesty's Commission, to treat with them about the alteration of it." pp. 2, 3, 10. 4to. 1661. The Petition for Peace is styled by the Author of the Conformist's Plea for the Nonconformists, "most humble, grave, and pathetical." Third Plea, p. 18. See also Calamy's Life of Howe, p. 39.

The Savoy Conference,—p. 58.

A meeting of a certain number of Bishops and Presbyterian Divines, by virtue of a Commission, granted by King Charles, dated 25th March, 1661, to consult respecting the expediency of making alterations in the Liturgy. As to the alterations and additions made, see Nicholl's Preface to his Comment on the Book of Common Prayer, p. x. A list of the individuals employed in the alterations, may be seen in Dr. D'Oyley's Life of Archbishop Sancroft, v. 1. p. 112, &c. and a full account of the whole, with the exceptions and proposed alterations, is preserved in Reliq. Baxter. lib. 1. part ii. p. 303, &c.

He never took the Covenant,—p. 59.

This document appears at length in Fuller's Church History, b. xi. p. 201.

Mr. Henry's Diary contains the following memoranda:—

"1661, May 27. I saw an order from the House of Lords, for burning the Covenant.—See Jer. xxxvi. 23, 32.—which was done, in London, by the common hangman, May 22nd.

"June 18. The lords' order for burning the Covenant was hanged up in the church by Mr. Puleston's appointment, near the reading-desk.

"June 23. Strong reports I should not be suffered to preach to-day, but I did, and no disturbance, blessed be God, who hath mine enemies in a chain. I took down the lords' order, knowing no authority but malice that caused it to be hanged where it was." Orig. MS.

Came to Broad Oak,—p. 60.

A house standing near the road-side, between Whitchurch and Wrexham, and situate in the township of Iscoid, in Flintshire, within the parish of Malpas, in Cheshire. See Tong's Life of Matt. Henry, p. 2. *ut supra.* The Broad Oak estate was Mr. Henry's property. The oaks in the immediate neighbourhood, but on premises held by lease from Mr. Hanmer, from which the residence was denominated, seem to have been afterwards an occasion of dispute. "1710-11, May 2. Heard from Broad Oak that Mr. Hanmer has cut down the lesser of the great oaks. I wrote to him about it." "May 5. I hear Mr. Hanmer, when my letter was brought in, would not receive it, or read it, but ordered it to be burnt, and the great oak to be cut down, though he had promised Mr. Key it should not. I would learn to take wrong. I have reason to think he could not justly do it." "May 14. The broad-oak was a week in falling." Matt. Henry's Diary, Orig. MS. A new dwelling-house, and also, in part, new out-houses, have been erected on the site of the premises where Mr. Henry's house stood, so that there is nothing now left of former appearances, unless a portion of the garden wall, and part of the out-buildings. These may fairly be presumed to have been contemporary with the renowned occupier. The "Chapel Barn," as it is denominated, was taken down about twelve years ago; the cushion used in the pulpit is in the possession of the present tenant.

Provide a dwelling for them,—p. 61.

In one of Mr. Henry's Diaries is the following record;—"1663. July 7. A day of prayer at Mrs. F——— with much sweetness. Lord, hear, and have mercy. Is. xvi. 4. much upon my heart. *Let my outcasts dwell with thee, Moab.* 1. God's people may be an outcast people; when men cast them out of their synagogues, out of their country. 2. God will own his people when men cast them out: *my* outcasts. 3. God will provide a dwelling for his outcast people. 4. Even Moab, an enemy, shall be a shelter to God's people, when the Lord speaks the word." Orig. MS. See the Rev. Matt. Henry's Comment. in loc. Similar instances occur in that invaluable work.

One of the martyrs,—p. 61.

Mr. John Rogers. Fox's Martyrol. pp. 98—108. fol. 1684. Fuller's Church History, cent. xvi. b. viii. p. 23. *ut supra.*

Imputed to him as his crime,—p. 62.

To the assertion that Mr. Henry's attendance at a meeting for prayer "was imputed to him as a crime," Dr. Wordsworth, in his edition of the life,* has appended the following note. "His crime was disobeying an Act of Parliament."

This so directly affects Mr. Matthew Henry's statement, and his venerable father's impressions, as, evidently, to render some remarks necessary. They proceed from a conviction that the biographer is correct, and are offered with unaffected respect.

The great point, it is apprehended, upon which Protestantism, not to mention nonconformity, rests, may be thus stated. Have any Popes, however renowned, any Parliament, however wise, any synods or councils, however select, or any church, however ancient or devotional, supreme authority† in matters of faith and practice; or can they make that unlawful, which, in its own nature, is right? If not, there could, in the instance before us, be no criminality, it is conceived, in non-compliance.‡ Happy had it been for the peace of the world, and the prosperity of undefiled religion, if the principle, thus negatived, had never struggled for domination. To the praise of heavenly mercy, indeed, it is now no longer considered a crime in our favoured country,

* Eccl. Biogr. v. 6. p. 236.

† See Bishop Stillingfleet's Irenicum, p. 118. *ut supra.*

‡ I believe that he that obeyeth not a law which was made against God's law, or without authority given by him, sinneth not against authority. Richard Baxter's Answer to Dr. Edward Stillingfleet's Charge of Separation. p. xx. 4to. 1680.

even to protest * against that which is deemed unscriptural, or to assert the unalienable rights of every Christian. Under the British legislature, divine worship is as unrestrained and protected in the unconsecrated meeting-house, as in the very precincts of ecclesiastical rule. Nor would one of the holiest, most peaceable, and loyal of men, were he now alive, be deprived of his liberty, examined as a felon, and rendered ignominious by bail, when the only occasion to be found against him had respect to the law of his God.

The more closely the charge of violating the laws of the country is considered, the clearer, it is thought, will be the conviction that Mr. Henry was not criminal.

By several statutes, indeed, it was made penal, under pretext of sedition,† for Christians to meet for religious exercises, unless under certain restrictions, both as to the number assembled, and the method of supplication. During the raging of the plague in London, Mr. Henry, and some others, as we have seen, whose habits were those of righteous intercessors, assembled for prayer. This may have been ‡ within some of the enactments, and he is, therefore, charged with disobedience.

But disobedience is defined by Dr. Johnson to be,—the "violation of *lawful* command or prohibition; breach of *duty* due to superiors." Now it is evident that the Bible, which is the guide of Protestants, contains no authority for legislation as to divine worship, any more than faith and obedience; and, therefore, should a statute-book dictate to an accountable creature where he shall render the homage required by his Creator,—whether in a house, or a cathedral, with a prayer-book, or without, with five persons, or a small number,—his obligations cannot be affected by such an ordinance; and should the parties to whom the execution of such laws is intrusted, levy upon conscientious objectors to their impositions the severest penalties, they would, indeed, be *persecuted*, but the rights of conscience being as spiritual as they are unalienable, there could be no correct imputation of CRIME.

The *Apostles* were beaten, and commanded, by existing authorities, that they should not speak in the name of Jesus,—but they *departed from the presence of the council, and daily, in the temple, and in every house, ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.* § Were they criminal? They answered, "We *ought* to obey God *rather* than men." "It should seem," remarks an excellent clergyman, "that this (if any) may be called a natural maxim, and that the rudest savage, or the least child that can be made to understand the terms, must assent to the truth of the proposition, as readily as they perceive that two and two make four. How strange then is it, that men of the greatest parts and penetration in other things, so seldom receive it. There are few periods to be found, even in the Christian church, in which those who steadily *acted* upon this principle, were not considered as heretics of the worst sort."‖

Let an instance be submitted. Suppose any individuals, from aversion to a certain class of their fellow-subjects, and opposition to their habits of sanctity, should obtain a statutory enactment, that no man should pray alone for thirty days, or that in spite of every thing divine as to the "communion of saints," only so many, however excellent, should pray together. Notwithstanding their decree, one and another of the parties "kneel and pray, and give thanks unto God as before," overlooking such law. Suppose them to be apprehended and punished. Can it be credited that their acts were criminal, or that they were punished for disobedience to the law? True it is, without the *existence* of the law, no punishment could have been attempted,—but is it not equally obvious that the crime was praying, and that their course being known, the law was framed as a snare, and as a sanction for penal inflictions? "There was a time," says the venerable episcopalian above quoted, referring to Mr. Henry's days, "when the nonconformists groaned under the iron rod of oppression, and were exposed to fines, penalties, and imprisonment, as well as to cruel mockings, and the lawless rage of a rabble, *for worshipping God according to the light of their consciences.* Yet I apprehend their nonconformity was rather the occasional, and ostensible, than the *real, cause* of the hard treatment they met with." ¶

The fact then appears to be, as stated by Mr. Matthew Henry, that praying with others was *imputed* to his father as a crime; the matter of the law being sinful, the criminality was there, and not in his conduct.** *That* was good, and no exposure to temporal punishment could make it otherwise, any more than the severest human denunciations can render obedience to inspired prescriptions liable to eternal vengeance. And, what saith the Scripture? *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*†† "He says not, I will be, but I am, referring to his divine presence at all times, *and in all places*, and to his special presence, by the influences of his Spirit, to communicate blessings to his people, *whenever, or wherever, they wait upon him.*" ‡‡

Were it otherwise than as thus represented, consequences too absurd for enlightened contemplation would follow. Then, indeed, the freedom of the human will would be destroyed,—conscience would, at once, be subjected to any inventions, or impositions, however anti-christian,—the necessary distinction between right and wrong would be confounded,—the Reformation from Popery would need special vindication,—the Puritans, instead of deserving eulogistic admiration,* would be more correctly reprobated,—the murder of martyrs would be capable of advocacy,—and even criminality originated, notwithstanding apostolic exhortations,† by adhering to *the liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free.* ‡

Let not the matter nevertheless be misconceived. The denial of magisterial control over conscience and religion, does not infringe upon authority in civil affairs. Conscientious persons especially, and they are the individuals more immediately affected by laws like those under consideration, ever feel the sacredness of divine injunctions. And, notwithstanding Christ reigns in the hearts and consciences of his true subjects, "the princes of this world," to borrow the appropriate language of the late admired rector of Aston Sandford, "have nothing to fear from the obedience of Christians to his authority. His servants are commanded to render tribute to whom tribute is due, honour to whom honour, to submit to the powers that be, to fear God and the King, and not to meddle with those who are given to change, though, at the same time, *they must obey God rather than man, when man presumes to interfere out of his own province.*" §

I shall go to him, &c.—p. 65.

Independently of the scriptural allusion, it is probable Mr. Henry had in view the following tender lines in a poem, called the "Exequy."

> Meantime, thou hast her, earth; much good
> May my harm do thee! since it stood
> With heaven's will I might not call
> Her longer mine,
> See that thou make thy reck'ning straight,
> And yield her back again by weight;
> For thou must audit on thy trust
> Each grain and atom of this dust.
> So close the ground, and 'bout her shade
> Black curtains draw, my bride is laid.
> But hark! my pulse like a soft drum
> Beats my approach, tells thee I come;
> And slow howe'er my marches be,
> I shall at last sit down by thee.
>
> Bishop King's Poems, p. 57. *ut supra.*

Called Seditious Conventicles,—p. 66.

The word Conventicle, in strictness, signifies, according to some, a cabal, or secret assembly of part of the monks of a convent to make a brigue, or party in the election of an abbot. It was, according to others, first used as to the Schools of Wickliff. Encyclop. Brit. in Verb. But its adoption was earlier. Lactantius speaks of the conventiculum, or church, where the Christians met. And Arnobius, in like manner. See Bingham's Works, vol. 2. p. 276. *ut supra.* The term occurs in the decree of the fourth General Council of Lateran, A. D. 1215.—Occulta *Conventicula* celebrantes. Nay, in Maximinian and Constantine, the Emperors' proclamation, the places where Christians resorted to public prayer, were called *Conventicles.* The Homilies, p. 223. *ut supra.* The third part of the Homily against peril of idolatry.

In the act touching Heresies, 2 Hen. IV. c. 15. Protestants are, by the then Popish Government, represented as, "A certain new sect, of the faith of the sacraments of the church, and the authority of the same damnably thinking;" and the statute alleges, that "of such wicked doctrine and opinions, they make unlawful *Conventicles* and confederacies; they hold and exercise schools; they make and write books; they do wickedly instruct and inform people." Bishop Gibson's Codex. v. i. p. 328. *ut supra.*

The venerable composers of the Homilies evidently used the term favourably. "Lo," say they, "unto the time of Constantine, by the space of above three hundred years after our Saviour Christ, when Christian religion was most pure, and indeed golden, Christians had but low and poor *Conventicles*, and simple oratories, yea, caves under the ground, called cryptæ, where they, for fear of persecution, assembled secretly together. A figure whereof remaineth in the vaults, which yet are builded under great churches, to put us in remembrance of the old state of the primitive church before Constantine." Homilies, *ut supra*, p. 223.

Afterwards, indeed, the epithet was applied by the Church of England herself to those of her fellow-protestants, in the 17th century, whose conscientious scruples obliging them to seek a still further reformation, partially withdrew from her communion, and were accustomed, in consequence of their liabilities, to convene, if they assembled for divine worship at all, in each other's habitations. Such persons were then regarded as obstinate schismatics; and by Canon XI. A. D. 1603, the asserter that a Conventicle was a lawful church, was subjected to excommunication. Gibson's Codex. vol. i. p. 503.

It being discovered that canonical denunciations were inefficient, the defect was supplied by statutory enactments, and an act passed to prevent and suppress *seditious* conventicles. See Inquiry into the Nature

* 1663, May 17. At Whitchurch, where preached Dr. Fowler concerning the nature and abuse of Christian liberty. Gal. v. 13. Asserting the power of the magistrates about indifferent things; which is partly to be granted, viz. in civil things; partly to be denied, viz. *in sacris.* P. Henry. Diary. Orig. MS.

† See note on following column.

‡ It does not appear how many were present; and from the narrative, it seems not unlikely, that the magistrates had some doubts how far the meeting was strictly within the Act of Parliament.

§ Acts v. 11. 12.

‖ Newton's Works, vol. iii. p. 85. *ut supra.*

¶ Newton's Works, vol. v. p. 4. *ut supra.*

** Diocesans were authorized, by Act of Parliament, to imprison and fine heretics, and on relapse, to burn them. See st. 2. H. 4. c. 15. "And every man knows," says Sir Matthew Hale, "that in the times of Henry 4th, and afterwards, the true professors of the Christian Religion were sentenced as hereticks." Hist. Plac. Cor. v. i. p. 398. fol. 1736. What would have been our just amazement had that great judge added,—Their crime was disobeying an Act of Parliament!

†† Matt. xviii. 20. See also 1 Tim. ii. 8.

‡‡ Rev. T. Scott's Comment. Matt. xviii. 20.

* See the Works of the Rev. James Hervey, vol. vi. p. 24. ed. 1835. and Hume's History, v. 5. p. 358.

† See 1 Tim. iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 6. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11, &c.

‡ Gal. v. 1.

§ Mr. Scott's Commentary, John xviii. 33—40. Practical Observations.

of Schism, in this vol. Henceforward the phrase, "*seditious conventicle*," was rendered permanently expressive,* in order that, by an inuendo of sedition, the meeting together of five or more persons of the age of sixteen years, "in other manner than according to the Liturgy and practice of the Church of England," might be fully obstructed.

In connexion with the consequences, an eminent clergyman made a remark not very favourable to the parties. "See," said he, "the piety of some of our suppressors of *Conventicles*. Preachers are threatened with hanging, and the death of traytors; they pull down a pulpit to set up healthing in it; tear the pulpit, distrain and sell the Bible to choose, when they might have made choice of other." The Conformist's Fourth Plea, *ut supra*, p. 76.

The subject cannot be dismissed without observing, that Bishop Latimer, at the commencement of one of his sermons, before King Edward, designates the Chapel Royal a "preaching place in the palace at Westminster;"† or, according to subsequent parlance, a Conventicle. "And," says Fuller, "no disgrace is imported in the notation of the word; Conventicle sounding nothing else but a *small convention*." Church History, b. ix. p. 102. *ut supra*. See Memoirs of the Rev. John Shower, by W. Tong, pp. 49, 50. oct. 1716.

Whence not to curry favour, &c.—p. 66.

This remark has attracted Dean Wordsworth's notice, (see Eccl. Biogr. vol. vi. p. 236.) as though, coupling it with the statement of an imputation of crime, already discussed, it was intended to suit some mysterious purpose. What the inuendo was meant to accomplish, is best known to its learned author; but, judging impartially, as Mr. M. Henry's representation is no departure from the simple verity, so it would be unfair to surrender his reputation to any thing short of proof. And surely it is not presumptuous to inquire,

——— Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?

Subjection to government,—p. 66.

Calvin in his chapter on Civil Government, says, "To entertain a thought of its extermination is inhuman barbarism; it is equally as necessary to mankind as bread and water, light and air, and far more excellent." Institutes, v. 3. p. 518. Allen's Translation.

All this and heaven too,—p. 70.

See an anecdote, very similar, in the Christian's Magazine, vol. 1. p. 202. oct. 1790.

Mr. William Turner,—p. 71.

See Mr. Chalmers's Biog. Dict. v. xxx. p. 100. In Mr. Henry's Diary are the following memoranda.

"1668. Aug. 26. William Turner came to winter with us, and to teach the children."

"1671, Feb. 24. William Turner went from us towards Oxford, having sojourned with us, for the most part, since August last, in which time he entered Katy in reading English, and Sarah in Hebrew. I pray God preserve him from University sins and snares."

"1672, Feb. 27. Jos. Mainwaring went with William Turner towards Oxford. The Lord prosper their studies, and keep them from present sins and snares." Orig. MS.

Time discovered,—p. 73.

Namely, the King's disposition to support the Roman Catholic at the expense of the Protestant interest. Dr. D'Oyley's Life of Archbishop Sancroft, v. i. p. 158, &c. and the Gent. Mag. v. 31. p. 253. where the Address, presented by the Dissenters, on that occasion, was first printed.

Spent in the work of the Lord,—p. 75.

Must we have no relaxation? We are servants to Christ, not slaves. The bow always bent becomes useless. Though we are ministers, we are men, therefore we need food, and physic, and friends to visit. Divinity excludes not humanity. But all should be made subservient to our work. As, if our people love any creature more than Christ, they will be lost for ever; so, if we love and follow any pleasure more than our people, we fail in duty. We must prop the earthen vessel, but it is that it may hold the treasure, and so far as is useful. We must be merry with our people in all civility, that they may be cheerful with us in all religion. Mr. Porter, at an Ordination. From a MS. in P. Henry's hand-writing.

First spoken to the offender,—p. 78.

This rule is prominently noticed by the late Ambrose Serle, Esq. in his excellent Manual, "The Christian Remembrancer," part. iii. c. xiv. p. 276. oct. ed. 1823. An edition enriched by an introductory essay from the pen of Dr. Chalmers.

They are not lost, &c.—p. 79.

Thus Mr. Rutherfoord, writing to John Gordon, remarks;—"Your bairns, now at their rest, *are not lost to you;* they are laid up in Christ's treasury in heaven. At the resurrection ye shall meet with them there; they are sent before, but not sent away." Religious Letters, *ut supra*, Letter 25. p. 35. Again, addressing "Lady Gaitgirth," he says,—"If your Lord take any of them [your bairns] home to his house before the storm comes on, take it well; the owner of the orchard may take down two or three apples off his own trees before Midsummer, and ere they get the harvest sun; and it would not be seemly that his servant, the gardener, should chide him for it; let our Lord pluck his own fruit at any season he pleaseth. *They are not lost to you;* they are laid up where our Lord's best jewels lie." Letter 76. p. 95. *ib*. And, addressing Lady Kenmure, he writes;—"Ye have lost a child; nay, she is not lost to you who is found to Christ; she is not sent away, *but only sent before;* like unto a star, which, going out of our sight, doth not die, and vanish, but shineth in another hemisphere." Part 2. Letter 4. p. 252. *ib*. See the Gardener and Rose Tree, a Fable, addressed to Mrs. H. on the Death of her Child, by the Rev. S. Pearce. Memoirs of Mr. Pearce, by the Rev. A. Fuller, p. 247. oct. 1808.

Not to be obeyed merely because they were laws,—p. 85.

In Queen Mary's time there was a law to go to mass, &c. But, saith T. P. you do not compare this law with that. No, saith Mr. Henry, God forbid; but I only mentioned it, to show that all human laws are not to be obeyed merely because they are laws. Life of P. Henry by Matt. Henry. Orig. MS.

An illustration is furnished by the vacillations of religion, as by law established, in England. Four alterations were crowded, during one period of our history, into the short space of fifty years. Popery, on the accession of King Henry the Eighth, A. D. 1509, was dominant; and, in 1533, gave way to Protestantism. In 1553, Popery was again the religion of the state. In 1558, Mass was abolished, and the Liturgy of King Edward restored. Mr. Henry, it is likely, had this state of things in view; and, if his doctrine be incorrect, it must have been criminal to have done otherwise than go with the stream.

The times, says the witty "Prebendarie of Sarum," under Diocletian, were Pagan; under Constantine, Christian; under Constantius, Arian; under Julian, Apostate; under Jovian, Christian again; and all within the age of man, the term of seventie years. And would it not have wrenched and sprained his soul with short turning, who, in all these, should have been of the religion *for the time being?* Fuller's Holy State, p. 200. *ut supra*.

Beza published an answer to the railings of Francis Baldwinus, who followed the steps of Ecebolius, both of them teaching,—that *men might change their religion as the state changed*. Clarke's Marrow of Eccl. Hist. p. 880. *ut supra*. Cicero says, Nihil tam absurdum, quod non dictum sit ab aliquo philosophorum.

Dispersion of the French Protestants,—p. 89.

In consequence of the revocation of the edict of Nantz, nearly fifty thousand refugees passed over into England, and were so many proofs, in addition to numberless others, that "persecution," as His Majesty King Charles the First well observed, "never was, nor will be, found a good way for conversion." Earl Clarendon's State Papers, v. 2. p. 267. It would furnish a source of interesting, as well as curious, employment, to collect the various exhibitions of the evil of intolerance, and the dangers to which its instruments are exposed. Without recurring to the primitive ages of the Church, the space from the Reformation to the period respecting which Dr. Doddridge urged, with so much force, "the absurdity and iniquity of persecution for conscience sake, in all its kinds, and degrees," * would supply ample materials, and which, placed together, would display a succession of reasoning, and illustration, almost as varied as the pens employed in their composition. One, and not a little curious, occurs in a scarce volume, entitled, "A Rare Sight; or, the Lyon Sent from a Far Country, and presented to the City of Norwich; in a Sermon, June 18, 1650, by John Carter, pp. 105—108. duod. 1653." Mr. Carter was the gentleman to whom the letter for promoting the London Polyglott Bible was addressed, by Archbishop Usher, Dr. Walton, and others, as preserved in the Life of Dr. Pocock. Works, by Twells, v. 1. p. 47. *ut supra*.

He doth not love you of the Church of England neither,—p. 94.

Mr. Henry's opinion was expressed by the Quakers to the King himself in their Address on his accession. "We are come to testify our sorrow for the death of our good friend Charles, and our joy for thy being made our governor. We are told thou art not of the persuasion of the Church of England no more than we; therefore, we hope that thou wilt grant us the same liberty which thou allowest thyself." Rapin's History of England, v. 15. p. 8. ed. 1731.

* See the 16th Charles II. c. 4. and 22d Charles II. c. 1. Walker had t an earlier period (A. D. 1649) applied the term to the House of Commons, styling it, the better to inspire odium, a "frighted Conventicle." History of Independency, part ii. p. 167. 4to. 1649.

† Sermons, p. 24. *ut supra*.

* Doddridge's Works, *ut supra*, v. 3. p. 117, &c. See Bishop Hoadley's Works, v. 3. p. 763. *ut supra*.

Books against Popery,—p. 95.

A learned antiquary, the Rev. Francis Peck, published in 4to. 1735, "A Complete Catalogue of all the Discourses written, both for and against Popery, in the time of King James II.; containing, in the whole, an Account of Four Hundred and Fifty-seven Books and Pamphlets." See Palmer's Vindication, ch. iv. p. 31. 4to. 1705, for "the true reason why Dissenters *writ* no more against Popery in the reign of James II." Also, see Popery a Spiritual Tyranny, in this vol.

Overtures made towards a comprehension,—p. 104.

Two similar attempts had been before made. The first by Sir Orlando Bridgman, in 1667-8. A full account of the whole, and the proposed alterations, is recorded in Reliq. Baxter. Part. III. pp. 23—38. *ut supra.* The second, by Dr., afterwards Archbishop, Tillotson; and Dr., afterwards Bishop, Stillingfleet, in 1674. Reliq. Baxter. Part iii. p. 157, &c. Birch's Life of Archbishop Tillotson, p. 43, &c.

As to the comprehension more immediately referred to, see Dr. D'Oyley's Life of Archbishop Sancroft, v. 1. p. 326. and the Hist. of Rel. Lib. v. 2. pp. 182—190.

A comprehension was again talked of in the year 1748, and an interesting letter on the subject, written by Mr. Barker to Dr. Doddridge, may be seen in the Letters to and from Dr. Doddridge, p. 112. oct. 1790.

Heaven and Hell,—p. 109.

Heaven and Hell may be considered *locally*,—so it matters not where they be; and, morally, so Heaven is holiness completed; Hell is sin completed. Hence they are set out by the same names; *Hell and sin*, by darkness, *Jude* 6. 2 *Pet.* ii. 4. comp. *Eph.* v. 8, 11. *Prov.* ii. 13.—by Death, *Rev.* xx. 6. comp. *Eph.* ii. 1. *Luke* xv. 32. *Heaven and holiness* by light, *Col.* i. 12. comp. *Eph.* v. 8. by life, *Rom.* vi. 22, 23. 1 *John* v. 11. comp. 1 *John* iii. 14. *Luke* xv. 32. by glory, 2 *Cor.* iv. 18. comp. iii. 18. 2 *Pet.* i. 3. P. Henry. Com. Place Book. Orig. MS.

Thy God, thy sin, thy death, thy Christ,
The eternal pains of hell,
The joyes of heaven, the day of doome,—
These seven, remember well.

"An ancient Minister now with God." See a Treatise on Christian Conference, by Edmund Staunton, D. D. p. 129. duod. 1673; also, the Lives of the Puritans, v. 2. p. 470.

All this he did gratis,—p. 109.

But few are of ability to do this, and when the power is enjoyed, it is, perhaps, questionable how far, on the whole, it is best to relieve the congregation from the privilege, to say nothing of the duty, of affording a due maintenance. Should a minister, by the kindness of Providence, be raised above the need of the supply, still the use of it would enlarge his capacity for usefulness, dissatisfaction towards those who are less supplied with outward blessings would be prevented, and his successor would be neither prejudiced by a feeling of inferiority, nor encumbrance. "If men held in as dear a regard their immortal souls, as they generally do their corruptible bodies, then would they never basely grudge unto the pastors of them a liberal affluence of all necessaries: so that no want of worthy respect, nor of time, nor of means, might discourage them from making meet and manifold provision to lead, to feed, to fold, to defend their flocks." A Liberall Maintenance is manifestly due to the Ministers of the Gospell, by Joshua Meene, Vicar of Wymondham in Norfolke. 4to. 1638. p. 55.

It should be observed, however, that reasons existed, in Mr. Henry's time, for the course he and others of his brethren pursued, which have long ceased; and before a conclusion is drawn from their example, they are entitled to consideration. The charge, for instance, was general, and not confined to a single calumniator; that covetousness was the ground of nonconformity. "Did I gain by nonconformity," exclaims the dignified and benevolent Baxter, "that, from the day that I was silenced, had never taken a groat for preaching, nor ever had a church to maintain me, and had commonly refused even friends' gratuities, (save £10 from one man that I could not refuse,) for many years after this, and, save from few, to this day? Who, by refusing a Bishopric, and other emoluments, have lost, I think, above twenty-thousand pounds by nonconformity? What answer do these men deserve?" Penitent Confession, *ut supra.* 89, 90.

Mr. Steele, addressing a congregation at an ordination in 1659, thus expressed himself; "Help us with your prayers. Help us in maintenance, that we who should live to study, may not be put to study to live." From a MS. in Mr. Philip Henry's hand-writing.

Private academies,—p. 113.

There was a Prophet's School at Gilgal, 2 Kings ii. 1. comp. iv. 38; at Jericho, 2 Kings ii. 4, 5; at Bethel, v. 23; at Carmel, v. 25. comp. iv. 23, 25; at Samaria, 2 Kings ii. 25; v. 3; at Ephraim, 2 Kings v. 22. P. Henry. Orig. MS.

A History of the early Dissenting Academies may be seen in Dr. Toulmin's Historical View, 215—261. *ut supra;* and, at the end of the same volume, a List of the Students. Appendix, No. V. pp. 559—592. See also, the History of Dissenters, vol. 4.

A correct view of the internal arrangement of the Institutions above referred to, may be obtained from a Letter written by Archbishop Secker. See Dr. Gibbon's Mem. of Dr. Watts, p. 346. and the Works of Dr. Doddridge, vol. 5. p. 559. *ut supra.* Also, from Dr. Raffles's Life of Mr. Spencer; Appendix, No. I. ed. 1813; and the History of Dissenters, vol. ii. p. 1, &c.

One who had been the pupil of Dr. Benion, observing that such Academies are by some most maliciously calumniated as nurseries of rebellion and sedition, and hurtful to kings and provinces, states, that what insight the Doctor thought fit to give his pupils into politics, tended to beget in them not only a satisfaction in, but an admiration of, the established constitution of the English Government; and he doubted not, but they brought with them, from his instructions, a true value for monarchy, and as thorough an abhorrence of the execrable murder of King Charles I. as they could have brought from Christ-Church itself. Life of Dr. Benion, in this volume.

Methinks it is strange, &c.—p. 119.

Old Mr. Turton, who, in the year 1688, we had a while at Nantwich, but who ended his days in Birmingham, when visited by Mr. Blackmore, complained of being left behind by so many of his dear friends in Christ; and added;—"It is because I am not ready." Mr. Blackmore replied;—"No, Sir; you are left here to help to make others ready for heaven." Mrs. Savage's Diary. Orig MS.

Find Jordan rough,—p. 120.

Let me tell you that which I know, yea, foreknow,—Death is somewhat drierie, and the streams of that Jordan betweene us and our Canaan runne furiously; but they stand still when the arke commeth. Let your anchor be cast within the vaile, and fastened on the Rocke Jesus. The Life of Bishop Cowper, Works, p. 6. *ut supra.*

Holy Paula,—p. 123.

Widow of Toxotius. She died at Bethlehem, A. D. 404, æt. 56. She is celebrated for her piety, and skill in the Hebrew language. Her bounty was immoderate. She took up money at interest to give to the poor, and left her daughter deep in debt; a great charge of brothers and sisters, and nothing to maintain it. "I like not this charitie reversed, when it begins far off, and neglects those at home. Sure, none need be more bountiful in giving, than the sunne is in shining, which, though freely bestowing his beams on the world, keeps, notwithstanding, the body of light to himself. Yea, it is necessary that liberality should as well have banks as a stream. Yet, surely, God's glory was the mark she shot at, though herein the hand of her practice did sometime shake, and oftener the eye of her judgment did take wrong aim." Fuller's Holy State, p. 29, 30. *ut supra.*

Playing at cards,—p. 131.

See Archæologia, vol. 8. Nos. xvii. xviii. xviii*.

"In that immense repository of papers," says an eminent writer, "which Thoresby's curiosity had gathered, was the rough draft of an answer made by the Rev. John Kellinbeck, to an application made by an unknown person whose conscience was disquieted in consequence of having played at cards, and laid a wager: one sentence of this proves him to have been an able and discerning casuist.—Though I do not think it utterly unlawful, yet the circumstances and consequences too often render it so. It would be well if the consciences of the present generation were sufficiently awake to perceive, that, among these circumstances and consequences, are to be reckoned, rapacity, fretfulness, and waste of time" Loidis and Elmete, by the Rev. T. D. Whitaker, p. 42. See Mr. Joseph Williams's Diary, p. 422. oct. 1815.

A celebrated poet, who will not easily be suspected of puritanic inclinations, satirically exclaims,—

See how the world its veterans rewards!
A youth of frolics, an old age of cards.
Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. II.

Turned it to his reproach that his meeting-place had been a barn,—p. 249.

See Eighteen Sermons by Mr. Henry, p. 307. n. Also Dr. Lempriere's Univ. Biog. 4to. 1808. in verb. P. Henry.

1694. Oct. 26th. The lower bay of the chapel was benched by William Evans, for which he had out of the sacrament money, 21*s.* 6*d.* P. Henry, Orig. MS.

The Nonconformists generally were reproached for preaching in barns. In noticing which, the Reverend Author of the Conformist's Plea, remarks, "His Gospel, who was laid in a manger, may be preached in a *barn*, if there be no room for his preachers in better places." Third Plea, *ut supra.* p. 50.

The venerable Archbishop Usher says, "In times of persecution, the godly did often meet in *Barns*, and such obscure places, which indeed were public, because of the church of God there; the house or place availing nothing to make it public or private; even as, wheresoever the Prince is, there is the Court, although it were in a poor cottage." Cited in Mather's History of New England, book iv. p. 148.

Memento hoc agere,—p. 137.

See a most elegant and edifying volume, entitled, "Thoughts, chiefly designed as Preparative or Persuasive to Private Devotion," by John Sheppard, p. 171. 2nd ed. 1824.

Advice of the moral philosopher, &c.—p. 137.

See Isocrates. Edit. Wolf. Bas. 1570. p. 7. c. 30. which sentence, from the phrase "moral philosopher," and the use of the verbs απιστειν, and πιστευειν, seems here to be referred to, but is itself founded on a fragment of Epicharmus, preserved in Dio Chrysostom περι απιστιας Orat. LXXIV. p. 636. Edit. Morell.

Ναφε και μεμνησ' απιστειν· αρθρα ταυτα των φρενων.

"The Sicilian wagg, Epicharmus, whispered,—Be watchfull, and distrust; for those are the nerves of the mind." Dr. Middleton's Life of Cicero, vol. 1. p. 282. 4to. 1741; and note [a].

Gave him a copy,—p. 143.

The venerable Archdeacon Owen, noticing the Polyglott, says, "One of the two copies of that great work in our school library, was the gift of Heath." Some account of the ancient and present state of Shrewsbury, p. 274.

In the Mem. of Bishop Walton, vol. 1. p. 269. *ut supra*, the donation of Mr. Heath is stated merely as a report. Mr. Henry, who must have known the fact, asserts it above positively. Mr. Todd's representation is rendered more observable, inasmuch as it stands connected with a reference to the Life of P. Henry.

He read the liturgy till, &c.—p. 143.

In Bishop Kennet's Register, vol. 1. p. 820. this statement somewhat varies. It is there said, that,—"Mr. Heath, at the persuasion of Bishop Walton, continued a few Lord's-days after August 24, 1662, reading the Liturgy, but was soon silenced, because he could not come up to the imposed terms of conformity."

The account is taken from Dr. Calamy's Abridgment, and is adopted, without a remark, in the Noncon. Mem. vol. 3. p. 153.

Notwithstanding an apparent discrepancy, may not both the accounts be substantially correct? Mr. Henry's referring to Mr. Heath's conduct from the Restoration.—Bishop Kennet's, to the same fact, *continued* a little longer than August 24, when the Act of Uniformity, which passed in May preceding, was enforced.

A few only of the ministers who were ejected, it will be recollected, used the Liturgy. Mr. Fairclough, who left Keddington in Suffolk, "could and did submit to the use of it, though he made it not the matter of his choice." Clark's Lives of Eminent Persons, p. 157. *ut supra*. And, Mr. Rowland Fogg, (son of Mr. Fogg, *ante*, p. 23.) "was among the first who restored its public use in 1660, and continued the use of it till August, 1662, yet he could not satisfy his conscience to keep in his living." Noncon. Mem. vol. 3. pp. 481, 482. Mr. Heath was like-minded. The continuance of the practice during his prolonged incumbency at St. Alkmond's is, therefore, probable.

In the Life of Mr. Wyar, who left Chiltern, in Wiltshire, it is remarked, that,—"If the reading of the Liturgy, without declaring unfeigned assent and consent, would have satisfied the law, he might have continued vicar." Noncon. Mem. vol. 3. p. 360. A like representation was applicable to each of those who adopted the Liturgy, but were afterwards ejected, as well as to those who disliked its use.

While some seceded early, (Mr. Baxter, for instance, in May, Reliq. Baxter, part ii. p. 384. *ut supra*,) most of the nonconformists continued in their respective churches until the statutory limitation had nearly expired. Mr. Heath not only did the same, but it is likely remained, according to the statement followed by Bishop Kennet, a few Lord's-days after. Many instances of such continuance may be referred to. See (*int. al.*) the Lives of Mr. Ashhurst, Noncon. Mem. vol. 1. p. 281. Mr. Tapper, *ib.* p. 357. Mr. Hardy, *ib.* vol. 2. p. 146. Mr. Crossin, *ib.* p. 265. Mr. Creswick, *ib.* p. 266. Mr. Hawes, *ib.* p. 292. Mr. Angier, *ib.* p. 360. And Mr. Truman, *ib.* vol. 3. p. 92.

It may be noticed, that, immediately after the restoration, the hazard of not reading the Common Prayer was great, and the results costly. See *ante*, pp. 45, 46; and Fawcett's Life of O. Heywood, p. 31; also the Lives of Mr. Thoroughgood, Noncon. Mem. vol. 2. p. 342; Mr. Barret, *ib.* vol. 3. p. 103; and Mr. Slater, *ib.* p. 257.

It would be difficult to find an exemption from trouble between the Restoration and St. Bartholomew's day, 1662, unless where the Liturgy was used, either in whole or in part. Mr. Heath remained, during that interval, undisturbed, which strengthens the probability, that, agreeably to Mr. Henry's assertion, he read the Liturgy, *before* August, 1662. On any other principle it is puzzling to account for his freedom from molestation. Mr. Tallents was indulged with like tranquillity; and Mr. Matthew Henry expressly says, that, "when the king was restored, in the year 1660, he (Mr. T.) intimated his readiness to conform, as far as he could, &c. He therefore read (as I think I have been told) some parts of the Liturgy at that time." Life of Mr. Tallents, appended to his Funeral Sermons, in this vol.

The only point of difference between the two narratives seems to be,—in Mr. Heath reading, according to Mr. Henry, *till* August 24, and then being silenced;—and, according to the register, at the persuasion of Bishop Waltou, continuing, before actual silence, a few Lord's-days after, reading the Liturgy. Without pressing an inference in Mr. Henry's favour from his vicinity to, and intimacy with, Mr. Heath, it may fairly be observed, that his record derives confirmation from the very phraseology adopted by Bishop Kennet. The register does not say that Mr. Heath read the Liturgy *from* August, but that he *continued* a few Lord's-days after, reading it; thus implying the previous habit, as mentioned by Mr. Henry.

Mr. Henry's notice of the case is perfectly natural; for the silencing, "because Mr. Heath could not come up to the imposed terms of conformity," (in which both statements agree,) was, in pursuance of the Act, which strictly operated on the Lord's-day preceding the 24th of August. The rigid effects of that statute were warded off in each instance, (and at great peril,) by special favour, which favour terminated, with a few exceptions only, speedily. It will appear less surprising, that the continuance of Mr. Heath, "a few Lord's-days after August 24," should not have been adverted to, when it is borne in mind, that, in such an occurrence, there was nothing singular. The habit of reading the Liturgy was more unusual, and was therefore memorialized.

Two objections to the other account present themselves. The register even mistakes the name of the church in which Mr. Heath officiated, St. Mary's, instead of St. Alkmond's. It asserts, also, that Mr. Heath's continuance a few Lord's-days beyond August 24, 1662, was at the persuasion of Bishop Walton. Bishop Kennet, indeed, properly notices, in the margin, that "Bishop Walton died Nov. 29, 1661;" it is added, however, he "yet might respect him, (Mr. Heath,) and advise him to church-conformity." Were the writer to abandon the explanation thus offered, he should, unhesitatingly, determine in favour of Mr. Henry's accuracy. It is conceived, that another circumstance, in addition to what has been submitted, would justify such a conclusion. The third and best edition of the Life of Philip Henry, "corrected" by his biographer, was published several years after the promulgation of the account adopted by Bishop Kennet; but, in the statement in question, no alteration was made. Dr. Calamy's Abridgment appeared in 1702. The third edition of Mr. Henry's Life, in 1712. Mr. Tallents, too, who was the fellow-townsman and associate of Mr. Heath, lived several years after the circulation of Dr. Calamy's statement, with two prior editions of Mr. Henry's Life, published in 1698 and 1699, before him. He had, as we have seen, special communications with Mr. Matthew Henry, relative to the facts introduced into that volume. Had, therefore, any inaccuracy crept in, it is difficult to conceive of it remaining unobserved by both of those excellent men,—Mr. Tallents, an acute and indefatigable chronologist, and Mr. Matthew Henry, a vigilant and minute inquirer after truth.

On the whole, the conclusion seems justifiable, that, notwithstanding Mr. Henry's silence as to Mr. Heath's habits after Bartholomew-day, 1662, both his statement, and that adopted in the register, are entitled to credit. Mr. Henry's, as an account not quite complete, but to the full extent correct; and Bishop Kennet's, or rather Dr. Calamy's, as perfect, evincing Mr. Heath's use of the Liturgy, not only before August 24, 1662, but also for a few Lord's-days after.

Mr. Joshua Richardson, &c.—p. 144.

The same power that displaced Mr. Moore, did, in his stead, place in Myddle Mr. Joshua Richardson, M. A. (Son of Joshua Richardson, of Broughton,) upon condition that he would allow the tythes of Hadnall's Ease, or pay a salary, equivalent to the value thereof, to a preaching minister, to be constantly resident in Hadnall's Ease. This Mr. Richardson was an able and laboriouse minister; his whoale imployment was about the concernes of his ministry. His wife, beeing a prudent and carefull woman, managed the rest of his afaires with great diligence and discretion. After the death of Mr. Moore, the Right Honourable John Earle of Bridgewater, (knowing that Mr. Richardson was well beloved in his parish,) by a certain kind of state amnesty, permitted him to continue minister, on the same termes and condicons that hee was putt in by the Parliament. This Mr. Richardson built that pt. of the psonage house, which is the kitchen and the romes beelow it, in which hee made use of soe much of the timber as was left of the barne that fell downe in Mr. More's time. After the restauracon of King Charles the Second, when the act for conformity came out, Mr. Richardson refuseing to subscribe the declaracon inserted in the act concerning the solemne league and covenant, lost his place, and with him fell the minister of Hadnall's Ease.

I had so much intimate acquaintance with Mr. Richardson, that hee would willingly have conformed to the discipline and constitucons of the Church of England. But hee told mee hee could not, with a safe conscience, subscribe to the declaration against the covenant; he received the tythes due before Bartholomew-tide, (according to the act of Parliament,) at which time all the ry and wheate was gott in, and some oates. Hee removed to Broughton, where he lived one year with his brother, Captaine Richardson, and afterward went to a farme called Ditches, neare Wem. But when the Act of Parliament came forth that noe outed minister should live within five myles of the place where he had formerly officiated, hee removed to Alkinton, near Whitchurch, (the place from whence his father came when hee had purchased his lands in Broughton, of Mr. Ottey.) Here Mr. Richardson lived a private, peaceable, and pyouse life, exercising himselfe in religiouse duetyes, and instructing and teaching his owne, and some of his relations' children in good literature. He dyed at Alkinton, and was buried at Whitchurch. Dr. Fowler preached his funerall sermon, and therein gave him a deserved commendation. He bequeathed a certaine number of bibles, and of those books of Mr. Baxter, entitled "A Call to the Unconverted," to be given to certaine poore people in the parish of Myddle, after his decease; which legacy was faithfully performed by his prudent widdow, and executrix. Antiquityes and Memoyres of the Parish of Myddle, written by Richard Gough, anno æt. suæ 66. anno domini 1700. MS in folio, pp. 10, 11.

The following elegy on his death was written by Mr. Malden. See *ante*, p. 146.

Venture, I will, to fix a verse
On my dear brother's sable hearse.
This star did sometimes shine most bright,
Although the clouds eclipst his light.
And now he's set, both grief and fears,
Express themselves in showers of tears.

But, let our hope our grief refrain,
For he shall rise and shine again.
While he doth hallelujahs sing,
Let us devout hosannahs bring.
Help, Lord!—our lights go out apace;
Shew us the brightness of thy face.
Heath, Porter, Wright, and Richardson,
And York, and Thomas, dead and gone!
A sign thou wilt no longer stay,
But break up house, and go away,
When thou thy jewels dost remove,
From this below, to that above.
And, wilt thou leave us here behind,
Like worthless stuff? Lord, be so kind
As to continue with us here;
Or else to take us with thee there!

From a MS. in the hand-writing of Mrs. Savage.

Mr. Samuel Hildersham, &c.—p. 144.

See Clark's Lives, annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 124. *ut supra*. Also, Vindiciæ Fœderis; or, a Treatise on the Covenant of God entered into with Man-kinde in the several Kindes and Degrees of it," by Thomas Blake, 4to. 1653. The "Epistle Dedicatory" is from Mr. Blake's study in Tamworth, and addressed "To his Reverend and much Honoured Friend, Mr. Samuel Hildersam, Bachelor in Divinity, and Pastor of West Felton, in the County of Salop; together with Mrs. Mary Hildersam, his pious Consort." After referring to a severe affliction,—the pestilence,—which had issued in an invitation to himself, "and those who had dependence upon him," to Mr. Hildersham's house, Mr. Blake thus proceeds;—"In your house I had not only leisure to make a good progresse in this work, but singular accommodation from your accomplished library. I know you affect not panegyricks; neither am I fitted for them, nor was ever accustomed to them. There is much published to the world of one of you in the life of the reverend father, to whom I have often, in my thoughts, applied that of Dr. Hall,* concerning learned Whittaker;—'Who ever saw him without reverence, or heard him without wonder?' Having lead the reader through his glory, they adde;—And yet his name, with the lively picture of his person, lives, in his worthy sonne, Master Samuel Hildersam; whose learning Cambridge knew, when he was Fellow of Emmanuel College; and whose present ministerial labours, and pious conversation, at West Felton, in Shropshire, do perpetuate the honour of his reverend father; whose memory he doth much reverence; and whose rich virtues, both personal and ministerial, he doth happily imitate. And it is not little that is said of the other, where it is remembered, that you were propounded by him, for a meet wife for his dearest sonne; and recorded, that he was heard with affection to ingeminate these words;—'Never man had a kinder daughter-in-law.' To be a follower of such a precedent, and to be found worthy of such a testimony, is a greater glory than all the noble blood that ran through the veins of the greatest of either of your ancestors."

Mr. R. Nevet died, &c.—p. 144.

This event, in connexion with the death of several Shropshire worthies already mentioned, and others, not named, produced the following lines from the pen of Mr. Tallents. They are transcribed, by favour of the Reverend Dr. Butler, from Mr. Tallents's own hand-writing, in a copy of a thin folio, entitled, "Large and Sure Foundations," published anonymously by that gentleman, and deposited in the Library of the Royal Free Grammar School, in Shrewsbury:—

"On occasion of the death of Mr. Rowland Nevet, formerly Minister of Oswestre, in Shropshire, December, 1675, and of other nonconformist ministers in that county, before that time.

When dismal edicts, fourteen years ago,
Thousands of pastors from their flocks did throw;
In this small countie many took that way,
And, mourning, yet, with courage, bore the day;
Like stars i' th' night, more glorious did appear,
And in their scorns and suff'rings brighter were.
Great Hildersam, and zealous Nevet go,
Kind Richardson, and reverend Porter too;
Smith, Paston, Thomas, Adams, Humphreys, Bote,
With famous Wright, and Froysel, men of note;
Sadler, and learned, holy, humble Heath;—
Others survive, and many;* May their breath
Keep many precious souls from endless death!
These, from their labours rest, nor can their name,
Envy, or fierce ambition justly blame.

Good men, from you these troubles never are,
Your actions, and your mildness since declare;
Nor, from those peers and patriots, who forbear
To press, with rigorous force, the laws severe;
Nor from those clergymen, that deeply groan,
For needless burdens on their brethren thrown;—
But, from those churchmen, and their friends, and train,
Whose blindness, pride, and int'rest, made the flame;
And from those men, whose bitter spirit stands
Irreconcileable to puritans.

Rome counsell'd, strove, rejoiced, in this success,
As a good step to their hop'd happiness;
Blind seers they, who could not this descry,
And feel their downfall by these arts draw nigh,
When large and sure foundations they laid by.

Blest King of Saints, of thy dear church take care,
And faithful pastors for thy flocks prepare;—
And haste those righteous days, thou seem'st to say,
Shall be on earth, before the last great day;—
And when the tares are burnt, the just let shine
Forth, like the glorious sun, in light divine."

* Forty went out that never conformed after; and eighteen were put out that did conform after.

* Epistles, Dec. 1, Ep. 7. Bishop Hall's Works, vol. 7. p. 137. *ut supra*.

He was a young man, &c.—p. 146.

The following is a copy of a manuscript in Mrs. Savage's hand-writing, entitled,—"On the Death of Mr. William Jennings, who died February 2, 1676-7, by Cosin Robert Bosier."

My mother, (reader, pardon me,
If that I interrupted be;
And if my trembling hand doth dread,
And knows not how to write,) is dead.
Oh, grief! What news is next? Sure, some,
My sorrow to allay, is come.
No, no; more sable clouds are spread;
My uncle 's sick, is worse, is dead.
Two friends, at once, are lost, I see;
And both of them most dear to me.
Two ways I'll tell my grief likewise,
By ink and tears, by tongue and eyes.
But how must I these two bestow?
Both these to both of them I owe.
I'll, then, divide; and, to be just,
I'll write his fame, and wash her dust.
And, now, I wish that any one
Would pen his deeds as they were done:
My glutted quill would write but dull;
I cannot speak, my mouth 's so full.
First, we unto the church will go,
For one o' th' first he's there, I know.
If he were absent, ask not why;
'Tis sickness, or necessity.
No cold, nor heat, could him prevent,
Through rain and snow he often went;
And yet on foot; he thought it best,
On sabbath-days, his beasts should rest,
(If he more pains did take;) though I
May call it,—his humility.
Unto his closet next return;
Thither betake thyself, and mourn.
But yet, my muse, awhile forbear;
Thou art too hasty;—he's at pray'r.
Search it throughout, and you will find
Some relics of a godly mind;
Some wit and ingenuity;
Some learning, but more piety;
Some memorandums of his end;
Some notes of sermons by him penn'd,
And fix'd upon the wall, that he
Without a guide might never be.
Besides;—he lov'd, unto the end,
The king, his country, and his friend.
A loyal heart he ever bore
Unto his prince. Need I say more?
He always took as great a care
To do what he had sworn, as swear.
A man of peace; as such was known
In ev'ry town, chiefly his own.
Next, I appeal unto the poor,
Which were relieved at his door.
And, oh, methinks, I hear them say,—
"Alas, we miss him ev'ry day!"
Much used, in our neighbourhood,
A private man of publick good.
His skill in husbandry was much,
You'll scarce, in all these parts, find such.
His house and orchards, all complete;
Not only needful were, but neat.
Expect not I should tell you all:—
Go, ask his garden, and his wall,
His walks, his trees, his meads, and fields,
Which of his care an instance yields.
Next, I could tell you, might it be,
How good a friend he was to me:
At every time his readiness,
In every thing, he did express.
Few like himself he left behind;
A faithful friend is hard to find.
And, now I've done, I do desire,
My spark may kindle others' fire;
That better poets may amend,
And finish what I did intend;—
For, there's a great deal yet behind;
My tongue could not express my mind.
He's dead, and yet he lives; and, why?
His lasting fame shall never die.

The works he did shall live his praise,
He died not old, but full of days.
Though thou hast slain him, death, yet he
Shall rise again in spite of thee;—
And be partaker of that joy,
Where he shall live, but never die.
From Mrs. Savage's MS.

A taking, popular preacher,—p. 146.

Dr. Wordsworth, in the work already referred to,* has, in this place, and another part of the volume, instituted a charge against Matthew Henry, as his father's biographer, which, if correct, would be not only detrimental to his fidelity, but opposed to his well-known simplicity and uprightness.

In allusion to the obituary of Mr. Bridge, Dr. Wordsworth says;—"It must be mentioned, though it cannot be told without regret, that this native dress † has not, in all cases, been so carefully preserved as it might have been wished. One instance, at least, will be specified where the biographer has departed from the original diary, for which departure, it should seem, no honourable motives can be easily assigned." ‡

Again;—in that part of the Life where the present observations are introduced, Dr. Wordsworth thus writes:—"The passage in Mr. Philip Henry's own diary, upon which the above particulars are founded, stands (notwithstanding the declaration made at the commencement of the present chapter) in the following terms:—

"Oct. 7. Mr. Thomas Bridge, minister of the higher-parsonage of Malpas, near fifty-eight years, aged eighty-two years, was buried this day. Mr. Green preached. Text, 1 Timothy i. 16. told what he had declared to him in a late fit which he had concerning his repentance; towards his latter end, very charitable; a taking, popular, good preacher; preached often, and, to the last, could read the smallest print without spectacles, having used glasses in private ever since forty. The decisive word "good," it will be remarked, is omitted in the printed account. The repentance is there "upon his death-bed;" but, by the manuscript, may have respected former repentance, as well as final. The circumstance of his being, "towards his latter end, very charitable;" that is, (probably,) towards the non-conformists, is totally omitted." §

On this, the only confirmatory instance, the following observations may be submitted.

It seems to be assumed, that Mr. Matthew Henry, having stated his selection of the materials to be from his father's papers, especially his diary, was thereby obliged if he found, as in this instance, a character, any where drawn, to print it as it stood, without reference to any other papers, even on the same subject.

The truth is, that, although it was Mr. Henry's custom, on the death of some of his neighbours and friends, to preserve characteristic remarks, it was seldom (I am aware only of a solitary instance ‖) that he wrote, in one place, a complete account. His sketches of the same character are usually scattered in the diaries, though the most minute statement accompanies the record of dissolution.

It may be noticed, that this part of the volume is, confessedly, from "his own papers," ¶ and not confined to the diaries, although those interesting documents are made prominent. It may be further remarked, that Mr. Henry, in compiling his father's Life, would not write it as one utterly ignorant of the parties to whom the manuscripts referred. He had lived almost all his days in the neighbourhood of most of them, and accurately knew his venerable father's opinion of their character and attainments. This, indeed, he has placed beyond doubt. In a letter addressed to Mr. Tallents, he thus wrote:—"My project is, to put the collection concerning my dear father, (which I have now finished, *out of my own knowledge*, and his diary,) into the hands of my friend, Mr. Tong, who, you know, hath a very great facility of expression; and will, I hope, put it into an agreeable shape, such as may recommend it to those who, otherwise, would be apt to despise it. To these I would have to be added a brief extract of your sermon, (if you please,) and of Mr. Owen's, and Mr. Lawrence's, the Wednesday following, taking that out of each which is nervous, and which may not be liable to exception, and so the sermon will be much better preserved than if published in a loose paper by itself. What is historical will be much more accurately related in the narrative. His imprisonment at Chester being only cautionary, and in company with many that had little of religion, he never put much upon the score of suffering for righteousness' sake. Some little mistakes in your narrative I observed;—p. 13. Mr. Taylor, of Wem, was buried, not August 24, but June 28, 1695, just a year before my father: and, page 14. the 355th day of his climacteric was not August 30, but August 3. Some other little mistakes also there are which should be rectified, and some things, likewise, which may not be so very proper to be spoken to all the world in this critical age. There are some of your friends here, (particularly Dr. Tylston, who truly loves and honours you,) who wish you rather to suppress it, at least for the present, especially considering that the occasion is such as will certainly bring into the hands of many who are very industrious in seeking matter for cavil and reproach."** I think, after this authentic specimen of Mr. Matthew Henry's prudence, and desire of accuracy, it may safely be concluded he would not, by a misrepresentation of Mr. Bridge, his near and well-known neighbour, expose himself to that, which, in the letter just quoted, he so explicitly deprecates.

Regarding the general tenour of the note in question, it seems only fair to remark,—that, as the word "good" evidently imported no moral qualities, its omission ought not to be so construed as to intend delinquency.

That Mr. Matthew Henry has rejected the term, and also added the words, "upon his death-bed," is admitted; nor need such an omission to be considered at all detrimental, since he retains, what in strictness, no doubt, though, perhaps, not common parlance, was more applicable,—"taking and popular." The introduction of the limitation as to repentance would appear, to a reader of Mr. Henry's manuscripts, in accordance with truth. The words used in the genuine Life were, in all probability, supplied from some document now unknown.* This is the more likely, because Mr. Bridge's name frequently occurs, and a manuscript account of him, now before me, (a transcript, by Mr. Matthew Henry, from his father's papers,) varies, in some particulars, though unimportant, both from the paragraph in the Life, and the record in Dr. Wordsworth's note; not to mention, that, in the several accounts respecting Mr. Bridge, which I have seen, the words, "towards his latter end very charitable," do not occur. The insinuation, as to these words, certainly does not agree with the record of those excellent clergymen, Mr. Haines, Mr. Edwards, and Mr Cawdrey, *ante*, pp. 146, 147; nor, indeed, with the general features of the Life. The whole narrative supports the conclusion,—that neither Mr. Henry, nor his faithful biographer, felt any inclination to withhold just praises on account of ecclesiastical conformity. Nor can it escape observation, that all the publications of Mr. Matthew Henry discover an exemplary freedom, even from an approximation to bigotry or censoriousness. Both he, and his father, evidently agreed in sentiment with Archbishop Tillotson,—that, "there is no readier way for a man to bring his own worth into question, than by endeavouring to detract from the worth of other men."†

Were it not for the note in Dr. Wordsworth's volume, it may be queried whether the memorial referred to could, by possibility, have been construed unfavourably to Mr. Bridge. That Mr. Matthew Henry had no intention it should be so regarded, is sufficiently clear from the whole paragraph introductory to chapter xi. *ante*, p. 142. The object of that chapter is, professedly, to record "the gifts and graces" of persons to whom Philip Henry "delighted to do honour." They are therefore mentioned "with respect," as "the righteous," and as "glorified souls, whose memories it was fit to embalm."

As allusion is made to something more than variations, it may appear necessary to introduce instances in corroboration of the present statements. But, since no injustice of intention is imputed to the reverend annotator, it can answer no good purpose to remove the veil, which has, hitherto, concealed those parts of Mr. Henry's diary, which relate to the subject, from public inspection; especially, as the learned and venerable communicator of the note ‡ stated to the editor, that he was not aware of any other document than that which he quoted, and which seemed to support the assertion. It is only justice to add, that, from the many opportunities an extensive and familiar acquaintance with the manuscripts has afforded of judging, the editor can testify, not merely the strict accuracy of Mr. Matthew Henry, but also his delicacy and tenderness in this and various other instances.

In the preceding remarks, the object has not been to raise an imputation against Mr. Bridge; his intimacy with Mr. Philip Henry seems to have been regular and neighbourly; and his preaching, judging from his sermons, preserved in Mr. Henry's hand-writing, in accordance with sound doctrine, not to say evidential of respectable pulpit ability. The design is, simply, to defend a reputation, which is too brilliant to be easily sullied; and which, in the absence of something unequivocally gross, may, without offence, be permitted to retain its full share of blessedness.

Mr. Jonathan Roberts, &c.—p. 147.

Mr. Roberts's character was drawn, and his loss deplored, by Mr. Matthew Henry, in the following tributary poem:

Should I go charm the muses now?
Summon Parnassus' top to bow
To my just griefs, or call upon
The purling streams of Helicon,
To fill mine eyes, as full of tears,
As is my heart of grief, and fears;
And make my lines breathe doleful tones;
Put words for sighs, and stops for groans?
Such high-strain'd raptures, those that knew
Our loss would think no more than due.
But yet, methinks, I see him stand
In glorious robes, at God's right hand,
Triumphing in this happy day.
And thus, to us, I hear him say;—
Weep not for me, my brethren, dear;
Weep for yourselves, and children, there.

* Ecclesiastical Biography, vol. 6. p. 107.
† Referring to the phrase used in Mr. Matthew Henry's preface, see *ante*, p. 5. as to the genuineness of the illustrations in the narrative.
‡ Ecclesiastical Biography, vol. 6. p. 119. § Ibid. vol. 6. p. 384. n.
‖ Mr. Nevet, see p. 144. *ante*. ¶ See *ante*, chap. xi. commencement.
** This letter is in Mr. Matthew Henry's hand-writing, is dated September 30, 1696, and superscribed,—"For the Rev. Mr. Tallents, at his house in Salop, These."—*Penes me*. Mr. Tallents's sermon, to which it refers, was not printed entire till the year 1816. See Eighteen Sermons, by Philip Henry, *ut supra*; also, the preface to that volume, pp. vii. viii.

* Of Mr. Henry's *regular* diaries the loss is very great. It is probable they consisted of thirty-nine interleaved almanacks. The editor could never trace more than eleven:—
"1657. This was the first year in which I began to keep an account of my time in this method. If the Lord bless me, I mean to hold on, and I hope use will make me more and more perfect in it;—it is a pleasing, profitable, heavenly art. *O Deus, doce me numerare dies meos.*" P. Henry. Diary. Orig. MS.
† Preface to Bishop Wilkins's Sermons, oct. 1682.
‡ The Rev. Archdeacon Churton.

And so we do, blest soul, for we
Do not lament so much for thee.
Too well we loved thee, to express
Repinings at thy happiness;
As knowing well, that, though it be
A loss to us, 'tis gain to thee.
For, now thy blessed race is run,
Thou hast received thy—*Well done;*
And, seasonably, put in to shore,
When winds and storms are at the door.
Now, got safe in thy resting-place,
Just now, when tempests rise apace.
Therefore it was thou mad'st such haste
To hide thee, till the storm be past.
But, for ourselves, we may, we must
Shed showers of tears over this dust.
We need not wonder if the wall
Do tremble when the pillars fall.*
Well may we fear an evil day,
When righteous men are ta'en away.
A sign night's coming o'er our head,
When God thus calls his babes to bed.
A sign he will no longer stay,
When he sends for his pearls away.
A sign he'll as an enemy, come,
When he commands his agents home.†
What reason, then, with one accord,
If ever, now to cry,—*Help, Lord!*
His character I need not tell
To those his friends, that knew him well.
His learning, and his piety,
His patience, and humility.
How general a scholar he
Always approv'd himself to be!
How he, by long experience, knew
Both study's pains, and pleasures too!
How much he diligently read,
And what a memory he had;—
How readily he could produce
That which he read for others' use;
E'en as the good housholder brings,
Out of his store, old and new things.
His warm and zealous British blood,
He well employ'd for God and good.
The faith he stoutly did defend,
And for the present truths contend.
But plainness was his master-grace;
He was of honest Jacob's race;—
A son of old Nathaniel,
Without allow'd, approv'd of, guile.
No welt, or gard;‡ a downright man,
As preacher, and as Christian.

He learnt that lesson,—to despise
Being despis'd in others' eyes.
Much hated by the world was he,
As Christ's belov'd ones us'd to be;—
For he, consulting the repose
And quiet of his conscience,* chose
The greatest sufferings rather than
The seeming least, and smallest sin.
But now kind death hath sent him thither,
Where sin and sorrow cease together,
And placed him in that happy state,
Where all their writs are out of date.
Lo, he who was a planet here,
Is a fixt star in glory there;—
With freedom to his heavenly home,
Though not to his earthly he could come.
Death gave him his *quietus-est*,
And laid him where the *weary rest*.
Those that but little rest can have
On earth, yet find it in the grave;
Except some commissary know;
And then, perhaps, 'twill not be so.
But hold awhile:—Shall Jonathan,—
Jonathan die,—do what we can?
Nay; 'tis too late; too late to cry,—
Shall Jonathan, dear Jonathan, die?
The stroke is giv'n;—he is sent,
To his father's house from banishment.
Where now we leave him full possess'd
Of everlasting peace and rest;
While I, in these poor rhymes, do tell
A prophet's fall in Israel.

HIS EPITAPH.

Reader! consider, and adjust
Thy thoughts to this despised dust.
'Tis learn'd Athenian dust; nay, more;
'Tis sacred dust from Zion's floor.
Here fell a star, that once did stand.
A shining star, in Christ's right hand;
A faithful, painful minister
Of Jesus Christ, lies sleeping here.
Consid'ring, then, it is his due,
Come drop, with me, a tear, or two.
From Mrs. Savage's MS.

Mrs. Crew, &c.—p. 148.

See Dr. Ormerod's History, vol. 2. p. 136. To the merits of this lady the following testimony appears in Sir John Crewe's manuscript journal. "Sunday, July 6, 1690. This day died my mother, the best parent, the truest friend, the best mistress, the greatest housekeeper of her rank, and the most pious Christian of her time." She was brought up under the direction of her kinsman, the celebrated John Bruen, of Stapleford, Esq. *Ib.* 136.

* It presageth the fall of an house when the pillars are removed. Rev. T. Watson's Funeral Sermon for Mr. John Wells, 4to. 1676. p. 32.

† Well may we all feare God intendeth wars,
When he commands home his ambassadours.
Poem upon the Death of so many reverend ministers of late. See Enoch's Walk and Change, *ut supra*, p. 49.

‡ A plain man he was, as Jacob, without *welt or gard*; and a plain dealing man, as Nathaniel, without craft or guile; free from all courtship, either for counterfeit, or compliment. Clark's Lives annexed to the Martyrologie, p. 59. *ut supra*.

* To him, who must judge us all at the great day, we can appeal before angels and men, that it is not this thing, or that thing, that puts us upon this dissent, but it is conscience towards God, and fear of offending him. Dr. Jacomb. Farewell Sermons, p. 115. 4to. 1663.

THE

PLEASANTNESS

OF A

RELIGIOUS LIFE

DISPLAYED, PROVED, AND RECOMMENDED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF EVERY ONE, PARTICULARLY OF THE YOUNG.

To the Reader.

That distinction which the learned Dr. Henry More insists so much upon, in his explanation of the *Grand Mystery of Godliness*, between the *Animal* Life and the *Divine* Life, is certainly of great use to lead us into the understanding of that mystery. What was the fall and apostasy of man, and what is still his sin and misery, but the soul's revolt from the *Divine* Life, and giving up itself wholly to the *Animal* Life? And what was the design of our Redeemer, but to recover us to the Divine and Spiritual Life again, by the influences of his grace? And to this, his gospel has a direct tendency; his religion is all spiritual and divine, while all other religions savour of the Animal Life. "Christianity" (says he) "is that period of the wisdom and providence of God, wherein the Animal Life is remarkably insulted, and triumphed over, by the Divine." Bk. 2. ch. 7. *And so far, and no farther, are we Christians indeed, than as this revolution is brought about in our souls.*

The conflict is between these two. Nothing draws more forcibly than *Pleasure*; in order therefore to the advancing of the interests of the Divine Life in myself and others, I have here endeavoured, as God has enabled me, to make it evident, that the *Pleasures* of the *Divine Life* are unspeakably better, and more deserving, than those of the *Animal Life*. Were people convinced of this, we should gain our point.

The substance of this was preached last year in six sermons, in the ordinary course of my ministry, among many other *Reasons why we should be Religious*. I was then solicited to make it public, and now take this opportunity to prepare it for the press, when, through the good hand of my God upon me, I have finished my *Fifth Volume of Expositions*, before I go about the *Sixth*. And herein, I confess, I indulge an inclination of my own; for this doctrine of the *Pleasantness of Religion* is what I have been long delighted with, and taken all occasions to mention. Yet I would not thus far have gratified either my friends' request, or my own inclination, if I had not thought that, by the blessing of God, it might be of some service to the common interest of Christ's kingdom, and the common salvation of precious souls.

May 31, 1714. M. H

Proverbs iii. 17.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

True *religion* and *godliness* are often, in Scripture, and particularly in this book of the Proverbs, represented, and recommended to us, under the name and character of *wisdom*; (Prov. i. 2, 7, 20; ii. 2, 10; iii. 13; Ps. cxi. 10.) because it is the highest improvement of the *human nature*, and the best and surest guide of *human life*. It was one of the first and most ancient discoveries of God's mind to the children of men, to the inquisitive part of them, that are in search for wisdom, and would have it at any rate. Then when God made a *weight for the winds*, and a *decree for the rain*, when he brought all the other creatures under the established rule and law of their creation, according to their respective capacities, then he *declared this to man*, a reasonable creature, as the law of his creation, (Job xxviii. 25—28.) *Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil*, the evil of sin, *is understanding*.

The *great men* of the world, that engross its wealth and honours, are pretenders to wisdom, and think none do so well for themselves as they do; but though their neighbours applaud them, and their

posterity, that reap the fruit of their worldly wisdom, approve their sayings, yet *this their way is their folly*, (Ps. xlix. 13.) and so it will appear, when God himself shall call those *fools*, who said to their souls, *Take your ease*, in *barns* full of corn, and *bags* full of money, Luke xii. 20. Jer. xvii. 11.

The *learned men* of the world were *well-wishers* to wisdom, and modestly called themselves φιλόσοφοι, —*Lovers of wisdom;* many wise principles we have from them, and wise precepts; and yet their philosophy failed them in that in which man's great duty and interest consist, acquainting himself with his Maker, and keeping up communion with him: herein they that *professed themselves to be wise, became fools;* (Rom. i. 22.) and *the world, by wisdom, knew not God*, 1 Cor. i. 21.

But *true Christians* are, without doubt, the truly *wise men*, to whom Christ is *made of God, Wisdom*, (1 Cor. i. 30.) *in* whom are hid, not *from* them, but *for* them, all the *treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. They understand themselves best, and on which side their interest lies, that give up themselves to the conduct of Christ, and his Word and Spirit; that consult his oracles, and govern themselves by them, which are indeed the truest oracles of reason, Prov. ix. 10. Men never begin to be *wise*, till they begin to be *religious;* and they then leave off to be *wise*, when they leave off to do *good*, Ps. xxxvi. 3.

Now, to *recommend* to us the study and practice of this *true* wisdom, to *bring us* into a willing subjection to her authority, and *keep us* to a conscientious observance of her dictates, the Great God is here, by Solomon, reasoning with us, from those topics, which in other cases are usually cogent and commanding enough. It is wonderful condescension, that he who has an indisputable authority over us, thus vouchsafes to *reason with us;* to *draw* with the *cords of a man*, and the *bands of love;* (Hos. xi. 4.) when he might make use only of the *cords of a God*, and the *bands of the law*, (Ps. ii. 3.) to *invite* us to that by *precious promises* which he enjoins upon us by his precepts, and those *not grievous*, 1 John v. 3.

Interest is the great *governess* of the world; which when men are once convinced of, they will be *swayed* by more than by any thing else; every one is for what he can get, and therefore applies himself to that which he thinks he can get by. The common inquiry is, *Who will show us any good?* We would all be happy, would all be easy.

Now it is here demonstrated by Eternal Truth itself, that it is our interest to be religious; and therefore *religion* deserves to be called *wisdom*, because it teaches us to do well for ourselves. And it is certain, that the way to be *happy*, that is, perfectly *holy*, hereafter, is to be *holy*, that is, truly *happy*, now. It is laid down for a principle here, *Happy is the man that finds wisdom*, (*v.* 13.) that finds the principles and habits of it planted in his own soul by divine grace; that, having diligently sought, has, at length, found that *Pearl of great price:* the man that getteth understanding, reckons himself therein a true gainer. The man—*qui profert intelligentiam—that draws out understanding*, so the original word signifies; that *produces* it, and *brings it forth;* and so the Chaldee reads it.—Happy is the man, that, having a good principle in him, makes use of it both for his own and others' benefit; that, having laid up, lays out.

It is necessary to our being happy, that we have right notions of happiness; the nature of it, wherein it consists, what are the ingredients of it, and what the ways that lead to it: for many keep themselves miserable by thinking themselves happy, when really they are not; and we have reason to suspect their mistake concerning themselves, because they mistake so grossly concerning others: they call the *proud happy*, (Mal. iii. 15.) they *bless the covetous, whom the Lord abhors.* Ps. x. 3. It concerns us therefore to consider, whence we take our measures of happiness, and what rules we go by in judging of it; that we may not covet our lot with those with whom we should dread to have our lot; that we may not say, as the Psalmist was tempted to say, when he looked upon the outward prosperity of worldly people, *Happy is the people that is in such a case;* but as he was determined to say, when he looked upon the true felicity of godly people, *Happy*, thrice happy, for ever happy, *is that people, whose God is the Lord;* (Ps. cxliv. 15.) and as God here says, whose judgment, we are sure, is according to truth, *Happy is the man that finds wisdom.*

The happiness of those that are religious, is here proved,

I. From the *true profit* that is to be got by religion. *Godliness is profitable to all things;* (1 Tim. iv. 8.) it is of universal advantage. Though we may be losers *for* our religion, yet we shall not only not be losers *by* it, but we shall be unspeakable gainers, in the end. They that trade with wisdom's talents, will find *the merchandise of it better than the merchandise of silver*, and the *gain thereof than fine gold*, and that it is *more precious than rubies.* As long since as Job's time it was agreed, that the advantages of religion were such, that, as they could not be purchased, so they could not be *valued, with the gold of Ophir, the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The topaz of Ethiopia could not equal them*, Job xxviii. 16, 19. *Length of days is* in wisdom's *right hand*, even life for evermore; length of days, and no shortening of them; *and in her left hand riches and honour*, (*v.* 16.) *the unsearchable riches of Christ*, and the *honour that comes from God*, which are true riches, and true honours, because durable, because eternal, and for ever out of the danger of poverty and disgrace.

In all labour there is profit, more or less, of one kind or other, but no profit like that in the labour

of religion. They who make a business of it will find great advantage by it; its present incomes are valuable, and a comfortable, honourable maintenance for a soul; but its future recompences infinitely more so, above what we are able either to speak or think.

II. From the *transcendent pleasure* that is to be found in it. Here profit and pleasure meet, which complete the happiness; and *Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci*—

> Where pleasure and advantage meet,
> They make the cheerful scene complete.

Those that pursue the gains of the world in wealth and riches, must be willing to deny themselves in their pleasures; and those that will indulge themselves in their pleasures, must be content not to get money, but to spend it. As they that are covetous, know they must not be voluptuous; so they that are voluptuous, leave no room to be covetous; but it is not so in the profits and pleasures of religion. Here a man may both *get* and *save*, the spiritual riches of divine grace, and yet, at the same time, bathe in a full stream of divine consolations, and be a holy epicure in spiritual delights, while he *lays up treasures in heaven;* the soul may even then dwell at ease, when it is labouring most diligently for the *meat* that endures to *eternal life*.

This is that which the text speaks of; and both the *profit* and *pleasure* of religion are put together in the next words, *She is a tree of life*, (*v.* 18.) both enriching and delighting *to them that lay hold upon her*. What gain or comfort like that of life?

1. We are here assured, that her *ways are ways of pleasantness;* not only *pleasant ways*, but, in the abstract, *ways of pleasantness*, as if pleasantness were confined to those ways, and not to be found any where else; and the pleasantness arises not from any foreign circumstance, but from the innate goodness of the ways themselves. Or it notes the superlative pleasantness of religion; it is as pleasant as *pleasantness* itself. *They are ways of pleasantness*, נעם; it is the word from which *Naomi* had her name in the day of her prosperity, which afterward she disclaimed; (Ruth i. 20.) *Call me not Naomi*, pleasant; but *Marah*, bitter. Think you hear Wisdom saying, on the contrary, "Call me not *Marah*, bitter, as some have miscalled me, but call me *Naomi*, pleasant." The vulgar *Latin* reads it, *viæ pulchræ —beautiful ways*; ways of sweetness, so the Chaldee.

Wisdom's ways are so; that is, the ways which she has directed us to walk in, the ways of her commandments; they are such, that if we *keep close to*, and *go on in*, them, we shall certainly find true pleasure and satisfaction. Wisdom says, "*This is the way, walk in it;* and you shall not only find *life* at the end, but *pleasure* in the way." That which is the only right way to happiness, we must resolve to travel, and to proceed, and persevere in, whether it be fair or foul, pleasant or unpleasant; but it is a great encouragement to a traveller, to know that his way is not only the right way, but a pleasant way: and such the way to heaven is.

God had told us by Solomon, (*ch.* ii. 3, 4.) that we must *cry after knowledge*, must *give our voice to understanding*, that we must *seek* it, and *search* for it, must spare no cost or pains to get it. He had told us, that this wisdom would restrain us from the way both of the *evil man*, and of the *strange woman;* (*ch.* ii. 12, 16.) that it would keep us from all the forbidden pleasures of sense. Now lest these *restraints* from pleasure, and *constraints* to piety and labour, should discourage any from the ways of religion, he here assures us, not only that our pains will be abundantly recompensed with the profits of religion, but that the pleasures we *forego* will be abundantly balanced with the pleasures we shall enjoy.

2. It is added, *All her paths are peace.* Peace is sometimes put for all good; here some take it for the good of safety and protection. Many ways are *pleasant;* they are clean, and look smooth, but they are *dangerous*, either not sound at bottom, or beset with thieves: but the ways of wisdom have in them a *holy security*, as well as a *holy serenity;* and they that walk in them, have God himself for their *shield* as well as their *sun*, and are not only joyful in the hope of good, but are, or may be, quiet also from the fear of evil.

But we may take it for the good of pleasure and delight; and so it imports the same as the former part of the verse. As there is *pleasantness* in wisdom's ways, so there is *peace* in all her *paths*.

(1.) There is not only peace *in the end* of religion, but peace *in the way*. There is not only peace provided as a bed, for good men to lie down in at night, when their work is done, and their warfare is accomplished; (they shall then *enter into peace, rest in their beds*, Isa. lvii. 2. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace*, Ps. xxvii. 37. it is everlasting peace;) but there is also peace provided as a shade, for good men to work in all day, that they may not only do their work, but do it with delight: for even the *work of righteousness*, as well as its reward, *shall be peace*, (Isa. xxxii. 17.) and the immediate *effect of righteousness*, as well as its issue at last, *quietness and assurance for ever*.

It is possible, that war may be the way to peace; *Sic quærimus pacem—thus we pursue peace*, is the best motto to be engraven on weapons of war; but it is the glory of those who are truly religious, that they not only seek peace, but enjoy it; the peace of *God* rules their hearts, and by that means *keeps* them; and even while they are travellers, they have peace, though they are not yet at home.

It is the misery of the carnal, irreligious world, that *The way of peace they have not known*, (Rom. iii.

17.) for they are *like the troubled sea; there is no peace, says my God, to the wicked,* Isa. lvii. 20, 21. How can peace be spoken to them that are not the *sons of peace,* (Luke x. 5, 6.) to them that have not grace for the word of peace to fasten upon? They may cry peace to themselves, but there is no true peace either in their way, or in their end. To such, I say, (2 Kings ix. 18.) *What hast thou to do with peace? Turn thee behind me;* while in God's name I speak peace to all that are in covenant with the God of peace, to all the faithful subjects of the *Prince of peace.* They have experimentally known the way of peace, and to them I say, "*Go on, and prosper;* go on in peace, for the *God of love and peace* is and will be *with you.*"

(2.) There is not only this peace in the way of religion in general, but in the particular *paths* of that way; view it in the several acts and instances of it, in the exercise of every grace, in the performance of every duty, and you will find, that what is said of the body of Christianity, is true of every part of it; it is *peace.*

The *ways* of religion are *tracked* as path-ways are; (Cant. i. 8.) We *go forth by the footsteps of the flock.* It is the *good old way* that all have walked in that are gone to heaven before us, and this contributes something to the peace of it; "Walk in the *old way,* and you shall *find rest to your soul,*" Jer. vi. 16. We go on in our way with so much the more assurance, when we see those going before us, who *through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises;* let us but keep the path, and we shall not miss our way.

The Chaldee reads it, *itinera, ejus, pacifica—her journeys are peace.* The paths of wisdom are not like walks in a garden, which we make use of for diversion only, and an amusement; but like tracks in a great road, which we press forward in with care and pains, as a traveller in his journey, *plus ultra—further still,* till we come to our journey's end. We must remember, that in the ways of religion we are upon our journey, and it is a journey of business, business of life and death, and therefore we must not trifle, or lose time; but must lift up our feet, as Jacob did, (Gen. xxix. 1.) *Then* Jacob *went on his way;* in the margin it is, *he lift up his feet;* and we must *lift up our hearts,* as Jehoshaphat did *in the ways of the Lord,* (2 Chron. xvii. 6.) and not take up short of the end of our faith and hope, not take up short of home: and though the journey is long, and requires all this care and application, yet it is pleasant, it is peace, notwithstanding.

In the way of religion and godliness, taken generally, there are different paths, according to the different sentiments of wise and good men in the less weighty matters of the law; but, blessed be God, every *different path* is not a *by-path;* and if it be not, but kept within the same hedges of divine truths and laws, as to the essentials of religion, it may be, it shall be, a way of peace; for both he that *eateth,* and he that *eateth not, give God thanks,* (Rom. xiv. 6.) and have comfort in it. If we have clear views, we shall perceive that *the kingdom of God,* the way of wisdom, *is not meat and drink,* and we shall find it to be, *righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,* Rom. xiv. 17.

(3.) There is this peace in *all* the paths of wisdom, in all the instances of *pure* and *undefiled religion.* Look into them *all,* make trial of them *all,* and you will find there are none to be excepted, none to be quarrelled with: they are all uniform, and of a piece: the same golden thread of peace and pleasure runs through the whole web of serious godliness.

We cannot say so of this world, that *all* its paths are peace, however some of them may pretend to give the mind a little satisfaction. Its pleasures have their allays; that which one thing sweetens, another comes presently, and imbitters. But as there is a universal rectitude in the principles of religion, (Ps. cxix. 128.) *I have esteemed all thy precepts concerning all things to be right;* and, (Prov. viii. 8.) *All the words of my mouth are in righteousness,* (says wisdom,) *and there is nothing froward or perverse in them;* so there is a universal peace and pleasure in the practice of religion. All our paths, if such as they should be, will be such as we could wish.

The doctrine, therefore, contained in these words, is,

That *true piety has true pleasure in it.* Or thus;
The *ways of religion are pleasant and peaceful ways.*

CHAPTER I.

THE EXPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE.

It is a plain truth which we have here laid down, and there is little in it that needs explication: it were well for us, if we would but as readily subscribe to the certainty of it, as we apprehend the sense and meaning of it. Nor will any complain, that it is hard to be understood, but those who know no other pleasures than those of sense, and relish no other, and therefore resolve not to give credit to it. Those who think, how can this be, that there should be pleasure in piety? will be ready to ask, what is the meaning of this doctrine? and to call it a *hard saying.*

You know what *pleasure* is; I hope you know, in some degree, what the pleasure of the *mind* is, a pleasure which the soul has the sensation of. And do you not know, in some degree, what *piety is,* a due regard to a God above us, and having the eyes of the soul ever up unto him? Then you know what

I mean when I say, that there is an abundance of real pleasure and satisfaction in the ways of religion and godliness.

But to help you a little in the understanding of it, and to prevent mistakes, observe,

I. That I speak of *true piety*, and of that, *as far as it goes.*

1. *Hypocrites are very much strangers to the delights and pleasures of religion;* nay, they are *altogether* so, for it is *joy* which those *strangers* do not *intermeddle with.* Counterfeit piety can never bring in true pleasure. He that acts a part upon a stage, though it be the same part of one that is ever so pleasant, though he may humour the pleasantness well, does not experience it. The pleasures of God's house lie not in the outer courts, but within the vail. None know what the *peace of God* means, but those that are under the dominion and operation of his grace; nor can any that *deny the power of godliness*, expect to share in the pleasures of it. *When wisdom enters into thine heart*, takes possession of that, and becomes a living, active principle there; then, and not till then, it is *pleasant unto thy soul*, Prov. ii. 10. They that aim at no more than the credit of their religion before men, justly fall short of the comfort of it in themselves.

Hypocrites have other things that they delight in, the satisfactions of the world, the gratifications of sense, which put their mouths out of taste for spiritual pleasures, so that they have *no pleasure in them.* They that have their hearts upon their marketings, are weary of the *new moons* and the *sabbaths*, Amos viii. 5. With good reason, therefore, does Job ask, *Will the hypocrite delight himself in the Almighty?* (*ch.* xxvii. 10.) No, his soul takes its ease in the creature, and returns not to the Creator as its *rest* and *home.*

Some transitory pleasure a hypocrite may have in religion, from a *land-flood* of sensible affections, who yet has not the least taste of the *river of God's pleasures.* There were those who *delighted to know God's ways;* (Isa. lviii. 2.) they met with some agreeable notions in them, that surprised them, and pleased their fancies, but they did not delight to walk in them. The stony ground *received the word with joy*, and yet received no lasting benefit by it, Luke viii. 13. Herod *heard John gladly*, (Mark vi. 20.) He found something very agreeable in his sermons, and which natural conscience could not but embrace, and yet could not bear to be reproved for his Herodias. A florid preacher, such as Ezekiel was, may be to them as *a very lovely song of one that can play well on an instrument*, (Ezek. xxxiii. 32.) and yet, at the same time, *the word of the Lord*, if it touch their consciences, and show them their transgressions, is to them *a reproach*, Jer. vi. 10.

They whose hearts are not right with God in their religion, cannot have the pleasure of *communion with God;* for it is the soul only that converses *with God*, and that he communicates himself to; *bodily exercise profiteth little*, (1 Tim. iv. 8.) and therefore pleases little. The service of God is a burthen and a task to an unsanctified, unrenewed heart; it is out of its element when it is brought into that air: and therefore, instead of snuffing it up, and saying, Behold, what a pleasure it is! it *snuffs at it*, and says, *Behold, what a weariness it is!* Mal. i. 13.

Nor can they take any pleasure in communing with their own consciences, or in their reflections; for *they* are ready, upon all occasions, to give them uneasiness, by charging them with that which is disagreeable to their profession, and gives the lie to it. And though they cry, *Peace, peace*, to themselves, they have that within them, that tells them the God of heaven does not speak *peace* to them; and this casts a damp upon all their pleasure, that their religion itself gives them pain, God himself is a terror to them, and the gospel itself condemns them for their insincerity. In time of trouble and distress, none are so much *afraid*, as the *sinners in Zion*, (Isa. xxxiii. 14.) the secret sinners there; and fearfulness is the greatest surprise of all to the hypocrites, (Amos vi. 1.) that were at *ease in Zion*, and thought its strong holds would be their security.

Therefore it is that hypocrites cast off religion, and discharge themselves of the profession of it, after they have a while disguised themselves with it, because it did not sit easy; and they are weary of it. Tradesmen that take no pleasure in their business, will not stick to it long; no more will those that take no pleasure in their religion; nor will any thing carry us through the outward difficulties of it, but the inward delights of it; if those be wanting, the *tree* is not *watered*, and therefore even *its leaf* will soon *wither*, Ps. i. 3. The hypocrite will not *always call upon God*, will not long do it, because he *will not delight himself in the Almighty*, Job xxvii. 10. This ought not to be a stumbling-block to us. Thus hypocrites *in* religion prove apostates *from* it; and the reason is, because they never found it pleasant. They never found it pleasant, because they were never sincere in it, which was *their* fault, and not the fault of the religion they professed.

Let us therefore take heed, and beware of hypocrisy, (Luke xii. 1.) if ever we hope to find *pleasure* in religion. Counterfeit piety has some other end in view, some other end to serve, than that which is the spring of *true delight.* They who rest in that, *hew them out cisterns* (Jer. ii. 13.) that can hold but little water, and that *dead;* nay, *broken cisterns* that *can hold no water;* and how can they expect the pleasure which *they* have, who cleave to, and continually draw from, the *Fountain of life* and *living waters?* No; as their principles are, such are their pleasures; as their aims are, such are their joys; they appeal to the world, and to the world they shall

go. But let not the credit of religion suffer for the sake of those who are only pretenders to it, and so indeed enemies to it.

2. It is possible that true Christians may, through their own *fault* and *folly*, want very much of the pleasure of religion; and therefore, I say, true piety, *as far as it goes*, is very *pleasant;* as far as it has its due influence upon us, and is rightly understood, and lived up to.

We abide by it, That *Wisdom's ways* are always pleasant, and yet must own, that Wisdom's children are sometimes unpleasant, and therein come short of *justifying* Wisdom in this matter as they ought to do, (Luke vii. 35.) and rather give advantage to her accusers, and prejudice to her cause. Either they miss these ways, and turn aside out of them, and so lose the pleasure that is to be found in them; or, (which is a common case,) they refuse to take the comfort which they might have in these ways. They hamper themselves with needless perplexities, make the yoke heavy which Christ has made easy, and that frightful which he designed should be encouraging: they indulge themselves, and then, as Jonah when he was angry, justify themselves, in causeless griefs and fears, and think they do well to put themselves into an agony, to be very heavy and sore amazed, and their souls *exceeding sorrowful even unto death*, as Christ's was; whereas Christ put himself into such an agony to make us easy.

But let not true piety suffer in its reputation because of this; for though it be called a religious melancholy, it is not so, for it is contrary to the very nature and design of religion, while it shelters itself under the colour of it, and pretends to take rise from it. It is rather to be called δεισιδαιμονία—*a superstitious melancholy*, arising from such a slavish fear of God as the heathens were driven by to their dæmons and barbarous sacrifices; which is a great injury to the honour of his goodness, as well as a great injury to themselves.

If the professors of religion look for that in the world, which is to be had in God only, and that is *perfect happiness;* and if they look for that in themselves, which is to be had in Christ only, and that is a *perfect righteousness;* or if they look for that on earth, which is to be had in heaven only, and that is *perfect holiness;* and then fret, and grieve, and go mourning, from day to day, because they are disappointed in their expectations, they may thank themselves; *Why seek they the living among the dead?* Luke xxiv. 5.

Let but religion, *true* and *pure* religion, in all the laws and instances of it, command and prevail, and these *tears* will soon be *wiped away*. Let but God's servants take their work before them, allow each principle of their religion its due weight, and each practice of it its due place and proportion, and let them not dash one precept of the gospel, any more than one table of the law, in pieces against the other. Let them look upon it to be as much their duty to rejoice in Christ Jesus, as to mourn for sin; nay, and more, for *this* is in order to *that:* and then we shall not fear, that their sorrows will in the least shake the truth of our doctrine, for, as far as the religion is carried, it will carry this character along with it, and further it cannot be expected.

II. In true *piety*, I say, there is a *pleasure:* there is that which we may find comfort *in*, and fetch satisfaction *from*. There is a *bonum jucundum—a pleasant good*, as well as *utile—a useful one*. That is pleasant, which is agreeable, which the soul rejoices in, or, at least, reposes in; or which it relishes, pleases itself with, and desires the continuance and repetition of. Let a man's faculties be in their due frame and temper, not vitiated, corrupted, or depraved, and there is that in the exercise of religion which highly suits them, and satisfies them. And this pleasure is such as is not allayed with any thing to cast a damp upon it.

1. The ways of religion are *right* and *pleasant;* they are pleasant without the allay of injury and iniquity. Sin pretends to have its pleasures, but they are the *perverting of that which is right*, (Job xxxiii. 27.) they are *stolen waters*, (Prov. ix. 17.) unjust, though pleasant; but the pleasures of godliness are as agreeable to the rectitude of our nature as they are gratifying to the pure and undebauched desires of it. It is the way in which we *should go;* and the way in which, if we were not wretchedly degenerated, we *would go* of choice.

They are *right*, for they are marked out to us by our *rightful* Lord, who, having given us the being of rational creatures, has authority to give us a law suited to our being; and he has done it, both by natural conscience, and by the written word: he has said, *This is the way, walk in it*, Isa. xxx. 21. It is not only permitted and allowed us, but charged and commanded us, to walk in it. He has sent us, as messengers from him, to travel this road upon his errand.

They are *right*, for they lead directly to our *great end*, have a tendency to our welfare here and for ever. They are the only right way to that which is the felicity of our being, which we shall certainly miss and come short of, if we do not walk in this way.

But that is not all, they are also *pleasant; Behold how good and how pleasant!* Ps. cxxxiii. 1. It is the happiness of those that fear God, that he not only *teaches them in the way that he shall choose*, (and we may be sure that is the right way,) but also that *their souls shall dwell at ease*, Ps. xxv. 12, 13. Justly may they dwell at ease, who have Infinite Wisdom itself to choose their way, and guide them in it. That may be *right, which is* not *pleasant*, and that *pleasant* which is not *right;* but religion is both: therefore,

in the next verse it is compared to the *tree of life*. The tree of knowledge was indeed *pleasant to the eyes*, and a *tree to be desired*, but it was *forbidden*, (Gen. iii. 6.) and therefore religion is called a *tree of life*, which was not only pleasant, but was allowed, till sin entered.

2. They are *easy* and *pleasant*; pleasant without the allay of toil and difficulty, any more than what arises from the corruption of our own nature; that indeed makes such opposition, that we have need of arguments, (and, blessed be God, we have good arguments,) to prove the practice of religion *easy*: but it is more than this, it is *pleasant*.

Much less is said than is intended, when we are told that *his commandments are not grievous*, 1 John v. 3. They are not only not grievous and galling, but they are gracious and pleasing. His yoke is *easy*, Matt. xi. 30. The word there used, χρηστὸς, signifies more than so, it is *sweet* and *gentle*; not only easy as a yoke is to the neck, when it is so well fitted as not to hurt it, but easy as a pillow is to the head, when the head is weary and sleepy. It is not only tolerable, but very comfortable. There is not only no matter of complaint in the ways of God, nothing to hurt us, but there is abundant matter of joy and rejoicing. It is not only work which is not weariness, but work which is its own wages; such a *tree of life*, as will not only screen us from the storm and tempest, and feed us with necessary food, but we may sit down under the shadow of it with great delight, and the fruit of it will be *sweet unto our taste*, Cant. ii. 3.

3. They are *gainful* and *pleasant*, and have not the allay of expense and loss. That may be profitable, which yet may be unpleasant, and that pleasant, which afterward may prove very unprofitable and prejudicial. What *fruit* have sinners from those things in which yet they said they had pleasure? Rom. vi. 21. But religion brings both pleasure with it, and profit after it. The pleasures of religion do not cost us dear; there is no loss by them when the account comes to be balanced.

The gain of this world is usually fetched in by toil and uneasy labour, which are grievous to flesh and blood. The servants of this world are drudges to it; they *rise up early, sit up late*, and *eat the bread of sorrows*, (Ps. cxxvii. 2.) in pursuit of its wealth. They *labour, and bereave their souls of good*; (Eccl. iv. 8.) but the servants of God have a pleasure even in the work they are to get *by*, and which they shall be recompensed *for*.

Beside the tendency that there is in the practice of serious godliness to our happiness in the other life, there is much in it that conduces to our comfort in this life. David observes it to the honour of religion, (Ps. xix. 11.) that not only *after* keeping, but *in* keeping, God's commandments, *there is a great reward*; a present great reward of obedience in obedience. *A good man is satisfied from himself*, (Prov. xiv. 14.) that is, from that which Divine Grace has wrought in him; and the saints are said to *sing in the ways of the Lord*, (Ps. cxxxviii. 5.) as those that find them pleasant ways.

The more closely we adhere to the rules of religion, the more intimate our converse is with divine things; and the more we live with an eye to Christ and another world, the more comfort we are likely to have in our own bosoms. *Great peace* have they that *love God's law*, (Ps. cxix. 165.) and the more they love it, the greater their peace is; nay, it is promised to the church, that *all her children shall be taught of the Lord*, (and those whom he teaches, are well taught, and taught to do well,) and then *great shall be the peace of her children*, (Isa. liv. 13.) it shall be entailed upon them; *Peace like a river, in omne volubilis ævum—rolling on from age to age.*

III. I call it a *true* pleasure. As there is *science, falsely so called*, (1 Tim. vi. 20.) so there is *pleasure*, falsely so called. One of the ancients distinguishes between Ἡδονὰς ἀληθεῖς, and Ἡδονὰς Ψευδεῖς, (*Damascen. Orthod. Fid. l.* 2.) *pleasures that have some* truth *in them, and pleasures that deceive us with a* lie *in their right hand.* Some have said that the School of Epicurus, which is commonly branded and condemned for making pleasure man's *chief good*, did not mean sensual pleasure, but the pleasure of the mind. And we should be willing enough to admit it, were not the other principles of his philosophy so atheistical and irreligious. But this we are sure of, that it is a *true* pleasure which religion secures to us; a pleasure that deserves the name, and answers it to the full.

It is a *true* pleasure, for,

1. It is *real*, and *not counterfeit*. Carnal worldlings pretend a great satisfaction in the enjoyments of the world, and the gratifications of sense. *Soul, take thine ease*, says one, Luke xii. 19. *I have found me out substance*, says another, (Hos. xii. 8.) even *the life of my hand. I have seen*, says a third, *the fire*, Isa. xliv. 16. *The wicked boasts of his heart's desire*; but Solomon assures us, not only that the *end of that mirth is heaviness*, but that even in *laughter the heart is sorrowful*, Prov. xiv. 13. But those that make a god of their belly, and those that make a god of their money, find such a constant pain and uneasiness attending their spiritual idolatries, that their pleasure is but from the teeth outward. Discontent at present disappointments, and fear of worse ungoverned passions, (which seldom are made less turbulent by the gratifications of the appetite,) and above all, conscience of guilt, and dread of divine wrath, these give them the lie, when they boast of their pleasures, which, with such allays, are not to be boasted of; they would not be thought to be disappointed in that which they have chosen for their happiness, and therefore they seem to be pleased,

they seem to be pleasant, when really their heart, if it knows its own wickedness, cannot but *know its own bitterness*, Prov. xiv. 10.

And many of the good things of this world, of which we said, *These same shall comfort us*, prove vexations to us; and we are disappointed in that, wherein we most promised ourselves satisfaction. *If we say our bed shall comfort us*, perhaps it is not a bed to rest on, but a bed to toss on, as it was to poor Job, when *wearisome nights were appointed to him*. Nay, such strangers are we to real pleasure in the things of this life, and so often do we deceive ourselves with that which is counterfeit, that we wish to live to those days of life which we are told will be *evil days*, and those years of which we are assured that we shall say, *We have no pleasure in them*, Eccl. xii. 1.

But the pleasures of religion are solid, substantial pleasures, and not painted; gold, and not gilded over: these sons of pleasure *inherit substance*, (Prov. viii. 21.) it is that *which is* the firm foundation, the strong superstructure, the *consolations of God*, which are not *few*, nor *small*, (Job xv. 14.) while a vain and foolish world, *cause their eyes to fly upon that which is not*, Prov. xxiii. 5. Worldly people pretend to the joy they have not; but godly people conceal the joy they have; as he did, that had found the treasure hid in the field. They have, like their Master, *meat to eat, which the world knows not of*, John iv. 32.

2. It is *rational*, and not *brutish*. It is the pleasure of the soul, not of sense; it is the peculiar pleasure of a man, not that which we have in common with the inferior creatures. The pleasures of religion are not those of the mere animal life, which arise from the gratifications of the senses of the body, and its appetites; no, they affect the soul, that part of us by which we are allied to the world of spirits, that noble part of us, and therefore are to be called the true pleasures of a man.

The brute creatures have the same pleasures of sense that we have, and perhaps, in some of them, the senses are more exquisite, and consequently they have them in a much higher degree; nor are their pleasures liable to the correctives of reason and conscience as ours are. Who live such merry lives as the leviathan, who *plays in the deep*, or the birds that *sing among the branches?* Ps. civ. 12, 26.

But what are these to a man, who being *taught more than the beasts of the earth, and made wiser than the fowls of heaven*, (Job xxxv. 11.) and being dignified above the beasts, not so much by the powers of reason, as by a capacity for religion, is certainly designed for enjoyments of a more excellent nature, for spiritual and heavenly delights. When God made man, he left him not to the enjoyments of the wide world, with the other creatures, but enclosed him a paradise,—a garden of pleasure, (so Eden signifies,) where he should have delights proper for him; signified indeed by the pleasures of a garden, pleasant trees, and their fruits, but really the delights of a soul, that was a ray of divine light, and a spark of divine fire, newly breathed into him from above, and on which God's image and likeness were imprinted. And we never recover our felicity, which we lost by our first parents' indulging the appetite of the body, till we come to the *due relish* of those pleasures which man has in common with angels, and a *due contempt* of those which he has in common with the brutes.

The pleasures of wisdom's ways may at second-hand affect the body, and be an advantage to that; hence it is said (Prov. iii. 8.) to be *health to the navel*, and *marrow to the bones;* but its residence is in the *hidden man of the heart*, (1 Pet. iii. 4.) and its comforts *delight the soul in the multitude of its thoughts*, Ps. xciv. 19. It is pleasant to the soul, and makes it like a watered garden. These are pleasures which a man, by the assistance of divine grace, may reason himself *into*, and not, (as it is with sensual pleasures,) reason himself *out of*.

There is no pleasure separate from that of religion, which pretends to be an intellectual pleasure, but that of *learning*, and that of *honour;* but as to the pleasure of a proud man in his dignities, and the respects paid him, as Herod, in the acclamations of the crowd, it does but affect the fancy; it is *vain-glory*, it is not glory, it is but the folly of him that receives the honour, fed by the folly of them that give it; so that it does not deserve to be called a rational pleasure; it is a lust of the mind that is gratified by it, and that is as much an instance of our degeneracy, as any of the *lusts of the flesh* are.

And as to the pleasure of a scholar, abstracted from religion, it is indeed rational and intellectual; but it is only the pleasure of the mind in knowing truth, and not its enjoying good. Solomon, who had as much of this pleasure as ever any man had, and as nice a taste of it, yet has assured us from his own experience, that in *much wisdom* of this kind is *much grief*, and *he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow*, Eccl. i. 18.

But the pleasures which a holy soul has in knowing God, and in communion with him, are not only of a spiritual nature, but they are satisfying, they are filling to the soul, and make a happiness adequate to its best affections.

3. It is durable, and not flashy and transitory: that is true pleasure, and deserves the name, which will continue with us as a *tree of life*, and not wither as the *green herb;* which will be not as the light of a *candle*, which is soon burnt out, but as that of the *sun*, which is a faithful witness in heaven. We reckon that most *valuable*, which is most *durable*.

The pleasures of sense are fading and perishing; as *the world passeth away*, (1 John ii. 17.) so do *the*

lusts of it: that which at first pleases and satisfies, after a while palls and surfeits. *As the crackling of thorns under a pot,* (Eccl. vii. 6.) which make a great blaze, and a great noise for a little while, but soon end in soot and ashes; such is the *laughter of the fool;* the *end of his mirth is heaviness.* Belshazzar's jollity is soon turned into the utmost consternation; *The night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear to me,* (Isa. xxi. 4.) The pleasures of sin are said to be but for a *season,* (Heb. xi. 25.) for the *end of that mirth is heaviness.* As they have no *consistence,* so they have no *continuance.*

But the pleasures of religion will abide, they wither not in winter, nor tarnish with time, nor does age wrinkle their beauty; frost nips them not, nor do storms blast them; they continue through the greatest opposition of events, and despise that time and *chance,* which *happens to all things under the sun,* Eccl. ix. 11. Believers, when they are sorrowful, they are but *as* sorrowful, for they are *always rejoicing,* (2 Cor. vi. 10. and ii. 14.) *thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph.* If an immortal soul make an eternal God its chief joy, what should hinder but that it should *rejoice evermore,* (1 Thess. v. 16.) for as the treasure, so the pleasure, is laid up there, where *neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.* The joy which Christ gives to those that are his, is joy which *no man taketh from them,* (John xvi. 22.) for it is their heart that rejoices. They are the beginning of everlasting pleasures, the earnest and foretaste of them; so that they are, in effect, pleasures for evermore.

So then the great truth which I desire my heart and yours may be fully convinced of, is this; That a holy, heavenly life, spent in the service of God, and in communion with him, is, without doubt, the most pleasant and comfortable life any man can live in this world.

CHAPTER II.

THE PLEASURE OF BEING RELIGIOUS, PROVED FROM THE NATURE OF TRUE RELIGION, AND MANY PARTICULAR INSTANCES OF IT.

THE doctrine needs no further explication, nor can have any better, than our own experience of it; but the chief part of this undertaking is to prove the truth of it. And O that God, by me, would set it before you in a true light, so that you may be all convinced of it, and embrace it as a faithful saying, and well worthy of all acceptation, that a godly life is a pleasant life: and that we may be wrought upon to live such a life.

Pleasure is a tempting thing; what yields delight cannot but attract desire; it is next to necessity, so strongly does it urge. Surely, if we were but fully persuaded of this, that religion has pleasure on its side, we should be wrought upon by the allurement of it to be religious. It is certainly so, let us not be in doubt of it. Here is a bait that has no hook under it, a pleasure courting you which has no pain attending it, no bitterness at the latter end of it; a pleasure which God himself invites you to, and which will make you happy, truly and eternally happy: and shall not this work upon you?

But we may entertain ourselves, and our hearers, long enough with discourses of the pleasantness of Wisdom's ways; but they will not profit unless they be *mixed with faith.* O! that we would all mix faith with this truth! that we would yield to the evidence of it.

To make way for the proof of it, I would only desire two things:

1. That you would *lay aside prejudice,* and give a fair and impartial hearing to this cause, and do not prejudge it. He that *answers* any *matter* before he *hears* it, hears it out, it is *folly* and *shame* to him; (Prov. viii. 13, 14.) especially if it be a matter of great importance and concern to himself; a matter of life and death. Be willing, therefore, to believe, that it is possible there *may,* and then I doubt not but to make out, that it is certain there *is* true pleasure in true religion.

You have got a notion, it may be, and are confirmed in it by the common cry of the multitude, that religion is a sour melancholy thing, that it is to bid farewell to all pleasure and delight, and to spend your days in grief, and your years in sighing: and if we offer any thing to the contrary, that it is a pleasant thing, and the best entertainment that can be to the mind, you are ready to say, as Ezekiel's hearers did of him, *Doth he not speak parables?* (Ezek. xx. 49.) does he not speak paradoxes? You startle at it, and start from it as a hard saying, like Nathaniel, when he said, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* (John i. 46.) So you are ready to say, Can there be any pleasure in religion? Believe it, Sirs, there can be, there cannot but be, pleasure in it.

Do not measure religion by the follies of some that profess it, but do not live up to their profession, nor adorn it; let them bear their own burthen, or clear themselves as they can; but you are to judge of things, not persons, and therefore ought not to be prejudiced against religion for their sakes. Nor should you measure by the ill opinions which its adversaries have of it, or the ill name which they endeavour to put it into, who neither know it, nor love it, and therefore care not what unjust things they say to justify themselves in the contempt of it, and to hinder others from embracing it; but think freely of this matter.

2. That you would admit this as a principle, and

abide by it,—that, *The soul is the man:* this is the *Postulatum* that I lay down, in order to the proof of the doctrine, and I hope it will be readily granted me, that man is principally to be considered as an intellectual, immortal being, endued with spiritual powers and capacities, allied to the world of spirits, and accountable to the Father of spirits; that there is a spirit in man, that has sensations and dispositions of its own, active and receptive faculties distinct from those of the body; and that this is the part of us, which we are, and ought to be, most concerned about, because it is really well or ill with us, according as it is well or ill with our souls.

Believe, that in man's present state, the soul and the body have separate and contesting interests; the body thinks it is its interest to have its appetites gratified, and to be indulged in its pleasures; while the soul knows it is its interest to have the appetites of the body subdued and mortified, that spiritual pleasures may be the better relished; and we are here upon our trial, which of these two we will side with.

Be wise, therefore, be resolute, and show yourselves men that are actuated and governed by reason, and are affected with things as reason represents them to you: not reason, as it is in the mere natural man, clouded, and plunged, and lost in sense; but reason elevated and guided by divine revelation to us, and divine grace in us. Walk by faith, and not by sense; let the God that made you, and knows you, and wishes you well, and from whom your judgment must proceed, determine your sentiments in this matter, and the work is done.

Now I shall, in the first place, endeavour to prove this doctrine, by showing you *what religion is*, wherein it *consists*, and what those things are which constitute serious godliness; and then you shall yourselves judge, whether it be not in its own nature pleasant. If you understand religion aright, you will find, that it has an innate sweetness in it, inseparable from it. Let it but speak for itself, and it will recommend itself. The very exhibition of this beauty in its own features and proportions, is enough to bring us all in love with it.

You shall see the pleasures of religion in twelve instances of it.

I. To be religious, is *to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent*, (John xvii. 3.) And is not that pleasant? This is the first thing we have to do, to get our understandings rightly informed, concerning both the *object* and the medium of our religious regards, to seek and receive this light from heaven, to have it diffused through our souls as the morning light in the air, and to be *turned* to the impressions of it, *as the clay to the seal*, (Job xxxviii. 14.) and this is a pleasure to the soul that understands itself, and its own true interest. *Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun*, (Eccl. xi. 7.) it *rejoiceth the heart*, Prov. xv. 30. Hence, light is often put for joy and comfort; but no light is comparable to that of *the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. iv. 6.

This is finding the knowledge we had lost, and must for ever have despaired of finding, if God had not made it known to us by his Spirit. It is finding the knowledge that we are undone *without*, and happy for ever in; for what is heaven but this knowledge in perfection? It is finding the knowledge which the soul would covet and rest in, if it had but recovered itself from the delirium, which by the fall it is thrown into. They that *sat in darkness*, when they begin to be religious, begin to *see a great light*, Matt. iv. 16. And it is a pleasing surprise to them; it is coming into a new world; such a pleasure as none could know so well, as he that had his sight given him, though he was *born blind*, John ix. 25. *Blessed are your eyes*, (says Christ to those whom he had brought into an acquaintance with himself,) *for they see. Apply thy heart to my knowledge*, saith Solomon, Prov. xxii. 17, 18. *for it is a pleasant thing if thou keep it within thee.* Thou wilt *eat honey, because it is good*, Prov. xxiv. 13, 14. *and the honey-comb, which is sweet to the taste; so shall the knowledge of wisdom be to thy soul.* Could a learned man, that had hit upon a demonstration in *mathematics*, cry out in a transport of joy, ἵυρηκα, ἵυρηκα,—*I have found, I have found;* and may not they much more boast of the discovery, that have found the knowledge of the Most High?

There is no pleasure in any learning like that of learning Christ, and the things that *belong to our everlasting peace;* for that which is known is not small and trivial, is not doubtful and uncertain, is not foreign to us, and which we are not concerned in; which are things that may much diminish the pleasure of any knowledge; but it is great and sure, and of the last importance to us, and the knowledge of it gives us satisfaction. Here we may rest our souls. To know the perfections of the divine nature, the unsearchable riches of divine grace to be led into the mystery of our redemption and reconciliation by Christ; this is food, such knowledge as this is a feast to the soul: it is *meat indeed*, and *drink indeed:* it is the knowledge of that *which the angels desire to look into*, 1 Peter i. 12. If the knowledge of the law of God was so sweet to David, *sweeter than honey to his taste*, Ps. xix. 10; cxix. 103. how much more should the knowledge of the gospel of Christ be so to us? When God gives this *wisdom* and *knowledge*, with it he *gives joy* to him that is *good in his sight*, Eccl. ii. 26.

I wonder what pleasure or satisfaction those can have in themselves, that are ignorant of God, and Christ, and another world, though they are told there is such a knowledge to be had, and there are

those that have it, and it is their continual entertainment. But thus do men stand in their own light, when they *love darkness rather than light.*

II. To be religious, is to *return to God, and repose in him as the rest of our souls.* And is not that pleasant? It is not only for our understandings to embrace the knowledge of him, but our affections to fasten upon the enjoyment of him: it is to love God as our *chief good*, and to rest in that love; *to love him with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and might*, who is well worthy of all that love, and infinitely more; amiable in himself, gracious to us; who will accept our love, and return it; who has promised to *love those that love him*, Prov. viii. 17. The love of God reigning in the soul (and that is true religion) is as much a satisfaction to the soul, as the love of the world is a vexation to it, when it comes to be reflected upon, and is found to be so ill bestowed.

How pleasant must it needs be, so far to recover ourselves, as to quit the world for a portion and happiness as utterly insufficient to be so, and to depend upon him to be so, who has enough in him to answer our utmost expectations! When we have in vain sought for satisfaction where it is not to be had, to seek it and find it where it is! To come from doating upon *lying vanities*, and *spending our money for that which is not bread*, (Isa. lv. 2.) to live, and live plentifully, upon a God that is enough, a God all-sufficient, and in him to enjoy *our own mercies!* Did ever any thing speak a mind more easy and better pleased than that of David, *Return unto thy rest, O my soul?* (Psalm cxvi. 7.) to God as thy rest, for in him, I am where I would be, I have what I would have: or that, (Ps. xvi. 2, 5, 6.) *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord, the portion of my inheritance, and of my cup?* And then, *The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, and I have a goodly heritage?* Or that, (Ps. lxxiii. 25.) *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee; for when flesh and heart fail, thou art the strength* and joy *of my heart, and my portion for ever?*

Religion consists not in raptures and transports; yet, without doubt, holy souls that are at home in God, that have *made the Most High their habitation*, (Ps. xci. 9.) whose desires are toward him, whose delights are in him, who are in him as their centre and element, *dwell at ease.* None can imagine the pleasure that a believer has in his covenant relation to God, and interest in him, and the assurance of his love. Have I taken *thy testimonies* to be *my heritage for ever?* (Ps. cxix.111.) surely they are the *rejoicing of my heart;* I cannot be better provided for. When King Asa brought his people to renew their covenant with God, it is said *they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice and with shoutings, and with trumpets*, (2 Chron. xv. 14, 15.) *And all* Judah *rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart.* When we come to make it our own act and deed, to *join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant*, and are upright with him in it, we cannot but be pleased with what we have done; it is a marriage covenant, it is made with joy: (Cant. ii. 16.) *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.*

III. To be religious, is to *come to God as a father, in and by Jesus Christ as a mediator.* And is not this pleasant? We have not only the pleasure of knowing and loving God, but the pleasure of drawing nigh to him, and having by faith a humble freedom and intimacy with him; (Ps. lxv. 4.) *blessed are they that dwell in his courts*, they shall be *satisfied with the goodness of his house, even of his holy temple.* Religion is described by coming *to* God; and what can be more agreeable to a soul that comes *from* him?

It is to come to God as a child to his father, to his father's house, to his father's arms, and to cry, *Abba, Father.* To come as a petitioner to his prince, is a *privilege;* but to come as a child to his father, is a *pleasure;* and this pleasure have all the saints, that have received the *Spirit of adoption.* They can look up to the God that made them, as one that loves them, and has a tender compassion for them, *as a father has for his children*, (Ps. ciii. 13.) and delights to do them good, *taking pleasure in their prosperity;* as one whom though they have offended, yet is reconciled to them, owns them as his children, and encourages them to call him father. When he afflicts them, they know it is in love, and for their benefit, and that still it is *their Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom*, Luke xii. 32. When Ephraim bemoaned himself *as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*, God bemoaned him *as a dear son, as a pleasant child*, Jer. xxxi. 18, 20. And if even prodigals, when penitents, become pleasant children to God, surely they have no reason to be unpleasant to themselves.

But this is not all, it is not only to come to God as a *father*, who *himself loves us*, (John xvi. 27.) but it is to come to him *in the name of Jesus Christ*, who is our *Advocate with the Father;* that by these *two immutable things* we might have *strong consolation*, that we have not only a God to go to, but an Advocate to introduce us to him, and to speak for us. Believing in Christ is sometimes expressed by rejoicing in him; for it is a complacency of soul in the methods which infinite wisdom has taken, of bringing God and man together by a Mediator. *We are the circumcision that rejoice in Christ Jesus*, (Phil. iii. 3.) not only rely upon him, but triumph in him. Paul is not only not ashamed of the cross of Christ, but he *glories in it*, Gal. vi. 14. And when the eunuch is brought to *believe in Christ with all his heart*, he *goes on his way rejoicing*, highly pleased with what he has done.

What a pleasure, what a satisfaction, is it, to lodge the great concerns of our souls and eternity (which,

surely, we cannot but have some careful thoughts about) in such a skilful, faithful hand as that of our Lord Jesus? And this we do by faith. To *cast the burthen* upon him who is *able to save to the uttermost*, and as willing as he is able, and thus to make ourselves easy. How is blessed Paul elevated at the thought of this! *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again*, Rom. viii. 34. And with what pleasure does he reflect upon the confidence he had put in Jesus Christ! (2 Tim. i. 12.) *I know whom I have believed, and he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* They that know what it is to be in pain for sin, and in care to obtain the favour of God, cannot but know what a pleasure it is to believe in Christ as the propitiation for our sins, and our intercessor with God.

How can we live a more pleasant life, than to *live by the faith of the Son of God?* (Gal. ii. 20.) to be continually depending on him, and deriving from him, and referring all to him; and as we have received him, so to *walk in him?* It is in *believing*, that we are *filled with joy and peace*, Rom. xv. 13.

IV. To be religious, is to *enjoy God in all our creature-comforts.* And is not that pleasant? It is to take the common supports and conveniences of life, (be they of the richest, or be they of the meanest,) as the products of his providential care concerning us, and the gifts of his bounty to us, and in them to *taste and see that the Lord is good*, (Ps. xxxiv. 8.) good to all, good to us. It is to look above second causes to the first, through the creature to the Creator, and to say concerning every thing, that is agreeable and serviceable to us, "This I asked, and this I have from the hand of my heavenly Father." What a noble taste and relish does this put into all the blessings with which we are daily loaded; our health and ease, our rest and sleep, our food and raiment, all the satisfaction we have in our relations, peace in our dwellings, success in our callings! The sweetness of these is more than doubled, it is highly raised, when by our religion we are taught and enabled to see them all coming to us from the goodness of God, as our great Benefactor, and thus to enjoy them *richly*, (1 Tim. vi. 17.) while those who look no further than the creature, enjoy them very *poorly*, and only as the inferior creatures do.

Carnal, irreligious people, though they take a greater liberty in the use of the delights of sense than good people dare take, and therein think they have the advantage of them, yet, I am confident, they have not half the true delight in them that good people have; not only because all excesses are a force upon nature, and surfeits are as painful as hunger and thirst, but because, (though they do not thus abuse God's good creatures,) they deprive themselves of the comfort of receiving them from their Father's hand, and are not affected to him as obedient children. *They knew not that I gave them corn, and wine, and oil*, Hos. ii. 8. They make use of the creature, but (Isa. xxii. 11.) *they have not looked unto the Maker thereof, nor had respect to him that fashioned it long ago*, as good people do; and so they come short of the pleasure which good people have.

Is it not pleasant to taste covenant-love in common mercies? very pleasant to see the hand of our heavenly Father spreading our table, filling our cup, making our houses safe, and our beds easy? This they do, that by faith have their eyes ever towards the Lord, that by prayer fetch in his blessing upon all their enjoyments, and by praise give the glory of them to that *mercy* of his which *endureth for ever.* And when thus a continual regard is had to that mercy, an abundant sweetness is thereby infused into all the comforts of this life; for as the wrath and curse of God is the wormwood and the gall, (Lam. iii. 19.) in all the *afflictions* and *miseries* of this life; so his loving kindness is the honey and oil in all the comforts and enjoyments of this life: that is it which is *better than life*, (Ps. lxiii. 3.) and which is abundantly satisfying; which *puts gladness into the heart beyond the joy of harvest*, Ps. iv. 7. Then the *nations* are *glad, and sing for joy*, when not only *the earth yields her increase*, but with it God, even *their own God, gives them his blessing*, Ps. lxvii. 4, 6. And when the church is brought to such a sense of God's grace, as to cry out, *How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!* (Zech. ix. 17.) it follows, that then *corn shall make the young men cheerful;* intimating that we have no joy of our enjoyments, no true joy of them, till we are led by these streams to the fountain. *To the pure, all things are pure*, (Tit. i. 15.) and the more pure they are, the more pleasant they are.

V. To be religious, is to *cast all our cares upon God, and to commit all our ways and works to him, with an assurance that he will care for us.* And is not this pleasant? It is a very sensible pleasure to be eased of some pressing burthen which we are ready to sink under; and care is such a burthen: it is a heaviness in the heart of man, which makes it to stoop. Now true religion enables us to *acknowledge God in all our ways*, (Prov. iii. 6.) and then depend upon him to *direct our steps*, and follow his directions, not leaning to our own understanding. It is to refer ourselves, and the disposal of every thing that concerns us in this world, to God, and to his will and wisdom, with an entire acquiescence in his award and arbitration; *Here I am, let the Lord do with me as seemeth good in his eyes*, 2 Sam. xv. 26.

To be truly godly, is to have our wills melted into the will of God in every thing, and to say *Amen* to it, not only as a prayer, but as a covenant; *Father in heaven, thy will be done; not as I will, but as thou wilt.* It is to be fully reconciled to all the disposals of the divine providence, and methods of divine

grace, both concerning others and ourselves: to be satisfied that all is well that God does, and will appear so at last, when the mystery of God shall be finished. And how does the mind enjoy itself that is come to this! How easy is it! It is not only freed from racking anxieties, but filled with pleasing prospects: fears are hereby silenced, and hopes kept up and elevated. Nothing can come amiss to those who have thus been taught by the principles of their religion to make the best of that which is, because it is the will of God; which is making a virtue of necessity.

What uncomfortable lives do they live, that are continually fretting at that which cannot be helped, quarrelling with the disposals of Providence, when they cannot alter them; and thus by contracting guilt as well as by indulging grief, doubling every burthen? But how pleasantly do they travel through the wilderness of this world, who constantly *follow the pillar of cloud and fire*, and accommodate themselves to their lot, whatever it is? That, like Paul, through Christ strengthening them, have learned *in every estate to be content, know how to want, and how to abound?* Phil. iv. 11, 12, 13.

Religion brings the mind to the condition, whatever it is, and so makes it easy, because the condition, though it be not in every thing to our mind, it is according to God's mind, who in all occurrences *performeth the thing that is appointed for us*, (Job xxiii. 14.) and will make all *work for good to them that love him*. When the psalmist had directed us to *delight ourselves always in the Lord*, (Ps. xxxvii, 4, 5.) that is, to make our religion a constant pleasure to ourselves, he directs us, in order thereunto, to *commit our way unto the Lord*, to *trust also in him* that he will *bring it to pass*, so that we shall have *the desire of our hearts*. And when St. Paul had encouraged us to be *careful for nothing*, but *in every thing* to *make our requests known to God*, he assures us that if we do so, *the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep our hearts and minds*, Phil. iv. 6, 7.

VI. To be religious, is to *rejoice in the Lord alway*, Phil. iii. 1. and iv. 4. And is not that pleasant? It is not only one of the privileges of our religion, that we may rejoice, but it is made one of the duties of it. We are defective in our religion, if we do not live a life of complacency in God, in his being, his attributes, and relations to us. It should be a constant pleasure to us, to think that there is a God; that he is such a one as the Scripture has revealed him to be, a Being infinitely wise and powerful, holy, just, and good; that this God governs the world, and gives law to all the creatures; that he is our owner and ruler; that in his hand our breath is, in his hand our times, our hearts, and all our ways are. Thus certainly it is, and thus it must be, and happy they that can please themselves with these thoughts; as those must needs be a constant terror to themselves, who could wish it were otherwise.

They who thus delight in God have always something, and something very commanding too, to delight in; a fountain of joy that can never be either exhausted or stopped up, and to which they may always have access. How few are there that *live many days*, and *rejoice in them all!* Eccl. xi. 8. Such a thing is supposed indeed, but it is never found true in any, but those that make God their joy, the gladness of their joy, as the psalmist expresses it, (Ps. xliii. 4.) their *exceeding* joy: and in him it is intended the joy should terminate, when we are bid to *rejoice evermore*, 1 Thess. v. 16.

The conversion of the nations to Christ, and his holy religion, is often prophesied of in the Old Testament, under the notion of their being brought into a state of *holy joy*; (Ps. xcvi. 11. and xcvii. 1. and c. 1.) *Let the earth rejoice that the Lord reigns*, and *let the multitude of isles be glad thereof; make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands*. The gospel is *glad tidings of great joy to all people*, Rom. xv. 10. When Samaria received the gospel, *there was great joy in that city*, Acts viii. 8. so essential is joy to religion.

And the conversation of those that are joined to the Lord, when it is as it should be, is cheerful and joyful. They are called upon to *walk in the light of the Lord*, (Isa. ii. 5.) and to *sing in the ways of the Lord*, (Ps. cxxxviii. 5.) and to *serve the Lord their God with joyfulness and gladness of heart in the abundance of all things*, (Deut. xxviii. 47.) yea, and in the want of all things too, (Hab. iii. 17.) *Though the fig-tree do not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vine*. Has God now accepted *thee*, and thy works in Jesus Christ, *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart*; Eccl. ix. 7. It is the will of God that his people should be a cheerful people, that his Israel should *rejoice in every good thing which the Lord their God giveth them*, (Deut. xxvi. 11.) so that it is their own fault if they have not a continual feast, and be not made to rejoice with the outgoings of every morning, and every evening; for the compassions of that God, in whom they rejoice, are not only constant, but new and fresh daily.

VII. To be religious, is to *make a business of praising God:* And is not that pleasant? It is indeed very unpleasant, and contrary to our inclination, to be obliged continually to praise one that is not worthy of praise; but what can be more pleasant, than to praise him to whom *all* praise is due, and *ours* particularly; to whom we and all the creatures lie under all possible obligations; who is worthy of, and yet exalted far above, all blessing and praise; from whom all things are, and therefore to whom all things ought to be?

There is little pleasure in praising one, whom none praise that are wise and good, but only the *fools in* Israel; but in praising God we concur with the blessed angels in heaven, and all the saints, and do

it in concert with them, who the more they know him, the more they praise him, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels, and all his hosts;* and therefore with what pleasure can I cast in my mite into such a treasury, *Bless the Lord, O my soul!*

There is little pleasure in praising one, who will not regard our praises, nor take notice of our expressions of esteem and affection: but when we *offer to God the sacrifice of praise continually,* (according to the obligation which our religion lays upon us,) that is, *the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name,* (Heb. xiii. 15.) we offer it to one that takes notice of it, accepts it, is well pleased with it, smells *a savour of rest* from it, (Gen. viii. 21.) and will not fail to meet those with his mercies, who follow him with their praises: for he has said, that they who *offer praise, glorify him;* such a favourable construction does he put upon it, and such a high stamp upon coarse metal.

Now what is it that we have to do in religion but to *praise God?* We are taken into covenant with God, that we should be to him *for a name, and for a praise,* (Jer. xiii. 11.) are called into his *marvellous light,* that we should *show forth the praises of him that called us,* (1 Pet. ii. 9.) and how can we be more comfortably employed? They are, therefore, *blessed that dwell in God's house,* for *they will be still praising him,* Ps. lxxxiv. 4. And *it is a good thing,* good in itelf, and good for us; and it is very pleasant *to give thanks unto the Lord,* and to *show forth his praises,* (Ps. cxxxv. 3. and xcii. 1.) for we cannot do ourselves a greater honour, or fetch in a greater satisfaction, than by *giving unto the Lord the glory due unto his name:* it is not only a heaven upon earth, but it is a pledge and earnest of a heaven in heaven too; for if we be here *every day blessing God,* (Ps. cxlv. 2.) we shall be *praising him for ever and ever;* for thus all that shall go to heaven hereafter begin their heaven now. Compare the hellish pleasure which some take in profaning the name of God, and the heavenly pleasure which others take in glorifying it, and tell me which is preferable.

VIII. To be religious, is *to have all our inordinate appetites corrected and regulated.* And is not that pleasant? To be eased from pain is a sensible pleasure, and to be eased from that which is the disease and disorder of the mind, is a mental pleasure. Those certainly live a most unpleasant, uncomfortable life, that are slaves to their appetites, and indulge themselves in the gratifications of sense, though ever so criminal; that lay the reins on the neck of their lusts, and withhold not their hearts from any joy. The drunkards and unclean persons, though they are said to give themselves up to their pleasures, yet, really, they estrange themselves from that which is true pleasure, and subject themselves to a continual pain and uneasiness.

The carnal appetite is often overcharged, and that is a burthen to the body, and its distemper. When enough is as good as a feast, I wonder what pleasure it can be to take more than enough; and the appetite, the more it is indulged, the more humorsome and troublesome it grows; it is *surfeited,* but not *satisfied;* it does but grow more impetuous, and more imperious. It is true of the body, what Solomon says of a servant, (Prov. xxix. 21.) *He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son,* nay his master, *at the length.* If we suffer the body to get dominion over the soul, so that the interests of the soul must be damaged to gratify the inclinations of the body, it will be a tyrant, (as a usurper generally is,) and will rule with rigour. And as God said to the people, (1 Sam. viii. 18. when by Samuel he had showed them *the manner of the king* that they chose, when they rejected his government,) *you will cry out in that day because of your king which ye have chosen you, and the Lord will not hear;* so it is with those that bring themselves into disorders, diseases, and terrors by the indulgence of their lusts. Who can pity them? They are well enough served for *setting such a king over them. Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow?* (Prov. xxiii. 29, 30.) None so much as they that *tarry long at the wine,* though they think themselves to have the monopoly of pleasure. The truth is, they that live in these pleasures are *dead while they live,* (1 Tim. v. 6.) and while they fancy themselves to take the greatest liberty, really find themselves in the greatest slavery; for they are *led captive by Satan at his will,* and of *whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage,* 2 Pet. ii. 19.

And if the carnal appetite has not gained such a complete possession, as quite to extinguish all the remains of reason and conscience; those noble powers, since they are not permitted to give *law,* will give *disturbance;* and there are few that have so full an enjoyment of the forbidden pleasures of sense, but that they sometimes feel the checks of reason, and the terrors of conscience, which mar their mirth, as the hand-writing on the wall did Belshazzar's, and make their lives uncomfortable to them, and justly so, which makes them the more so.

Now to be religious, is to have the exorbitant power of those lusts and appetites broken, and since they will not be satisfied, to have them mortified, and brought into a quiet submission to the commanding faculties of the soul, according to the direction of the divine law; and thus the peace is preserved, by supporting good order and government in the soul.

Those certainly live the most easy, healthful, pleasant lives, that are most sober, temperate, and chaste; that allow not themselves to eat of any forbidden tree, though *pleasant to the eye;* that live regularly, and are the masters, not the servants, of

their own bellies, (1 Cor. ix. 27.) that *keep under their bodies, and bring them into subjection* to religion and right reason, and by laying the axe to the root, and breaking vicious habits, dispositions, and desires, in the strength of divine grace, have made the refraining from vicious acts very easy and pleasant: Rom. viii. 13. *If through the Spirit* we *mortify the deeds of the body*, we live, we live pleasantly.

IX. To be religious, is *to have all our unruly passions likewise governed and subdued.* And is not that pleasant? Much of our torment arises from our intemperate heats, discontent at the providence of God, fretfulness at every cross occurrence, fear of every imaginary evil, envy at those that are in a better state than ourselves, malice against those that have injured us, and an angry resentment of every, the least, provocation. These are thorns and briers in the soul; these spoil all our enjoyments, both of ourselves, and of our friends, and of our God too; these make men's lives unpleasant, and them a terror to themselves, and to all about them.

But when by the grace of God these *roots of bitterness* are plucked up, which bear so much *gall and wormwood*, and we have learned of our Master to be *meek and lowly in heart*, (Matt. xi. 29.) we find *rest to our souls*, we enter into the *pleasant land.* There is scarcely any of the graces of a Christian, that have more of a present tranquillity and satisfaction, both inherent in them, and annexed to them, than this of meekness. *The meek shall eat, and be satisfied*, (Ps. xxii. 26.) they shall *inherit the earth*, (Matt. v. 5.) they shall *delight themselves in the abundance of peace*, (Ps. xxxvii. 11.) and they shall *increase their joy in the Lord*, (Isa. xxix. 19.) which nothing diminishes more than ungoverned passion; for that grieves the Spirit of grace, the Comforter, and provokes him to withdraw, Eph. iv. 30, 31.

How pleasant it is for a man to be master of his own thoughts, to have a calmness and serenity in his own mind, as those have, who have *rule over their own spirits*, and thereby are *kept in peace; peace*, that will break an angry man's heart, but that will not break a meek man's sleep.

X. To be religious, is to *dwell in love to all our brethren*, and *to do all the good we can in this world.* And is not that pleasant? Love is the *fulfilling of the law;* it is the second great commandment, to *love our neighbour as ourselves*, Rom. xiii. 10. All our duty is summed up in one word, which as it is a short word, so it is a sweet word, *Love.* Behold, *how good and how pleasant it is to live in holy love!* Ps. cxxxiii. 1. It is not only pleasing to God, and amiable in the eyes of all good men, but it will be very comfortable to ourselves; for they that *dwell in love, dwell in God, and God in them*, 1 John iv. 16.

Religion teaches us to be kind to our relations, and to please them well in all things; neither to give nor resent provocations; to bear with their infirmities; to be courteous and obliging to all with whom we converse; to keep our temper, and the possession and enjoyment of our own souls, whatever affronts are given us: and can any thing contribute more to our living pleasantly?

By love we enjoy our friends, and have communion with them in all their comforts, and so add to our own; rejoicing with them that do rejoice, 1 Thess. iii. 9. By love we recommend ourselves to their love; and what more delightful than to love, and be beloved? Love is the very element of a pure and sanctified mind, the sweet air it breathes in, the cement of the best society, which contributes so much to the pleasure of human life. The sheep of Christ, united in flocks by the bond of holy love, lie down together in the *green pastures*, by the *still waters*, where there is not only plenty, but pleasure. The apostle (exhorting his friends to *be of good comfort*, (2 Cor. xiii. 11.) and to go on cheerfully in their Christian course) exhorts them, in order to that, to *be of one mind, and to live in peace*, and then *the God of love and peace will be with them.*

And what pleasure comparable to that of doing good? It is some participation of the pleasure of the Eternal Mind, who delights to show mercy, and to do good. Nay, besides the *divinity* of this pleasure, there is a *humanity* in it; the nature of man, if it be not debauched and vitiated, cannot but take pleasure in making any body safe and easy. It was a pleasure to Job, to think that he had *caused the widow's heart to sing for joy*, had been *eyes to the blind, feet to the lame*, and *a father to the poor*, and that they had been *warmed with the fleece of his sheep*, Job xxix. 13, 15, 16. and xxxi. 20. The pleasure that a good man has in doing good, confirms that saying of our Saviour's, that *it is more blessed to give than to receive*, Acts xx. 35.

XI. To be religious, is to *live a life of communion with God.* And is not that pleasant? Good Christians being taken into friendship, have *fellowship with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ*, (1 John i. 3.) and make it their business to keep up that holy converse and correspondence. Herein consists the life of religion, to converse with God, to receive his communications of mercy and grace to us, and to return pious and devout affections to him: and can any life be more comfortable? Is there any conversation that can possibly be so pleasant as this to a soul that knows itself, and its own powers and interests?

In reading and meditating upon the word of God, we hear God speaking with a great deal of condescension to us, and concern for us; speaking *freely* to us, as a man does to his friend, and about our own business, speaking *comfortably* to us in compassion to our distressful case: and what can be more pleasant to those who have a value for the favour of God, and care about the interests of their

own souls; Ps. cxli. 6. *When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words, for they are sweet:* the words of God will be very sweet to those who see themselves overthrown by sin, and so they will be to all that love God. With what an air of pleasure does the spouse say, *It is the voice of my beloved,* and he speaks *to me?* Cant. ii. 8, 10.

In prayer and praise we speak to God, and we have liberty of speech, have leave to *utter all our words before the Lord,* as Jephthah did his in Mizpeh, Judg. xi. 11. We speak to one whose ear is open, is bowed to our prayers, nay, to whom the *prayer of the upright* is a *delight,* (Prov. xv. 8.) which cannot but make it a very great delight to them to pray. It is not only an *ease* to a burthened spirit to unbosom itself to such a friend as God is, but a pleasure to a soul that knows its own extraction, to have such a *boldness,* (as all believers have,) to *enter into the holiest.*

Nay, we may as truly have communion with God in providences as in ordinances, and in the duties of common conversation, as in religious exercises; and thus, that pleasure may become a continual feast to our souls. What can be more pleasant, than to have a God to go to, whom we may *acknowledge in all our ways,* and whom our *eyes are ever towards;* (Ps. xxv. 15.) to see all our comforts coming to us from his hand, and all our crosses too; to refer ourselves, and all events that are concerning us, to his disposal, with an assurance that he will order all for the best? What a pleasure is it to behold the beauty of the Lord in all his works, and to taste the goodness of the Lord in all his gifts, in all our expectations to see every man's judgment proceeding from him; to make God our hope, and God our fear, and God our joy, and God our life, and God our all! This is to live a life of communion with God.

XII. To be religious, is to *keep up a constant expectation of the glory to be revealed:* it is to set eternal life before us as the mark we aim at, and the prize we run for, and to *seek the things that are above,* Col. iii. 1. And is not this pleasant? It is our duty to think much of heaven, to place our happiness in its joys, and thitherward to direct our aims and pursuits; and what subject, what object, can be more pleasing? We have need, sometimes, to frighten ourselves from sin, with the terrors of *eternal death;* but it is much more a part of our religion, to encourage ourselves in our duty; with the hopes of that *eternal life* which God hath given us, that *life which is in his Son,* 1 John v. 11.

What is Christianity, but *having our conversation in heaven,* (Phil. iii. 20.) trading with the *New Jerusalem;* and keeping up a constant correspondence with that *better country, that is, the heavenly,* as the country we belong to, and are in expectation of; to which we remit our best effects and best affections; where our head and home is, and where we hope and long to be?

Then we are as we should be, when our minds are in a heavenly frame and temper; then we do as we should do, when we are employed in the heavenly work, as we are capable of doing it in this lower world; and is not our religion then a heaven upon earth? If there be a fulness of joy and pleasure in that glory and happiness, which is *grace* and *holiness* perfected; there cannot but be an abundance of joy and pleasure in that *grace* and *holiness,* which is *glory* and *happiness* begun. If there will be such a complete satisfaction in vision and fruition, there cannot but be a great deal in faith and hope, so well founded as that of the saints is. Hence we are said, *believing to rejoice with joy unspeakable,* (1 Pet. i. 8.) and to be *filled with joy and peace in believing,* Rom. xv. 13.

It is the character of all God's people, that they are born *from* heaven, and bound *for* heaven, and have laid up their treasure *in* heaven; and they that know how great, how rich, how glorious, and how well secured that happiness is to all believers, cannot but own, that if that be their character, it cannot but be their unspeakable comfort and delight.

Now sum up the whole, and then tell me, whether religion be not a pleasant thing indeed, when even the *duties* of it themselves are so much the delights of it: and whether we do not serve a good master, who has thus made our work its own wages, and has graciously provided *two* heavens for those that never deserved *one*

CHAPTER III.

THE PLEASANTNESS OF RELIGION PROVED, FROM THE PROVISION THAT IS MADE FOR THE COMFORT OF THOSE WHO ARE RELIGIOUS, AND THE PRIVILEGES THEY ARE ENTITLED TO.

We have already found by *inquiry,* (O! that we could say we had found by experience!) that the very principles and practices of religion themselves have a great deal of pleasantness in them, and the one half of it has not been told us; and yet the comfort that attends religion, and follows after it, cannot but exceed that which is inherent in it, and comes with it. If the *work of righteousness* be *peace,* much more is the *effect of righteousness* so, Isa. xxxii. 17. If the precepts of religion have such an air of sweetness in them, what then have the comforts of it? Behold, *happy is the people,* even in this world, *whose God is the Lord.*

We must conclude, that they who walk in the ways of *Holy Wisdom,* have, or may have, true *peace* and *pleasure;* for God has both taken care for their comfort, and given them cause to be comforted: so that

if they do not live easily and pleasantly, it is their own fault.

I. The God whom they serve, has, in general, taken care *for* their comfort, and has done enough to convince them, that it is his will they should be comforted; that he not only gives them leave to be cheerful, but would have them to be so: for what could have been done more to the satisfaction of his family, than he has done in it?

1. There is a *purchase made* of peace and pleasure for them, so that they come to it fairly, and by a good title. He that purchased them a *peculiar people* to himself, took care that they should be a pleasant people, that their comforts might be a credit to his cause, and the joy of his servants in his work might be a reputation to his family. We have not only *peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*, (Rom. v. 1, 2, 3.) but peace in our own consciences too: not only peace *above*, but peace *within;* and nothing less will pacify an offended conscience, than that which satisfied an offended God. Yet this is not all, we have not only inward peace, but we *rejoice in the hope of the glory of God*, and triumph *over*, nay, we triumph *in*, *tribulation*.

Think what a vast expense (if I may so say) God was at, of blood and treasure, to lay up for this, and secure to us, not only a future bliss, but present pleasure, and the felicities not only of our home but of our way. Christ had *trouble*, that we might have *peace; pain*, that we might have *pleasure; sorrow*, that we might have *joy*. He wore the crown of thorns, that he might crown us with roses, and a lasting joy might be upon our heads. He put on the *spirit of heaviness*, that we might be arrayed with the *garments of praise*. The garden was the place of his agony, that it might be to us a *garden of Eden*, and there it was that he covenanted with his prosecutors for the disciples, (upon his surrendering himself,) saying in effect to all agonies, as he did to them, *If ye seek me let these go their way*, (John xviii. 8.) If I be resigned to trouble, let them *depart in peace*.

This was that which made *Wisdom's* ways *pleasantness;* the *everlasting righteousness* which Christ, by dying, wrought out, and brought in. This is the foundation of the treaty of peace, and consequently the fountain of all those consolations which believers are happy in. Then it is, that *all the seed of* Israel *glory*, when they can each of them say, *In the Lord have I righteousness and strength;* (Isa. xlv. 24, 25.) and then Israel shall dwell safely, in a holy security, when they have learned to call Christ by this name, *The Lord our Righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. If Christ had not gone to the Father, as our High Priest, with the blood of sprinkling in his hand, we could never have rejoiced, but must have been always trembling.

Christ is *our peace*, (Eph. ii. 14, 17.) not only as he *made peace* for us with God; but as he *preached* to them *that were afar off, and to them that were nigh*, and has engaged that his people, whenever they may have trouble in the world, shall have *peace in him;* (John xvi. 33.) upon the assurance of which they may *be of good cheer*, whatever happens. It is observable, that in the close of that ordinance which Christ instituted in *the night wherein he was betrayed*, (to be a memorial of his sufferings,) he both sung a hymn of joy, and preached a sermon of comfort; to intimate, that that which he designed in dying for us, was to give us *everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace*, (2 Thess. ii. 16.) and that we should aim at in all our commemorations of his death.

Peace and comfort are bought and paid for; if any of those who were designed to have the benefit of this purchase, deprive themselves of it, let them bear the blame, but let him have the praise who intended them the kindness; and who will take care, that though his kindness be deferred, it shall not be defeated; for though his disciples may be sorrowful for a time, *their sorrow shall be turned into joy*, John xvi. 20.

2. There are *promises made* to believers of *peace* and *pleasure*. The benefits Christ bought for them, are conveyed to them and settled upon them in the covenant of grace; which is *well-ordered in all things*, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) for the comfort and satisfaction of those, who have made that covenant *all their salvation and all their desire*. There it is that *light is sown for the righteous*, and it will come up again in due time; the promises of that covenant are the *wells of salvation* out of which they *draw water with joy;* the *breasts of consolation*, out of which, by faith, they *suck and are satisfied*, Isa. xii. 3. and lxvii. 11.

The promises of the Old Testament, that point at gospel times, speak mostly of this as the blessing reserved for those times, that there should be great joy and rejoicing; (Isa. xxxv. 1. and lx. 1.) *The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; Arise, shine, for the light is come*. The design of the gospel was to make religion a more pleasant thing than it had been, by freeing it, both from the burthensome services which the Jews were under, and from the superstitious fears which the heathen kept themselves and one another in awe with; by enlarging the privileges of God's people, and making them easier to come at.

Every particular believer is interested in the promises made to the church, and may put them in suit, and fetch in the comfort contained in them, as every citizen has the benefit of the charter, even the meanest. What a pleasure may one take in applying such a promise as that, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee?* Or that, *All things shall work for good to them that love God?* These, and such as these, *guide our feet in the ways of peace;* and as they are a firm foundation on which to build our hopes, so they are a full fountain from which to draw our joys.

By the *exceeding great and precious promises*, we *partake of a divine nature*, (2 Pet. i. 4.) in this instance of it as much as any, a comfortable enjoyment of ourselves: and by all the other promises that promise is fulfilled, Isa. lxv. 13, 14. *My servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed; my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart:* and the encouragement given to all the church's faithful friends, is made good, *Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her all ye that love her;* Isa. lxvi. 10.

3. There is *provision made for the application* of that which is *purchased* and *promised* to the saints. What will it avail that there is wine in the vessel, if it be not drawn out? that there is a cordial made up, if it be not administered? Care is therefore taken, that the people of God be assisted in making use of the comforts treasured up for them in the everlasting covenant.

A religious life, one may well expect, should be a very comfortable life; for Infinite Wisdom has devised all the means that could be to make it so; *What could have been done more for God's vineyard*, (Isa. v. 4.) to make it flourishing as well as fruitful, than what he has *done in it?* There is not only an overflowing fulness of oil in the *Good Olive*, but *golden pipes*, (as in the prophet's vision, Zech. iv. 12.) for the conveyance of that oil to the lamps, to keep them burning. When God would himself furnish a paradise for a beloved creature, there was nothing wanting that might contribute to the comfort of it; in it was planted *every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and good for food*, (Gen. ii. 9.) so in the gospel there is a paradise planted for all the faithful offspring of the second Adam: a Canaan, a land *flowing with milk and honey*, a *pleasant land*, a *rest* for all the spiritual seed of Abraham. Now, as God put Adam into paradise, and brought Israel into Canaan, so he has provided for the giving of possession to all believers, of all that comfort and pleasure that is laid up for them. As in the garden of Eden, innocency and pleasure were twisted together; so, in the gospel of Christ, grace and peace, *righteousness and peace have kissed each other*, (Ps. lxxxv. 10.) and all is done that could be wished, in order to our *entering into this rest*, this blessed *sabbath*, (Heb. iv. 3, 9.) So that if we have not the benefit of it, we may thank ourselves: God would have comforted us, and we would not be comforted, our souls refused it.

Four things are done with this view, that those who live a godly life, may live a comfortable and pleasant life; and it is a pity they should receive the grace of God herein in vain.

(1.) The *Blessed Spirit* is sent to be the *Comforter;* he does also enlighten, convince, and sanctify, but he has his name from this part of his office, (John xiv. 16.) he is, *ὁ παράκλητος, the Comforter.* As the *Son of God* was sent to be the *Consolation of Israel*, (Luke ii. 25.) to provide matter for comfort; so the *Spirit of God* was sent to be the Comforter, to apply the consolation which the Lord Jesus has provided. Christ came to make peace, and the Spirit to speak peace, and to *make us to hear joy and gladness*, even such as will cause *broken bones* themselves to *rejoice*, Ps. li. 8. Christ having wrought out the salvation for us, the work of the Spirit is to give us the comfort of it; hence the joy of the saints is said to be the *joy of the Holy Ghost*, (1 Thess. i. 6.) because it is his office to administer such comforts as tend to the filling of us with joy.

God, by his Spirit *moving on the face of the waters*, made the world according to the word of his power; and by his Spirit moving on the souls of his people, even when they are a perfect chaos, he *creates the fruit of the lips*, Peace, (Isa. lvii. 19.) the product of the word of his promise; and if he did not create it, it would never be: and we must not only attend to the word of God speaking to us, but submit to the Spirit of God working upon us with the word.

The Spirit, as a Comforter, was given not only for the relief of the saints in the suffering ages of the church, but to continue with the church *alway to the end*, for the comfort of believers, in reference to their constant sorrows, both temporal and spiritual; and what a favour is this to the church, no less needful, no less advantageous, than the sending of the Son of God to save us, and for which, therefore, we should be no less thankful. Let this article never be left out of our songs of praise, but let us always give thanks to him, who not only sent his *Son to make satisfaction for us*, for *his mercy endureth for ever*, but sent his *Spirit to give satisfaction for us*, for *his mercy endureth for ever;* sent his Spirit not only to work in us the disposition of children towards him, but also to witness to our adoption, and *seal us to the day of redemption.*

The Spirit is given to be our Teacher, and to *lead us into all truth*, and as such he is a Comforter; for by rectifying our mistakes, and setting things in a true light, he silences our doubts and fears, and sets things in a pleasant light. The Spirit is our Remembrancer, to put us in mind of that which we do know, and as such he is a Comforter; for, like the disciples, we distrust Christ in every exigence, because we *forget the miracles of the loaves*, Mat. xvi. 9. The Spirit is our Sanctifier; by him sin is mortified, and grace wrought and strengthened, and as such he is our Comforter; for nothing tends so much to make us easy, as that which tends to make us holy. The Spirit is our Guide, and we are said to be *led by the Spirit*, and as such he is our Comforter; for under his conduct we cannot but be led into *ways of pleasantness*, to the *green pastures*, and *still waters.*

(2.) The *Scriptures* are written, *that our joy may be full;* (1 John i. 4.) that we may have that joy which alone is filling, and has that in it which will fill up the vacancies of other joys, and make up their deficiencies; and that we may be full of that joy, may have more and more of it, may be wholly taken up with it, and may come, at length, to the full perfection of it in the kingdom of glory: *these things are written to you,* not only that you may *receive the word with joy,* at first, when it is a new thing to you, but that your *joy may be full,* and constant. The word of God is the chief conveyance, by which comfort is communicated from Christ, the fountain of life, to all the saints. That book, which the *Lamb,* that was *slain,* took out of the *right hand of him that sat on the throne,* is that which we are by faith to feed upon and digest, and to fill our souls with; and we shall find that it will, like Ezekiel's roll, (Ezek. iii. 3.) *be in our mouths as honey for sweetness,* and the opening of its seals will put a *new song into our mouth,* Rev. v. 9.

Scripture light is pleasant, much more sweet, more pleasant, than for the *eyes to behold the sun;* the manner of its conveyance is such, as makes it abundantly more so, for God speaks to us after the manner of men, in our own language. The comforts which the Scripture speaks to us are the *sure mercies of David,* such as we may depend upon, and it is continually speaking. The Scriptures we may have always with us, and whenever we will, we may have recourse to them; so that we need not be to seek for cordials at any time. The *word is nigh thee,* (Rom. x. 8.) in thy house, and in thy hand, and it is thine own fault if it be not in *thy mouth,* and in thy heart. Nor is it a spring shut up, *nor a fountain sealed:* those that compare spiritual things with spiritual, will find the Scripture its own interpreter; and spiritual pleasure to flow from it as easily, as plentifully, to all that have spiritual senses exercised, as the honey from the comb.

The saints have found pleasure in the word of God, and all those who have given up themselves to be led and ruled by it. It was such a comfort to David in his distress, that if he had not had that for *delight,* he would have *perished in his affliction,* (Ps. cxix. 92.) nay, he had the joy of God's word to be his continual entertainment, (Ps. cxix. 54.) *Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage:*—"*Thy words were found,* (says Jeremiah,) *and I did eat them,* feast upon them with as much pleasure, as ever any hungry man did upon his necessary food, or epicure upon his dainties; I perfectly regaled myself with them; and *thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart:*" (Jer. xv. 16.) and we not only come short of their experiences, but frustrate God's gracious intentions, if we do not find pleasure in the word of God; for *whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope,* Rom. xv. 4.

(3.) *Holy ordinances* were *instituted* for the furtherance of our comfort, and to make our religion pleasant unto us. The conversation of friends with each other, is reckoned one of the greatest delights of this world; now ordinances are instituted for the keeping up of our communion with God, which is the greatest delight of the soul that is allied to the other world. God appointed to the Jewish church a great many feasts in the year (and but one fast, and that but for one day) for this end, that they might *rejoice before the Lord their God,* they and their families, Deut. xvi. 11.

Prayer is an ordinance of God, appointed for the fetching in of that peace and pleasure which is provided for us. It is intended to be not only the ease of our *hearts,* by casting our burthen upon God, as it was to Hannah, (1 Sam. i. 18.) who, when she had prayed, *went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad;* but to be the joy of our hearts, by putting the promises in suit, and improving our acquaintance with heaven: *Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full,* John xvi. 24. There is a throne of grace erected for us to come to; a Mediator of grace appointed, in whose name to come; the Spirit of grace given to help our infirmities, and an answer of peace promised to every prayer of faith: and all this, that we might fetch in, not only sanctifying, but comforting, grace *in every time of need,* Heb. iv. 16. God's house, in which wisdom's children dwell, is called *a house of prayer,* and thither God brings them, on purpose to *make them joyful,* Isa. lvi. 7.

Singing of psalms is a gospel ordinance, that is designed to contribute to the pleasantness of our religion; not only to express, but to excite, and to increase, our holy joy. In singing to the Lord, we make a *joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation,* Ps. xcv. 1. When the apostle had warned all Christians to take heed of drunkenness, *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess,* lest they should think, that thereby he restrained them from any mirth, that would do them good, he directs them, instead of the song of the drunkard, when the heart is merry with wine, to entertain themselves with the songs of angels; (Eph. v. 18, 19.) *Speaking to yourselves* (when you are disposed to please yourselves) *in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.* There is no substance in this ordinance, but the word and prayer put together; but the circumstance of the voice and tune being a natural means of affecting our hearts, both with the one and with the other, God, in condescension to our state, has been pleased to make a particular ordinance of it, to show how much it is his will, that we should be cheerful: (Jam. v. 13.) *Is any merry, let him sing psalms.* Is

any vainly merry? let him suppress the vanity, and turn the mirth into a right channel; he need not banish nor abjure the mirth, but let it be holy, heavenly mirth, and in that mirth let him sing psalms. Nay, *Is any afflicted*, and merry in his affliction, let him show it by *singing psalms*, as Paul and Silas did, *in the stocks*, Acts xvi. 25.

The Lord's day is appointed to be a pleasant day, a day of holy rest, nay, and a day too of holy joy; a thanksgiving day: (Ps. 118. 24.) *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice, and be glad in it.* The Psalm or Song for the Sabbath-day begins thus, *It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord*, Ps. xcii. 1. So far were the primitive Christians carried in this notion, that the Lord's day was designed for holy triumph and exultation, that they thought it improper to kneel in any act of worship on that day.

The Lord's supper is a spiritual feast; and a *feast* (Solomon says, Eccl. x. 19.) was *made for laughter*, and so was this for holy joy. We celebrate the memorials of his death, that we may rejoice in the victories that he obtained, and the purchases he made, by his death; and may apply to ourselves the privileges and comforts, which by the covenant of grace are made *ours*. *There* we cannot but be *glad*, and *rejoice in him*, *where* we *remember his love more than wine*, Cant. i. 4.

(4.) The ministry is appointed for the comfort of the saints, and their guides in the ways of wisdom are instructed, by all means possible, to make them *ways of pleasantness*, and to encourage them to go on pleasantly in those ways. The priests of old were *ordained for men*, (Heb. v. 1, 2.) and were therefore *taken from among men*, that they might have compassion upon the mourners. And the prophets had this particularly in their commission, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem*, Isa. xl. 1.

Gospel-ministers, in a special manner, are appointed to be the helpers of the joy of the Lord's people; to be Barnabases, *Sons of consolation;* to *strengthen the weak hands*, and *feeble knees*, and to say to them who are of a *fearful heart*, *Be strong*, Isa. xxxv. 3, 5. The tabernacles of the Lord of hosts being amiable, the care of all that serve in those tabernacles, must be to make them appear so; that they who compass the altars of God, may find him *their exceeding joy*.

Thus has God taken care for the comfort of his people, so that he is not to be blamed if they be not comforted. But that is not all:

II. There are many particular benefits and privileges which they are entitled to, who walk in the ways of religion, that contribute very much to the pleasantness of those ways. By the blood of Christ those benefits and privileges are procured for them, which speaks them highly valuable, and by the covenant of grace they are secured to them, which speaks them unalienable.

1. Those who walk in Wisdom's ways are *discharged from the debts of sin*, and that is *pleasant*. They are privileged from arrests, (Rom. viii. 33.) *Who shall lay any thing to their charge?* while *it is God that justifies* them, and will stand by his own act, against hell and earth: and *he is* always *near that justifies them*, Isa. l. 8. And so is their Advocate, that pleads for them, nearer than their accuser, though he stand at their right hand to resist them; and is able to cast him out, and all his accusations.

Surely, they put a force upon themselves, that are merry and pleasant under the guilt of sin: for if conscience be awake, it cannot but have a *fearful looking for of wrath;* but if sin be done away, the burthen is removed, the wound is healed, and all is well: "*Son, be of good cheer*, (Mat. ix. 2.) Though sick of a palsy, yet be cheerful, for *thy sins are forgiven thee;* and therefore, not only they shall not hurt thee, but God is reconciled to thee, and will do thee good. Thou mayst enjoy the comforts of this life, and fear no snare in them; mayst bear the crosses of this life, and feel no sting in them; and mayst look forward to another life without terror or amazement."

The pain which true penitents experience in their reflections upon their sins, makes the pleasure and satisfaction they have in the assurance of the pardon of them doubly sweet; as the sorrow of a woman in travail is not an allay, but rather a foil to the *joy*, that a *child is born into the world*. No pain is more acute than that of broken bones, to which the sorrows of a penitent sinner are compared; but when they are well set, and well knit again, they are not only made easy, but they are made to rejoice, to which the comforts of a pardoned sinner are compared: *Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice*, Ps. li. 8. All our bones, when kept, that not one of them was broken, must say, Lord, who is like unto thee? But there is a more sensible joy for one displaced bone reduced, than for the multitude of the bones that were never hurt; for one lost sheep brought home, than for ninety and nine that went not astray. Such is the pleasure which they have, that know their sins are pardoned.

When God's prophets must speak comfortably to Jerusalem, they must tell her that her *iniquity is pardoned*, Isa. xl. 2. Such a pleasure there is in the sense of the forgiveness of sins, that it enables us to make a light matter of temporal afflictions, particularly that of sickness, (Isa. xxxiii. 24.) *The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick, for the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.* And to make a great matter of temporal mercies, when they are thus sweetened and secured, particularly that of recovery from sickness; (Isa. xxxviii. 17.)

Thou hast, in love to my soul, cured my body, and *delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.* If our sins be pardoned, and we know it, we may go out, and come in, in peace, nothing can come amiss to us; we may lie down and rise up with pleasure, for all is clear between us and heaven: thus *blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven.*

2. They have *the Spirit of God witnessing with their spirits, that they are the children of God,* Rom. viii. 16. and that is pleasant. Adoption accompanies justification, and if we have an assurance of the *forgiveness of our sins according to the riches of God's grace,* (Eph. i. 5, 7.) we have an assurance of this further comfort, that we were *predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ.* The same evidence, the same testimony that is given of our being pardoned, serves as an evidence and testimony of our being preferred, our being thus preferred. Can the children of princes and great men please themselves with the thoughts of the honours and expectations that attend that relationship? And may not the children of God think with pleasure on the *adoption* they have *received,* (Gal. iv. 6.) the *Spirit of adoption,* and that Spirit is witness to their adoption? And the pleasure must be the greater, and make the stronger impression of joy, when they remember, that they were by nature not only *strangers* and *foreigners,* but *children of wrath,* and yet are thus highly favoured.

The comfort of relations is none of the least of the delights of this life; but what comfort of relations is comparable to this, of being related to God, as our Father; and to Christ, as our elder Brother; and to all the saints and angels too, as belonging to the same family; which we are happily brought into relation to? The pleasure of claiming and owning this relation, is plainly intimated in our being taught to cry, *Abba, Father,* (Rom. viii. 15.) why should it be thus doubled, and in two languages? but to intimate to us, the unaccountable pleasure and satisfaction with which good Christians call God *Father;* it is the string they harp upon, *Abba, Father.*

With what pleasure does David's own spirit witness to this! *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord;* (Ps. xvi. 2.) and it is more to me that God is mine, than if all the world were mine. But when with our spirits the *Spirit of God* witnesses this too, saying to thy soul, "Yea, *he is thy God,* and he owns thee as one of his family; witness what he has wrought both *in thee,* and *for thee,* by my hand;" what joy does this fill the soul with, *joy unspeakable;* especially considering that, as the prophet speaks in the place, in the same heart and conscience, where it was said, and by the Spirit too, when he convinced as a Spirit of bondage,) *Ye are not my people,* even *there it shall be said unto them,* by the Spirit, (when he comforts as a Spirit of adoption,) *Ye are the sons of the living God,* Hos. i. 10.

3. They have *access with boldness to the throne of grace,* and that is *pleasant.* Prayer not only fetches in peace and pleasure, but it is itself a great privilege, and not only an honour, but a comfort; one of the greatest comforts of our lives, that we have a God to go to at all times, so that we need not fear coming unseasonably, or coming too often: and in all places, though as Jonah in the *fish's belly,* or as David in the *depths,* or *in the ends of the earth,* Ps. cxxx. 1. and lxi. 2.

It is a pleasure to one that is full of care and grief to unbosom himself; and we are welcome to *pour out our complaint* before God, and to show *before him our trouble,* (Ps. cxlii. 2.) and to one that wants, or fears wanting, to petition one that is able and willing to supply the wants. And we have great encouragement to *make our requests known to God;* we have *access with confidence,* (Eph. iii. 12.) not *access with difficulty,* (as we have to great men,) nor access with uncertainty of acceptance, as the Ninevites, *Who can tell if God will return* to us? But we have access with assurance, *whatsoever we ask* in faith, according to his will, *we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him,* 1 John v. 15.

It is a pleasure to talk to one that we love, and that we know loves us, and though far above us, yet takes notice of what we say, and is tenderly concerned for us: what a pleasure is it then to speak to God! to have not only a liberty of access, but a liberty of speech, παῤῥησία, freedom to utter all our mind, humbly, and in faith; *boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,* Heb. x. 19, 20. (and not with fear and trembling, as the high priest under the law, *entered into the holiest,*) and boldness to *pour out our hearts* before God, (Ps. lxii. 8.) as one (though he knows our case better than we ourselves) who will give us the satisfaction of knowing it from us, according to our own showing. Beggars that have good benefactors, live as pleasantly as any other people; it is the case of God's people, they are beggars, but they are beggars to a bountiful Benefactor, that is *rich in mercy to all that call upon him:* Blessed are they that *wait daily at the posts of wisdom's doors,* Prov. viii. 34. If the prayer of the upright be God's delight, it cannot but be theirs, Cant. ii. 14.

4. They have *a sanctified use of all their creature-comforts,* and that is *pleasant. The Lord knows the way of the righteous,* and takes cognizance of all their concerns; (Ps. xxxvii. 23.) *The steps,* yea, and the stops too, *of a good man are ordered by the Lord;* both his successes when he goes forward, and his disappointments when he goes backward; he blesses the work of their hands, and his blessing *makes rich, and adds no sorrow with it,* Prov. x. 22. More is im-

plied than is expressed; it adds joy with it, infuses a comfort into it.

What God's people have, be it little or much, they have it from the love of God, and with his blessing, and then *behold all things are clean* and sweet *to them;* they come *from* the hand of a Father, *by* the hand of a Mediator, not in the channel of common providence, but by the golden pipes of the promises of the covenant. Even the *unbelieving husband*, though not sanctified himself, yet is *sanctified to the believing wife*, (1 Cor. vii. 14.) and so is the comfort of other relations; for to those who please God, every thing is pleasing, or should be so, and is made so by his favour. And hence it is, (Ps. xxxvii. 16.) that *a little that a righteous man has*, having a heart to be content with it, and the divine skill of enjoying God in it, is better to him than the riches of many wicked were to them; and that *dinner of herbs where love is*, and the *fear of the Lord*, is better, and yields abundantly more satisfaction, than *a stalled ox*, and *hatred* and *trouble therewith*, Prov. xv. 16, 17.

5. They have the *testimony of their own consciences for them in all conditions*, and that is *pleasant*. A good conscience is not only a brazen wall, but a continual feast; and all the melody of Solomon's instruments of music of all sorts, were not to be compared with that of the bird in the bosom, when it sings sweet. If Paul has a *conscience void of offence*, though he be *as sorrowful, yet he is always rejoicing;* nay, and even when he is *pressed above measure*, (2 Cor. i. 8, 12.) and has *received a sentence of death within himself, his rejoicing is this*, even *the testimony of his conscience* concerning his integrity.

As nothing is more painful and unpleasant, than to be smitten and reproached by our own hearts; to have our consciences fly in our faces, and give us our own; so, there is nothing more comfortable, than to be upon good grounds reconciled to ourselves; to *prove our own work* (Gal. vi. 4.) by the touchstone of God's word, and to find it right, for then have we *rejoicing in ourselves alone, and not in another*. For *if our hearts condemn us not*, (1 John iii. 21.) *then have we confidence towards God;* may *lift up our face without spot* unto him, and comfortably appeal to his omniscience: *Thou, O Lord, knowest me, thou hast seen me, and tried my heart towards thee*, Jer. xii. 3.

This will not only make us easy under the censures and reproaches of men, as it did Job, *My heart shall not reproach me*, though you do; and Paul, *It is a very small thing with me to be judged of man's judgment;* but it will be a continual delight to us, to have our own hearts say, *Well done*. For the voice of an enlightened, well-informed conscience, is the voice of God, it is his deputy in the soul. The *thoughts* of the sober heathen *between themselves* when they did not *accuse*, yet the utmost they could do was but to *excuse*, which is making the best of bad; but they who have their *hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience* by the blood of Christ, (Rom. ii. 15.) are not only *excused*, but encouraged and commended, for their *praise is not of men, but of God*.

It is easy to imagine the holy, humble pleasure that a good man has, in the just reflection upon the successful resistance of a strong and threatening temptation; the seasonable suppressing and crossing of an unruly appetite or passion, and a check given to the tongue, when it was about to *speak unadvisedly*. What a pleasure is it to look back upon any good word spoken, or any good work done, in the strength of God's grace, to his glory, and any way to the advantage of our brethren, either for soul or body! With what a sweet satisfaction may a good man lay down in the close of the Lord's day, if God has enabled him, in some good measure, to do the work of the day in the day, according as the duty of the day requires? We may then *eat our bread with joy*, and *drink our wine with a merry heart*, when we have some good ground to hope, that *God now accepteth our works* through Jesus Christ, Eccl. ix. 7.

6. They have the *earnests and foretastes of eternal life and glory*, and that is pleasant indeed. They have it not only secured to them, but dwelling in them, in the first-fruits of it, such as they are capable of in their present imperfect state, (1 John v. 13.) *These things are written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know*, not only that you *shall have*, but *that you have eternal life;* you are *sealed with that holy Spirit of promise*, (Eph. i. 13, 14.) marked for God, which is the *earnest of our inheritance*, not only a ratification of the grant, but part of the full payment.

Canaan, when we come to it, will be a land flowing with milk and honey; *in God's presence*, there is *a fulness of joy* and *pleasures for evermore*, Ps. xvi. 11. But lest we should think it long ere we come to it, the God whom we serve has been pleased to send to us, as he did to Israel, some clusters of the grapes of that good land to meet us in the wilderness: which if they were sent as an excuse of the full enjoyment, and we were to be put off with them, that would put a bitterness into them; but being sent us in earnest of the full enjoyment, that puts a sweetness into them, and makes them pleasant indeed.

A day in God's courts, an hour at his table in communion with him, is very pleasant, better than *a thousand days*, than ten thousand hours, in any of the enjoyments of sense; but this very much increases the pleasantness of it, that it is the pledge of a blessed eternity, which we hope to spend *within the vail*, in the vision and fruition of God. Sabbaths are sweet, as they are earnests of the everlasting sabbatism, or *keeping of a sabbath* (as the apostle calls it, Heb. iv. 9.) which *remains for the people of*

God.———Gospel feasts are therefore sweet, because earnests of the everlasting feast, to which we shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. The joys of the Holy Ghost are sweet, as they are earnests of that joy of our Lord, into which all Christ's good and faithful servants shall enter. Praising God is sweet, as it is an earnest of that blessed state, in which we shall not rest day or night from praising God. The communion of saints is sweet, as it is an earnest of the pleasure we hope to have in the *general assembly, and church of the first-born*, Heb. xii. 23.

They that travel in Wisdom's ways, though sometimes they find themselves walking in the low and darksome *valley of the shadow of death*, where they can see but a little way before them, yet at other times they are led with Moses to the top of mount Pisgah, and thence have a pleasant prospect of the land of promise, and the glories of that good land, not with such a damp upon the pleasure of it as Moses had, (Deut. xxxiv. 4.) *Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither;* but such an addition to the pleasure of it as Abraham had, when God said to him, (Gen. xiii. 15.) *All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it.* Take the pleasure of the prospect as a pledge of the possession shortly.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DOCTRINE FURTHER PROVED BY EXPERIENCE.

HAVING found religion in its own nature *pleasant*, and the comforts and privileges so, with which it is attended; we shall next try to make this truth more evident, by appealing to such as may be thought competent witnesses in such a case. I confess, if we appeal to the *natural man*, the mere *animal* (as the word signifies, 1 Cor. ii. 14.) that looks no further than the things of sense, and judges by no other rule than sense, and *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*, for they are *foolishness to him;* such a one will be so far from consenting to this truth, and concurring with it, that he will contradict and oppose it: our appeal must be to those, that have some spiritual senses exercised, for otherwise *the brutish man knows not, neither doth the fool understand this*, Ps. xcii. 6.

We must therefore be allowed to appeal to convinced sinners, and comforted saints; wicked people whom the Spirit has roused out of a sinful security, and godly people, whom the Spirit has put to rest in a holy serenity, are the most competent witnesses to give evidence in this case; and to their experience we appeal.

I. Ask those that have tried the ways of sin and wickedness, of vice and profaneness, and begin to pause a little, and to consider, whether the way they are in be right; and let us hear what is their experience concerning those ways; and our appeal to them is in the words of the apostle, *What fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed?* Rom. vi. 21. Not only, What fruit *will ye have* at last, when the end of these things is death? or, (as Job xxi. 21.) *What pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?* But what fruit, what pleasure had ye then, when you were in the enjoyment of the best of it?

Those that have been running to an excess of riot, that have laid the reins on the neck of their lusts, have rejoiced with the *young man in his youth*, and *walked in the way of their hearts, and the sight of their eyes*, have taken a boundless liberty in the gratifications of sense, and have made it their business to extract out of this world, whatever may pass under the name of pleasure: ask them now, when they begin to reflect, which they could not find in their hearts to do while they were going on in their pursuit, what they think of those pleasures which pretend to vie with those of religion; and they will tell you,

1. That *the pleasure of sin was painful and unsatisfying in the enjoyment*, and which then they had no reason to boast of. It was a sordid pleasure, and beneath the dignity of a man, and which could not be had, but by yielding up the throne in the soul to the inferior faculties of sense, and allowing them the dominion over reason and conscience, which ought to command and give law. It was the gratifying of an appetite which was the disease of the soul, and which would not be satisfied, but, like the daughters of the horse-leech, still cry, *Give, give.*

What poor pleasure has the covetous man in the wealth of the world! It is the *lust of the eye* that is thereby humoured, for *what good has the owner thereof, save the beholding thereof with his eyes?* And what a poor satisfaction is that! And yet even that is no satisfaction neither, for *he that loveth silver*, will find, that the more he has, the more he would have, so that he *shall not be satisfied with silver;* nay, it fastens upon the mind a burthen of care and perplexity, so that *the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep*, Eccl. v. 10, 11, 12.

Drunkenness passes for a pleasant sin, but it is a brutish pleasure, for it puts a force upon the powers of nature, disturbs the exercise of reason, and puts men out of the possession and enjoyment of their own souls; and so far is it from yielding any true satisfaction, that the gratifying of this base appetite is but bringing oil to a flame: *When I awake, I will seek it yet again*, is the language of the drunkard, Prov. xxiii. 35.

Contention and revenge pretend to be pleasant sins too, *Est vindicta bonum vitâ jucundius ipsâ,*—

vengeance is a gratification more delightful than life itself, but it is so far from being so, that it is, of all other sins, the most vexatious; it kindles a fire in the soul, puts it into a hurry and disorder: where they are, there is *confusion* and *every evil work*. The lusts, whence not only *wars* and *fightings* come, (Jam. iv. 1.) but other sins are said to *war in the members*; they not only *war against the soul*, (1 Pet. ii. 11.) and threaten the destruction of its true interests, but they war in the soul, and give disturbance to its present peace, and fill it with continual alarms.

They that have made themselves slaves to their lusts, will own, that it was the greatest drudgery in the world, and therefore is represented in the parable of the prodigal, by a young gentleman hiring himself to one that *sent him into his field to feed swine*, (Luke xv. 16.) where he was made a fellow-commoner with them, and *would fain have filled his belly with the husks* that they did eat; such a disgrace, such a dissatisfaction, is there in the pleasures of sin: besides the diversity of masters which sinners are at the beck of, and their disagreement among themselves; for they that are *disobedient* to that God who is *One*, are *deceived*, serving *divers lusts and pleasures*, and therein *led captive* by Satan, their sworn enemy, *at his will*, Tit. iii. 3.

2. That the *pleasure of sin was very bitter and tormenting in the reflection*. We will allow that there is a pleasure in sin *for a season*, (Heb. xi. 25.) but that season is soon over, and is succeeded by another season that is the reverse of it; the sweetness is soon gone, and leaves the bitterness behind in the bottom of the cup: the wine is red, and *gives its colour*, its flavour very agreeable, but at the last it *bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder*, Prov. xxiii. 32. Sin is that *strange woman*, whose flatteries are charming, but *her end bitter as wormwood*, Prov. v. 3, 4.

When conscience is awake, and tells the sinner he is *verily guilty*; when his sins are set in order before him in their true colour, and he sees himself defiled and deformed by them; when *his own wickedness* begins to *correct him*, and his *backslidings* to *reprove him*, and his own heart makes him *loathe himself for his abominations*, (Jer. ii. 19.) where is the pleasure of his sin then? As the thief is ashamed when he is discovered to the world, so are the drunkards, the unclean, when discovered to themselves; and say, *Where shall I cause my shame to go?* there is no remedy, but I must *lie down in it*. If the pleasure of any sin would last, surely that of ill-got gain would, because there is something to show for it; and yet though that wickedness be *sweet* in the sinner's *mouth*, though he *hide it under his tongue*, yet *in his bowels it is turned* into the *gall of asps*, Job xx. 12, &c. He hath *swallowed down riches*, but shall be forced to *vomit them up again*.

Solomon had skimmed the cream of sensual delights, and pronounced not only *vanity* and *vexation* concerning them all, even the best; but concerning those of them that were *sinful*, the forbidden pleasures into which he was betrayed, that the reflection upon them filled him with horror and amazement: *I applied my heart*, (says he,) *to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness*; so he now calls the irregularities into which he had fallen: he cannot speak bad enough of them, for *I find more bitter than death, the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands*, Eccl. vii. 26.

And is such pleasure as this worthy to come in competition with the pleasures of religion, or to be named the same day with them? What senseless creatures are the sensual, that will not be persuaded to quit the pleasures of brutes, when they shall have in exchange the delights of angels!

II. Ask those that have *tried the ways of wisdom*, what is their experience concerning those ways? *Call now if there be any that will answer you, and to which of the saints will you turn?* Job v. 1. Turn you to which you will, and they will agree to this, that *Wisdom's ways are pleasantness, and her paths peace*. However about some things they may differ in their sentiments, in this, they are all of a mind, that God is a good master, and his service not only perfect freedom, but perfect pleasure.

And it is a debt which aged and experienced Christians owe both to their Master and to their fellow-servants, both to Christ and Christians, to bear their testimony to this truth; and the more explicitly and solemnly they do it, the better: let them tell others *what God has done for their souls*, and how they have *tasted that he is gracious*, (Ps. lxvi. 16.) let them own, to the honour of God and religion, that (1 Kings viii. 56.) there *has not failed one word of God's good promise*, by which he designed to make his servants pleasant; that what is said of the pleasantness of religion, is really so: let them *set to their seal that it is true*. Let it have their *probatum est—we have found it so*.

The ways of religion and godliness, are the good *old ways*, (Jer. vi. 16.) Now if you would have an account of the way you have to go, you must inquire of those that have travelled it, not those who have only occasionally *stept* into it, but those whose business had led them to *frequent* it. Ask the ancient travellers, whether they have found *rest to their souls* in this way; and there are few you shall inquire of, but will be ready to own these four things from experience:

1. That they have found *the rules and dictates of religion very agreeable both to right reason, and to their true interest*, and therefore pleasant. They have found the *word nigh them*, and accommodated to them, and not at such a mighty distance as they

were made to believe. They have found *all God's precepts concerning all things* to be *right*, and reasonable, and highly equitable; and when they did but show themselves men, they could not but consent, and subscribe *to the law, that it was good*, (Rom. vii. 16.) and there is a wonderful propriety in this. For the laws of humility and meekness, sobriety and temperance, contentment and patience, love and charity, are agreeable to ourselves when we are in our right mind; they are the rectitude of our nature, the advancement of our powers and faculties, the composure of our minds, and the comfort of our lives, and carry their own *letters of commendation* along with them. If a man understood himself, and his own interest, he would comport with these rules and govern himself by them, though there were no authority over him to oblige him to it. All that have thoroughly tried them, will say they are so far from being chains of imprisonment to a man, and as fetters to his feet, that they are as chains of ornament to him, and as the girdle to his loins.

Ask experienced Christians, and they will tell you what abundance of comfort and satisfaction they have had in keeping sober, when they have been in temptation to excess; in doing justly, when they might have gained by dishonesty as others do, and nobody know it; in forgiving an injury, when it was in the power of their hand to revenge it; in giving alms to the poor, when perhaps they straitened themselves by it; in submitting to an affliction, when the circumstances of it were very aggravating; and in bridling their passion under great provocations. With what comfort does Nehemiah reflect upon it, that though his predecessors in the government had abused their power, yet *so did not I*, (says he, Neh. v. 15.) *because of the fear of God!* And with what pleasure does Samuel make his appeal, (1 Sam. xii. 3.) *Whose ox have I taken, or whom have I defrauded?* And Paul his; *I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.* If you would have a register of experiences to this purpose, read the 119th Psalm, which is a collection of David's testimonies to the sweetness and goodness of God's law, the equity and excellency of it, and the abundant satisfaction that is to be found in a constant conscientious conformity to it.

2. That they have found *the exercises of devotion to be very pleasant and comfortable*, and if there be an heaven upon earth, it is in communion with God in his ordinances; in hearing from him, in speaking to him, in receiving the tokens of his favour and communications of his grace, and returning pious affections to him, pouring out the heart before him, lifting up the soul to him.

All good Christians will subscribe to David's experience; (Ps. lxxiii. 28.) *It is good for me to draw near to God;* the nearer the better; and it will be best of all, when I come to be nearest of all, within the vail, and will join with him in saying, *Return unto thy rest, O my soul!* (Ps. cxvi. 7.) to God as to thy rest, and repose in him. I have found that satisfaction in communion with God, which I would not exchange for all the delights of the sons of men, and the peculiar treasures of kings and provinces.

What a pleasure did those pious Jews in Hezekiah's time find in the solemnities of the passover, who, when they had kept seven days according to the law in attending on God's ordinances, *took counsel together to keep other seven days*, and they *kept other seven days with gladness*, 2 Chron. xxx. 23. And if Christ's hearers had not found an abundant sweetness and satisfaction in attending on him, they would never have continued their attendance three days in a desert place, as we find they did, Matt. xv. 32. No wonder then that his own disciples, when they were spectators of his transfiguration, and auditors of his discourse with Moses and Elias in the holy mount, said, *Master, it is good for us to be here;* here let us *make tabernacles*, Matt. xvii. 4.

I appeal to all that know what it is to commune with God in an ordinance, to worship him *in the spirit*, whether they have not found abundant satisfaction in it? They will say with the spouse, (Cant. ii. 3.) *I sat down under his shadow with delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste:* and with the noble Marquis of Vico, "*Let their money perish with them, that esteem all the wealth and pleasure of this world worth one hour's communion with God in Jesus Christ.*" They will own that they never had that true delight and satisfaction in any of the employments or enjoyments of this world which they have had in the service of God, and in the believing relishes of that *loving-kindness* of his, which is *better than life*, Ps. lxiii. 3. These have put gladness into their hearts, more than the joy of harvest, or theirs that divide the spoil. If in their preparations for solemn ordinances they have *gone forth weeping, bearing precious seed*, yet they have *come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them*, Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6.

That they have found *the pleasures of religion sufficient to overcome the pains and trouble of sense*, and to *take out the sting of them*, and *take off the terror of them.* This is a plain evidence of the excellency of spiritual pleasures, that religious convictions will soon conquer sensual delights, and quite extinguish them. So that they become as *songs to a heavy heart;* for a *wounded spirit who can bear?* But it has often been found, that the pains of sense have not been able to extinguish spiritual delights, but have been conquered and quite over-balanced by them. Joy in spirit has been to many a powerful allay to trouble in the flesh.

The pleasure that holy souls have in God, as it needs not to be supported by the delights of sense, so it fears not being suppressed by the grievances of sense. They can rejoice in the Lord, and joy in

him as the God of their salvation, even then, when the *fig-tree doth not blossom*, and *there is no fruit in the vine*, (Hab. iii. 17, 18.) for even then, when in the world they have tribulation, Christ has provided that in him they should have satisfaction.

For this we may appeal to the martyrs, and other sufferers for the name of Christ; how have their spiritual joys made their bonds for Christ easy, and made their prisons their "*delectable orchards*," as one of the martyrs called his. Animated by these comforts, they have not only taken patiently, but *taken joyfully, the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they have in heaven a better and a more enduring substance*, Heb. x. 34. Ask Paul, and he will tell you, (2 Cor. vii. 4, 5.) that even then, when he was *troubled on every side*, when *without were fightings and within were fears*, yet he was *filled with comfort*, and was *exceeding joyful in all his tribulation*; and that as his sufferings for Christ increased, his consolation in Christ increased proportionably, 2 Cor. i. 5. And though he expects no other but to finish his course with blood, yet he doubts not but to *finish his course with joy*.

Nay, we may appeal to the sick-beds and death-beds of many good Christians for the proof of this; when wearisome nights have been appointed to them, yet God's *statutes have been their songs*, their *songs in the night*, Ps. cxix. 54. "*I have pain*," says one, "but I bless God *I have peace*;" "weak and dying," said another, "but *sat lucis intus*," *light and comfort enough within*. The delights of sense forsake us, when we most need them to be a comfort to us; when a man is *chastened with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain, he abhorreth bread and dainty meat*, and cannot relish it, Job xxxiii. 19, 20. But then the bread of life and spiritual dainties have the sweetest relish of all.

Many of God's people have found it so: *This is my comfort in mine affliction*, that thy *word hath quickened me*, Ps. cxix. 50. This has *made all their bed in their sickness*, and made it easy.

The *pleasantness of Wisdom's ways* has sometimes been remarkably attested by the joys and triumphs of dying Christians, in reflecting upon that divine grace which has carried them comfortably through this world, and is then carrying them more comfortably out of it to a better. "*What is that light which I see?*" said an eminent divine upon his death-bed. "*It is the sun-shine*," said one that was by. "*No*," replied he, "*it is my Saviour's shine. O the joys! O the comforts that I feel! Whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; but I see and feel things that are unutterable, and full of glory. O let it be preached at my funeral, and tell it when I am dead and gone, that God deals familiarly with man. I am as full of comfort as my heart can hold.*" Mr. Joseph Allein's life, and Mr. John Janeway's, have remarkable instances of this.

4. They have found, that *the closer they have kept to religion's ways, and the better progress they have made in those ways, the more pleasure they have found in them.* By this it appears, that the pleasure takes its excellency from the religion; that the *more* religion prevails, the *greater* the pleasure is. What disquiet and discomfort Wisdom's children have, is owing, not to *Wisdom's ways*, those are pleasant, but to their deviations from those ways, or their slothfulness and trifling in these ways; those indeed are unpleasant, and sooner or later will be found so.

If good people are sometimes drooping, and in sorrow, it is not because they are good, but because they are not so good as they should be. They do not live up to their profession and principles, but are too much in love with the body, and hanker too much after the world: though they do not turn back to Sodom, they look back towards it, and are too mindful of the country *from which they came out*; and this makes them uneasy, this forfeits their comforts, and grieves their Comforter, and disturbs their peace, which would have been firm to them, if they had been firm to their engagements. But if we turn aside out of the ways of God, we are not to think it strange, if the consolations of God do not follow us.

But *if we cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart*, then we find the *joy of the Lord our strength*. Have we not found those duties most pleasant, in which we have taken most pains and most care? and that we have had the most comfortable sabbath-visits made to our souls when we have been most *in the Spirit on the Lord's day?* Rev. i. 10.

And the longer we continue, and the more we mend our pace, in these ways, the more pleasure we find in them. This is the excellency of spiritual pleasures, and recommends them greatly, that they increase with use, so far are they from withering, or going to decay: the difficulties which may at first be found in the ways of religion wear off by degrees, and the work of it grows more easy, and the joys of it more sweet.

Ask those that have back-slidden from the ways of God, have left their first love, and begin to bethink themselves, and to remember whence they are fallen, whether they had not a great deal more comfort when they kept close to God, than they have had since they turned aside from him; and they will say with that adulteress, when she found the way of her apostasy hedged up with thorns, *I will go and return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now*; Hos. ii. 7. There is nothing got by departing from God, and nothing lost by being faithful to him.

CHAPTER V.

THE DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED BY THE SIMILITUDE USED IN THE TEXT, OF A PLEASANT WAY OR JOURNEY.

THE practice of religion is often in Scripture spoken of as a *way*, and our walking in that *way:* it is the way of God's commandments, it is a *high way:* the King's high way, the King of kings' high way; and those that are religious, are *travelling* in that way. The schoolmen commonly call Christians in this world, *Viatores—travellers;* when they come to heaven, they are *Comprehensores—they have then attained*, are at home: here they are in their journey, there at their journey's end. Now if heaven be the *journey's end*, the *prize of our high calling*, and we be sure if we *so run* as we ought, that *we shall obtain*, it is enough to engage and encourage us in our way, though it be ever so unpleasant; but we are told, *ex abundanti—very fully*, that we have also a pleasant road.

Now there are *twelve things* which help to make a *journey pleasant*, and there is something like to each of them which may be found in the *way of Wisdom*, by those that walk in that way.

I. It helps to make a journey pleasant to *go upon a good errand.* He that is brought up a prisoner in the hands of the ministers of justice, whatever conveniences he may be accommodated with, cannot have a pleasant journey, but a melancholy one: and that is the case of a wicked man; he is going on in this world toward destruction; the way he is in, though wide and broad, leads directly to it; and while he persists in it, every step he takes is so much nearer hell, and therefore he cannot have a pleasant journey: it is absurd and indecent to pretend to make it so; though the way may seem right to a man, yet there can be no true pleasure in it, while the end thereof is the ways of death, and the *steps take hold on hell*, Prov. v. 5.

But he that goes into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, whatever difficulties may attend his journey, yet the errand he goes on is enough to make it pleasant: and on this errand they go that travel Wisdom's ways: they look for a kingdom which cannot be moved, and are pressing forward in the hopes of it. Abraham went out of his own country *not knowing whither he went*, (Heb. xi. 8.) but those that set out and hold on in the way of religion, know whither it will bring them, that it leads to life, eternal life; and therefore *in the way of righteousness is life*, (Prov. xii. 28.) because there is such a life at the end of it.

Good people go upon a good errand, for they go on God's errand as well as their own; they are serving and glorifying him, contributing something to his honour, and the advancement of the interests of his kingdom among men; and this makes it pleasant; and that which puts so great a reputation upon the duties of religion, as that by them God is served and glorified, cannot but put so much the more satisfaction into them. With what pleasure does Paul appeal to God, as the God whom *he served with his spirit in the gospel of his Son!* Rom. i. 9.

II. It helps to make a journey pleasant, to have strength and ability for it. He that is weak, sickly, and lame, can find no pleasure in the pleasantest walks: how should he, when he takes every step in pain? A strong man rejoices to run a race, but he that is feeble trembles to set one foot before another. Now this makes the ways of religion pleasant, that they who walk in those ways, are not only cured of their natural weakness, but are filled with spiritual strength; they travel not in their own might, but in the *greatness of his strength*, who is *mighty to save*, Isa. lxiii. 1.

Were they to proceed in their own strength, they would have little pleasure in the journey, every little difficulty would foil them, and they would tire presently; but they go forth, and go on, in the strength of the Lord God, (Ps. lxxi. 16.) and upon every occasion, according to his promise, he renews that strength to them, and they *mount up with wings like eagles*, they go on with cheerfulness and alacrity, they *run*, and are not *weary*, they *walk*, and do *not faint*, Isa. xl. 31. God, with his comforts, enlarges their hearts, and then they not only go, but *run the way of his commandments*, Ps. cxix. 32.

That which to the old nature is impracticable and unpleasant, and which therefore is declined, or undertaken with reluctancy, to the new nature is easy and pleasant: and this new nature is given to all the saints, which puts a new life and vigour into them, strengthens them with all might in the inner man, (Col. i. 11.) unto all diligence in doing-work, patience in suffering-work, and perseverance in both; and so all is made pleasant. They are *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, (Eph. vi. 10.) and this not only keeps the spirit willing, even when the flesh is weak, but makes even the *lame man* to *leap as an hart*, and the *tongue of the dumb to sing*, Isa. xxxv. 6. *I can do all things through Christ strengthening me*, Phil. iv. 13.

III. It helps to make a journey pleasant to have day-light. It is very uncomfortable travelling in the night, in the black and dark night. *He that walketh in darkness* (says our Saviour) *knows not whither he goes*, (John xii. 35.) right or wrong, and that is uncomfortable: and in another place, *If a man walk in the night he stumbleth, because there is no light in him*, John xi. 10. And this is often spoken of as the miserable case of wicked people, *They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness*, Psal. lxxxii. 5. They are in continual danger, and so much the more, if they be not in continual fear.

But Wisdom's children are all children of the

light, and of the day. They were darkness, but are light in the Lord, and walk as the children of the light. *Truly the light is sweet*, even to one that sits still, but much more so to one that is on a journey; and doubly sweet to those who set out in the dark, as we all did. But this great light is risen upon us, not only to please our eyes, but to *guide our feet* into the *way of peace*, Luke i. 79. And they are indeed paths of peace when we are guided into them, and guided in them, by the light of the gospel of Christ. And all that walk in the light of gospel conduct, cannot fail to walk in the light of *gospel comforts*.

And it adds to the pleasure of having day-light in our travels, if we are in no danger of losing it, and of being benighted: and this is the case of those that walk in the light of the Lord; for the Sun of Righteousness that is risen upon them, with healing under his wings, shall *no more go down*, but shall be *their everlasting light*, Isa. lx. 20.

IV. It helps to make a journey pleasant, to have a good guide, whose knowledge and faithfulness one can confide in. A traveller, though he has day-light, yet may miss his way, and lose himself, if he have not one to show him his way, and go before him, especially if his way lie, as ours does, through a wilderness, where there are so many by-paths; and though he should not be guilty of any fatal mistake, yet he is in continual doubt and fear, which makes his journey uncomfortable.

But this is both the safety and the satisfaction of all true Christians, that they have not only the *gospel of Christ* for their *light*, as a discovering and directing light, but the Spirit of Christ for their guide. It is promised, that he shall *lead them into all truth*, (John xvi. 13.) shall *guide them with his eye*, Ps. xxxii. 8. Hence they are said to *walk after the Spirit*, and to be *led by the Spirit*, (Rom. viii. 1, 14.) as God's Israel of old were led through the wilderness by a pillar of cloud and fire, and the Lord was in it.

This is that which makes the way of religion such a highway, as that the *way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein*, Isa. xxxv. 8. There are fools, indeed, wicked ones, who walk after the flesh, that miss their way, and wander endlessly; *The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city*, Eccl. x. 15. But those fools that shall not err therein, are weak ones, the foolish things of the world, who, under a sense of their own folly are so wise, as to give up themselves entirely to the conduct of the Spirit, both by conscience and the written word: and if they have done this in sincerity, they know whom they have depended upon to *guide them by his counsel*, and *afterwards* to *receive them to his glory*, Ps. lxxiii. 24. Those may go on their journey pleasantly, who are promised, that whenever they are in doubt, or in danger of mistaking or being misled, they shall hear a voice, saying, *This is the way, walk in it*, Isa. xxx. 21.

V. It helps to make a journey pleasant to be under a good guard or convoy, that one may travel safely. Our way lies through an enemy's country, and they are active, subtle enemies; the road is infested with robbers, that lie in wait to spoil, and to destroy; we travel by the lions' dens, and the mountains of the leopards; and our danger is the greater, that it arises, not from flesh and blood, but spiritual wickednesses; Satan, by the world (1 Peter v. 8.) and the flesh, way-lays us, and seeks to devour us; so that we could not with any pleasure go on our way, if God himself had not taken us under his special protection.

The same Spirit that is a guide to these travellers is their *guard also*; for whoever are sanctified by the Holy Ghost, are by him *preserved in Christ Jesus*, (Jude 1.) *blameless*; and shall be preserved to *the heavenly kingdom*, (2 Tim. iv. 18.) so as they shall not be robbed of their graces and comforts, which are evidences for, and earnests of, eternal life, they are *kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation*, (1 Pet. i. 5.) and therefore may go on cheerfully.

The promises of God are a writ of protection to all Christ's good subjects in their travels, and give them such a holy security, as lays a foundation for a constant serenity. Eternal truth itself has assured them, that no evil shall befall them, (Ps. xci. 10.) nothing really and destructively evil, no evil but what God will bring good to them out of. God himself has engaged to be their Keeper, and to preserve their going out and coming in, from henceforth and for ever, which looks as far forwards as eternity itself: and by such promises as these, and that grace which is conveyed through them to all active believers, God carries them as upon eagles' wings to bring them to himself, Deut. xxxii. 11.

Good angels are appointed for a guard to all that walk in Wisdom's ways, to bear them in their arms, where they go, and to pitch their tents round about them where they rest, (Ps. xxxiv. 7.) and so to keep them in all their ways. How easy may they be that are thus guarded, and how well pleased under all events! as Jacob was, who *went on his way, and the angels of God met him*, Gen. xxxii. 1.

VI. It helps to make a journey pleasant, to have the way tracked by those that have gone before in the same road, and on the same errand. Untrodden paths are unpleasant ones; but in the way of religion, we are both directed and encouraged by the good examples of those that have chosen the way of truth before us, and have walked in it. We are bidden to follow them, who are now *through faith and patience* (those travelling graces of a Christian) *inheriting the promises*, Heb. vi. 12.

It is pleasant to think that we are walking in the same way with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, with whom we hope shortly to sit down in the king-

dom of God. How many holy, wise, good men have governed themselves by the same rules that we govern ourselves by, with the same views; have lived by the same faith that we live by, looking for the same blessed hope, and have by it *obtained a good report*, Heb. xi. 2. And we *go forth by the footsteps of the flock*, Cant. i. 8.

Let us, therefore, to make our way easy and pleasant, take the prophets for an example, Jam. v. 10. And *being compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses*, (that like the cloud in the wilderness that went before Israel, not only to show them the way, but to smooth it for them,) *let us run with patience*, and cheerfulness, *the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus*, the most encouraging pattern of all, who has *left us an example, that we should follow his steps*, Heb. xii. 1. And what more pleasant than to follow such a leader, whose word of command is, *Follow me!*

VII. It helps to make a journey pleasant to have good company: this deceives the time, and takes off the tediousness of a journey as much as any thing. *Amicus pro vehiculo—A friend is as good as a carriage.* It is the comfort of those who walk in Wisdom's ways, that though there are but few walking in those ways, yet there are some, and those the wisest and best, and more excellent than their neighbours; and it will be found there are more ready to say, *We will go with you*, for *we have heard that God is with you*, Zech. viii. 23.

The communion of saints contributes much to the pleasantness of Wisdom's ways; we have many fellow-travellers, that quicken one another, by the fellowship they have one with another, as companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, Rev. i. 9. It was a pleasure to those who were going up to Jerusalem to worship, that their numbers increased n every town they came to, and so they *went from trength to strength*, they grew more and more numerous, *till every one of them in* Zion *appeared before God*, (Ps. lxxxiv. 7.) and so it is with God's spiritual Israel, to which we have the pleasure of seeing laily additions of such as shall be saved.

They that travel together make one another pleaant by familiar converse; and it is the will of God hat his people should by that means encourage one nother, and strengthen one another's hands. *They hat fear the Lord shall speak often one to another*, Mal. iii. 16.) exhort one another daily, and comunicate their experiences, and it will add much to he pleasure of this, to consider the kind notice God s pleased to take of it; *he hearkens, and hears*, and *book of remembrance is written for those that fear he Lord, and think on his Name.*

VIII. It helps to make a journey pleasant, to have ie way lie through green pastures, and by the still aters; and so the ways of Wisdom do. David peaks his experience herein, (Ps. xxiii. 2.) that he was led into the *green pastures*, the verdure whereof was grateful to the eye; and *by the still waters*, whose soft and gentle murmurs were music to the ear: and he was not driven through these, but made to lie down in the midst of these delights, as Israel when they encamped at Elim, where there were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees, Exod. xv. 27.

Gospel ordinances, in which we deal much in our way to heaven, are very agreeable to all the children of God, as these green pastures, and still waters; they call the sabbath a delight, and prayer a delight, and the word of God a delight. These are *their pleasant things.* There *is a river of* comfort in gospel ordinances, the *streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High*; (Ps. xlvi. 4.) and along the banks of this river their road lies.

Those that turn aside from the ways of God's commandments are upbraided with the folly of it, as leaving a pleasant road for an unpleasant one. Will a man, a traveller, be such a fool as to leave my fields, which are smooth and even, for a rock that is rugged and dangerous, or for the snowy mountains of Lebanon? Jer. xviii. 14. Shall the running waters be forsaken for the strange cold waters? Thus are men enemies to themselves, and the foolishness of man perverteth his way.

IX. It adds to the pleasure of a journey, to have it fair over-head. Wet and stormy weather takes off very much of the pleasure of a journey; but it is pleasant travelling when the sky is clear, and the air calm and serene: and this is the happiness of those who walk in Wisdom's ways, that all is clear between them and heaven; there are no clouds of guilt to interpose between them and the Sun of Righteousness, and to intercept his refreshing beams; no storms of wrath gathering that threaten them.

Our reconciliation to God, and acceptance with him, makes every thing pleasant; how can we be melancholy, if Heaven smile upon us? *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*, (Rom. v. 1, 2.) and peace from God, peace made for us, and peace spoken to us, and then we rejoice in tribulation. Those travellers cannot but rejoice all the day, who *walk in the light of God's countenance*, Ps. lxxxix. 15.

X. It adds likewise to the pleasure of a journey, to be furnished with all needful accommodations for travelling. They that walk in the way of God, have wherewithal to bear their charges; and it is promised them that they shall want no good thing, Ps. xxxiv. 10. If they have not an abundance of the wealth of this world, which perhaps will but overload a traveller, and be an encumbrance, rather than any furtherance, yet, they have good bills; having access by prayer to the throne of grace wherever they are, and a promise that they shall receive what they ask; and access by faith to the covenant of

grace, which they may draw upon, and draw from, as an inexhaustible treasury. *Jehovah jireh, The Lord will provide.*

Christ, our Melchizedec, brings forth bread and wine, (Gen xiv. 18.) for the refreshment of the poor travellers, that they may not faint by the way, 1 Kings xix. 8. When Elijah had a long journey to go, he was victualled accordingly; God will give grace sufficient to his people for all their exercises, (2 Cor. xii. 9.) *Strength according to the day; Verily they shall be fed.* And since travellers must have refreshing places, and resting-places, Christ has provided *rest at noon*, (Cant. i. 7.) in the heat of the day, for those that are his; and rest at night too: *Return to thy rest, O my soul.*

XI. It adds something to the pleasure of a journey to sing in the way: this takes off something of the fatigue of travelling, exhilarates the spirits; pilgrims used it; and God has put a song, *a new song, into the mouths* of his people, (Ps. xl. 3.) even *praises to their God*, and comfort to themselves. He has given us cause to be cheerful, and leave to be cheerful, and hearts to be cheerful, and has made it our duty to rejoice in the Lord always.

It is promised to those, who are brought to praise God, by hearing the words of his mouth, that they shall *sing in the ways of the Lord*, (Ps. cxxxviii. 5.) and good reason, *for great is the glory of the Lord.* How pleasantly did the released captives return to their own country, when they came with singing unto Zion! Isa. li. 11. And much more Jehoshaphat's victorious army, when they came to Jerusalem, *psalteries and harps to the house of the Lord; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies*, 2 Chr. xx. 28. With this the travellers may revive one another, *O come, let us sing unto the Lord.*

XII. It helps to make a journey pleasant to have a good prospect. The travellers in Wisdom's ways may look about them with pleasure, so as no travellers ever could; for they can call all about them their own, even the *world, and life, and death, and things present, and things to come*, in this state, *all is yours, if you be Christ's*, 1 Cor. iii. 22. The whole creation is not only at peace with them, but at their service.

They can look before them with pleasure; not with anxiety and uncertainty, but with a humble assurance; not with terror, but with joy. It is pleasant in a journey, to have a prospect of the journey's end; to see that the way we are in leads directly to it, and to see that it cannot be far off; every step we take is so much nearer it, nay, and we are within a few steps of it. We have a prospect of being shortly with Christ in paradise; yet a little while, and we shall be at home, we shall be at rest; and whatever difficulties we may meet with in our way, when we come to heaven all will be well, eternally well.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DOCTRINE VINDICATED.

SUFFER me a little, (says Elihu to Job, Job xxxvi. 2.) *and I will show thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf*, something more to say in defence of this truth, against that which may seem to weaken the force of it. We all ought to concern ourselves for the vindication of godliness, and to speak what we can for it, for we know that it is every where spoken against: and there is no truth so plain, so evident, but there have been those who have objected against it: the prince of darkness will raise what mists he can to cloud a truth, that stands so directly against his interest; but great is the truth, *and will prevail.*

Now as to the truth of the pleasantness of religion;

I. It is easy to confront the reproaches of the enemies of religion, who give it an ill name. There are those who make it their business, having perverted their own ways, to pervert the right ways of the Lord, and cast an odium upon them; as Elymas the sorcerer did, with design to *turn away the deputy from the faith*, Acts xiii. 8, 10. They are like the wicked spies, that *brought up an evil report* of the promised land, (Numb. xiii. 32.) as a land that did eat up the inhabitants thereof; and neither could be conquered, nor was worth conquering.

The scoffers of the latter days speak ill of religion, as a task and drudgery; they dress it up in frightful, formidable colours, but very false ones, to deter others from piety, and to justify themselves in their own impiety. They suggest that Christ's yoke is heavy, and his commandments grievous, and that to be religious is to bid adieu to all pleasure and delight, and to turn tormentors to ourselves; that God is *a hard* master, *reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not strawed*, Matt. xxv. 24.

There were those of old that thus reproached the ways of God, and slandered religion; for they said, *It is vain to serve God*, (Mal. iii. 14.) there is neither credit nor comfort in it, and *what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances*, and (observe their invidious description of religion) *that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts*; as if to be religious was to walk mournfully, whereas indeed it is to walk cheerfully.

Now in answer to these calumnies we have this to say, that the matter is not so. They who say thus of religion, *speak evil of the things which they know not:* while *what they know naturally as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves*, Jude 10. The devil we know was a liar from the beginning, and a false accuser of God and religion, and in this particular represented God to our first parents, (Gen. iii.

5.) as having dealt hardly and unjustly with them, in prohibiting them the *tree of knowledge;* as if he envied them the happiness and pleasure they would attain to by eating of that tree; and the same methods he still takes to alienate men's minds from the life of God, and the power of godliness. But we know, and are sure, that it is a groundless imputation, for Wisdom's ways are *ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*

II. It is easy also to set aside the misrepresentation of religion, which are made by some that call themselves its friends, and profess kindness for it. As there are enemies of the Lord that blaspheme, (2 Sam. xii. 14.) so there are among the people of the Lord those that give them great occasion to do so, as David did. How many wounds does religion receive in the house of her friends, false friends they are or foolish ones, unworthy to be called Wisdom's children, for they do not justify her as they ought; but through mistake and indulgence of their own weakness, betray her cause, instead of pleading it, and witnessing to it; and confirm people's prejudices against it, which they should endeavour to remove.

Some that profess religion are morose and sour in their profession, peevish and ill-humoured, and make the exercises of religion a burthen, and task, and terror to themselves, and all about them, which ought to sweeten the spirit and make it easy, and candid, and compassionate to the infirmities of the weak and feeble of the flock.

Others are melancholy and sorrowful in their profession, and go mourning from day to day under prevailing doubts and fears, and disquietudes about their spiritual state. We know some of the best of God's servants have experienced trouble of mind to a great degree.

But as to the former, it is their sin; and let them bear their own burthen, but let not religion be blamed for it: and as to the latter, though there are some very good people that are of a sorrowful spirit, yet we will abide by it, that true piety has true pleasure in it notwithstanding.

1. But God is sometimes pleased, for wise and holy ends, for a time, to suspend the communication of his comforts to his people, and to hide his face from them, to try their faith, that it may be *found to praise and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Christ,* (1 Pet. i. 6, 7.) and so much the more for their being while *in heaviness through manifold temptations.* Thus he corrects them for what has been done amiss by them, and takes this course to mortify what is amiss in them; even winter seasons contribute to the fruitfulness of the earth. Thus he brings them to a closer and more humble dependence upon Christ for all their comfort, and teaches them to live entirely upon him. And though *for a small moment* he thus *forsakes them,* (Isa. liv. 7, 8.) it is but to magnify his power so much the more in supporting them, and to make his returns the sweeter, for he will gather them with *everlasting loving-kindness.* Light is sown for them, and it will come up again.

2. This is their affliction, God's hand must be acknowledged in it, as his righteous hand; yet there is sin in it, and that is from themselves. Good people have not the comforts they might have in their religion, and whose fault is it? They may thank themselves; they run themselves into the dark, and then shut their eyes against the light. *My wounds stink and are corrupt,* (says David, Ps. xxxviii. 5.) The wounds of sin which I gave myself are unhealed, not bound up, or mollified with ointment. And why? Is it for want of balm in Gilead, or a physician there? No, he owns, it is because of my foolishness; I did not take the right method with them. God speaks joy and gladness to them, but they turn a deaf ear to it, like Israel in Egypt, that hearkened not to Moses, for *anguish of spirit and sore bondage,* Exod. vi. 9. But let not the blame be laid upon religion, which has provided comfort for their souls; but let them bear the blame whose souls refuse to be comforted, or who do not take the way appointed for comfort; who do not go through with their repenting and believing. David owns that the reason why he wanted comfort, and was in pain, and agitated, was because he *kept silence.* He was not so free with God as he might and should have been; but when he said, *I will confess my transgression unto the Lord,* he was forgiven, and all was well, Ps. xxxii. 3—5.

Those do both God and Christ, and themselves and others, a deal of wrong, who look upon him with whom they have to do in religion, as one that seeks an occasion against them, and counts them for his enemies, and is extreme to mark what they think, or say, or do amiss; whereas he is quite otherwise, is slow to anger, swift to mercy, and willing to make the best of those whose hearts are upright with him, though they are compassed about with infirmity: he will not always chide; he does not delight in the death of *them that die,* but would rather they should *turn and live,* Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Nor does he delight in the tears of them that weep, does not *afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men,* (Lam. iii. 33.) much less his own children, but would rather they should be upon good grounds comforted. Religion then clears itself from all blame, which some may take occasion to cast upon it, from the uncomfortable lives which some lead that are religious.

III. But it will require some more pains to reconcile this truth of the *pleasantness of religious ways,* with (that which the word of God itself tells us of) the difficulties with which the ways of religion are attended. We value not the misapprehensions of some, and the misrepresentations of others, concerning religious ways; but we are sure the word of God is of a piece with itself, and does not contra-

dict itself. Our Master has taught us to call the way to heaven a narrow way, *ὁδος τεθλιμμένη,—an afflicted way, a distressed way;* and we have in Scripture many things that declare it so. And it is true; but that does not contradict this doctrine, "That the ways of Wisdom are pleasant:" for the pleasantness that is in Wisdom's ways, is intended to be a balance, and is very much an over-balance, to any thing in them which is any way distasteful or incommodious. As for the imaginary difficulties, which the sluggard dreams of, "A lion in the way," "A lion in the street," we do not regard them: but there are some real difficulties in it, as well as real comforts; for *God hath set the one over against the other*, (Eccl. vii. 14.) that we might study to comport with both, and might sing, and sing unto God, of both, Psal. ci. 1.

We will not, we dare not, make the matter better than it is, but will allow there is that in religion which at first view may seem unpleasant; and yet doubt not but to show that it is reconcilable to, and consistent with, all that pleasure which we maintain to be in religion, and so, to take off all exceptions against this doctrine. *Amicæ Scripturarum lites; utinam et nostræ!—It were well if we could agree with one another, as well as Scripture does with itself.*

There are four things which seem not well to agree with this doctrine, and yet it is certain they do.

1. It is true, that to be religious, is to live a life of repentance, and yet, religious ways are pleasant notwithstanding. It is true, that we must mourn for sin daily, and reflect with regret upon our manifold infirmities; sin must be bitter to us, and we must even loathe and abhor ourselves for our corruptions that dwell in us, and the many actual transgressions that are committed by us. We must renew our repentance daily, and every night must make some sorrowful reflections upon the transgressions of the day. But then,

(1.) It is not walking in the way of Wisdom that creates us this sorrow, but our trifling in that way, and our turning aside out of it. If we would keep close to these ways, and pass forward in them as we ought, there would be no occasion for repentance. If we were as we should be, we should be always praising God, and rejoicing in him; but we make other work for ourselves by our own folly, and then complain that religion is unpleasant; and whose fault is that? If we would be always loving and delighting in God, and would live a life of communion with him, we should have no occasion to repent of that; but if we leave the fountain of living waters, and turn aside to broken cisterns, or the brooks in summer, and see cause (as doubtless we shall) to repent of it, we may thank ourselves.

What there is of bitterness in repentance, is owing not to our religion, but to our defects and defaults in religion; and it proves, not that there is bitterness in the ways of God, but in the ways of sin, which make a penitential sorrow necessary, for the preventing of a sorrow a thousand times worse; for sooner or later sin will have sorrow. If repentance be bitter, we must not say, this is occasioned through being godly, but through being sinful; Jer. iv. 18. *This is thy wickedness, because it is bitter.* If by sin we have made sorrow necessary, it is certainly better to mourn now, than *mourn at the last*, Prov. v. 11. To continue impenitent, is not to put away sorrow from thy heart, but to put it off to a worse place.

(2.) Even in repentance, if it be right, there is a true pleasure, a pleasure accompanying it. Our Saviour has said of them, who thus mourn, not only that they shall be comforted, but that they *are blessed*, Matt. v. 4. When a man is conscious to himself that he has done an ill thing, and what is unbecoming him, and may be hurtful to him, it is incident to him to repent of it. Now religion has found a way to put a sweetness into that bitterness. Repentance, when it is not from the influence of religion, is nothing but bitterness and horror, as Judas's was; but repentance, as it is made an act of religion, as it is one of the laws of Christ, is pleasant, because it is the raising of the spirit, and the discharging of that which is noxious and offensive.

Our religion has not only taken care, that penitents be not overwhelmed with an excess of sorrow, (2 Cor. ii. 7.) and swallowed up by it; that their sorrow do not work death, as the sorrow of the world does; but it has provided, that even this bitter cup should be sweetened: and therefore we find that under the law, the sacrifices for sin were commonly attended with expressions of joy; and while the priests were sprinkling the blood of the sacrifices to make atonement, (2 Chr. xxix. 24, 25.) the Levites attended with *psalteries and harps*, for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets. Even the day to afflict the soul is the day of atonement; and when we receive the atonement, we *joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ*, Rom. v. 11. In giving our consent to the atonement, we take the comfort of the atonement.

In sorrowing for the death of some dear friend or relation, thus far we have found a pleasure in it, that it has given vent to our grief which our spirits were full of; so in sorrow for sin, the shedding of just tears is some satisfaction to us. If it is a pleasure to be angry, when a man thinks with Jonah, that he *does well to be angry;* much more is it a pleasure to be sorry, when a man is sure he does well to be sorry. The same word in Hebrew, נחם signifies both *consolari* and *pœnitere*, both to *comfort* and to *repent*, because there is comfort in true repentance.

(3.) Much more after repentance, there is a plea-

sure attending it, and flowing from it. It is a way of pleasantness, for it is the way to pleasantness. To them that mourn in Zion, that sorrow after a godly sort, God has appointed *beauty for ashes*, and the *oil of joy for mourning*, Isa. lxi. 3. And the more the soul is humbled under the sense of sin, the more sensible will the comfort of pardon be; it is wounded in order to be healed: the jubilee trumpet sounded in the close of the day of soul-affliction, (Lev. xxv. 9.) which proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord, the year of release; and an acceptable year it is indeed, to those who find themselves tied and bound with the cords of their sin.

True penitents go weeping, it is true, but it is to *seek the Lord of hosts*, (Jer. l. 4, 5.) to seek him as *their God*, and to enter into covenant with him: and let their *hearts rejoice that seek the Lord*, (Ps. cv. 3.) for they shall find him, and find him their bountiful rewarder. They sorrow not as those that have no hope, but good hope that their iniquities are forgiven; and what joy can be greater than that of a pardon to one condemned?

2. It is true, that to be religious is to take care, and to take pains, and to labour earnestly, (Luke xiii. 24.) and yet *Wisdom's ways* are *ways of pleasantness*. It is true, we must strive to enter into this way, must be in an agony, so the word is. There is a violence which the kingdom of heaven suffers, and the *violent take it by force*, Matt. xi. 12. And when we are in that way, we must *run with patience*, Heb. xii. 1. The bread of life is to be eaten in the sweat of our face; we must be always upon our guard, and keep our hearts with all diligence. Business for God and our souls is what we are not allowed to be slothful in, but *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*, Rom. xii. 11. We are *soldiers of Jesus Christ*, and we must *endure hardness*, must *war the good warfare*, till it be accomplished, 2 Tim. ii. 2.

And yet even in this contention there is comfort. It is work indeed, and work that requires care; and yet it will appear to be pleasant work, if we consider how we are strengthened for it, and encouraged in it.

(1.) How we are strengthened for it, and animated with strength in our souls to go on in it, and go through with it. It would be unpleasant, and would go on very heavily, if we were left to ourselves, to travel in our own strength; but if we be actuated and animated in it by a better spirit, and mightier power than our own, it is *pleasant*. If God *work in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure*, Phil. ii. 13.) we shall have no reason to complain of the difficulty of our work; for God *ordains peace for us*, true peace and pleasure, by *working all our works in us*, Isa. xxvi. 12.

We may sing at our work, if our minds be by the Spirit of God brought to it, our hands strengthened for it, and our infirmities helped, (Rom. viii. 26.) and particularly our infirmities in prayer; that by it we may fetch in strength for every service, strength according to the day. Daniel at first found God's speaking to him a terror, he could not bear it; but when one like the appearance of a man came and touched him, (who could be no other than Christ the Mediator,) and put strength into him, saying, *Peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong;* it was quite another thing with him, then nothing more pleasant, *Let my Lord speak, for thou hast strengthened me*, Dan. x. 17—19.

Though the way to heaven be up-hill, yet, if we be carried on in it as upon eagle's wings, it will be pleasant; and those are so that wait upon the Lord, for to them it is promised that they *shall renew their strength*. That is pleasant work, though against the inclination of our corrupt natures, for the doing of which we have not only a new nature given us, inclining us to it, and making us habitually capable of application to it, but actual supplies of grace sufficient for the doing of it promised us, (2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.) by one who knows what strength we need, and what will serve, and will neither be unkind to us, nor unfaithful to his own word. And it is observable that when God, though he eased not Paul of the thorn in the flesh, yet said that good word to him, *My grace is sufficient for thee;* immediately it follows, *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong*. Sufficient grace will make our work pleasant, even the hardest part of it.

(2.) How we are encouraged in it. It is true, we must take pains, but the work is good work, and is to be done, and is done by all the saints, from a principle of holy love; and that makes it pleasant, (1 John v. 3.) as Jacob's service for Rachel was to him, because he loved her. It is an unspeakable comfort to industrious Christians, that they are working together with God, and he with them; that their Master's eye is upon them, and a witness to their sincerity: he *sees in secret*, and will *reward openly*, Mat. vi. 6. God now accepts their works, smiles upon them, and his Spirit speaks to them good words and *comfortable words*, (Zech. i. 13.) witnessing to their adoption. And this is very encouraging to God's servants, as it was to the servants of Boaz, to have their master come to them, when they were hard at work, reaping down his own fields, and with a pleasant countenance say to them, *The Lord be with you*, Ruth ii. 4. Nay, the Spirit says more to God's labourers, *The Lord is with you*.

The prospect of the recompence of reward, is in a special manner encouraging to us in our work, and makes it pleasant, and the little difficulties we meet with in it to be as nothing. It was by having an eye to this that Moses was encouraged not only to bear the reproach of Christ, but to *esteem it greater riches than the treasures of* Egypt, Heb. xi. 26. In

all labour there is profit; and if so, there is pleasure also in the prospect of that profit, and according to the degree of it. We must work, but it is to work out our salvation, a great salvation, which, when it comes, will abundantly make us amends for all our toil. We must strive, but it is to enter into life, eternal life. We must run, but it is for an incorruptible crown, the prize of our high calling. And we do not run at an uncertainty, nor fight as those that beat the air; for to him that *sows righteousness there is a sure reward*, (Prov. xi. 18.) and the assurance of that harvest will make even the seed-time pleasant.

3. It is true, that to be religious, is to deny ourselves in many things that are pleasing to sense: and yet Wisdom's ways are *pleasantness* notwithstanding. It is indeed necessary, that beloved lusts should be mortified and subdued, corrupt appetites crossed and displeased, which, to the natural man, is like *plucking out a right eye*, and *cutting off a right hand*, Mat. v. 29. There are forbidden pleasures that must be abandoned, and kept at a distance from: the flesh must not be gratified, nor *provision* made to *fulfil the lusts of it*, (Rom. xiii. 14.) but on the contrary, we must *keep under the body*, and *bring it into subjection*, (1 Cor. ix. 27.) we must *crucify the flesh*, must kill it, and put it to a painful death. The first lesson we are to learn in the school of Christ, is to deny ourselves, (Matt. xvi. 24.) and this must be our constant practice; we must use ourselves to deny ourselves, and thus *take up our cross daily*.

Now will not this spoil all the pleasure of a religious life? No, it will not; for the pleasures of sense, which we are to deny ourselves, are comparatively despicable, and really dangerous.

(1.) These pleasures we are to deny ourselves are comparatively despicable: how much soever they are valued and esteemed by those who live by sense, and know no better, they are looked upon with a generous contempt by those who live by faith, and are acquainted with divine and spiritual pleasures. And it is no pain to deny ourselves in these pleasures, when we know ourselves entitled to better, more rational, and noble, and agreeable; the delights of the blessed spirits above.

The garlic and onions of Egypt were doated upon by those that knew not how to value either the manna of the wilderness, or the milk and honey of Canaan, Numb. xi. 5. So the base and sordid pleasures of sense are relished by the depraved and vicious appetites of the carnal mind. But when a man has learned to put a due estimate upon spiritual pleasures, those that are sensual have lost all their sweetness, and are become the most insipid things in the world; have no pleasure in them, in comparison with that far greater pleasure which excelleth.

Is it any diminution to the pleasure of a grown man, to deny himself the toys and sports which he was fond of when a child? No, when he became a man, he put away those childish things; he is now past them, he is above them, for he is acquainted with those entertainments that are manly and more generous. Thus mean and little do the pleasures of sense appear to those that have learned to delight themselves in the Lord.

(2.) They are really dangerous, they are apt to take away the heart. If the heart be set upon them, they blind the mind, debauch the understanding and conscience, and in many quench the sparks of conviction, and of that holy fire which comes from heaven, and tends to heaven. They are in danger of drawing away the heart from God, and the more they are valued and coveted, the more dangerous they are, of piercing us through with many sorrows, and of drowning us in destruction and perdition: to deny ourselves in them is but to avoid a rock, upon which multitudes have fatally split.

What diminution is it to the pleasure of a safe and happy way on sure ground, which will certainly bring us to our journey's end, to deny ourselves the false and pretended satisfaction, of walking in a fair but dangerous way, that leads to destruction? Is it not much pleasanter travelling on a rough pavement, than on a smooth quicksand? Where there is a known peril, there can be no true pleasure, and therefore the want of it is no loss or uneasiness.

What pleasure can a wise or considerate man take in those entertainments, in which he has continual reason to suspect a snare and a design upon him, any more than he that was at a feast could relish the dainties of it, when he was aware of a naked sword hanging directly over him by a single thread! The foolish woman, indeed, calls the *stolen waters sweet*, and *bread eaten in secret pleasant*, (Prov. ix. 17, 18.) But those find no difficulty or uneasiness in denying them, who know *that the dead are there, and her guests are already in the depths of hell.* Therefore, however the corrupt heart may find some reluctance in refusing those forbidden pleasures, we may say of it, as Abigail did of David's denying himself the satisfaction of being revenged on Nabal; afterwards this shall be *no grief unto us, nor offence of heart*, 1 Sam. xxv. 31.

4. It is true, that *through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God*, (Acts xiv. 23.) that we must not only deny ourselves the pleasures of sense, but must sometimes expose ourselves to its pains; we must take up our cross when it lies in our way, and bear it after Christ. We are told, that *all, that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution*, at least they must expect it, and get ready for it; bonds and afflictions abide them, losses in their estates, hinderances in their preferment, reproaches and contempts, banishments, deaths must be counted upon: and will not this spoil the pleasure of religion? No, it will not; for,

(1.) It is but *light affliction* at the worst, that we are called to suffer, and *but for a moment*, compared with the *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* that is reserved for us, (2 Cor. iv. 17.) with which the *sufferings of this present time* are *not worthy to be compared*, Rom. viii. 18. All these troubles do but touch the body, the outward man, and the interests of it, they do not at all affect the soul: they break the shell, or pluck off the husk, but do not bruise the kernel.

Can the brave and courageous soldier take pleasure in the toils and perils of the camp, and in jeoparding his life in the high places of the field, in the eager pursuit of honour, and in the service of his prince and country? And shall not those who have the interests of Christ's kingdom near their hearts, and are carried on by a holy ambition of the honour that comes from God, take a delight in suffering for Christ, when they know that those sufferings tend to his honour, and their own hereafter? They that are *persecuted for righteousness sake*, that are *reviled*, and have *all manner of evil said against them falsely*, because they belong to Christ, are bidden not only to bear it patiently, but to rejoice in it, and to be *exceeding glad*, for *great is their reward in heaven*, Matt. v. 11, 12. Every reproach we endure for Christ, will be a pearl in our crown shortly.

(2.) As those *afflictions abound* for Christ, so our *consolations in Christ do much more abound*, 2 Cor. i. 5. The more the waters increased, the higher was the ark lifted up; the more we suffer in God's cause, the more we partake of his comforts; for he will not be wanting to those whom he calls out to any hardships more than ordinary for his name's sake. The Lord was with Joseph in the prison, when he lay there for a good conscience; and those went from the council rejoicing, that were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name; were honoured to be dishonoured for him, Acts v. 41.

Thus the extraordinary supports and joys which they experience, who patiently suffer for righteousness sake, add much more to the pleasantness of the ways of Wisdom, than the sufferings themselves do, or can, derogate from it; for the sufferings are human, the consolations are divine. They suffer in the flesh, but they rejoice in the spirit; they suffer for a time, but they rejoice evermore; and *this their joy no man taketh from them.*

CHAPTER VII.

THE APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE.

CONCERNING this doctrine of the pleasantness of religious ways, I hope we may now say, as Eliphaz does of his principle, *Lo! this, we have searched it, so it is*, (Job v. 27.) it is incontestably true, and therefore we may conclude as he does, *Hear it, and know thou it for thy good*; know thou it *for thyself*, so the margin reads it; apply it to thyself, believe it concerning thyself, not only that it is good, but that *it is good for thee, to draw near to God*, Ps. lxxiii. 28. Then only we hear things and know them for our good, when we hear them and know them for ourselves.

Three inferences, by way of counsel and exhortation, we shall draw from this doctrine.

1. Let us all then be persuaded, and prevailed with, to enter into, and to walk in, these paths of Wisdom, that are so very pleasant. This is what I principally intend in opening and proving this truth: most people would rather be courted than threatened to their duty. Much might be said to frighten you out of the ways of sin and folly, but I would hope to gain the same point another way, by alluring you into the ways of wisdom and holiness. This comes to invite you to a feast which the Lord of hosts has, in the gospel, made to all nations, (Isa. xxv. 6.) and to all in the nations, and to you among the rest, for none are excluded, that do not by their unbelief exclude themselves; *a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined*; delights for souls, infinitely transcending the delicacies of sense. You are welcome to this feast: come, for all things are now ready. *Come, eat of Wisdom's bread, and drink of the wine that she has mingled*, Prov. ix. 5.

Is a life of religion such a sweet and comfortable life? Why then should not we be religious? If such as these be the ways of Wisdom, why should not we be travellers in those ways? Let this recommend to us a life of sincere and serious godliness, and engage us to conform to all its rules, and give up ourselves to be ruled by them. It is not enough to have a good opinion of religion, and to give it a good word; that will but be a witness against us, if we do not set ourselves in good earnest to the practice of it, and make conscience of living up to it.

I would here, with a particular and pressing importunity, address myself to you that are young; to persuade you, now in the days of your youth, now in the present day, to make religion your choice and your business; and I assure you, if you do so, you will find it your delight. May God, by his grace, convince you of the real comforts that are to be had in real godliness, that you may be drawn cheerfully to Christ with these cords of a man, and held fast to him with these bands of love. *My son*, (says Solomon to his little scholar, Prov. xxiv. 13, 14.) *eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honey-comb, which is sweet to thy taste.* He does not forbid him the delights of sense, he may use them soberly and moderately, and with due caution; but remember that, *so shall the knowledge of Wisdom be to thy soul, when thou hast found it:* thou hast better pleasures

than these to mind and pursue, spiritual and rational ones · and instead of being made indifferent to those, we should rather be led to them, and quickened in our desires after them, by these delights of sense, which God gives us to engage us to himself and his service.

The age of youth is the age of pleasure; you think you may now be allowed to take your pleasure; O that you would take it, and seek it there, where alone it is to be had, and that is, in a strict observance of the laws of virtue and godliness. Would you live a pleasant life? begin betimes to live a religious life, and the sooner you begin, the more pleasant it will be: it is best travelling in a morning. Would you rejoice, O young people! in your youth, and have your hearts to cheer you in the days of your youth? (Eccl. xi. 9.) do not walk in the way of your corrupt and carnal hearts, but in the way of God's commandments; for he knows what is good for you, better than you do yourselves: do not walk in the sight of your eyes, for the eyes are apt to fly upon that which is not, (Prov. xxiii. 5.) but live by faith, that faith, which, being the *substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*, will lead you to that which is; for Wisdom *makes those that love her to inherit substance*, and *fills their treasures*, (Prov. viii. 21.) and thence arises their true satisfaction.

That which I would persuade you to, is, to walk in the way of Wisdom, to be sober-minded, to be thoughtful about your souls and your everlasting state, and get your minds well-principled, and well-affected, and well-inclined. *Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get Wisdom, and, with all thy getting, get understanding*, Prov. iv. 7. That of which I would persuade you, is, the pleasantness of this way; you cannot do better for yourselves, than by a religious course of life. *My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine;* (Prov. xxiii. 15, 16.) *yea, my reins shall rejoice if thy lips*, out of the abundance of thy heart, *speak right things;* but that is not all, not only my heart shall rejoice, but thy own shall.

I wish you would see, and seriously consider, the two rivals that are making court to you for your souls, for your best affections, Christ and Satan, and act wisely in disposing of yourselves, and make such a choice as you will afterwards reflect upon with comfort. You are now at the turning time of life; turn right now, and you are made for ever. Wisdom says, (Prov. ix. 4.) *Whoso is simple, let him turn in* to me; and she will cure him of his simplicity: Folly says, *Whoso is simple, let him turn in* to me; and she will take advantage of his simplicity: now let him come, whose right your hearts are, and give them him, and you shall have them again more your own.

That you may determine well between these two competitors for the throne in your souls,

(1.) See the folly of carnal, sinful pleasures, and abandon them; you will never be in love with the pleasures of religion till you are persuaded to fall out with forbidden pleasures. The enjoyment of the delights of sense suits best with that age, the appetite towards them is then most violent; mirth, sport, plays, dainties, are the idols of young people; they are therefore called *youthful lusts*. The days will come, the evil days, when they themselves will say they have *no pleasure in them*, like Barzillai, (2 Sam. xix. 35.) who, when he is old, can no more relish what he eats and what he drinks. O that reason, and wisdom, and grace, might make you as dead to them now, as time and days will make you after a while.

Will you believe one that tried the utmost of what the pleasures of sense could do towards making a man happy? He said of laughter, It *is mad*, and of mirth, *What doth it?* and that *sorrow is better than laughter*, Eccl. ii. 2. and vii. 3. Moses knew what the pleasures of the court were, and yet chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to continue in the snare of them; (Heb. xi. 25.) and you must make the same choice; for you will never cordially embrace the pleasures of religion, till you have renounced the pleasures of sin. Covenant against them, therefore, and watch against them.

If you would live, and go in the way of understanding, you must forsake the foolish, (Prov. ix. 6.) take heed of the way both of the *evil man*, and of the *strange woman;* avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away, Prov. iii. 12, 16. Look upon sinful pleasures as mean, and much below you; look upon them as vile, and much against you; and do not only despise them, but dread them, and hate even the garments spotted with the flesh.

(2.) Be convinced of the pleasure of Wisdom's ways, and come and try them. You are, it may be, prejudiced against religion as a melancholy thing, but, as Philip said to Nathanael, (John i. 46.) *Come and see*. Believe it possible, that there may be a pleasure in religion which you have not yet thought of. When religion is looked upon at a distance, we see not that pleasure in it, which we shall certainly find when we come to be better acquainted with it. Peter Martyr, in a sermon, illustrated it by this comparison, (and it proved a means of the conversion of the Marquis of Vico,) "He that looks upon persons dancing at a distance, would think they were mad; but let him come nearer, and observe how they take every step by rule, and keep time with the music, he will not only be pleased with it, but inclined to join with them."

Come and take Christ's yoke upon you, and you will find it easy; try the pleasure there is in the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, and in converse with spiritual and eternal things; try the pleasure of seriousness and self-denial, and you will find it

far exceeds that of vanity and self-indulgence. Try the pleasure of meditation on the word of God, of prayer and praise, and sabbath-sanctification, and you will think that you have made a happy change of the pleasure of vain and carnal mirth for these true delights.

Make this trial by these four rules:

[1.] That man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy him. Our pleasures will be according to that which we pitch upon and pursue as our chief end: if we can mistake so far, as to think it is our chief end to enjoy the world and the flesh, and our chief business to serve them, the delights of the sense will relish best with us; but if the world was made for man, certainly man was made for more than the world; and if God made man, certainly he made him for himself. God then is our chief good, it is our business to serve and please him, and our happiness to be accepted of him.

And if so, and we believe so, nothing will be a greater pleasure to us, than that which we have reason to think will be pleasing to him. If we do, indeed, look upon God as our chief good, we shall make him our *chief joy*, our *exceeding joy*. If we consider that we were made capable of the pleasure of conversing with God in this world, and seeing and enjoying him in another; we cannot but think that we wretchedly disparage ourselves, when we take up with the mean and sordid pleasures of sense as our felicity, especially if we forego all spiritual and eternal pleasures for them; as certainly we do, and give up all our expectations of them, if we place our happiness in these present delights; and we are guilty of a greater absurdity than that which profane Esau was guilty of, who, *for a mess of pottage, sold his birth-right*, Heb. xii. 16.

[2.] That the soul is the man, and that is best for us, that is best for our souls. Learn to think meanly of this flesh, by which we are allied to the earth and the inferior creatures; it is formed out of the dust, it is dust, and it is hastening to the dust; and then the things that gratify it, will not be esteemed of any great moment: *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them;* and therefore let us not make idols of them.

But the soul is the noble part of us, by which we are allied to heaven, and the world of spirits; those comforts therefore which delight the soul, are the comforts we should prize most, and give the preference to, for the soul's sake. Rational pleasures are the best for a man.

[3.] That the greatest joy is that which a stranger doth not intermeddle with, Prov. xiv. 10. The best pleasure is that which lies not under the eye and observation of the world, but which a man has and hides in his own bosom, and by which he enjoys himself, and keeps not only a peaceable, but a comfortable, possession of his own soul, though he does not by laughter, or other expressions of joy, tell them the satisfaction he has. Christ had *meat to eat which the world knew not of*, (John iv. 32.) and so have Christians, to whom he is the bread of life.

[4.] That all is well that ends everlastingly well. That pleasure ought to have the preference, which is of the longest continuance. The pleasures of sense are withering and fading, and leave a sting behind them to those that placed their happiness in them; but the pleasures of religion will abide with us; *in these is continuance*, (Isa. lxiv. 5.) they will not turn with the wind, nor change with the weather, but are meat which endures to everlasting life.

Reckon that the best pleasure which will remain with you, and stand you in stead, when you come to die: which will help to take off the terror of death, and allay its pains. The remembrance of sinful pleasures will give us killing terrors, but the remembrance of religious pleasures will give us living comforts in dying moments. They that live in Belshazzar's revels, may expect to receive the summons of death, with the same confusion that he did, when *the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another;* (Dan. v. 6.) but they that live in Hezekiah's devotions, may receive them with the same composure that he did, when with a great deal of satisfaction he looked back upon a well-spent life: *Now, Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with an upright heart*, Isa. xxxvii. 3.

2. Let us, that profess religion, study to make it more and more pleasant to ourselves. We see how much is done to make it so; let us not receive the grace of God herein in vain. Let them that walk in Wisdom's ways, taste the sweetness of them, and relish it. Christ's service is perfect freedom; let us not make a drudgery of it, nor a toil of such a pleasure. We should not only be reconciled to our duty, (as we ought to be to our greatest afflictions, and to make the best of it,) but we should rejoice in our duty, and sing at our work. If God intended that his service should be a pleasure to his servants, let them concur with him herein, and not walk contrary to him.

Now in order to the making of our religion increasingly pleasant to us, I shall give seven directions.

(1.) Let us always keep up good thoughts of God, and carefully watch against hard thoughts of him. As it is the original error of many that are loose and careless in religion, that they *think God altogether such a one as themselves*, (Ps. l. 21.) as much a friend to sin as themselves, and as indifferent whether his work be done or no; so it is the error of many that are severe in their religion, that they think God, like themselves, a hard master; they have such thoughts of him, as Job had in an hour of temptation, when he looked upon God as seeking occasions against him, numbering his steps, and watching over his sins, and taking him for his enemy; (Job xiii.

24. and xiv. 16.) as if he were extreme to mark iniquities, and implacable to those who had offended, and not accepting any service that had in it the least defect or imperfection.

But the matter is not so, and we do both God and ourselves a great deal of wrong, if we imagine it to be so; what could have been done more than God has done, to convince us that he is gracious and merciful, *slow to anger*, and ready to forgive sin when it is repented of? *I said, I will confess mine iniquity unto thee, and thou forgavest;* (Ps. xxxii. 5.) and he is ready to accept the services that come from an upright heart. He *will not always chide*, nor *contend for ever*. So far is he from taking advantage of us, that he makes the best of us: where the spirit is willing, he accepts that, and overlooks the weakness of the flesh. Let us deal with him accordingly; look upon God as Love, and the God of love, and then it will be pleasant to us to hear from him, to speak to him, to converse with him, and to do him any service.

It is true, God is great, and glorious, and jealous, and to be worshipped with reverence and holy fear; but is he not our Father, a tender, gracious father? Was not God, in Christ, *reconciling the world* to himself, (2 Cor. v. 19.) and to all his attributes and relations to us, by showing himself willing to be reconciled to us, notwithstanding our provocations? See him, therefore, upon a throne of grace, and come boldly to him; and that will make your service pleasant.

(2.) Let us dwell much, by faith, upon the promises of God. What pleasant lives should we lead, if we were but more intimately acquainted with those declarations which God has made of his good will to man, and the assurances he has given of his favour, and all the blessed fruits of it, to those who serve him faithfully? The promises are many, and exceeding great and precious, suited to our case, and accommodated to every exigence; there are not only promises *to* grace, but promises *of* grace, grace sufficient; and these promises are all *Yea* and *Amen* in Christ.

What do these promises stand in our Bibles for, but to be made use of? Come then, and let us apply them to ourselves, and insert our own names in them by faith. What God said to Abraham, *I am thy shield*, (Gen. xv. 1.) I am *El-shaddi*, a *God All-sufficient;* (Gen. xvii. 1.) what he said to Joshua, *I will never fail thee nor forsake thee*, (Josh. i. 5.) he says to me. What he says to all that love him, that *all things shall work for good to them*, (Rom. viii. 28.) and to all that *fear him*, that *no good thing* shall be *wanting* to them, (Ps. xxxiv. 10.) he says to me; and why should not I take the comfort of it?

These promises, and the like, are *wells of salvation*, from which we may *draw water with joy;* and *breasts of consolation*, from which we may *suck, and be satisfied;* they will be both our *strength*, and our *song* in the *house of our pilgrimage*. So well-ordered is the covenant of grace in all things, and so sure, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) that if, having laid up our portion in it, and so made it all our salvation, we would but fetch our maintenance from it, and so make it all our desire and delight, we should have in it a continual feast, and should go on our way rejoicing, Ps. cxix. 111.

(3.) Let us order the affairs of our religion with discretion. Many make religion unpleasant to themselves, and discouraging to others, by their imprudent management of it; making that service to be a burthen by the circumstances of it, which in itself would be a pleasure; doing things out of time, or tasking themselves above their strength, and undertaking more than they can go through with, especially at first; which is like *putting new wine into old bottles*, (Matt. ix. 17.) or like *over-driving the flocks one day*, Gen. xxxiii. 13. If we make the yoke of Christ heavier than he has made it, we may thank ourselves that our drawing in it becomes unpleasant. Solomon cautions us, (Eccl. vii. 16.) against being *righteous overmuch*, and making ourselves *overwise*, as that by which we may destroy ourselves, and put ourselves out of conceit with our religion; there may be over-doing in well-doing, and then it becomes unpleasant.

But let us take our religion as Christ has settled it, and we shall find it easy. When the ways of our religion are ways of Wisdom, then they are ways of pleasantness; for the more wisdom the more pleasantness; and that Wisdom dwells with prudence. Wisdom will direct us to be even and regular in our religion, to take care that the duties of our general and particular calling, the business of our religion, and our necessary business in the world, do not interfere or intrench upon one another. It will direct us to time duty aright; for every thing is beautiful and pleasant in its season, (Eccl. iii. 11.) and work is then easy, when we are in frame for it.

(4.) Let us live in love, and keep up Christian charity, and the spiritual communion of saints; if we would be of good comfort, we must be of one mind, (2 Cor. xiii. 11.) and therefore the apostle presses brotherly love upon us, with an argument taken from the consolations in Christ, (Phil. ii. 1.) that is, the comfort that is in Christianity. As ever you hope to have the comfort of your religion, submit to that great law of it, *Walk in love:* for, *Behold, how good, and how pleasant, it is*, (how good in itself, and pleasant to us,) *for brethren to dwell together in unity*. The more pleasing we are to our brethren, the more pleasant we shall be to ourselves.

Nothing makes our lives more uncomfortable than strife and contention; *Woe is me that I dwell* among those that *hate peace*, Ps. cxx. 5. It is bad being among those that are disposed to quarrel, and worse

having in ourselves a disposition to quarrel. The resentments of contempt put upon us, are uneasy enough, and contrivances to revenge it much more so. And nothing makes our religion more uncomfortable, than strifes and contentions about that. We forfeit and lose the pleasure of it, if we entangle ourselves in perverse disputings about it.

But by holy love we enjoy our friends, which will add to the pleasure of enjoying God in this world. Love itself sweetens the soul, and revives it, and, as it is the loadstone of love, it fetches in the further pleasure and satisfaction of being beloved, and so it is a heaven upon earth; for what is the happiness and pleasure of heaven, but that there love reigns in perfection? Then we have most peace in our bosoms, when we are most peaceably disposed towards our brethren.

(5.) Let us be much in the exercise of holy joy, and employ ourselves much in praise. Joy is the heart of praise, as praise is the language of joy; let us engage ourselves to these, and quicken ourselves in these. God has made these our duty, that by these all the other parts of our duty may be pleasant to us; and for that end we should abound much in them, and attend upon God with joy and praise. Let us not crowd our spiritual joys into a corner of our hearts, nor our thankful praises into a corner of our prayers, but give both scope and vent to both.

Let us live a life of delight in God, and love to think of him as we do of one whom we love and value. Let the flowing in of every stream of comfort lead us to the fountain; and in every thing that is grateful to us, let us taste that the Lord is gracious. Let the drying up of every stream of comfort drive us to the fountain; and let us rejoice the more in God for our being deprived of that which we used to rejoice in.

Let us be frequent and large in our thanksgivings. It will be pleasant to us to recount the favours of God, and thus to make some returns for them; though poor and mean, yet such as God will graciously accept. We should have more pleasure in our religion, if we had but learned in *every thing to give thanks*, (1 Thess. v. 18.) for that takes out more than half the bitterness of our afflictions, that we can see cause even to be thankful for them; and it infuses more than a double sweetness into our enjoyments, that they furnish us with matter for that excellent heavenly work of praise; *Sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant;* comfortable, as well as comely, Ps. cxxxv. 3.

(6.) Let us act in a constant dependence upon Jesus Christ. Religion would be much more pleasant, if we did but cleave more closely to Christ in it, and do all in his name. The more precious Christ is to us, the more pleasant will every part of our work be; and therefore believing in Christ is often expressed by our rejoicing *in him*, Phil. iii. 3. We may rejoice in God, through Christ, as the Mediator between us and God; may rejoice in our communion with God, when it is kept up through Christ; may rejoice in hope of eternal life, when we see this life in the Son: *He that hath the Son of God, has life*, that is, he has comfort, 1 John v. 11, 12.

There is that in Christ, and in his undertaking and performances for us, which is sufficient to satisfy all our doubts, to silence all our fears, and to balance all our sorrows. He was appointed to be the consolation of Israel, and he will be so to us, when we have learnt not to look for that in ourselves, which is to be had in him only, and to make use of his mediation in every thing wherein we have to do with God. When we rejoice in the righteousness of Christ, and in his grace and strength, rejoice in his satisfaction and intercession, rejoice in his dominion and universal agency and influence, and in the progress of his gospel, and the conversion of souls to him, and please ourselves with prospects of his second coming, we have then a joy, not only which no man takes from us, but which will increase more and more; and of the *increase of* Christ's *government*, (and therefore of that peace,) *there shall be no end*, Isa. ix. 7. Our songs of joy are then most pleasant, when the burthen of them is, *None but Christ, none but Christ.*

(7.) Let us converse much with the glory that is to be revealed. They that by faith send their hearts and best affections before them to heaven, while they are here on this earth, may in return fetch thence some of those joys and pleasures that are at God's right hand. That which goes up in vapours of holy desire, though insensible, in groanings which cannot be uttered, will come down again in dews of heavenly consolations, which will make the soul as a watered garden.

Let us look much to the end of our way, how glorious it will be, and that will help to make our way pleasant. This abundantly satisfies the saints, and is the fatness of God's house on earth, Ps. xxxvi. 8, 9. This makes them now to *drink of the river of God's pleasures*, that *with him is the fountain of life*, whence all these streams come, and *in his light* they hope to *see light*, everlasting light. By frequent meditations on that rest which remains for the people of God, (Heb. iv. 3.) we now enter into that rest, and partake of the comfort of it.

Our hopes of that happiness through grace would be very much strengthened, and our evidences for it cleared up insensibly, if we did but converse more with it, and the discoveries made of it in the Scripture. We may have foretastes of heavenly delights, while we are here on earth, clusters from Canaan, while we are yet in this wilderness, and there is no pleasure comparable to that which these afford. That is the sweetest joy within us, which is borrowed

from the joy set before us. And we deprive ourselves very much of the comfort of our religion, in not having our eye more to that joy. We rejoice most triumphantly, and with the greatest degrees of holy glorying, when we *rejoice in hope of the glory of God*, Rom. v. 2. In this our heart is glad, and our glory rejoices, Ps. xvi. 9.

3. Let us make it appear, that we have, indeed, found Wisdom's ways to be pleasantness, and her paths peace. If we have experienced this truth, let us evidence our experience, and not only in word, but in deed, bearing our testimony to the truth of it. Let us live as those who believe the sweetness of religion, not because we are told it, but because we have tasted it, 1 John i. 1.

If so be then, to borrow the apostle's words, (1 Pet. ii. 3.) *we have tasted that the Lord is gracious*, if we have, indeed, found it a pleasant thing to be religious;

(1.) Let our hearts be much enlarged in all religious exercises, and all instances of gospel-obedience. The more pleasant the service of God is, the more we should abound in it. When God enlarges our hearts with his consolations, he expects that we should run the way of his commandments, that we should exert ourselves in our duty with more vigour, and press forward the more earnestly towards perfection.

This should make us forward to every good work, and ready to close with all opportunities of serving God, and doing good; that which we take a pleasure in, we need not to be twice *called to*. If indeed the hearts of those rejoice that seek the Lord, (as in Ps. cv. 3.) then when God says, *Seek ye my face*, how steadily should our hearts answer at the first word, *Thy face, Lord, will we seek;* (Ps. xxvii. 8.) and how glad shall we be, when it is said, *Let us go to the house of the Lord!* Ps. cxxii. 1. This should make us forward to acts of charity, that there is a pleasure in doing good; and we shall reflect with comfort upon it, that we have done something that will turn to the honour of God and our own account.

This should make us lively in our duty; and fix the heart in hearing the word, and in prayer and praise. Those that take delight in music, how does it engage them! How do all the marks of a close application of mind appear in their countenance and carriage! And shall not we, by our attending on the Lord without distraction, make it to appear, that we attend upon him with delight, and are in our element when we are in his service? Let this be my rest for ever: here let me dwell all the days of my life.

This should keep us constant and unwearied in the work and service of God. What is really our delight, we are not soon weary of. If we delight in approaching to God, we shall seek him daily, and make it our daily work to honour him. If meditation and prayer be sweet, let them be our daily exercise; and let this bind our souls with a bond to God, and the *sacrifice* as *with cords to the horns of the altar*. With this we should answer all temptations to apostasy: "Shall I quit so good a master, so good a service? Entreat me not to leave Christ, or to turn from following after him; for *it is good to be here.*" *Here let us make tabernacles*, (Matt. xvii. 4.) *Whither* else *shall we go*, but to him that has *the words of eternal life*.

(2.) Let our whole conversation be cheerful, and melancholy be banished. Are the ways of religion pleasant? Let us be pleasant in them, both to ourselves, and to those about us. As for those who are yet in a state of sin and wrath, they have reason to be melancholy; let the sinners in Zion be afraid, be afflicted, joy is forbidden fruit to them; what have they to do with peace? *Rejoice not*, O Israel, *for joy as other people, for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God*, Hos. ix. 1.

But those who, through grace, are called out of darkness into a marvellous light, have cause to be cheerful, and should have hearts to be so. *Arise, shine, for thy Light is come*, Isa. lx. 1. Is the Sun of Righteousness risen upon us? Let us arise, look forth as the morning with the morning. That comfort which Christ directs to our souls, let us reflect back upon others. And as our light is come, so is our liberty. Art thou *loosed from the bands of thy neck? O captive daughter of* Zion, *awake, awake, put on thy strength, put on thy beautiful garment, and shake thyself from the dust, arise and sit down, O Jerusalem*, Isa. lii. 1, 2.

Though vain and carnal mirth is both a great sin, and a great snare, yet there is a holy cheerfulness and pleasantness of conversation, which will not only consist very well with serious godliness, but greatly promote it in ourselves, and greatly adorn it and recommend it to others. *A merry heart* (Solomon says) *does good like a medicine*, (Prov. xvii. 22.) and make fat the bones; while a broken spirit does hurt like a poison, and dries the bones. Christians should endeavour to keep up a cheerful temper, and not indulge themselves in that which is saddening and disquieting to the spirit; and they should show it in all holy conversation, that those they converse with may see, they did not renounce pleasure, when they embraced religion.

I am sure none have so much reason to rejoice as good people have, nor so much done for them to encourage their joy; and therefore, (to allude to that of Jonadab to Amnon,) *Why art thou, being the king's son, lean from day to day?* 2 Sam. xiii. 4. Are we in prosperity? Therefore let us be cheerful, in gratitude to the God of our mercies, who expects that we should *serve him with joyfulness and gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things*, (Deut. xxviii. 47.) and justly takes it ill if we do not.

Tristis es, et felix? Sciat hoc Fortuna caveto,
Ingratum dicet te (Lupe) si scierit. *Mart.*

In the midst of prosperity are you sorrowful? Beware that Fortune hear it not; if she be informed of it (Lupus) she will call you ungrateful. Mart.

Are we in affliction? Yet let us be cheerful, that we may make it appear that our happiness is not laid up in the creature, nor our treasures on earth. If it is the privilege of Christians to rejoice in tribulation, let them not throw away their privilege, but glory in it, and make use of it. Let the joy of the Lord, which has infused itself into our hearts, diffuse itself into all our converse. *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy,* (Eccl. ix. 7.) *and drink thy wine;* nay, if thou shouldst be reduced to drink mere water, drink it *with a merry heart,* if thou hast good ground to hope that in Christ Jesus, God now accepts thy works: and this joy of the Lord will be thy strength.

(3.) Let us look with contempt upon the pleasures of sense, and with abhorrence upon the pleasures of sin. The more we have tasted of the delights of heaven, the more our mouths should be put out of taste with the delights of this earth. Let not those who have been feasted with the milk and honey of Canaan, hanker after the garlic and onions of Egypt.

Let us keep at a distance from all forbidden pleasures; there is a hook under those baits, a snake under the green grass; a rock under those smooth waters, on which multitudes have split. We must so dread the drunkard's pleasure, as not to *look upon the wine when it is red,* (Prov. xxiii. 31.) so dread the pleasures of the adulterer, as not to *look upon a woman to lust after her;* (Matt. v. 28.) for these pleasures of sin not only are but for a season, but at the last they bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder. Either spiritual pleasures will deaden the force of the pleasures of sin, or the pleasures of sin will spoil the relish of spiritual pleasures.

Let us keep up a holy indifference even to the lawful delights of sense, and take heed not to love them more than God. The eye that has looked at the sun, is dazzled to every thing else. Have we beheld the beauty of the Lord? Let us see and own how little beauty there is in other things. If we be tempted to do any thing unbecoming us, by the allurements of pleasure, we may well say, "Offer these things to those that know no better; but we do, and will never leave fountains of living water for cisterns of puddle water."

(4.) Let not our hearts envy sinners. Envy arises from an opinion that the state of others is better than our own, which we grudge and are displeased at, and wish ourselves in their condition. Good people are often cautioned against this sin: *Be not thou envious against evil men, nor desire to be with them;* (Prov. xxiv. 1. Ps. xxxvii. 1.) for if there be all this pleasure in religion, and we have experienced it, surely we would not exchange our condition with any sinner, even in his best estate.

Envy not sinners their outward prosperity, their wealth and abundance, which put them into a capacity of having all the delights of sense raised to the highest pitch of pleasure; though they lie *upon beds of ivory,* (Amos vi. 4, 5, 6.) and *stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flocks, and the calves out of the midst of the stall, though they chant to the sound of the viol, drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments;* yet those have no reason to envy them, whose souls dwell at ease in God; who are fed with the bread of life, the true manna, angels' food, and drink of the water of life freely; that make melody with their hearts to the Lord, and are made to hear from him joy and gladness; and have received the anointing of the Spirit. If we have relished the delights of religion, we shall say as David, *Let us not eat of their dainties,* Ps. cxiv. 4.

Envy not sinners the liberty they take to sin; that they can allow themselves in the full enjoyment of those pleasures which we cannot think of without horror; but have not we then the enjoyment of those pleasures which are infinitely better, and which they are strangers to? We cannot have both, and of the two, are not ours, without dispute, preferable to theirs; and why then should we envy them? Their pleasures are enslaving, ours enlarging; theirs debasing to the soul, ours ennobling; theirs surfeiting, ours satisfying; theirs offensive to God, ours pleasing to him; theirs will end in pain and bitterness, ours will be perfected in endless joys; and what reason then have we to envy them?

(5.) Let not our spirits sink, or be dejected, under the afflictions of this present time. We disparage our comforts in God, if we lay too much to heart our crosses in the world: and therefore, hereby let us evidence, that, being satisfied *of* God's loving-kindness, we are satisfied *with* it. Let us look upon that as sufficient to balance all the unkindnesses of men. They that value themselves upon God's smiles, ought not to vex themselves at the world's frowns. The light of God's countenance can shine through the thickest clouds of the troubles of this present time: and, therefore, we should walk in the light of the Lord, even when, as to our outward condition, we sit in darkness.

We manifest that we have found true delight and satisfaction in the service of God, and communion with him, when the pleasure of them will make the bitterest cup of affliction that our Father puts into our hand, not only passable but pleasant; so that, like blessed Paul, when we are as sorrowful, yet we may be always rejoicing, and may take pleasure in infirmities and reproaches, because, though, for the present, they are not joyous but grievous, yet when afterwards they yield the peaceable fruit of righte-

ousness, they become not grievous, but truly joyous. *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest.*

(6.) Let the pleasure we have found in religion, dispose us to be liberal and charitable to the poor and distressed. The pleasing sense we have of God's bounty to us, by which he has done so much to make us easy, should engage us bountifully to distribute to the necessities of saints, according to our ability; not only to keep them from perishing, but to make them easy, and that they may rejoice as well as we. Cheerfulness that enlarges the heart, should open the hand too. Paul observes it concerning the churches of Macedonia, who were ready to give for the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem, that it was the *abundance of their joy*, their spiritual joy, their joy in God, that *abounded unto the riches of their liberality*, 2 Cor. viii. 2.

When the people of Israel are commanded to *rejoice in every good thing* which God had given them, (Deut. xxvi. 11, 12.) they are commanded also to give freely to *the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat and be filled.* And when upon a particular occasion they are directed to *eat the fat*, and *drink the sweet*, (Neh. viii. 10.) at the same time they are directed to *send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared:* and then the joy of the Lord will be their strength. By our being charitable, we should show that we are cheerful; that we cheerfully taste God's goodness in what we have, and trust his goodness for what we may hereafter want.

(7.) Let us do what we can to bring others to partake of the same pleasures in religion which we have tasted, especially those who are under our charge. It adds very much to the pleasure of an enjoyment, to communicate of it to others, especially when the nature of it is such, that we have never the less, but the more rather, for others sharing in it. What good tidings we hear, that are of common concern, we desire that others may hear them, and be glad too. He that has but found a lost sheep, *calls his friends and neighbours to rejoice with him;* (Luke xv. 6.) but he that has found Christ, and found comfort in him, can say, not only, Come, rejoice with me, but, Come, and partake with me; for yet there is room enough for all, though ever so numerous, enough for each, though ever so necessitous and craving.

When Samson had found honey in the carcass of the lion, (Judg. xiv. 8.) he brought some of it to his parents, that they might partake with him: thus when we have found a day in God's courts better than a thousand, we should invite others into those courts, by telling them what God has done for our souls, and how willing he is to do the same for theirs, if they, in like manner, apply themselves to him. When Andrew, with a surprising pleasure, finds the Messiah, (John i. 41, 45.) he cannot rest till he has brought his brother Peter to him; nor Philip till he has brought his friend Nathaniel. They that are feasted with the comforts of God's house, should not covet to eat their morsel alone, but be willing to communicate of their spiritual things.

(8.) Let us be willing to die, and leave this world. We have reason to be ashamed of ourselves, that we, who have not only laid up our treasures above, but fetch our pleasures thence, are as much in love with our present state, and as loth to think of quitting it, as if our riches, and pleasure, and all, were wrapt up in the things of sense and time. The delights of sense entangle us and hold us here; these are the things that make us loth to die, as one once said, viewing his fine house and gardens. And are these things sufficient to court our stay here, when God says, *Arise, and depart, for this is not your rest?* Mic. ii. 10.

Let us not be afraid to remove from a world of sense to a world of spirits, since we have found the pleasures of sense not worthy to be compared with *spiritual pleasures.* When in old age, which is one of the valleys of the shadow of death, we can no longer relish the delights of the body, but they become sapless and tasteless, (as they were to Barzillai,) yet we need not call those *evil days*, and *years in which we have no pleasure*, if we have walked and persevered in Wisdom's ways; for if so, we may then in old age look back with pleasure upon a life well spent on earth, (as Hezekiah did,) and look forward with pleasure, upon a life to be better spent in heaven.

And when we have received a sentence of death within ourselves, and see the day approaching, the pleasure we have in loving God, and believing in Christ, and in the expressions of holy joy and thankfulness, should make even a sick-bed and a death-bed easy; *The saints shall be joyful in glory, and shall sing aloud upon their beds*, (Ps. cxlix. 5.) those beds to which they are confined, and from which they are removing to their graves, their beds in the darkness. Our religion, if we be faithful to it, will furnish us with living comforts in dying moments, sufficient to balance the pains of death, and take off the terror of it, and to enable us to triumph over it; *O death! where is thy sting?* Let us then evidence our experience of the pleasures of religion, by living above the inordinate love of life, and fear of death.

(9.) *Lastly*, Let us long for the perfection of these spiritual pleasures in the kingdom of glory. When we come thither, and not till then, they will be perfected; while we are here, as we know and love but in part, so we rejoice but in part; even our spiritual joys here have their damps and allays; we mix tears and tremblings with them: but, in heaven, there is a *fulness of joy* without mixture, and *pleasures for evermore*, without period or diminution. The servants of Christ will there enter into the joy

of their Lord, and it shall be *everlasting joy*, Isa. xxxv. 10.

And what are the pleasures in the way of Wisdom, compared with those at the end of the way? If a complacency in the divine beauty and love be so pleasant while we are in the body, and are absent from the Lord, what will it be when we have put off the body, and go to be present with the Lord? If a day in God's courts, and a few minutes spent there in his praises, be so pleasant; what will an eternity within the veil be, among them that dwell in his house above, and are still praising him? If the earnest of our inheritance be so comfortable, what will the inheritance itself be?

Now whenever there is grace, it will be aiming at, and pressing towards, its own perfection; it is a *well of water springing up to eternal life;* (John iv. 14.) this therefore we should be *longing for*. Our love to God in this world is love in motion, in heaven it will be love at rest: O when shall that sabbatism come, which remains for the people of God? Here we have the pleasure of looking towards God; *O when shall we come and appear before him?* Our Lord Jesus, when at his last passover, which he earnestly desired to eat with his disciples, he had tasted of the *fruit of the vine*, speaks as one that longed to drink it *new in the kingdom of his Father*, Matt. xxvi. 29. It is very pleasant to serve Christ here, but to *depart and be with Christ, is far better. Now are we the sons of God*, (1 John iii. 2.) and it is very pleasant to think of it; but *it doth not yet appear what we shall be:* something there is in reserve, which we are kept in expectation of. We are not yet at home, but should long to be there, and keep up holy desires of that glory to be revealed, that we may be quickened, as long as we are here, to press *toward the mark for the prize of the high calling*.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

MEEKNESS AND QUIETNESS OF SPIRIT.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A SERMON ON ACTS XXVIII. 22.

SHOWING THAT THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS NOT A SECT; AND YET THAT IT IS EVERY WHERE SPOKEN AGAINST.

To the Reader.

I do not think it at all needful to tell the world what it was which led me to the writing of this discourse concerning Meekness, the substance of which was preached several years ago; nor am I concerned to apologize for the publication of it: if I thought it needed an apology I would not consent to it. That temper of mind, which it endeavours to promote, and to charm men into, every one will own to be highly conducive to the comfort of human life, the honour of our holy religion, and the welfare and happiness of all societies, civil and sacred: and therefore, while the design cannot be disliked, I hope what is weak and defective in the management, will be excused. Some useful discourses have been of late published against rash anger, and an excellent dissuasive from revenge by the present Bishop of Chester; wherein those brutish vices are justly exposed. I am cooperating in the design, while I recommend the contrary virtues to the love and practice of all that profess relation to the Holy Jesus. And if this Essay have that good effect upon those into whose hands it shall at any time fall, my object will be attained.

As to the Sermon annexed, it is published (with some enlargements) at the request of a very worthy friend who heard it preached in London last summer: and since, blessed be God, there are a great many testimonies borne at this day, against the avowed infidelity and impiety of the age, I hope this may be accepted as a mite cast into that treasury, by a cordial friend to peace and holiness.

M. HENRY.

Chester, Nov. 21, 1698.

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[a] V. 1, 2.

1 Peter iii. 4. [latter part.]

——*Even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*

The apostle Peter, in this Epistle, (as also his beloved brother Paul, in many of his,) is very earnest in pressing upon Christians the conscientious discharge of the duties of their particular relations, and not without good reason; for generally it holds true, "That we are really, as we are relatively."[a] He is here, in the former part of this chapter, directing Christian wives how to carry themselves in that relation, to the glory of God, their own comfort, and the spiritual benefit and advantage of their yokefellows. Among other good lessons, he teaches them how to dress themselves as it becomes women professing godliness.* Those of that sex are commonly observed to be very solicitous about their ornaments. When the question is asked, *Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?* it is supposed scarcely possible, Jer. ii. 32. This prevailing inclination the apostle here takes hold of, for the recommending of those graces and duties to their choice and practice, which are indeed the most excellent and amiable adorning, not only of their sex to whom the exhortation is primarily directed, but of the other also, for whom, no doubt, it is likewise intended. Observe this method:

1. He endeavours to wean them from the vanity of outward ornaments, v. 3. *whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning*, &c. ων ἔσω—κόσμος. This does not forbid the sober and moderate use of decent ornaments, when it is according to the quality, place,

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* *Genus muliebre est* φιλόκοσμον.—The race of women is attached to ornaments. *Lorin. in loc.*

and station, and in due season; (not on days of fasting, and humiliation, when it is proper for ornaments to be laid aside, Exod. xxxiii. 4, 5.) but it forbids the inordinate love and excessive use (that is, the abuse) of them. There *may be* the *plaiting of the hair*, and the *wearing of gold*, and there *must be* the *putting on of apparel;* (that shame, which came into the world with sin, has made it necessary;) but we must not make these things our adorning; that is, we must not set our hearts upon them, nor value ourselves by them, nor think the better of ourselves for them, nor pride ourselves in them, as if they added any real excellency to us, nor say to them as Saul did to Samuel, *Honour me now before this people*, out of a vain ambition to make *a fair show in the flesh*. We must spend no more care, or thoughts, or time, or words, or cost, about them, and lay no more stress or weight upon them, than they deserve, and that is but a very little. It is but *glory hung upon us*, as the expression is, (Isa. xxii. 24.) and has no glory, if compared with the glory that excelleth it even in the creatures that are so far below us:[b] for Solomon, in all his glory, *was not arrayed* or beautified like one of those *lilies, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven*. We must not seek first these things, nor seek them most, as if we had bodies for no other end than to wear out our clothes, and had nothing else to do with them than to make them fine. It was the folly, and proved the ruin, of that rich man in the parable, that he made his purple, and his fine linen, (with the other ornaments and delights of the body,) his good things, the things in which he placed his happiness, and in which he had his consolation, (Luke xvi. 19, 25.) that is, in the language of this scripture, he made them *his adorning*;[c] and so, being unclothed of these, he was found naked. Let not the wearing of gold, and the putting on of apparel, be κόσμος—*the world;* so it may be rendered: it is *mundus muliebris—a woman's world*. Let not these things be all the world with us, as they are with many, who reckon that to be out of the fashion (whatever it be) is to be out of the world.[d] Christians are called out of the world, and delivered from it, and should evidence a victory obtained by faith over it, as in other instances, so in this. It is a prescribed rule of our holy religion, (whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear,) that *women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety*, 1 Tim. ii. 9. But whereas there are some, on the one hand, that exclaim against vanity in apparel as the crying sin of this age, above any other, as if it were a new thing under the sun, and the former days were, in this respect, better than these;[e] and some, on the other hand, condemn it as a piece of fanaticism to witness (as there is occasion) against this vanity; both may receive a sufficient answer, if they will but read that excellent Homily of the Church of England, entitled, "An Homily against Excess of Apparel," (No. 18.) by which it will appear, that even in those early days of the reformation, it was a vanity that prevailed much in our land, and which the rulers of the church thought themselves obliged to reprove. But we will hasten to the text.

2. He endeavours to bring them in love with the better ornaments, those of the mind, the graces of the blessed Spirit, here called ὁ κρυπτὸς ἄνθρωπος—*the hidden man of the heart*. Grotius observes, that "though he writes to women, yet he uses a word of the masculine gender, because the ornament he recommends, is such as both men and women must be adorned with." Grace, as a living principle of regular holy thoughts, words, and actions, is sometimes called the *new man*, (Eph. iv. 24.) sometimes the *inward man*, (Rom. vii. 22. and 2 Cor. iv. 16.) and so here, the *hidden man of the heart*. It is called a man, because it is made up of many parts and members, and its operations are vital and rational; and it restores those to the dignity of men, who, by sin, had made themselves like the beasts that perish. It is called the *man of the heart*, because out of the heart are the *issues of life;* there lie the springs of the words and actions, and therefore into that the salt of grace is cast, and so all the waters are healed.[g] He is the Christian indeed, that is one inwardly, and that circumcision, that baptism, which is *of the heart*, Rom. ii. 29. It is called the *hidden man of the heart*, because the work of grace is a secret thing, and does not make a pompous show in the eye of the world; it is a *mystery of godliness;* a[h] *life* that is *hid* with Christ in God, to whom secret things belong; therefore the saints are called his *hidden ones*, (Ps. lxxxiii. 3.) for the world knows them not, much less does it yet appear what they shall be. The king's daughter that is espoused to Christ, is *all glorious within*, Ps. xlv. 13. The working of grace in the soul is often represented as a regeneration, or being begotten again; and perhaps when this good work is called the *hidden man of the heart*, there may be some allusion to the[i] forming of the bones in the womb of her that is with child, which Solomon speaks of as unaccountable, as is also the way of the Spirit, Eccl. xi. 5. compare John iii. 8. And lastly, it consists in that which is not corruptible; it is not depraved or vitiated by the corruption that is in the world through lust, and is in the soul a *well of living water, springing up unto eternal life*, John iv. 14.

In the text he specifies one particular grace, one member of this *hidden man in the heart*, which we must every one of us adorn ourselves with, and

b Matt. vi. 29, 30. c 2 Cor. v. 3.
d Gal. i. 4. 1 John v. 4. e Eccl. vii. 10.
f Prov. iv. 33. g 2 Kings ii. 21.
h Col. iii. 3. i Ps. cxxxix. 14–16.

that is, *a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.* Where observe,

(1.) The grace itself here recommended to us; it is a *meek and quiet spirit.* There must be not only a meek and quiet behaviour outwardly; there may be that, either by constraint, or with some base and disguised design, while the soul in the mean time is rough and turbulent, and envenomed; the words may be softer than oil, while war is in the heart, Ps. lv. 21. But the word of God is κριτικος—*a discerner* and *judge* of the *thoughts* and *intents* of the heart, Heb. iv. 12. The power of men's laws may bind a man to good behaviour, but it is only the power of God's grace that will *renew a right spirit* within him, Ps. li. 10. It is this that makes the tree good, and then the fruit will be good. The God with whom we have to do, demands the heart, looks at the principle, and requires truth in the inward parts, not only in the duties of his own immediate worship, that those be done in the Spirit, but also in the duty we owe to our neighbour, that that also be done with a pure heart, and without dissimulation. The word of command which the Captain of our salvation gives, is, Christians, *take heed to your spirits*, Mal. ii. 15.

(2.) The excellency of this grace; it is *in the sight of God of great price.* It is really a precious grace, for it is so in the sight of God, and we know that he can neither deceive, nor be deceived. It is πολυτελὲς, which is the same word that is used, (1 Tim. ii. 9.) for that *costly array*, which is joined with *gold* and *pearls*, ἱματισμῷ πολυτελεῖ. Persons of quality, in their ornaments, affect not so much that which is gay, as that which is rich; not that which makes a glittering, gaudy show, and pleases children and fools, but that which is of intrinsic value, and recommends itself to the intelligent. A meek and quiet spirit is such an ornament, which has not that *gaiety* which is agreeable to the humour of a carnal world, but that real worth which recommends it to the favour of God. It is one of those graces which are compared to the *powders of the merchant*, (Cant. iii. 6.) far-fetched, and dear-bought, even with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. [k]Herein we should every one φιλοτιμεμεθα—*labour*, and this we should be ambitious of, as the greatest honour, that present or absent, living and dying, we may be *accepted of the Lord;* and blessed be God it is a thing attainable, through the Mediator, from whom we have received how to walk so as to please him; we must walk with *meekness* and *quietness* of Spirit, for this is *in the sight of God of great price.* Therefore this mark of honour is, in a special manner, put upon the grace of meekness, because it is commonly despised and looked upon with contempt by the children of this world, as a piece of mean-spiritedness; but (however they be termed and treated now) they are happy, and will appear so shortly, whom God approves, and to whom he says, *Well done, good and faithful servant;* for by his judgment we must stand or fall eternally.

These words, therefore, will easily afford us this plain Doctrine,

That meekness and quietness of spirit is a very excellent grace, which we should every one of us put on, and be adorned with.

In the prosecution hereof, we shall endeavour,

I. To show *what this meekness and quietness of Spirit is.* And,

II. *What excellency there is in it.* And,

III. *Apply it.*

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF MEEKNESS AND QUIETNESS OF SPIRIT.

MEEKNESS and quietness seem to import much the same thing, but the latter having something of metaphor in it, will illustrate the former, and therefore we shall speak of them distinctly.

I. We must be of a meek spirit.—πρᾶος qu. ῥᾶος—*facilis—easy:* so the critics. Meekness is easiness of spirit; not a sinful easiness to be debauched, as Ephraim's, who willingly walked after the commandment of the idolatrous princes, (Hos. v. 11.) nor a simple easiness to be imposed upon and deceived, as Rehoboam's, who, when he was forty years old, is said to be young and tender-hearted, (2 Chron. xiii. 7.) but a gracious easiness to be wrought upon by that which is good, as theirs whose heart of stone is taken away, and to whom a *heart of flesh* is given. Meekness is easiness, for it accommodates the soul to every occurrence, and so makes a man easy to himself, and to all about him. The Latins call a meek man *mansuetus*, qu. *manu assuetus—used to the hand;* which alludes to the taming and reclaiming of creatures wild by nature, and bringing them to be tractable and familiar.[a] Man's corrupt nature has made him like *the wild ass used to the wilderness*, or the *swift dromedary traversing her ways*, (Jer. ii. 23, 24.) but the grace of *meekness*, when that gets dominion in the soul, alters the temper of it, brings it to hand, submits it to management; and now the wolf dwells with the lamb, and the leopard lies down with the kid, and a little child may lead them; for enemies are laid aside, and there is nothing to *hurt or destroy*, Isa. xi. 6, 9.

Meekness may be considered with respect both to God, and to our brethren; it belongs to both the tables of the law, and attends upon the *first* great commandment, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God;* as well as the *second*, which is like unto it, *Thou*

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k 2 Cor. v. 9.

a Jam. iii. 7, 8.

shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; though its special reference is to the latter.

1. There is meekness toward God, and it is the easy and quiet submission of the soul to his whole will, according as he is pleased to make it known, whether by his word or by his providence.

(1.) It is the silent submission of the soul to the word of God: the understanding bowed to every divine truth, and the will to every divine precept; and both without murmuring or disputing. The word is then an engrafted word, when it is received with meekness, (Jam. i. 21.) that is, with a sincere willingness to be taught, and desire to learn. Meekness is a grace that cleaves the stock, and holds it open, that the word, as the imp, or shoot, may be grafted in; it breaks up the fallow ground, and makes it fit to receive the seed; captivates the high thoughts, and lays the soul like white paper under God's pen. When the day-*spring* takes *hold of the ends of the earth*, it is said to be *turned as clay to the seal*, Job xxxviii. 12—14. Meekness does, in like manner, dispose the soul to admit the rays of divine light, which before it rebelled against; it opens the heart, as Lydia's was opened; and sets us down with Mary at the feet of Christ; the learner's place and posture. (Compare Deut. xxxiii. 3.) The promise of teaching is made to the meek, because they are disposed to learn; The *meek will he teach his way*, Ps. xxv. 8, 9. The word of God is gospel indeed, good tidings to the meek, (Isa. lxi. 1.) they will entertain it and bid it welcome; the poor in spirit are evangelized, (Matt. xi. 5.) and wisdom's alms are given to those that with meekness [b] *wait daily at her gates*, and like beggars *wait at the posts of her doors*. The language of this meekness is that of the child Samuel, (1 Sam. iii. 9.) *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth;* and that of Joshua, who, when he was in that high post of honour, giving command to Israel, and bidding defiance to all their enemies, (his breast filled with great and bold thoughts,) yet, upon the intimation of a message from heaven, thus submits himself to it, (Josh. v. 14.) *What saith my Lord unto his servant?* And that of Paul, (and it was the first breath of a new man,) Acts ix. 6. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* And that of Cornelius, (Acts x. 33.) And *now we are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* And that of the good man I have read of, who, when he was going to hear the word, used to say, "Now let the word of the Lord come; and if I had six hundred necks, I would bow them all to the authority of it." To receive the word with meekness, is to be delivered into it, as into a mould: it seems to be Paul's metaphor, Rom. vi. 17. that form of doctrine εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε—*into which you were given up.* Meekness softens the wax, that it may receive the impression of the seal, whether it be *for doctrine or reproof, for correction or instruction in righteousness.* It opens the ear to discipline, silences objections, and suppresses the risings of the carnal mind against the word; consenting to the *Law that* it is *good*,* and esteeming *all the precepts* concerning all things to be *right*, even when they give the greatest check to flesh and blood.

(2.) It is the silent submission of the soul to the *providence* of God, for that also is the *will* of God concerning us.

[1.] When the events of Providence are grievous and afflictive, displeasing to sense, and crossing our secular interests; meekness not only quiets us under them, but reconciles us to them; and enables us not only to bear, but to receive, evil as well as good at the hand of the Lord; which is the excellent frame that Job argues himself into, Job ii. 10. It is to kiss the rod, and even to accept of the punishment of our iniquity; taking all in good part that God does: not daring to strive with our Maker, no, nor desiring to prescribe to him, but dumb, and not opening the mouth because God does it. How meek was Aaron under the severe dispensation which took away his sons with a particular mark of divine wrath! *He held his peace*, (Lev. x. 3.) God was sanctified, and therefore Aaron was satisfied, and had not a word to say against it. Unlike to this was the temper, or rather the distemper, of David, who was not like a man after God's own heart, when he was *displeased because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzziah*, (2 Sam. vi. 8.) as if God must have asked David leave thus to assert the honour of his ark. When God's anger is kindled, ours must be stifled; such is the law of meekness, that whatsoever pleases God, must not displease us. David was in a better frame when he penned the 56th Psalm, the title of which, some think, bespeaks the calmness and submissiveness of his spirit when the Philistines took him in Gath. It is upon *Jonathelem-reckokim,—the silent dove afar off.* It was his calamity, that he was afar off, but he was then as a *silent dove;* mourning perhaps, (Isa. xxxviii. 14.) but not murmuring, not struggling, not resisting, when seized by the birds of prey; and the Psalm he penned in this frame, was, *Michtam*, a *Golden Psalm.* The language of this meekness is that of Eli, (1 Sam. iii. 18.) *It is the Lord:* and that of David to the same purport, (2 Sam. xv. 26.) *Here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.* Not only, he *can* do what he will, subscribing to his power, for who can stay his hand? Or, He *may* do what he will, subscribing to his

[b] Prov. viii. 34.

* *Mitescere est non contradicere divinæ Scripturæ sive intellectæ, si vitia percutit, sive non intellectæ, quasi nos melius sapere possemus. Aug. l. 2. de Doctrinâ Christi.*—True meekness will prevent us from opposing either the obvious parts of Scripture, severely as they may task our vices; or the mysterious parts, in reading which, vanity may suggest that we could have dictated what is more profitable.

sovereignty, for he gives not account of any of his matters. Or, He *will* do what he will, subscribing to his unchangeableness, for he is in one mind, and who can turn him? But, *Let him do what he will*, subscribing to his wisdom and goodness, as Hezekiah, (Isa. xxxix. 8.) *Good is the word of the Lord, which thou hast spoken.* Let him do what he will, for he will do what is best; and therefore, if God should refer the matter to me, (says the meek and quiet soul,) being well assured that he knows what is good for me better than I do for myself, I would refer it to him again; he shall *choose our inheritance for us*, Ps. xlvii. 4.

[2.] When the methods of Providence are dark and intricate, and we are quite at a loss what God is about to do with us, *his way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known*, clouds and darkness are round about him; a meek and quiet spirit acquiesces in an assurance, that all things shall work together for good to us, if we love God, though we cannot apprehend how or which way. It teaches us to follow God with an implicit faith, as Abraham did when he went out, not knowing *whither he went*, but knowing very well whom he followed, Heb. xi. 8. It quiets us with this, that though what he doeth *we know not now*, yet we *shall know hereafter*, John xiii. 7. When poor Job was brought to that dismal plunge, that he could no way trace the footsteps of the divine providence, but was almost lost in that labyrinth, (Job xxiii. 8, 9.) how quietly does he sit down, *v.* 10. with this thought, *But he knows the way I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.*

2. There is meekness toward our brethren, toward all men, (Tit. iii. 2.) and so we take it here. Meekness is especially conversant about the affection of anger, not wholly to extirpate * and eradicate it out of the soul; (that were to quench a coal which sometimes there is occasion for, even at God's altar, and to blunt the edge even of our spiritual weapons, with which we are to carry on our spiritual warfare;) but its office is to direct and govern this affection, that we may *be angry and not sin*, Eph. iv. 26.

Meekness, in the school of the philosophers, is a virtue consisting in a mean between the extremes of rash excessive anger on the one hand, and a defect of anger on the other, in which Aristotle † confesses it very hard exactly to determine.

Meekness, in the school of Christ, is one of the *fruits of the Spirit*, (Gal. v. 22, 23.) it is a grace, (both *gratis data—freely given*, and *gratum faciens—rendering kind,*) wrought by the Holy Ghost both as a sanctifier and as a comforter in the hearts of all true believers, teaching and enabling them at all times to keep their passions under the conduct and government of religion and right reason. I observe that it is wrought in the hearts of all true believers, because, though there are some rough and knotty pieces that the Spirit works upon, whose natural temper is unhappily sour and harsh, which are long in the squaring; yet wheresoever there is true grace, there is a disposition to strive against, and strength in some measure to conquer, that distemper. And though in this, as in other graces, an absolute sinless perfection cannot be expected in this present state, yet we are to labour after it, and press towards it.

More particularly: the work and office of meekness is to enable us prudently to govern our own anger when at any time we are provoked, and patiently to bear the anger of others, that it may not be a provocation to us. The former is its office especially in superiors, the latter in inferiors, and both in equals.

(1.) Meekness teaches us prudently to govern our own anger, whenever any thing occurs that is provoking. As it is the work of temperance to moderate our natural appetites toward those things that are pleasing to sense, so it is the work of meekness to moderate our natural passions against those things that are displeasing to sense, and to guide and govern our resentments of those things. Anger in the soul is like mettle in a horse, good if it be well managed. Now meekness is the bridle; as wisdom is the hand that gives law to it; puts it into the right way, and keeps it in an even, steady, and regular pace in that way, reducing it when it turns aside, preserving it in a due decorum, and restraining it and giving it check when at any time it grows headstrong and outrageous, and threatens mischief to ourselves or others. It must thus be held in, *like the horse and mule, with bit and bridle*, (Ps. xxxii. 9.) lest it break the hedge, run over those that stand in its way, or throw the rider himself headlong. It is true of anger, ‡ which we say of fire, that it is a "*good servant*," but a "*bad master*;" it is good on the hearth, but bad in the hangings. Now meekness keeps it in its place, sets banks to this sea, and says, *Hitherto thou shalt come, and no further; here shall thy proud waves be stayed.*

In reference to our own anger, when at any time we meet with the excitements of it, the work of meekness is to do these four things:

[1.] To consider the circumstances of that which we apprehend to be a provocation, so as at no time to express our displeasure, but upon due and mature deliberation. The office of meekness is to keep reason upon the throne in the soul, as it ought to be, to preserve the understanding clear and unclouded,

* Not απαθεια—insensibility, but μετριοπαθεια—moderation. Anger is *cos fortidudinis*—the whetstone of courage.

† Ethic. l. 4. c. 6.

‡ *Non cognoscitur audacia nisi in bello, amicus nisi in necessitate, sapiens nisi in ira.*—It is in war, that we discover the hero; in a time of need, the friend; and during anger, the man of wisdom. *Sent. Arab.*

the judgment untainted and unbiassed in the midst of the greatest provocations, so as to be able to set every thing in its true light, and to see it in its own colour, and to determine accordingly, as also to keep silence in the court, that the still small voice, in which the Lord is, (as he was with Elijah at Mount Horeb, 1 Kings xix. 12, 13.) may not be drowned by the noise of the tumult of the passions. A meek man will never be angry at a child, at a servant, at a friend, till he has first seriously weighed the cause in just and even balances, while a steady and impartial hand holds the scales, and a free and unprejudiced thought adjudges it necessary. It is said of our Lord Jesus, John xi. 33. *ἐτάραξε ἑαυτὸν—he troubled himself;* which denotes it to be a considerate act, and what he saw reason for. Then things go right in the soul, when no resentments are admitted into the affections, but what have first undergone the scrutiny of the understanding, and thence received their pass. That passion which comes not in by this door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber, which we should stand upon our guard against. In a time of war, (and such a time it is in every sanctified soul in a constant war between grace and corruption,) due care must be taken to examine all passengers, especially those that come armed, whence they came, whither they go, whom they are for, and what they would have? Thus should it be in the well-governed, well-disciplined soul. Let meekness stand centinel, and, upon the advance of a provocation,* let us examine who it is that we are about to be angry with, and for what? What are the merits of the cause, wherein lay the offence, what was the nature and tendency of it? What are likely to be the consequences of our resentments, and what harm will it be if we stifle them, and let them go no further? Such as these are the interrogatories which meekness would put to the soul, and in answer to them would abstract all that which passion is apt to suggest, and hear reason only, as it becomes rational creatures to do.

Three great dictates of meekness we find put together, in one scripture, James i. 19. *Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;* which some observe to be couched in three proper names of Ishmael's son, Gen. xxv. 14. 1 Chron. i. 30. (which Bishop Prideaux, in the beginning of the wars, recommended to a gentleman that had been his pupil, as the summary of his advice,) *Mishma, Dumah, Massa;* the signification of which is, *Hear, Keep silence, Bear.* Hear reason, keep passion silent, and then you will not find it difficult to bear the provocation.

It is said of the Holy One of Israel, when the Egyptians provoked him, *Libravit semitam iræ suæ—He weighed a path to his anger:* so the margin reads it from the Hebrew, Ps. lxxviii. 50. Justice first poised the cause, and then anger poured out the vials. Thus (Gen. xi. 5.) the Lord came down to see the pride of the Babel-builders, before he scattered them; and (Gen. xviii. 21.) he came down to see the wickedness of Sodom, before he overthrew it, though both were obvious and barefaced,† to teach us to consider before we are angry, and to judge before we pass sentence, that herein we may be *followers of God, as dear children,* and be merciful, as our Father which is in heaven is merciful.

We read, (Jam. iii. 13.) of the *meekness of wisdom;* for where there is not wisdom, (that wisdom which is profitable to direct, that wisdom of the prudent which is to understand his way,) meekness will not long be preserved.[c] It is our rashness and inconsideration that betray us to all the mischiefs of an ungoverned passion, on the‡ neck of which the reins are laid, (which should be kept in the hand of reason,) and so we are hurried upon a thousand precipices. Nehemiah is a remarkable instance of prudence presiding in just resentments; he owns, (Neh. v. 6, 7.) *I was very angry when I heard their cry;* but that anger did not at all transgress the laws of meekness, for it follows, *Then I consulted with myself,* or as the Hebrew has it, *My heart consulted in me.* Before he expressed his displeasure, he retired into his own bosom, took time for a sober thought upon the case, and then he *rebuked the nobles,* in a very solid rational discourse, *v.* 8—11. and the success was good, *v.* 12, 13. In every cause, when passion demands immediate judgment, meekness moves for further time, and will have the matter fairly argued, and counsel heard on both sides.

When the injured Levite had pitched upon a very barbarous course to irritate the tribes of Israel (who commonly were too fiery to need a spur) against the men of Gibeah, yet withal he referred the matter to their deliberate counsels, to teach us, when our hearts are meditating revenge, to do likewise, Judg. xix. 30. So and so the matter is, *consider of it, take advice,* and then *speak your minds.* When Job had any quarrel with his servants, he was willing to admit a rational debate of the matter, and to hear what they had to say for themselves. *For,* (says he,) *what shall I do when God riseth up?* And withal, *did not he that made me in the womb, make*

* *Expenduntur verba, si dicendum hoc, si dicendum adversum hunc, si tempus sermonis sit hujus, &c.*—We should carefully consider whether what we say ought to be said, whether it ought to be said against this particular person, whether this is the time for saying it, &c. *Ambr. de Offic. l.* 1. *c.* 9.

† *In correptione vitiorum subesse menti debet Iræcundia, non præsse.*—In reproving vice, though we admit a degree of anger, we should not suffer it to usurp arbitrary sway. *Greg. in Job, l.* 26. *c.* 36.

c Eccl. x. 10. Prov. xiv. 8.

‡ *Ratio id judicare vult quod æquum est, Iræ id æquum videri vult, quod judicavit*—Reason prompts us to pass a righteous judgment; anger first hurries us into an opinion, and then, whatever it is, resolves to maintain it. *Sen.*

him? Job xxxi. 13—15. When our hearts are at any time hot within us, we should do well to put that question to ourselves which God put to Cain, (Gen. iv. 6.) *Why am I wroth?* Why am I angry at all? Why so soon angry? Why so very angry? Why so far transported, and dispossessed of myself, by my anger? What reason is there for all this? *Do I well to be angry for a gourd,* that *came up in a night, and perished in a night?* Jonah iv. 9. Should I be touched to the quick by such a sudden and transient provocation? Will not my cooler thoughts correct these hasty resentments, and therefore were it not better to check them now? Such are the reasonings of the meekness of wisdom.

[2.] The work of meekness is to calm the spirit, so as that the inward peace may not be disturbed by any outward provocation. No doubt a man may express his displeasure against the miscarriages of another, as much as at any time there is occasion for, without suffering his resentments to recoil upon himself, and to put his own soul into a hurry. What need is there for a man to *tear himself (his soul,* so it is in the Hebrew) *in his anger?* Job xviii. 4. Cannot we charge home upon our enemy's camp, without the wilful disordering of our own troops? Doubtless we may, if meekness have the command, for that is the grace which preserves a man master of himself, while he contends to be master of another, and which, though there may be some firing in the outworks, yet fortifies the heart, the main fort, the inner wards, against the assaults of provocation, which do us no great harm, while they do not rob us of our peace, nor disturb the rest of our souls. As patience in case of sorrow, so meekness in case of anger, keeps *possession of the soul,* (as the expression is, Luke xxi. 19.) that we be not dispossessed of that freehold, and takes care when the bell is up, that it does not overturn. The drift of Christ's farewell-sermon to his disciples we have in the first words of it, John xiv. 1. *Let not your hearts be troubled.* It is the duty and interest of all good people, whatever happens, to keep trouble from their hearts, and to have them even and sedate, though the *eye* (as Job expresses it) should *continue* unavoidably *in the provocation* of this world, Job xvii. 2. The wicked (רשעים the *turbulent* and *unquiet,* so the world primarily signifies) are *like the troubled sea when it cannot rest,* (Isa. lvii. 20.) but that *peace of God, which passeth all understanding,* keeps the *hearts and minds* of all the meek of the earth. Meekness preserves the mind from being ruffled and discomposed, and the spirit from being unhinged by the vanities and vexations of this lower world. It stills the noise of the sea, the noise of her waves, and the tumult of the soul; it permits not the passions to crowd out in a disorderly manner, like a confused ungoverned rabble; but draws them out like the trained-bands, rank and file, every one in his own order, ready to march, to charge, to fire, to retreat, as wisdom and grace give the word of command.

It is said of the just and holy God, that he is *Lord of his anger,* Nah. i. 2. where we translate it, he is *furious,* (perhaps not so well, for *fury is not in him,* Isa. xxvii. 4. but,) he is בעל חמה *the Lord of anger, compos iræ,* so some of the critics render it; he is master of his own anger, and we should labour to be so too. Some interpreters give this as the sense of that which God said to Cain, (Gen. iv. 7.) *Unto thee,* or, *subject unto thee, shall be its desire, and thou shalt rule over it;* that is, over this passion of anger, which thou hast conceived in thy bosom, thou shouldst, and (if thou wouldst use the grace offered to thee) thou mightst subdue and keep under these intemperate heats, so as that they may not disquiet the repose of thy soul, nor break out into any extravagance.

[3.] Meekness will curb the tongue, and keep the mouth as with a bridle when the heart is hot, Ps. xxxix. 1, 2, 3. Even then, when there may be occasion for a keenness of expression, and we are called to *rebuke sharply,* (ἀποτόμως—*cuttingly,* Tit. i. 13.) yet meekness forbids all fury and indecency of language, and every thing that sounds like *clamour and evil-speaking,* Eph. iv. 31. The meekness of Moses was not at hand when he spake that unadvised word, Num. xx. 10. [*rebels,*] for which he was shut out of Canaan, though rebels they were, and at that time very provoking. Men in passion are apt to give reviling language, to call names, and those most senseless and ridiculous, to take the blessed name of God in vain, and so to profane it. It is a wretched way by which the children of hell vent their passion at their beasts, their servants, any person, or any thing, that provokes them, to swear at them. Men in a passion are apt to reveal secrets, to make rash vows and resolutions which afterward prove a snare, and sometimes to slander and belie their brethren, and bring railing accusations, and so to do the devil's work; and to speak that in their haste concerning others, (as David, Ps. cxvi. 11. *All men are liars,*) which they see cause to repent of at leisure. How brutishly did Saul, in his passion, call his own son, the heir-apparent to the crown, the *son of the perverse rebellious woman!* 1 Sam. xx. 30. that is, *the son of a strumpet,* a fine credit to himself and his family! *Raca* and *Thou fool,* are specified by our Saviour as breaches of the law of the sixth commandment, (Matt. v. 22.) and the passion in the heart is so far from excusing such opprobrious speeches, (for which purpose it is commonly alleged,) that really it is that which gives them their malignity, they are the smoke from that fire, the gall and wormwood springing from that root of bitterness; and if,[d] *for every idle word* that men

[d] Matt. xii 36.

speak, much more for such wicked words as these, must they *give an account at the day of judgment*. And as it is a reflection upon God to kill, so it is to curse men that are made after the image of God, (though ever so much our inferiors,) that is, to speak ill of them, or to wish ill to them.

This is the disease which meekness prevents, and is *in the tongue a law of kindness*, as the expression is, Prov. xxxi. 26. It is to the tongue as the helm is to the ship, (it is the apostle's comparison, Jam. iii. 4.) not to silence it, but to guide it, to steer it wisely, especially when the wind is high. If at any time we have conceived passion, and thought evil, meekness will *lay the hand upon the* * *mouth*, (as the wise man's advice is, Prov. xxx. 32.) to keep that evil thought from venting itself in any evil word, reflecting upon God or our brother. It will reason a disputed point without noise, give a reproof without a reproach, convince a man of his folly without calling him a fool, will teach superiors either to *forbear threatening*, (Eph. vi. 9.) or (as the margin reads it) to *moderate* it, and will *look diligently, lest any root of bitterness, springing up, trouble us, and thereby we*, and *many others, be defiled*, Heb. xii. 15.

[4.] Meekness will cool the heat of passion quickly, and not suffer it to continue. As it keeps us from being soon angry, so it teaches us, when we are angry, to be soon pacified. The anger of a meek man is like fire struck out of steel, hard to be got out, but when it is out, soon gone. The wisdom that is from above, as it is gentle, and so not apt to provoke, so it is *easy to be entreated* when any provocation is given, (Jam. iii. 17.) and has the ear always open to the first proposals and overtures of satisfaction, submission, and reconciliation, and so the anger is turned away. He that is of a meek spirit, will be forward to forgive injuries, and to put up with affronts, and has some excuse or other ready wherewith to extenuate and qualify the provocation, which an angry man, (for the exasperating and justifying of his own resentments,) will industriously aggravate. It is but saying, "There is no great harm done, or, if there be, there was none intended,† and peradventure it was an oversight;" and so the offence being looked at through that end of the perspective which diminishes, it is easily past by, and the distemper being taken in time, goes off quickly, the fire is quenched before it gets head, and by a speedy interposal the plague is stayed. While the world is so full of the sparks of provocation, and there is so much tinder in the hearts of the best, no marvel if anger come sometimes into the bosom of a wise man, but it rests only in the *bosom of fools*, Eccl. vii. 9. Angry thoughts, as other vain thoughts, may crowd into the heart upon a sudden surprise, but meekness will not suffer them to lodge there, (Jer. iv. 14.) nor let the sun go down upon the wrath, (Eph. iv. 26.) for if it do, there is danger lest it rise bloody the next morning. Anger concocted, becomes malice; it is the wisdom of meekness, by proper applications, to disperse the humour before it comes to a head. One would have thought when David so deeply resented Nabal's abuse, that nothing less than the blood of Nabal and all his house could have quenched his heat, but it was done at a cheaper rate; and he showed his meekness, by yielding to the diversion that Abigail's present and speech gave him, and that with satisfaction and thankfulness. He was not only soon pacified, but blessed her, and blessed God for her that pacified him. God does not *contend for ever*, neither is he *always wroth;* his *anger endures but a moment*, Ps. xxx. 5. How unlike then are those to him, whose sword devours for ever, and whose anger burns like the coals of juniper? But the grace of meekness, if it fail of keeping the peace of the soul from being broken, yet fails not to recover it presently, and to make up the breach, and, upon the least transport, steps in with help in the time of need, restores the soul, puts it in frame again, and no great harm is done. Such as these are the achievements of meekness, as it governs our own anger.

(2.) Meekness teaches and enables us patiently to bear the anger of others, which property of meekness we have especially occasion for, in reference to our superiors and equals. Commonly, that which provokes anger, is anger, as fire kindles fire; now meekness prevents that violent collision which forces out these sparks, and softens, at least, one side, and so puts a stop to a great deal of mischief; for it is the second blow that makes the quarrel. Our first care should be to prevent the anger of others, by giving no offence to any, but becoming all things to all men; every one studying to *please his neighbour for good to edification*, (Rom. xv. 2.) and endeavouring as much as lies in us, to accommodate ourselves to the temper of all with whom we have to do, and to make ourselves acceptable and agreeable to them. How easy and comfortable should we make every relation, and all our intercourse, if we were but better acquainted with this art of obliging. Naphtali's tribe, that was famous for giving *goodly words*, (Gen. xlix. 21.) had the happiness of being *satisfied with favour*, (Deut. xxxiii. 23.) for *every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer*, Prov. xxiv. 26. In the conjugal relation it is taken for granted (1 Cor. vii. 33, 34.) that the care of the husband is

* *In Socrate iræ signum erat, vocem submittere, loqui parcius; apparebat tunc illum sibi obstare.*—Anger was indicated in Socrates by his speaking little, and in a low key; thus he was observed to maintain a conflict within himself. *Ita refert Seneca de ira, l. 3. c. 13. Plutarch de non irascendo.*

† It is a maxim in the law, *In verbis dubiis benignior sententia est præferenda.*—On words of dubious import we should pass a favourable construction. And, *Semper fit præsumptio in meliorem partem.*—We should always presume on the candid side. *Vid. Alciat. de præsumpt. Reg. 3.*

to *please his wife*, and the care of the wife is to *please her husband;* and where there is that mutual care, comfort cannot be wanting. Some people love to be unkind, and take a pleasure in displeasing, and especially contrive to provoke those they find passionate and easily provoked, that (as he that giveth his *neighbour drink, and putteth his bottle to him*, Hab. ii. 15, 16.) they may look upon his shame, to which, in his passion, he exposes himself, and so they make a mock at sin, and become like the madman that casts firebrands, arrows, and death, and says, "*Am not I in sport?*" But the law of Christ forbids us to *provoke one another*, Gal. v. 26. (unless it be to *love and to good works,*) and enjoins us (as it follows there, ch.vi. 2.) to *bear one another's burthens, and so to fulfil the law of Christ.*

But because they must rise betimes, who will please every body, and carry their cup even indeed, who will give no offence; our next care therefore must be, so to behave ourselves when others are angry that we may not make bad worse. And this is one principal thing, in which the younger must submit themselves to the elder; nay, in which all of us must be subject one to another, as our rule is, 1 Pet. v. 5. And here meekness is of use, either to enjoin silence, or indite a soft answer.

[1.] To enjoin silence. It is prescribed to servants, (Tit. ii. 9.) to *please their masters well in all things*, not *answering again*, for that must needs be displeasing; better say nothing, than say that which is provoking. When our hearts are hot within us, it is good for us to keep silence, and hold our peace; so David did, (Ps. xxxix. ii. 3.) and when he did speak it was in prayer to God, and not in reply to the wicked that were before him. If the heart be angry,* angry words will but inflame it the more, as wheels are heated by a rapid motion. One reflection, and repartee, begets another, and the beginning of the debate is like the letting forth of water, which is with difficulty stopt when the least breach is made in the dam; and therefore meekness says, "By all means keep silence, and leave it off before it be meddled with." When a fire is begun, it is good, if possible, to smother it, and so prevent its spreading. Come on, let us deal wisely, and stifle it in the birth, lest afterward it prove too strong to be dealt with. Anger in the heart, is like those books which were stowed up in cellars in the conflagration of London, which, though they were extremely heated, yet never took fire, till they took air many days after, where giving vent to the heat put them into a flame. When the spirits are in a ferment, though it may be some present pain to check and suppress them, and the headstrong passions hardly admit the bridle, yet afterward it will be no grief of heart to us.

Those who find themselves wronged and aggrieved think they may have leave to speak, but it is better to be silent than to speak amiss, and make work for repentance. At such a time, he that holds his tongue holds his peace; and if we soberly reflect, we shall find we have been often the worse for our speaking, but seldom the worse for our silence.† This must be especially remembered and observed by as many as are under the yoke, who will certainly have most comfort in meekness, and patience, and silent submission, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. It is good in such cases to remember our ‡ place, and *(if the spirit of a ruler rise up against us,)* not to *leave* it, that is, not to do any thing unbecoming, for yielding *pacifieth great offences*, Eccl. x. 4. We have a common proverb that teaches us this, "*When thou art the hammer, knock thy fill; but when thou art the anvil, lie thou still:*" for it is the posture thou art cut out for, and which best becomes thee.

If others be angry at us without cause, and we have ever so much reason on our side, yet oftentimes it is best to adjourn our own vindication, though we think it necessary, till the passion be over: for there is nothing said or done in passion, but it may be better said and better done afterwards. When we are calm, we shall be likely to say it and do it in a better manner; and when our brother is calm, we shall be likely to say it and do it to a better purpose. A needful truth, spoken in a heat, may do more hurt than good, and offend rather than satisfy. The prophet himself forbare even a message from God, when he saw Amaziah in a passion, 2 Chron. xxv. 16. Sometimes it may be advisable to get some one else to say that for us, which is to be said, rather than say it ourselves. However, we have a righteous God, to whom (if, in a meek silence, we suffer ourselves to be run down unjustly) we may *commit our cause:* and having his promise, that he will *bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noonday,* (Ps. xxxvii. 6.) we had better leave it in his hands than undertake to manage it ourselves, lest that which we call clearing ourselves, God should call quarrelling with our brethren. David was greatly provoked by those that sought his hurt, and spake mischievous things against him; and yet, (says he,) *I as a deaf man heard not, I was as a dumb man that*

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* *Quid refert inter provocantem et provocatum, nisi quod ille prior in maleficio deprehenditur, et ille posterior? nulla vero in maleficio ordinis ratio est.*—What is the difference between him that provokes and him that is provoked, but this, that the one did wrong in the first instance, and that the other did wrong afterward? In the act of doing wrong they are alike culpable. *Tertul. de Patientiâ, c.* 10.

† *Complures vidi loquendo peccatum incidisse, vix quemquam tacendo: ideoq; tacere nosse quam loqui difficilius est.*—I have known many sin by speaking, scarcely one by continuing silent, it is therefore more difficult to know how to be silent than how to speak. *Ambr. de Offic. l.* 1. *c.* 2.

‡ *Locus tuus patientia est, locus tuus sapientia est, locus tuus ratio est, et sedatio indignationis.*—Your place is to be patient, wise, and reasonable. *Ambr. ubi supra, c.* 21.

openeth not his mouth, Ps. xxxviii. 13. And why so? It was not because he wanted something to say, or because he knew not how to say it; but, *v.* 15. because *in thee, O Lord, do I hope, thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.* If God hear, what need have *I* to hear? *His* concerning himself in the matter supersedes *ours;* and he is not only engaged, in justice, to own every righteous cause that is injured, but he is further engaged, in honour, to appear for those who, in obedience to the law of meekness, commit their cause to him, and trust him with it. If there be any vindication or avenging necessary, (which Infinite Wisdom is the best judge of,) he can do it better than we can; and therefore *give place unto wrath*, (Rom. xii. 19.) that is, to the judgment of God, which is according to truth and equity; make room for him to take the seat, and do not you step in before him: it is fit that our wrath should stand by to give way to his, for the *wrath of man* engages not the *righteousness of God* for him.[e] Even just appeals made to him, if they be made in passion, are not admitted into the court of heaven, being not duly put in; that one thing, error, is sufficient to overrule them: let not therefore those that do well, and suffer for it, spoil their own vindication by mistiming and mismanaging it; but tread in the steps of the Lord Jesus, *who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but was as a lamb dumb before the shearers;* and so *committed himself to him that judges righteously.* It is indeed a great piece of self-denial to be silent when we have enough to say, and provocation to say it; but if we do thus control our tongues, out of a pure regard to peace and love, it will turn to a good account, and will be an evidence for us that we are Christ's disciples, having learned to deny ourselves. It is better by silence to yield to our brother, who is, or has been, or may be, our friend, than by angry speaking to yield to the devil, who has been, and is, and ever will be, our sworn enemy.

[2.] To indite a soft answer. This Solomon commends as a proper expedient to turn away wrath, while grievous words do but stir up anger, Prov. xv. 1. When any speak angrily to us, we must pause a while, and study an answer, which, both for the matter and manner of it, may be mild and gentle. This brings water, while peevishness and provocation would but bring oil to the flame. Thus is death and life in the power of the tongue; it is either healing or killing, an antidote or a poison, according as it is used. When the waves of the sea beat on a rock, they batter and make a noise; but a soft sand receives them silently, and returns them without damage. A soft tongue is a wonderful specific, and has a very strange virtue in it; for Solomon says, *It breaks the bone*, (Prov. xxv. 15.) that is, it qualifies those that were provoked, and makes them pliable; it heaps *coals of fire* upon the head of an enemy, not to burn him, but to melt him, Prov. xxv. 21, 22. "Hard words (we say) break no bones;" but it seems soft ones do, (and yet do no harm,) as they calm an angry spirit, and prevent its progress, breaking it, as we do a flint, upon a cushion. A stone that falls on a wool-pack rests there, and rebounds not to do any further mischief, such is a meek answer to an angry question. It is observed in that rencounter which was between the royal tribe and the other ten, that the *words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel*, 2 Sam. xix. 43. When passion is up, that God whose eyes are upon all the ways of men, takes notice who speaks fiercely, and sets a mark upon them.

The good effects of a soft answer, and the ill consequence of a peevish one, are observable in the stories of Gideon and Jephtha. Both of them in the day of their triumphs over the enemies of Israel, were causelessly quarrelled with by the Ephraimites, (an angry sort of people it seems, *) who took it very heinously, when the danger was past and the victory won, that they had not been called upon to engage in the battle. Gideon pacified them with a soft answer, (Judg. viii. 2.) *What have I done now in comparison of you?* magnifying their achievements, and lessening his own, speaking honourably of them, and meanly of himself, *Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezar?* In which reply it is hard to say whether there was more of wit or wisdom: and the effect was very good; the Ephraimites were pleased, their anger turned away, a civil war prevented, and no body could think the worse of Gideon, for his mildness and self-denial; but, on the contrary, that he won more true honour by this victory over his own passion, than he did by his victory over all the host of Midian; for he that *hath rule over his own spirit, is better than the mighty*, Prov. xvi. 32. The Angel of the Lord has pronounced him a *mighty man of valour*, (Judg. vi. 12.) and this his tame submission did not at all derogate from that part of his character. But Jephtha, (who by many instances appears to be a man of a rough and hasty spirit, though enrolled among the eminent believers, Heb. xi. 32. for all good people are not alike happy in their temper,) when the Ephraimites in like manner pick a quarrel with him, rallies them, upbraids them with their cowardice, boasts of his own courage, challenges them to make good their cause, Judg. xii. 2, 3. They retort a scurrilous reflection upon Jephtha's country (as it is usual with passion to taunt and jeer one another) *Ye Gileadites are fugi-*

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e Jam. i. 20.

* Hence we read of the envy of Ephraim, Isa. xi. 13.

tives, v. 4. From words they go to blows, and so great a matter does this little fire kindle, that there goes no less, to quench the flame, than the blood of two and forty thousand Ephraimites, v. 6. All which had been happily prevented, if Jephtha had had but half as much meekness in his heart, as he had reason on his side.

A soft answer is the dictate and dialect of that wisdom which is from above, which is *peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated.* And to recommend it to us, we have the pattern of good men, as that of Jacob's carriage to Esau; though, who is so hard to be won, as a brother offended, yet, as he had prevailed with God by faith and prayer, so he prevailed with his brother by meekness and humility. We have also the pattern of good angels, who, even when a rebuke was needful, durst not turn it into a railing accusation, durst not give any reviling language, not to the devil himself, but referred the matter to God, *The Lord rebuke thee*, as that passage, Jude 9. is commonly understood. Nay, we have the pattern of a good God, who, though he could plead against us with his great power, yet gives soft answers: witness his dealing with Cain, when he was wroth, and his countenance fallen, reasoning the case with him, (Gen. iv. 6, 7.) *Why art thou wroth——If thou doest well, shalt not thou be accepted?* With Jonah likewise, when he was so discontented, Jonah iv. 4, 9. *Doest thou well to be angry?* This is represented in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, by the carriage of the father towards the elder brother, who was so high and humorsome, so angry, that he would not come in. The father did not say, "Let him stay out then," but he came himself and entreated him, (when he might have interposed his authority, and commanded him,) and said, *Son, thou art ever with me*, Luke xv. 28, 31. When a passionate parley is begun, there is a plague broke out; the meek man, like Aaron, takes his censer with the incense of a soft answer, steps in seasonably, and stays the plague.

This soft answer, in case we have committed a fault, (though perhaps not culpable to that degree that we are charged with,) must be penitent, humble, and submissive, and we must be ready to acknowledge our error, and not stand in it, or insist upon our own vindication, but rather aggravate than excuse it, rather condemn than justify ourselves. It will be a good evidence of our repentance toward God, to humble ourselves to our brethren, whom we have offended; as it will be also a good evidence of our being forgiven of God, if we be ready to forgive those that have offended us: and such yielding pacifies great offences. Meekness teaches us, as often as we trespass against our brother, to turn again and say, *I repent*, Luke xvii. 4. An acknowledgment in case of a wilful affront, is perhaps as necessary to pardon, as (we commonly say) restitution is in case of wrong. And so much for the opening of the Nature of Meekness, which yet will receive further light from what follows.

II. We must be of a quiet spirit. Quietness is the evenness, the composure, and the rest of the soul, which speaks both the nature and the excellency of the grace of meekness. The greatest comfort and happiness of man is sometimes set forth by quietness. That peace of conscience which Christ has left for a legacy to his disciples, that present sabbatism of the soul, which is an earnest of the rest that remains for the people of God, is called *quietness and assurance for ever*, and is promised, as the *effect of righteousness*, Isa. xxxii. 17. and it follows, v. 18. *My people shall dwell in quiet resting-places.* So graciously has God been pleased to intwine interests with us, as to enjoin the same thing under the notion of a duty, which he proposes and promises under the notion of a privilege. Justly may we say, that we serve a good Master, whose *yoke is easy*, (Matt. xi. 30.) it is χρηστὸς, not only easy, but *sweet* and *gracious*, (so the word signifies,) not only tolerable, but amiable and acceptable: *Wisdom's ways* are not only pleasant, but pleasantness itself, and all her *paths are peace*, Prov. iii. 17. It is the character of the Lord's people, both in respect of holiness and happiness, that (however they be branded as the troublers of Israel) they are the *quiet in the land*, Ps. xxxv. 20. If every saint be made a spiritual prince, (Rev. i. 6.) having a dignity above others, and a dominion over himself, surely he is like that Seraiah, Jer. li. 59. a *quiet prince.* It is a reign with Christ, the transcendent Solomon, under the influence of whose golden sceptre there is abundance of peace *as long as the moon endures*, yea, and longer, *for, of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.* Quietness is in the text recommended to us as a grace which we should be endued with, and as a duty which we should practise. In the midst of all the affronts and injuries that are or can be offered us, we must keep our spirits sedate, and undisturbed, and evidence by a calm, and even, and regular behaviour, that they are so. This is quietness. Our Saviour has pronounced the blessing of adoption upon the peace-makers, Matt. v. 9. εἰρηνοποιοὶ, *those that are for peace*, as David professes himself to be, Ps. cxx. 7. in opposition (such an opposition as meekness is capable of) to those that *delight in war*, Ps. lxviii. 30. Now if charity be for peace-making, surely this "charity begins at home," and is for making peace there in the first place. Peace in our own souls is some conformity to the example of the God of peace, who, though he does not always give peace on this earth, yet evermore *makes peace in his own high-places*, Job xxv. 2. *This, some think, is

* Dr. Hammond, Pract. Catech. p. 125.

the primary intention of that peace-making, on which Christ there commands the blessing: it is to have strong and hearty affections to peace, to be peaceably-minded; for making in Scripture notes the bent and inclination of the soul: as to make a lie, is to be given to lying; so to make peace, is to be addicted to peace; to have a disposition in the soul ready to command the peace, when there is at any time any kind of disturbance. In a word, quietness of spirit is the soul's stillness, and silence, from intending provocation *to*, or resenting provocation *from*, any with whom we have to do.

The word has something in it of a metaphor, which we would not choose but fairly prosecute, for the illustration of the grace of meekness.

1. We must be quiet as the air is quiet from winds. Disorderly passions are like stormy winds in the soul; they toss and hurry it, and often split, or strand, or overset it; they move it *as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind*; it is the prophet's comparison, Isa. vii. 2. and is an apt emblem of a man in passion. Now meekness restrains these winds, says to them, *Peace, be still*, and so preserves a calm in the soul, and makes it conformable to him, who has the winds in his hands, and is herein to be praised, that even the stormy winds fulfil his word. A brisk gale is often useful, especially to the *ships of desire*, (as the Hebrew phrase is, Job ix 26.) so there should be in the soul such a warmth and vigour as will help to speed us to the desired harbour. It is not well to lie wind-bound in dulness and indifferency; but tempests are perilous, yea, though the wind be in the right point; so are strong passions, even in good men, they both hinder the voyage and hazard the ship: such a quickness as consists with quietness is what we should all labour after, and meekness will contribute very much toward it; it will silence the noise, control the force, moderate the impetus, and correct all undue and disorderly transports. What manner of grace is this, that even the winds and the sea obey it? If we will but use the authority God has given us over our own hearts, we may keep the * winds of passion under the command of religion and reason, and then the soul is quiet, the sun shines, all is pleasant, serene, and smiling, and the man sleeps sweetly and safely on the lee-side. We make our voyage among rocks and quicksands, but if the weather be calm, we can the better steer so as to avoid them, and by a due care and temper hit the mean between extremes; whereas he that suffers these winds of passion to get head, and spread a large sail before them, while he shuns one rock, splits upon another, and is in danger of being drowned in destruction and perdition, by many foolish and hurtful lusts, especially those whence *wars and fightings come*.

2. We must be quiet as the sea is quiet from waves. The wicked (whose sin and punishment both lie in the unruliness of their own souls, and the violence and disorder of their own passions, which perhaps will not be the least of their eternal torments) are compared *to the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast forth mire and dirt*, (Isa. lvii. 20.) that is, they are uneasy to themselves, and to all about them, *raging waves of the sea*, (so they are described, Jude 13.) *foaming out their own shame*; their *hard speeches* which they speak against God, *v.* 15. and *dignities, v.* 8. and *things which they know not, v.* 10. their *great swelling words, v.* 16. and *mockings, v.* 18. these are the *shame* they *foam out*. Now meekness is the grace of the Spirit, that *moves upon the face of the waters*, and quiets them, smooths the ruffled sea, and stills the noise of it, (it is now *mare pacificum—the Pacific Ocean,)* it casts forth none of the mire and dirt of passion. The waves mount not up to the heaven in proud and vain-glorious boastings; go not down to the depths to scrape up vile and scurrilous language; no reeling to and fro, as men overcome with drink, or with their own passion, which is all one, (for if *wine* be a *mocker*, and *strong drink raging*, Prov. xx. 1. anger is no less so,) none of that transport which brings them to their wits' end: I refer to the Psalmist's description of a storm, Ps. cvii. 26, 27. but as it follows there, *v.* 30. *They are glad because they are quiet, so he bringeth them to their desired haven.* This calmness and evenness of spirit makes our passage over the sea of this world safe and pleasant, quick and speedy towards the desired harbour, and is amiable and exemplary in the eyes of others; such a path does the meek and quiet Christian make to shine after him, that one would think the deep to be hoary.

3. We must be quiet as the land is quiet from war. It was the observable felicity of Asa's reign, that in his days *the land was quiet*, 2 Chron. xiv. 1, 5. In the preceding reigns there was *no peace to him that went out, or to him that came in*, whether outward bound or homeward bound, they were exposed to *great vexations, ch.* xv. 5. but now the rumours and alarms of war were stilled, and the people *delivered from the noise of archers at the place of drawing waters*, as when the land had rest in Deborah's time, Judg. v. 11. Such a quietness there should be in the soul, and such a quietness there will be where meekness sways the sceptre. A soul inflamed with wrath and passion upon all occasions, is like a kingdom embroiled in war, in a civil war, subject to continual frights, and losses, and perils; deaths and terrors, in their most horrid shapes, walk triumphantly, sleeps disturbed, families broken, friends suspected, enemies feared, laws silenced, commerce ruined, business neglected, cities wasted; such heaps upon heaps does ungoverned anger lay

* *Æolus sis affectuum tuorum.*—Rule your passions, as Æolus the winds. *Neiremb.*

when it is let loose in the soul. *Jusq ; datum sceleri —When vice has free scope, &c.* But meekness makes these wars to cease, breaks the bow, cuts the spear, sheaths the sword, and in the midst of a contentious world, preserves the soul from being the seat of war, and makes peace in those borders. The rest of the soul is not disturbed, its comforts not plundered, its government not disordered ; the laws of religion and reason rule, and not the sword: the trading duties are not interrupted, neither its communion with God, nor its communion with the saints, intercepted; no breaking in of temptation, no going out of corruption, no complaining in the streets, no occasion given, no occasion taken, to complain. *Happy is the soul that is in such a case,* Ps. cxliv. 14, 15. *The words of such wise men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools, and this wisdom is better than weapons of war,* Eccl. ix. 17, 18. This is the quietness we should every one of us labour after, and it is what we might attain to, if we would but more support and exercise the authority of our graces, (which are as the commissioners of the peace,) and guide and control the power of our passion, (which are as the commissioners of array,) in our souls.

4. We must be quiet as the child is quiet after weaning. It is the Psalmist's comparison, Ps. cxxxi. 2. *I have behaved* (or rather, I have *composed*, so Ainsworth reads it) *and quieted myself, (my soul,* Heb. for our souls are ourselves, and our principal care must be concerning them,) *as a child that is weaned of his mother, my soul is even as a weaned child.* A child while it is in the weaning perhaps is a little cross and froward, and troublesome for a time; but when it is perfectly weaned, how quickly does it forget the breast, and accommodate itself to its new way of feeding! Thus a quiet soul, if provoked by the denial or loss of some creature-comfort or delight, that has been dear, quiets itself, and does not fret at it, nor perplex itself with anxious cares how to live without it, but composes itself to make the best of that which is. If wormwood be put upon the breasts, which we have called the breasts of our consolation, it is but to make us indifferent to them, and we must set ourselves to answer that intention, and sit loose to them accordingly. And this holy indifference to the delights of sense, is (like the weaning of a child) a good step taken towards the *perfect man,* the *measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.** A child newly weaned is free from all the uneasiness and disquietude of care, and fear, and envy, and anger, and revenge: how undisturbed are its sleeps, and even in its dreams it looks pleasant and smiling! How easy its days? How quiet its nights! If put into a little pet now and then, how soon is it over, the provocation forgiven, the sense of it forgotten, and both buried in an innocent kiss! Thus, if ever we would enter into the kingdom of heaven, we must be converted from pride, envy, ambition, and strife for precedency, and must *become like little children.*† So our Saviour has told us, (who, even after his resurrection, is called, *The Holy Child Jesus,* Acts iv. 27.) Matt. xviii. 3. And even when we have put away other childish things, yet still in *malice* we must be children, 1 Cor. xiv. 20. And as for the quarrels of others, in all broils and heats, a meek and quiet Christian endeavours to be as disinterested, and as little engaged, as a weaned child in the mother's arms, that is not capable of such angry resentments.

This is that meekness and quietness of spirit which is here recommended to us, such a command and composure of the soul, that it be not unhinged by any provocation whatsoever, but all its powers and faculties preserved in due temper for the just discharge of their respective offices.‡ In a word; *Put off all wrath, and anger, and malice,* (those corrupted limbs of the old man,) pluck up and cast away those roots of bitterness, and stand upon a constant guard against all the exorbitances of your own passion, and then you will soon know, to your comfort, better than I can tell you, what it is to be of a meek and quiet spirit.

CHAPTER II.

THE EXCELLENCY OF MEEKNESS AND QUIETNESS OF SPIRIT.

THE very opening of this cause, one would think, were enough to carry it, and the explaining of the nature of meekness and quietness, should suffice to recommend it to us; such an amiable sweetness does there appear in it, upon the very first view, that if we look upon its beauty, we cannot but be enamoured with it. But because of the opposition that there is in our corrupt hearts to this, as well as to the other graces of the Holy Spirit, I shall endeavour more particularly to show the excellency of it, that we may be brought (if possible) to be in love with it, and to submit our souls to the charming power of it.

It is said, (Prov. xvii. 27.) That *a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.*—He is קר רוח (so the *Chetib*, though the *Keri*, which our translation follows, reads it יקר) *frigidus Spiritu,* so Tremellius,

* Yet corrupt passions appear betimes. *Vidi zelantem parvulum qui intuebatur pallidus amaro aspectu collactaneum suum.*—I have seen a young child pale with envy, while looking on another child that was nourished at the same breast. *Aug. Conf.* l. 7.

† *Et si cito pueri inter se moventur, facile sedantur et majori suavitate in se recurrunt; nesciunt se subdole artificioseque tractare*—Though boys are soon irritated, they are soon reconciled, and become kinder than before they quarrelled; they are strangers to artifice and circumvention. *Amb. de Offic. l.* i. *c.* 21.

‡ Col. iii. 8.

he is *of a cool spirit;* put them together, and teach us, that a cool spirit is an excellent spirit, and that he is *a man of understanding* who is governed by such a spirit. The text tells us (what need we more) that *it is in the sight of God of great price;* and we may be sure that is precious indeed which is so in God's sight; that is good, very good, which he pronounces so, for his judgment is according to truth, and sooner or later he will bring all the world to be of his mind; for as he has decided it, so shall our doom be, and he will be *justified when he speaketh, and clear when he judgeth.*

The excellency of a meek and quiet spirit will appear, if we consider the *credit* of it, and the *comfort* of it, the present *profit* there is by it, and the *preparedness* there is in it for something further.

I. Consider how creditable a meek and quiet spirit is. Credit or reputation is a thing which most people are very sensibly touched with the ambition of, though few consider aright either what it is, or what is the right way of obtaining it, and particularly it is little believed what a great deal of true honour there is in the grace of meekness, and what a sure and ready way mild and quiet souls take to gain the good word of their Master, and of all their fellow-servants who love our Master, and are like him.

Let us see what credit there is in meekness.

1. There is in it the credit of a victory. What a great figure do the names of high and mighty conquerors make in the records of fame! How are their conduct, their valour, and success, cried up and celebrated! But if we will believe the word of truth, and pass a judgment upon things according to the rules of it, *he that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city,* Prov. xvi. 32. Behold, a greater than Alexander or Cæsar is here; the former of which (some think) lost more true honour by yielding to his own ungoverned anger, than he got by all his conquests. No triumphant chariot so easy, so safe, so truly glorious, as that in which the meek and quiet soul rides over all the provocations of an injurious world, with a gracious unconcernedness: no train so splendid, so noble, as that train of comforts and graces which attend this chariot. The conquest of an unruly passion is more honourable than that of an unruly people, for it requires more true conduct. It is easier to kill an enemy without, which may be done at a blow, than to chain up and govern an enemy within, which requires a constant, even, steady hand, and a long and regular management. It was more to the honour of David to yield himself conquered by Abigail's persuasions, than to have made himself a conqueror over Nabal and all his house. A rational victory must needs be allowed more honourable to a rational creature than a brutal one. This is a cheap, safe, and unbloody conquest that does nobody any harm, no lives, no treasures are sacrificed to it, the glory of these triumphs are not stained, as others generally are, with funerals. *Every battle of the warrior* (says the prophet, Isa. ix. 5.) *is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning, even by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts;* as a *Spirit of judgment* and a *Spirit of burning.* Nay, in meek and quiet suffering we are *more than conquerors through Christ that loved us;* (Rom. viii. 37.) conquerors *with little loss;* we lose nothing but the gratifying of a base lust: conquerors with great gain, the spoils we divide are very rich, the favour of God, the comforts of the Spirit, the foretastes of everlasting pleasures: these are more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey. We are more than conquerors; that is, *triumphers,* we live a life of victory, every day is a day of triumph to the meek and quiet soul.

Meekness is a victory over ourselves and the rebellious lusts in our own bosoms; it is the quieting of intestine broils, the stilling of an insurrection at home, which is oftentimes more hard to do than to resist a foreign invasion. It is an effectual victory over those that injure us, and make themselves enemies to us, and is often a means of winning their hearts. The law of meekness is, *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst,* πότιζε *αὐτὸν, propina illi,* not only *give him drink,* (which is an act of charity,) but *drink to him,* in token of friendship, and true love, and reconciliation; and *in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head,* not to consume him, but to melt and soften him, that he may be cast into a new mould: and thus while the angry and revengeful man, that will bear down all before him with a high hand, is overcome of evil, the patient and forgiving *overcome evil with good;* (Rom. xii. 20, 21.) and forasmuch as their *ways please the Lord,* he makes even their enemies to be at peace with them, Prov. xvi. 7. Nay, meekness is a victory over Satan, the greatest enemy of all. What conquest can sound more great than this? It is written for caution to us all, and it reflects honour on those who through grace overcome, that *we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world,* Eph. vi. 12. The magnifying of the adversary, magnifies the victory over him; such as these are the meek man's vanquished enemies,* the spoils of these are the trophies of his victory. It is the design of the devil, that great deceiver and destroyer of souls, that is baffled; it is his attempt that is defeated, his assault that is repulsed by our meekness and quietness. Our Lord Jesus was more admired

* Ἕνα μόνον ἐχθρὸν ἐχε τὸν Διάβολον, πρὸς αὐτὸν μηδέποτε καταλλάττου, πρὸς ἀδελφὸν μηδέποτε ἀπεχθῶς ἔχε.——Have but one enemy, the devil; never be reconciled to him, with a brother never fall out. Chrysost. Hom. 19.

for controlling and commanding the unclean spirits, than for any other cures which he wrought: unruly passions are unclean spirits, legions of which some souls are possessed with, and desperate outrageous work they make; the soul becomes like that miserable creature, (Mark v. 3—5.) that *cried and cut himself*; or that, (Mark ix. 22.) who was so often *cast into the fire, and into the waters*. The meek and quiet soul is through grace a conqueror over these enemies, their fiery darts are quenched by the shield of faith, Satan is in some measure trodden under his feet, and the victory will be complete shortly, when *he that overcometh shall sit down with Christ upon his throne, even as he overcame and is set down with the Father upon his throne*, where he still appears in the emblem of his meekness, *a Lamb as it had been slain*, Rev. v. 6. And upon mount Zion, at the head of his heavenly hosts, he appears also as a Lamb, Rev. xiv. 1. Such is the honour meekness has in those higher regions.

2. There is in it the credit of beauty. The beauty of a thing consists in the symmetry, harmony, and agreeableness of all the parts: now what is meekness, but the soul's agreement with itself? It is the joint concurrence of all the affections to the universal peace and quiet of the soul, every one regularly acting in its own place and order, and so contributing to the common good. Next to the beauty of holiness, which is the soul's agreement with God, is the beauty of meekness, which is the soul's agreement with itself. Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for the powers of the soul thus to dwell together in unity, the reason knowing how to rule, and the affections at the same time knowing how to obey. Exorbitant passion is a discord in the soul; it is like a tumour in the face, which spoils the beauty of it; meekness scatters the tumour, binds down the swelling, and so prevents the deformity, and preserves the beauty. This is one instance of the comeliness of grace, through *my comeliness*, (says God to Israel, Ezek. xvi. 14.) *which I had put upon thee*. It puts a charming loveliness and amiableness upon the soul, which renders it acceptable to all who know what true worth and beauty is. *He that in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, (that is, in Christian meekness and quietness of spirit,) *serveth Christ, is acceptable to God and approved of men*, Rom. xiv. 17, 18. And to whom else can we wish to recommend ourselves?

Solomon (a very competent judge of beauty) has determined, that it is a man's wisdom that makes *his face to shine*, (Eccl. viii. 1.) and doubtless the meekness of wisdom contributes as much as any one branch of it to this lustre. We read in Scripture of three whose faces shone remarkably, and they were all eminent for meekness. The face of Moses shone, (Exod. xxxiv. 30.) and he was the meekest of all the men on earth. The face of Stephen shone, (Acts vi. 15.) and he it was, who, in the midst of a shower of stones, so meekly submitted, and prayed for his persecutors. The face of our Lord Jesus shone in his transfiguration, and he was the great pattern of meekness. It is a sweet and pleasing air which this grace puts upon the countenance, while it keeps the soul in tune, and frees it from those jarring ill-favoured discords which are the certain effect of an ungoverned passion.

3. There is in it the credit of an ornament. The text speaks of it as an *adorning* much more excellent and valuable than gold, pearls, or the most costly array; much more recommending than all the bravery of the daughters of Zion. It is an adorning to the soul, the principal, the immortal part of the man. That outward adorning does but deck and beautify the body, which at the best is but a sister to the worms, and will ere long be a feast for them; but this is the ornament of the soul, by which we are allied to the invisible world: it is an adorning that recommends us to God, which is in his sight of *great price*; so the text says, and in that says enough to its praise. Ornaments go by estimation: now we may be sure the judgment of God is right and unerring. Every thing is indeed, as it is with God; those are righteous indeed, that are [a] righteous before God; and that is an ornament indeed which he calls and counts so. It is an ornament of God's own making; is the soul thus decked? it is he that has decked it: *By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens*, (Job xxvi. 13.) and by the same Spirit has he garnished the meek and quiet soul. It is an ornament of his accepting, (it must needs be so if it be of his own working,) for to him who has this ornament, more adorning shall be given. He has promised, (Ps cxlix. 4.) that he will *beautify the meek with salvation*; and if the garments of salvation will not beautify, what will? The robes of glory will be the everlasting ornaments of the meek and quiet spirits. This meekness is an ornament that (like the Israelites' clothes in the wilderness) never waxes old, nor will ever go out of fashion while right reason and religion have any place in the world: all wise and good people will reckon those best drest that put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and walk with him in the white of meekness and innocency. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these lilies of the valleys, though *lilies among thorns*.

The same ornament, which in the text is recommended to wives, is, by the same apostle, recommended to us all, (1 Pet. v. 5.) *Yea, all of you be subject one to another*: that explains what meekness is; it is that mutual yielding which we owe one to

[a] Luke i. 6.

another, for edification and in the *fear of God*, Eph. v. 21. This seems to be a hard saying, how shall we digest it? an impracticable duty, how shall we conquer it? Why, it follows, *Be clothed with humility.* The word is * την ταπεινοφροσυνην εγκομβωσασθε, *innodate*, from κομβος, *a knot*. Which notes, (1.) The *fixedness* of this grace: we must gird it fast to us, and not leave it to hang loose, so as to be snatched away by every temptation. Carelessness is no commendation of the soul's adorning: watchfulness and resolution in the strength of Christ must tie the knot upon our graces, and make them as the girdle that cleaves to a man's loins. (2.) The comeliness and ornament of it: put it on as a knot of ribbons, as an ornament to the soul. Such is the meekness of wisdom, it gives to the head an *ornament of grace*, and (which is more) *a crown of glory*, Prov. i. 9. and iv. 9.

There is in it the credit of true courage.† Meekness is commonly despised and run down by the grandees of the age, as a piece of cowardice and mean-spiritedness, and the evidence of a little soul, and is posted accordingly; while the most furious and angry revenges are celebrated and applauded under the pompous names of valour, honour, and greatness of spirit, which arise from a mistaken notion of courage; the true nature whereof is thus stated by a very ingenious pen,‡ "That it is a resolution never to decline any evil of pain, when the choosing of it, and the exposing of ourselves to it, is the only remedy against a greater evil." And therefore, he that accepts a challenge, and so runs himself upon the evil of sin, which is the greater evil, only for fear of shame and reproach, which is the less evil, he is the coward; while he that refuses the challenge, and so exposes himself to reproach, for fear of sin,§ he is the valiant man. True courage is such a presence of mind, as enables a man rather to suffer than to sin; to choose affliction rather than iniquity; to pass by an affront, though he lose by it, and be hissed at for a fool and a sneak, rather than engage in a sinful quarrel. He that can deny the brutal lust of anger and revenge, rather than violate the royal law of love and charity, (however contrary the sentiments of the world may be,) is truly resolute and courageous; the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. Fretting and vexing is the fruit of the weakness of women and children, but much below the strength of a man, especially of the new man, that is born from above. When our Lord Jesus is described in his majesty, riding prosperously, the glory he appears in, is *truth*, and *meekness*, and *righteousness*, Ps. xlv. 4. The courage of those who overcome this great red dragon of wrath and revenge, by meek and patient suffering, and by *not loving their lives unto the death*, (Rev. xii. 11.) will turn to the best and most honourable account on the other side the grave, and will be crowned with *glory*, and *honour*, and *immortality*; when those that *caused their terror in the land of the living*, fall ingloriously, and *bear their shame with them that go down to the pit*. Ezek. xxxii. 24.

5. The credit of a conformity to the best patterns. The resemblance of those that are confessedly excellent and glorious, has in it an excellence and glory. To be meek, is to be like the greatest saints, the elders that obtained a good report, and were of renown in their generation. It is to be like the greatest angels, whose meekness in their converse with, and ministration to, the saints, is very observable in the Scriptures. Nay, it is to be like the great God himself, whose goodness is his glory, (who is *Deus optimus—the best God*, and therefore *maximus—the greatest*,) who is slow to anger, and in whom *fury is not*, Isa. xxvii. 4. We are then *followers of God, as dear children*, when we *walk in love*, and are *kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another*, Eph. v. 1, 2. compare *ch.* iv. 2. The more quiet and sedate we are, the more like we are to that God, who, though he be nearly concerned in all the affairs of this lower world, is far from being moved by its most violent convulsions and revolutions: but as he was from eternity,‖ so he is and will be to eternity, infinitely happy in the enjoyment of himself. It is spoken to his praise and glory, Ps. xxix. 10. *The Lord sits upon the floods*, even when *the floods have lifted up their voice, have lifted up their waves*, Ps. xciii. 3. Such is the rest of the Eternal Mind, that he sits as¶ firm and undisturbed upon the movable flood, as upon the immovable rock, the same *yesterday, to-day, and for ever:* and the meek and quiet soul that preserves its peace and evenness against all the ruffling insults of passion and provocation, does thereby somewhat participate of a *divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4.

Let the true honour that attends this grace of meekness recommend it to us: it is one of those things that are *honest*, and *pure*, and *lovely*, and *of good report;* a virtue that has a *praise* attending it, Phil. iv. 8. A praise, not, perhaps, of men, but of God, Rom. ii. 29. It is the certain way to get and keep, if not a great name, yet a good name; such as is *better than precious ointment*. Though there be those that trample upon the meek of the earth, and look

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* *Vobis infixam habete.*—Fix within you. *Eras.*

† *Magni animi est proprium, placidum esse et injurias superne despicere* —It belongs to a great mind to be calm, and to despise injuries as one elevated above their power. *Sen.*

‡ Norris Miscell. p. 167, 188.

§ Paul showed more true *valour* when he said, *I can do nothing against the truth*, than Goliah did, when he defied all the host of Israel. *Ward.*

‖ The Hebrew critics observe, that in the name יהוה all the letters are *quiescent.*

¶ *Quod desideras magnum et summum est, Deoque vicinum, non concuti.* Sen.—*Diis proximus ille est, quem ratio non ira movet.*—What you

upon them as Michal upon David, despising them in their hearts; yet *if this is to be vile*, let us be *yet more vile*, and *base in our own sight*, and we shall find (as David argues there) that there are those of whom we shall be *had in honour*, sooner or later, (2 Sam. vi. 22.) for the word of Christ shall not fall to the ground, that those who humble themselves shall be exalted.

II. Consider how comfortable a meek and quiet spirit is. Inward comfort is a desirable good, which has more in it of reality, and depends less upon opinion, than that of credit: and this is that which meekness and quietness of spirit has such a direct tendency to, nay, which it carries along with it. What is true comfort and pleasure, but a quietness in our own bosom? Those are most easy to themselves, who are so to all about them; while they that are a burthen and a terror to others, will not be much otherwise to themselves. He that would lead a quiet, must lead a peaceable, life, 1 Tim. ii. 2. The surest way to find rest to our souls, is to learn of him who is meek and lowly in heart, Matt. xi. 29. Let but our moderation be known unto all men; *and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds*, Phil. iv. 5, 7. Quietness is the thing which even the busy, noisy part of the world pretend to desire and pursue: they will be quiet, yea, that they will, or they will not endure the least disturbance of their quietness. But verily they go a mad way to work, in pursuit of quietness; greatly to disquiet themselves inwardly, and put their souls into a continual hurry, only to prevent or remedy some small outward disquietude from others. But he that is meek, finds a sweeter, safer quietness, and much greater comfort, than that which they in vain pursue. *Great peace have they that love this law of love*, for *nothing shall offend them*, Ps. cxix. 165. Whatever offence is intended, it is not so interpreted, and by that means the peace is preserved. If there be a heaven any where upon earth, it is in the meek and quiet soul, that acts and breathes above that lower region, which is infested with storms and tempests, the harmony of whose faculties is like the music of the spheres they talk of, a perpetual melody. *Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*

A meek and quiet Christian must needs live very comfortably, for he enjoys himself, he enjoys his friends, he enjoys his God, and he puts it out of the reach of his enemies to disturb him in these enjoyments.

1. He enjoys himself. Meekness is very nearly allied to that patience which our Lord Jesus prescribes to us, as necessary to the keeping possession of our own souls, Luke xxi. 19. How calm are the thoughts, how serene are the affections, how rational the prospects, and how even and composed are all the resolves, of the meek and quiet soul!* How free from the pains and tortures of an angry man, who is disseized and dispossessed even of himself, and while he toils and vexes to make other things his own, makes his own soul not so: his reason is in a mist, confounded and bewildered, cannot argue, infer, or foresee with any certainty. His affections are on the full speed, hurried on with an impetus, which is as uneasy as it is hazardous. Who is that good man who is †*satisfied from himself?* Prov. xiv. 14. Who but the quiet man, that needs not go abroad for satisfaction, but having Christ dwelling in his heart by faith, has in him that peace, which the world can neither give nor take away? While those that are fretful and passionate rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of sorrow, in pursuit of revengeful projects, the God of peace *gives to his beloved* (Jedidijahs, one of Solomon's names, who was a man of peace) *sleep*, Ps. cxxvii. 2. The sleep of the meek is quiet, and sweet, and undisturbed: those that by innocency and mildness make themselves the sheep of Christ, shall be made to lie down in the *green pastures*, Ps. xxiii. 2. That which would break an angry man's heart, will not break a meek man's sleep. It is promised, Ps. xxii. 26. That *the meek shall eat and be satisfied.* He has what sweetness is to be had in his common comforts, while the angry man either cannot eat, his stomach is too full and too high, (as Ahab, 1 Kings xxi. 4.) or eats and is not satisfied, unless he can be revenged, as Haman, Esth. v. 12, 13. *All this avails me nothing*, (though it was a banquet of wine with the king and queen,) as long as Mordecai is unhanged.

It is spoken of as the happiness of the meek, that they *delight themselves in the abundance of peace*, Ps. xxxvii. 11. Others may delight themselves in the abundance of wealth; a poor delight that is interwoven with so much trouble and disquietude; but the meek, though they have but a little wealth, have peace, abundance of peace, peace like a river, and this such as they have a heart to delight themselves in; *sat lucis intus—light enough within*, as Oecolampadius said, their souls are a Goshen in the midst of the Ægypt of this world, they have a light in their dwelling, when clouds and darkness are round about them: this is the *joy which a stranger doth not meddle with.* We may certainly have (and we would do well to consider it) less inward disturbance, and more true ease and satisfaction in forgiving twenty injuries, than in avenging one. No

want is, that noble, that divine attainment—Unshaken tranquillity. *Claud.*

* Opinion is the rate of things
From whence our peace doth flow:
I have a better fate than kings,
Because I think it so.
Mrs. Philips.

† ——— *Ne te quæsiveris extra.*

doubt Abigail intended more than she expressed, when to qualify David, and to persuade him to pass by the affront which Nabal had given him, she prudently suggested, that *hereafter this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart.*[b]——Not only so, but it would be very sweet and easy, and comfortable in the reflection. Such a rejoicing is it, especially in a suffering-day, to have the testimony of conscience, that in *simplicity* and *godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God*, particularly the grace of meekness, *we have had our conversation in the world*, and so have pleased God, and done our duty. He did not speak the sense, no not of the sober heathen, that said, *Est vindicta bonum, vitâ jucundius ipsâ—Revenge is sweeter than life;* for it often proves more bitter than death.

2. He enjoys his friends:——And that is a thing in which lies much of the comfort of human life. Man was intended to be a sociable creature, and a Christian much more so. But the angry man is unfit to be so, that takes fire at every provocation; fitter to be abandoned to the lions' dens, and *mountains of the leopards*, than to *go forth by the footsteps of the flock.* He that has *his hand against every man*, cannot but have (with Ishmael's character Ishmael's fate) *every man's hand against him*, (Gen. xvi. 12.) and so he lives in a state of war; but meekness is the cement of society, the bond of Christian communion; it planes and polishes the materials of that beautiful fabric, and makes them lie close and tight, and the living stones which are built up a spiritual house, to be, like the stones of the temple that Herod built, all as one stone, whereas, "Hard upon hard" (as the Spaniards' proverb is) "will never make a wall." Meekness preserves among brethren that unity, which is like the ointment upon the holy head, and the dew upon the holy hill, Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 2. In our present state of imperfection there can be no friendship, correspondence, or conversation maintained without mutual allowances; we do not yet dwell with angels or spirits of just men made perfect, but with men subject to like passions. Now meekness teaches us to consider this, and to allow accordingly; and so distances and strangeness, feuds and quarrels, are happily prevented, and the beginnings of them crushed by a timely care. How necessary to true friendship it is to surrender our passions, and to subject them all to the laws of it, was (perhaps) intimated by Jonathan's delivering to David his sword, and his bow, and his girdle, all his military habiliments, when he entered into a covenant of friendship with him, 1 Sam. xviii. 3, 4.

3. He enjoys his God; and that is most comfortable of all. It is the quintessence of all happiness, and that without which all our other enjoyments are sapless and insipid; for this, none are better qualified than those who are arrayed with the *ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.* It was when the Psalmist had newly conquered an unruly passion, and composed himself, that he lifted up his soul to God in that pious and pathetic breathing, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee?* Ps. lxxiii. 25. We enjoy God when we have the evidences and the assurances of his favour, the tastes and tokens of his love, when we experience in ourselves the communication of his grace, and the continued instances of his image stamped upon us: and this, those that are most meek and quiet have usually the greatest degrees of. In our wrath and passion we give place to the devil, and so provoke God to withdraw from us; nothing grieves the Holy Spirit of God (by whom we have fellowship with the Father) more than *bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking*, Eph. iv. 30, 31. But to this man does the God of heaven look with a peculiar regard, *even to him that is poor*, poor in Spirit, (Isa. lxvi. 2.) עני ושפל רוח,—*to him that is quiet*, so the Syriac; *to him that is meek*, so the Chaldee. The great God overlooks heaven and earth, to give a favourable look to the meek and quiet soul. Nay, he not only looks at such, but (Isa. lvii. 15.) *he dwells with them;* noting a constant intercourse and communion between God and humble souls. His secret is with them; he gives them more grace, and they that thus dwell in love, *dwell in God, and God in them.* The waters were dark indeed, but they were quiet, when the Spirit of God moved upon them, and out of them produced a beautiful world.

This calm and sedate frame does very much qualify and dispose us for the reception and entertainment of divine visits, and *sets bounds to the mountain*, (Exod. xix. 12.) on which God is to descend, that no interruption may break in, and charges the *daughters of Jerusalem*, by *the roes and the hinds of the field*, (those sweet, and gentle, and peaceable creatures,) *not to stir up or awake our Love till he please*, Cant. ii. 7. Some think it was for the quieting and composing of his spirit, (which seems to have been a little ruffled,) that Elisha called for the minstrel, (2 Kings iii. 15.) *and then the hand of the Lord came upon him.* Never was God more intimate with any mere man, than he was with Moses, the meekest of all the men on the earth; and it was required as a needful qualification of the high priest, who was to draw near to minister, that he should have *compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way*, Heb. v. 1, 2. The meek will he guide in judgment, with a still small voice, which cannot be heard, when the passions are loud and tumultuous. The angry man, when he awakes, is

[b] 2 Sam. xxv. 31.

still with the devil, contriving some malicious project; the meek and quiet man, when he awakes, is still with God, solacing himself in his favour. *Return unto thy rest, O my soul,* says David, (Ps. cxvi. 7.) when he had reckoned himself among the simple, that is, the mild, innocent, and inoffensive people. Return to thy Noah, so the word is, (for Noah had his name from Rest,) perhaps alluding to the rest which the dove found with Noah in the ark, when she could find none any where else. Those that are harmless and simple as doves, can with comfort return to God as to their rest. It is excellently paraphrased by Mr. Patrick, "God and thyself" (my soul) "enjoy; in quiet rest, freed from thy fears." It is said, Ps. cxlvii. 6. that the *Lord lifteth up the meek:* as far as their meekness reigns, they are lifted up above the stormy region, and fixed in a sphere perpetually calm and serene. They are advanced indeed that are at home in God, and live a life of communion with him, not only in solemn ordinances, but even in the common accidents and occurrences of the world. Every day is a sabbath day, a day of *holy rest,* with the meek and quiet soul, that is, one of the days of heaven. As this grace gets ground, the comforts of the Holy Ghost grow stronger and stronger, according to that precious promise, (Isa. xxix. 19.) *The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.*

4. It is not in the power of his enemies to disturb and interrupt him in these enjoyments. His peace is not only sweet, but safe and secure: as far as he acts under the law of meekness, it is above the reach of the assaults of those that wish ill to it. He *that abides quietly under the shadow of the Almighty, shall surely be delivered from the snare of the fowler,* Ps. xci. 1, 3. The greatest provocations that men can give would not hurt us, if we did not,* by our own inordinate and foolish concern, come too near them, and within reach of their cannon; we may therefore thank ourselves if we be damaged: he that has learned, with meekness and quietness, to forgive injuries, and pass them by, has found the best and surest way of baffling and defeating them;† nay, it is a kind of innocent revenge. It was an evidence that Saul was actuated by another spirit, in that, when the children of Belial despised him, and brought him no presents, (hoping by that contempt to give a shock to his infant government,) *he held his peace,* and so neither his soul nor his crown received any disturbance, 1 Sam. x. 27. Shimei, when he cursed David, intended thereby to pour vinegar into his wounds, and to add affliction to the afflicted; but David, by his meekness, preserved his peace, and Shimei's design was frustrated, *So let him curse;* (2 Sam. xvi. 10.) alas, poor creature! he hurts himself more than David, who, while he keeps his heart from being tinder to those sparks, is no more prejudiced by them, than the moon is by the foolish cur that barks at it. The meek man's prayer is that of David, (Ps. lxi. 2.) *Lead me to the rock that is higher than I;* and there I can (as Mr. Norris expresses it)

——— Smile to see
The shafts of fortune all drop short of me.

The meek man is like a ship that rides at anchor, *movetur, sed non amovetur—is moved, but not removed.* The storm *moves* it, (the meek man is not a stock or stone under provocation,) but does not *remove* it from its port. It is a grace that in reference to the temptations of affront and injury, (as faith in reference to temptation in general,) quenches the fiery darts of the wicked.‡ It is armour of proof against the spiteful and envenomed arrows of provocation, and is an impregnable wall to secure the peace of the soul there, where *thief cannot break through and steal,* while the angry man lays all his comforts at the mercy of every wasp that will strike at him.

So that, upon the whole matter, it appears, That the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is as easy as it is comely.

III. Consider how profitable a meek and quiet spirit is. All people are for what they can get; it is that which the busy world is set upon, *Every one for his gain from his quarter,* Isa. lvi. 11. It is for this that they break their sleep, and spend their spirits, and raise so great a dust. Now it will be to convince such, that, really, there is more to be gotten by meekness and quietness of spirit, than by all this hurry and confusion. They readily believe, that *in all labour there is profit;* but let God himself tell them, *In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength;* they will not take his word for it, but they say, (as it follows there,) *No, for we will flee upon horses, and we will ride upon the swift,* Isa. xxx. 15, 16. He tha came from heaven to bless us, has entailed a special blessing upon the grace of meekness, Matt. v. 5. *Blessed are the meek:* and his saying they are blessed, makes them so, for those whom he blesses are blessed indeed; *blessed, and they shall be blessed.*

Meekness is gainful and profitable,

1. As it is the condition of the promise. The meek are therefore blessed, *for they shall inherit the earth:* it is quoted from Ps. xxxvii. 11. and is almost the

* *Nemo læditur nisi a seipso.*—No man is hurt but by himself. *Dict Diogen.*

† *Idcirco quis te lædit ut doleas, quia fructus lædentis in dolore læsi est; ergo, cum fructum ejus everteris non dolendo, ipse doleat necesse est amissione fructus sui, improbum cædis sustinendo.*—He who injures you, does it in order to grieve you, for the grief of the person injured is precisely the injurer's reward; if therefore you deprive him of this reward by suppressing your grief, you turn the mischief he intended, on himself. *Tertull. de Patientia, cap.* 8.

‡ Meekness is the greatest affront to all injuries in the world, for it returns them upon the injurious, and makes them useless, ineffective, and innocent. *Taylor's Great Exempl.* p. 304.

only express promise of temporal good things in all the New Testament.* Not that the meek shall be put off with the earth only, then they would not be truly blessed, but they shall have that as an earnest of something more. Some read it, *They shall inherit the land*, that is, the land of *Canaan*, which was not only a type and figure, but to them that believed, a token and pledge, of the heavenly inheritance. So that, "A double Canaan" (as Dr. Hammond observes) "is thought little enough for the meek man.† The same felicity, in a manner, attending him which we believe of Adam, if he had not fallen, a life in Paradise, and thence a transplantation to heaven." ——But besides this, meekness is a branch of godliness, which has more than other branches of it, the *promise of the life that now is*, 1 Tim. iv. 8. *They shall inherit the earth;* the sweetest and surest tenure is that by inheritance, which is founded in sonship: that which comes by descent to the heir, the law attributes to the act of God, who has a special hand in providing for the meek. They are his children, and *if children then heirs.* It is not always the largest proportion of this world's goods that falls to the meek man's share, but whether he has more or less, he has it by the best title; not by a common, but a covenant-right: he holds *in Capite*, ‡—*in* (Christ) *our Head*, an honourable tenure.

If he has but a little, he has it from God's love, and with his blessing, and behold all things are clean and comfortable to him. The wise man has determined it, (Prov. xvii. 1.) *Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife*: and, chap. xv. 17. *Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.* Be the fare ever so scanty, he that has rule over his own spirit, knows how to make the best of them; how to *suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock*, Deut. xxxii. 13. *Blessed are the meek, for they shall* wield *the earth;* so old Wickliff's translation reads it, (as I remember it is quoted in the Book of Martyrs,) and very significantly. Good management contributes more to our comfort than great possessions. Whatever a meek man has of this earth, he knows how to wield it, to make a right and good use of it; that is all in all. Quiet souls so far inherit the earth, that they are sure to have as much of it as is good for them; as much as will serve to bear their charges through this world to a better; and who would covet more? Enough is as good as a feast. The promise of God without present possession, is better than possession of the world, without an interest in the promise.

2. As it has in its own nature a direct tendency to our present benefit and advantage. He that is thus wise, is wise for himself, even in this world, and effectually consults his own interest.

(1.) Meekness has a good influence upon our health. If envy be the *rottenness of the bones*, (Prov. xiv. 30.) meekness is the preservation of them. As the indulging of inordinate appetites towards those things that are pleasing to the flesh, so the indulging of inordinate passions against those things that are displeasing, do in the effect prejudice and injure the very body which they contend so much for. The excesses and exorbitances of anger stir up those peccant humours in the body which kindle and increase wasting and killing diseases; but meekness governs those humours, and so contributes very much to the good temper and constitution of the body. When Ahab was sick for Naboth's vineyard, meekness would soon have cured him. Moses, the meekest of men, not only lived to be old, but was then free from the infirmities of age; *his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*, (Deut. xxxiv. 7.) which may be very much imputed to his meekness, as a means. The days of old age would not be such evil days, if old people did not, by their own frowardness and unquietness, make them worse than otherwise they would be. Ungoverned anger inflames the natural heat, and so begets acute diseases, dries up the radical moisture, and so hastens chronical decays. The body is called the sheath or scabbard of the soul, Dan. vii. 15. *marg.* How often does an envious fretful soul, like a sharp knife, cut its own sheath, and, as they say of the viper's brood, eat its own way out: all which, meekness happily prevents.

The quietness of the spirit will help to cool distempering heats, to suppress melancholy vapours; and this, as other of wisdom's precepts, will be *health to the navel, and marrow to the bones; length of days, and long life, and peace they shall add unto thee: but wrath kills the foolish man*, Job v. 2.

(2.) It has a good influence upon our wealth, the preservation and increase of it. As in kingdoms, so in families and neighbourhoods, war begets poverty. Many a one has brought a fair estate to ruin, by giving way to the efforts of an ungoverned anger, that barbarous idol, to which, even the children's portions and the family's maintenance are oftentimes sacrificed. Contention will as soon clothe a man with rags as slothfulness; that, therefore, which keeps the peace, does not a little befriend the plenty. It was Abraham's meek management of his quarrel

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* As heaven is taken by violence, so is earth by meekness. *Trap in loc.*

† *Pract. Cat.* p. *(mihi)* 117.

‡ *Terram inhabitant quam sibi divinitus concessam esse nôrunt, et secure agunt sub Dei tutelâ; et hoc illis satis est, donec mundi hæreditatem ultimo die adeant. Feroces vero omnia possidendo nihil possident.*—They inhabit the earth which they know to be theirs by the divine allotment, and they are safe beneath the divine protection; this suffices them, till, in the last day, they arrive at the full possession of their inheritance. The furious, on the contrary, by grasping at all, lose every thing. Calv. *in* Matt. v. 5.

with Lot, that secured both his own and his kinsman's possessions, which otherwise would have been an easy prey to the Canaanite and the Perizzite that dwelt then in the land, Gen. xiii. 7, 8. And Isaac, whom I have sometimes thought to be the most quiet and calm of all the patriarchs, and that passed the days of his pilgrimage most silently, raised the greatest estate of any of them, (Gen. xxvi. 13.) *he grew till he became very great:* and his son Jacob lost nothing in the end, by his meek and quiet carriage toward his uncle Laban. Revenge is costly; Haman bid largely for it, no less than ten thousand talents of silver: (Esth. iii. 9.) it is better to forgive, and save the charges. Mr. Dod used to say, "Love is better than law; for love is cheap, but law is chargeable." Those tradesmen are commonly observed to thrive most, that make the least noise, that with quietness work and mind their own business, 2 Thess. iii. 12.

(3.) It has a good influence upon our safety. In the day of the Lord's anger, the meek of the earth are most likely to be secured. *It may be you shall be hid,* (so runs the promise, Zeph. ii. 3.) if any be, you shall, you stand fairest for special protections. Meekness approaches to that innocence which is commonly an effectual security against wrongs and injuries. However some base and servile spirits may insult over the tame and humble; yet, with all persons of honour, it is confessedly a piece of cowardice to set upon an unarmed unresisting man, that resents not provocation. *Who is he that will harm you, if you be followers τu ἀγαθu, of him that is good,* in his goodness, 1 Pet. iii. 13. Who draws his sword, or cocks his pistol, at the harmless silent lamb? while every one is ready to do it at the furious barking dog. Thus does the meek man escape many of those perplexing troubles, those woes, and sorrows, and wounds without cause, which he that is passionate, provoking and revengeful, pulls upon his own head. Wise men turn away wrath, but a fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calls for strokes. It is an honour to a man to cease from strife, but every fool will be meddling to his own hurt. An instance of this I remember Mr. Baxter gives in his book of "Obedient Patience," which was this; "That once, going along London streets, a hectoring rude fellow justled him: he went on his way, and took no notice of it; but the same man affronting the next he met in like manner, he drew his sword and demanded satisfaction, and mischief was done." He that would sleep both in a whole skin, and in a whole conscience, must learn rather to forgive injuries than to revenge them. The two goats that met upon the narrow bridge (as it is in Luther's fable) were both in danger should they quarrel; but were both preserved by the condescension of one, that lay down and let the other go over him. It is the evil of passion, that it turns our friends into enemies; but it is the excellency of meekness, that it turns our enemies into friends, which is an effectual way of conquering them. Saul, as inveterate an enemy as could be, was more than once melted by David's mildness and meekness. *Is this thy voice, my son David?* (says he, 1 Sam. xxiv. 16.) *I have sinned, return, my son David,* 1 Sam. xxvi. 21. And after that, Saul persecuted him no more, *ch.* xxvii. 4. The change that Jacob's meekness made in Esau, is no less observable; and (some think) is remarked as very strange and surprising, by an unusual pointing in the Hebrew text, upon Esau's kissing Jacob, Gen. xxxiii. 4. וישקהו a point over every letter, to put the reader in mind to take special notice of it. In the ordinary dispensations of Providence, some tell us,* that they have found it remarkably true in times of public trouble and calamity, that it has commonly fared best with the meek and quiet; their lot has been safe and easy, especially if compared with the contrary fate of the turbulent and seditious. Whoso is wise and observes these things, will understand the loving-kindness of the Lord to the quiet in the land, against whom we read indeed of plots laid, and deceitful matters devised, (Ps. xxxv. 20; xxxvii. 12, 14.) but those by a kind and overruling providence are ordinarily baffled and made successless. Thus does this grace of meekness carry its own recompence along with it, and in keeping this commandment, as well as after keeping it, there is a *great reward,* Ps. xix. 11.

IV. Consider what a preparative it is for something further. It is a very desirable thing to *stand complete in all the will of God,* (Col. iv. 12.) to be fitted and furnished for every good work, to be made ready, a people prepared for the Lord: a living principle of grace is the best preparation for the whole will of God. Grace is establishing to the heart, it is the root of the matter, and a good foundation for the time to come. This grace of meekness is particularly a good preparation for what lies before us in this world.

1. It makes us fit for any duty. It puts the soul in frame, and keeps it so, for all religious exercises. There was no noise of axes and hammers in the building of the temple: those are most fit for temple service that are most quiet and composed. The work of God is best done, when it is done without noise. Meekness qualifies and disposes us to hear and receive the word: when malice and envy are laid aside, and we are like new-born babes for innocence and inoffensiveness, then we are most fit to *receive the sincere milk of the word,* and are most likely to grow thereby, 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. Meekness prepares the soil of the heart for the seed of the word, as the

* Dr. Hammond, *Pract. Cat.* p. 117.

husbandman *opens and breaks the clods of his ground, and makes plain the face thereof*, and then *casts in the principal wheat and the appointed barley*, Isa. xxviii. 24, 25. Christ's ministers are fishers of men, but we seldom fish successfully in these troubled waters. The voice that Eliphaz heard, was ushered in with a profound silence, (Job iv. 16.) and in *slumberings upon the bed*, a quiet place and posture. *God opens the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions*, Job xxxiii. 15, 16. Prayer is another duty which meekness disposes us for the right and acceptable performance of. We do not lift up pure hands in prayer, if they be not without wrath, 1 Tim. ii. 8. Prayers made in wrath are written in gall, and can never be pleasing to, or prevailing with, the God of love and peace. Our rule is, *First go and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift*,* Matt. v. 23, 24. And if we do not take this method, though we seek God in a due ordinance, we do not seek him in the due order.

The Lord's day is a day of rest, and none are fit for it but those who are in a quiet frame, whose souls are entered into that present sabbatism which the gospel has provided for the people of God, Heb. iv. 9. The Lord's supper is the gospel-feast of *unleavened bread*, which must be kept, not with the old leaven of wrath, and malice, and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.†

God made a gracious visit to Abraham, (Gen. xiii. 14.) after that Lot was separated from him, *viz.* after the strife betwixt him and Lot was over, in which he had discovered so much mildness and humility. The more carefully we preserve the communion of saints, the fitter we are for communion with God. It is observable, that the sacrifices which God appointed under the law, were not ravenous beasts, and birds of prey; but calves, and kids, and lambs, and turtle-doves, and young pigeons, all of them emblems of meekness, and gentleness, and inoffensiveness; for *with such sacrifices God is well pleased*. This quietness of spirit contributes very much to the constant steadiness and regularity of a religious conversation. Hot and eager spirits, that are ready to take fire at every thing, are usually very inconstant in their profession, and of great inconsistency with themselves, like a man in an ague-fit, sometimes burning hot, and sometimes shivering for cold; or like those that gallop in the beginning of their journey, and tire before the end of it: whereas the meek and quiet Christian is still the same; and, by keeping to a constant rate, rids ground. If you would have one foot of the compass go even round the circumference, you must be sure to keep the other fixed and quiet in the centre, for your strength is to sit still.

2. It makes us fit for any relation, which God in his providence may call us into. Those who are quiet themselves, cannot but be easy to all that are about them; and the nearer any are to us in relation and converse, the more desirable it is that we should be easy to them. Relations are various, as superiors, inferiors, and equals; he that is of a meek and quiet spirit, is cut out for any of them. Moses was forty years a courtier in Egypt, forty years a servant in Midian, and forty years a king in Jeshurun; and his meekness qualified him for each of these posts, and still he held fast his integrity. There are various duties requisite, according as the relation is, and various graces to be exercised; but this of meekness is the golden thread that must run through all. If man be a sociable creature, the more he has of humility, the more fit he is for society. Meekness would greatly help to preserve the wisdom and due authority of superiors, the obedience and due subjection of inferiors, and the love, and mutual kindness, and serviceableness of equals. A calm and quiet spirit receives the comfort of the relation most thankfully, studies the duty of the relation most carefully, and bears the inconvenience of the relation (for there is no unmixed comfort under the sun) most cheerfully and easily. I have heard of a married couple, who, though they were both naturally of a hot and hasty temper, yet lived very comfortably in that relation, by observing an agreement made between themselves, "Never to be both angry together:" an excellent law of meekness it is, which, if faithfully lived up to, would prevent many of those breaches among relations, which occasion so much guilt and grief, and are seldom healed without a scar. It was part of the good advice given by a pious and ingenious father, to his children newly entered into the conjugal relation;

> Doth one speak fire? t'other with water come;
> Is one provoked? be t'other soft or dumb.

And thus *one wise, both happy*. But where wrath and anger are indulged, all relations are imbittered, those that should be helps, become as thorns in our eyes, and goads in our sides. *Two indeed are better than one*, and yet it is better to dwell alone in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry relation, *who is like a continual dropping in a very rainy day*, Prov. xxi. 19; xxvii. 15. Some of the Hebrew critics have noted, that if you take away יי *the fear*

* Leave thy Gift: Θεος ουκ ηλειται ατιμιαν ειναι την δωρεαν καταλιμπανομενην, και συνομιζεις ὑβριν, ειναι, το προτερος απελθειν και καταλλαγηναι.—God does not deem that any dishonour attaches to him, when he leaves a gift, though it should be slighted; and dost thou think it degrading to make the first overture toward reconciliation? *Chrysost. Hom.*

† *Quid est ad pacem Dei accedere sine pace? Ad remissionem debitorum cum retentione? Quomodo placabit patrem iratus in fratrem, cum omnis ira ab initio interdicta sit nobis?*—How can we attain the peace of God without peace? How can we attain the remission of our sins without remitting the sins of others? How can he that is angry with his brother, pacify his father, who, from the first, forbids us to be angry? *Tertul. de Orat. c.* 10.

of the Lord, from איש and אשה *husband and wife*; there remains but אש and אש *fire, fire*.—It is so in other relations.

3. It makes us fit for any condition, according as the wise God shall please to dispose of us. Those that through grace are enabled to compose and quiet themselves, are fit to live in this world, where we meet with so much every day to discompose and disquiet us. In general, whether the outward condition be prosperous or adverse, whether the world smile or frown upon us, a meek and quiet spirit is neither lifted up with the one, nor cast down with the other, but still in the same poise; in prosperity humble and condescending, the estate rising, but the mind not rising with it; in adversity encouraged and cheered up, *cast down, but not in despair*; in both *even*, like a dye, throw in which way you will, it lights on a square side. St. Paul, who had learned in every state to be content, *αυταρκης—satisfied within himself, knew how to be abased, and knew how to abound; every where, and in all things, he was instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound, and to suffer need*, Phil. iv. 11, 12. Changes without made none within. It is a temper which, as far as it has the ascendant in the soul, makes every burthen sit light, by bringing the mind to the condition, when the condition is not in every thing brought to the mind. Prosperity and adversity have each of them their particular temptation to peevishness and frowardness; the former by making men imperious, the latter by making men impatient. Against the assaults of each of these temptations, the grace of meekness will stand upon the guard. Being to pass through this world *by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report*, that is, through a great variety of conditions and treatments, we have need of that long-suffering and kindness, and love unfeigned, which will be the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left. I refer to that scripture, 2 Cor. vi. 6—8. Meekness and quietness will fortify the soul on each hand, and suit it to the several entertainments which the world gives us; like a skilful pilot, that, which point of the compass soever the wind blows from, will shift his sails accordingly; and knows either how to get forward, and weather his point with it, or to lie by without damage. It is the continual happiness of a quiet temper, to make the best of that which is.*

4. It makes us fit for a day of persecution. If tribulation and affliction arise because of the word, (which is no foreign supposition,) the meek and quiet spirit is armed for it, so as to preserve its peace and purity at such a time, which are our two great concerns, that we may neither torment ourselves with a base fear, nor pollute ourselves with a base compliance. We are accustomed to say, "We will give any thing for a quiet life."—I say, any thing for a quiet conscience, which will be best secured under the shield of a meek and quiet spirit, *which doth not render railing for railing*, (1 Pet. iii. 9.) nor aggravate the threatened trouble, or represent it to itself in its most formidable colours, but has learned to put a *but* upon the power of the most enraged enemies; they can but kill the body; and to witness the most righteous testimony with meekness and fear, (1 Pet. iii. 15.) like our Master, who, *when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously*, 1 Pet. ii. 23. Suffering saints (as the suffering-Jesus) are compared to sheep, (Isa. liii. 7. Rom. viii. 36.) as sheep dumb before the shearer, nay, dumb before the butcher. The meek and quiet Christian, if duly called to it, can tamely part, not only with the wool, but with the blood; not only with the estate, but with the life, and even then rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Angry, froward people, in a day of rebuke, are apt to pull crosses upon themselves by needless provocations, or to murmur, and complain, and fly in the face of instruments, and give unbecoming language, contrary to the laws of our holy religion, and the example of our Master, and so do more hurt than good by their suffering. Whenever we have the honour to be persecuted for righteousness-sake, our great care must be to glorify God, and to adorn our profession: (which is done most effectually by meekness and mildness, under the hardest censures, and the most cruel usage:) so manifesting that we are indeed under the power and influence of that holy religion, which we think it worth our while to suffer for.

5. It makes us fit for death and eternity. The grave is a quiet place; *there the wicked cease from troubling*, Job iii. 17. Those that were most troublesome, are there bound to the peace; and their *hatred and envy* (those great make-bates) *are there perished*, Eccl. ix. 6. Whether we will or no, in the grave we shall *lie still and be quiet*, Job iii. 13. What a great change then must it needs be to unquiet, angry, and litigious people! and what a mighty shock will that sudden forced rest give them, after such a violent rapid motion! It is therefore our wisdom to compose ourselves for the grave, to prepare ourselves for it, by adapting and accommodating ourselves to that which is likely to be our long home: this is dying daily, quieting ourselves, for death will shortly quiet us.

The meek and quiet soul is at death let into that rest which it has been so much labouring after; and how welcome must that needs be!——Thoughts of death and the grave are very agreeable to those who love to be quiet; for then and there they shall *enter into peace*, and *rest in their beds*, Isa. lvii. 2.

* Μη ζητει τα γινομενα γινεσθαι ως θελεις, αλλα θελε γινεσθαι τα γινομενα ως γινεται, και ευ ποιησεις.—Seek not to adjust events to your will so much as to adjust your will to events; thus you will act a becoming part. *Epict. c.* 13.

After death we expect the judgment, than which nothing is more dreadful to them that are contentious, Rom. ii. 8. The coming of the master brings terror along with it, to those who smite their fellow-servants, (Luke xii. 45, 46.) but those that are meek and quiet, are likely to have their plea ready, their accounts stated, and whenever it comes, it will be no surprise to them: to those whose moderation is known to all men, it will be no ungrateful news to hear that *the Lord is at hand*, Phil. iv. 5. It is therefore prescribed, as that which ought to be our constant care, that whenever our master comes, we may be found of him in peace, 2 Pet. iii. 14. that is, in a peaceable temper. *Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he comes shall find* in such a frame. "*A good man*" (says the late excellent Abp. Tillotson, in his preface to his book of Family Religion) "*would be loth to be taken out of the world reeking hot from a sharp contention with a perverse adversary; and not a little out of countenance to find himself in this temper translated into the calm and peaceable regions of the blessed, where nothing but perfect charity and good-will reigns for ever.*" Heaven, for certain, is a quiet place, and none are fit for it but quiet people. The heavenly Canaan, that land of peace, would be no heaven to those that delight in war; turbulent and unquiet people would be out of their element, like a fish upon dry ground, in those calm regions.

They are the sheep of Christ, (such as are patient and inoffensive,) that are called to inherit the kingdom; *without are dogs* that bite and devour, Rev. xxii. 15.

They are the wings of a dove, not those of a hawk or eagle, that David would fly upon to his desired rest, Ps. lv. 6.

Now lay all this together, and then consider, Whether there be not a real excellency in this meekness and quietness of spirit, which does highly recommend it to all that love either God or themselves, or have any sensible regard to their own comfort, either in this world, or in that which is to come.

CHAPTER III.

THE APPLICATION.

I. And now, have we not reason to lament the want of *the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit*, among those that profess religion, and especially in our own bosoms? If this be Christianity, the Lord help us! How little is there of the thing, even among those that make great pretensions to the name! Surely, (as one said in another case,) *Aut hoc non Evangelium, aut hi non Evangelici—Either this is not Gospel, or these are not Gospel-professors.* And oh! how bare and uncomely does profession appear, for want of this adorning! When the Israelites had stript themselves of their ornaments, to furnish up a golden calf, it is said, they were *made naked to their shame*, Exod. xxxii. 25. How naked are we (like Adam when he had sinned) for want of this ornament! It is well if it were to the shame of true repentance; for there is reason enough for it.

I am not teaching you to judge and censure others in this matter, there is too much of that to be found among us; we are quick-sighted enough to spy faults in others, the transports of whose passions we should interpret favourably. But we have all cause, more or less, to condemn ourselves, and confess guilt in this matter. In many things we all offend, and perhaps in this, as much as in any, coming short of the law of meekness and quietness.

We are called Christians, and it is our privilege and honour that we are so: we name the name of the meek and lowly Jesus, but how few are actuated by his Spirit, or conformed to his example! It is a shame that any occasion should be given to charge it upon professors, who, in other things, are most strict and sober, that in this, they are most faulty: and that many who pretend to conscience and devotion, should indulge themselves in a peevish, froward, and morose temper and conversation, to the great reproach of that worthy Name by which we are called. May we not say, as that Mahometan did, when a Christian prince had perfidiously broke his league with him, "O Jesus! are these thy Christians?"

It is the manifest design of our holy and excellent religion, to smooth, and soften, and sweeten our tempers, and to work off the ruggedness and unevenness of them. Is it not a wretched thing therefore, that any who profess it, should be soured, and imbittered, and less conversable and fit for human society, than other people? He was looked upon as a very good man in his day, (and not without cause,) who yet had such an unhappy temper, and was sometimes so transported with passion, that his friend would say of him, "He had grace enough for ten men, and yet not enough for himself." All the disciples of Jesus Christ, even those of the first three, do not *know what manner of spirit they are of*, Luke ix. 55. So apt are we to deceive ourselves, especially when these extravagances shroud themselves under the specious and plausible pretence of zeal for God and religion. But yet the fault is not to be laid upon the profession, or the strictness and singularity of it in other things which are praiseworthy; nor may we think the worse of Christianity for any such blemishes: we know very well that *the wisdom that is from above, is peaceable, and gentle, and easy to be entreated*, and all that is sweet, and amiable, and endearing, though she is not herein justified of all who call themselves her children. But the blame must be laid upon the corruption and

folly of the professors themselves, who are not so perfectly delivered into the mould of Christianity as they should be; but neglect their ornament, and prostitute their honour, and suffer the authority of their graces to be trampled upon; they let fire go out of the rod of their branches, which devour their fruit: so that there is no meekness as a strong rod, to be a sceptre to rule in the soul, which is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation; (I refer to that complaint, Ezek. xix. 14.) something resembling the woful degeneracy of the angels that sinned, of whom it is said, (Jude 6.) That they kept not *την εαυτων αρχην—Suum principatum.* So the Vulgate: might it not be read, *The government of themselves?** They lost the command they should have had over their inferior faculties, and suffered them to get head. And is it not much like this, when those pretend to the dignity, who have lost the dominion, of a religious profession, having no rule over their own spirits.

And yet, blessed be God, even in this corrupt and degenerate world, there are many, who appear in the excellent ornament of a meek and quiet spirit; and some whose natural temper is hasty and choleric, (as it is said Calvin's was,) yet have been enabled by the power of divine grace to show in a good conversation their works with meekness and wisdom. It is not so impracticable as some imagine, to subdue these passions, and to preserve the peace of the soul, even in a stormy day.

But that we may each of us judge ourselves, and find matter for repentance herein, I shall only mention those instances of irregular deportment towards our particular relations, which evidence the want of *meekness and quietness of spirit.*

1. Superiors are commonly very apt to chide, and that is, for want of meekness. It is spoken to the praise of him, who is the great ruler of this perverse and rebellious world, that *he will not always chide*, Ps. ciii. 9. But how many little rulers are there of families and petty societies, that herein are very unlike him, for they are always chiding! Upon every little default, they are put into a flame, and transported beyond due bounds; easily provoked, either for no cause at all, or for very small cause; greatly provoked, and very outrageous, and unreasonable, when they are provoked. Their carriage is fiery and hasty, their language is scurrilous and indecent; they care not what they say, nor what they do, nor whom they insult; they are such sons of Belial, that a man cannot speak to them, 1 Sam. xxv. 17. One had as good meet a bear robbed of her whelps, as meet them. These require meekness. *Husbands should not be bitter against their wives*, Col. iii. 19. *Parents should not provoke their children*, Eph. vi. 4. *Masters must forbear threatening*, Eph. vi. 9. These are the rules, but how few are ruled by them! The undue and intemperate passion of superiors goes under the umbrage and excuse of necessary strictness, and the maintaining of authority, and the education and control of children and servants. But surely every little failure needs not be animadverted upon, but rather should be passed by; or if the fault must needs be reproved and corrected, may it not be done without such a heat? What needs so much noise and clamour, and all this ado? Is this the product of a meek and quiet spirit? Is this the best badge of your authority you have to put on? and are these the ensigns of your honour? Is there no other way of making your inferiors know their place, but by putting them among the dogs of your flock, and threatening them as such? Not that I am against government and good order in families, and such reproofs as are necessary to the support and preservation of it, and those, so sharpened, as some tempers require and call for. But while you are governing others, pray learn to govern yourselves, and do not disorder your own souls, under pretence of keeping order in your families: for though you yourselves may not be aware of it, yet it is certain, that by those indications of your displeasure, which transgress the laws of meekness, you do but render yourselves contemptible and ridiculous, and rather prostitute than preserve your authority. Though your children dare not tell you so, yet perhaps they cannot but think that you are very unfit to command yourselves.† Time was, when you were yourselves children, and scholars, and perhaps servants and apprentices; and so (if you will but allow yourselves the liberty of reflection) you cannot but know the heart of an inferior, (Exod. xxiii. 9.) and should therefore treat those that are now under you, as you yourselves then wished to be treated. A due expression of displeasure, so much as is necessary to the amendment of what is amiss, will very well consist with meekness and quietness. And your gravity and awful composedness therein will contribute very much to the preserving of your authority, and will command respect abundantly more than your noise and chiding. Masters of families (and masters of schools too) have need, in this matter, to behave themselves wisely, (Ps. ci. 2.) so as to avoid the two extremes, that of Eli's foolish indulgence on the one hand, (1 Sam. ii. 23, 24.) and that of Saul's brutish rage on the other hand, (1 Sam. xx. 30, 33.) and for the hitting of this golden mean, wisdom is profitable to direct.

2. Inferiors are commonly very apt to complain. If every thing be not just to their mind, they are fretting and vexing, and their hearts are hot within them; they are uneasy in their place and station,

* *Cudworth's Intellect. Syst.* p. 816.

† *Nemo regere potest, nisi qui et regi.*—No one is fit to rule, except he is willing to be governed. *Seneca.*

finding fault with every thing that is said or done to them. Here wants a quiet spirit, which would reconcile us to the post we are in, and to all the difficulties of it, and would make the best of the present state, though it be attended with many inconveniences. Those unquiet people, whom the apostle Jude in his epistle compares to *raging waves of the sea, and wandering stars,* (*v.* 13.) *were murmurers and complainers* (*v.* 16.) μεμψιμοιροι,—*blamers of their lot,*—so the word signifies. It is an instance of unquietness to be ever and anon quarrelling with our allotment. Those wives wanted a meek and quiet spirit, who *covered the altar of the Lord with tears,* Mal. ii. 13. Not tears of repentance for sin, but tears of vexation at the disappointments they met with in their outward condition. Hannah's meekness and quietness was in some degree wanting, when she fretted, and wept, and would not eat; (1 Sam. i. 7.) but prayer composed her spirit, and set her to rights, *v.* 18. *Her countenance was no more sad.* It was the unquietness of the spirit of the elder brother in the parable, that quarrelled so unreasonably with the father, for receiving and entertaining the penitent prodigal, Luke xv. 29. For those that are given to be uneasy, will never want something or other to complain of. It is true, (though not so readily apprehended,) that the sullenness, and murmuring, and silent frets of children and servants, are as great a transgression of the law of meekness, as the more open, noisy, and avowed passions of their parents and masters. We find the king's chamberlains *wroth with the king,* Esth. ii. 21. And Cain's quarrel with God himself, for accepting of Abel, was interpreted anger at God: Gen. iv. 6. *Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen?* The sour looks of inferiors are as certain an indication of anger resting in the bosom, as the disdainful looks of superiors; and how many such instances of discontent there have been, especially under a continual cross, our own consciences may perhaps tell us. It is the want of meekness only that makes those whom divine Providence has put under the yoke, children of Belial, that is, impatient of the yoke.

3. Equals are commonly very apt to clash and contend. It is for want of meekness that there are in the church so many pulpit and paper-quarrels, such strifes of words, and perverse disputings: that there are in the state such factions and parties, and between them such animosities and heart-burnings: that there are in neighbourhoods such strifes, and brawls, and vexatious law-suits; or such distances, and estrangements, and shyness one of another: that there are in families envies and quarrels among the children and servants, crossing and thwarting, finding fault one with another: and that brethren that dwell together, do not, as they should, *dwell together in unity.* It is for want of meekness that we are so impatient of contradiction in our opinions, desires, and designs; that we must have our own saying, right or wrong, and every thing our own way; that we are so impatient of competitors, not enduring that any should stand in our light, or share in that work of honour which we would engross to ourselves; that we are so impatient of contempt, so quick in our apprehension and resentment of the least slight or affront; and so pregnant in our fancy of injuries, where really there are none, or none intended. They are not only loud and professed contentions, that evidence a want of meekness, but also those silent alienations in affection and conversation, which make a less noise; little piques and prejudices conceived, which men are themselves so ashamed of, that they will not own them: these show the spirit disturbed, and wanting the ornament of meekness. In a word, the wilful doing any thing to disquiet others, slandering, backbiting, whispering, tale-bearing, or the like, is too plain an evidence, that we are not ourselves rightly disposed to be quiet.

And now, may we not all remember our faults this day? and, instead of condemning others, though ever so faulty, should we not each of us bewail before the Lord, that we have been so little actuated by this excellent spirit, and repent of all that, which we have at any time said, or done, contrary to the law of meekness, and from under the direction and influence of it? Instead of going about to extenuate and excuse our sinful passions, let us rather aggravate them, and lay a load upon ourselves for them: *So foolish have I been, and ignorant, and so like a beast,* as the Psalmist speaks, when he is recovering himself from an intemperate heat, Ps. lxxiii. 22. Think how often we have appeared before God and the world without our ornament, without our livery, to our shame. God kept account of the particular instances of the unquietness of Israel; *they have tempted me* (says he) *now these ten times,* Numb. xiv. 22. Conscience is God's register, that records all our miscarriages; even what we say and do in our haste, is not so quick as to escape its observation: let us, therefore, be often opening that book now, for our conviction and humiliation, or else it will be opened shortly to our confusion and condemnation. *But if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord.* May we not all say, as Joseph's brethren did, (and perhaps some are, as they were, in a special manner called to say it, by humbling providences,) *We are verily guilty concerning our brother,* Gen. xlii. 21. "Such a time, in such a company, upon such an occasion, I wanted meekness, and was unquiet; my spirit was provoked, and I spake unadvisedly with my lips, and now I remember it against myself. Nay, have not I lived a life of unquietness, in the family, in the neighbourhood, always in the fire of contention, as in my

element, and breathing threatenings? And by so doing, have not I dishonoured my God, discredited my profession, disturbed my soul, grieved the blessed Spirit, and been to many an occasion of sin? And for all this, ought not I to be greatly humbled and ashamed?" Before we can put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, we must first wash in the laver of true repentance, not only for our gross and open extravagances of passion, but for all our neglects and omissions of the duties of meekness.

II. Have we not reason to labour and endeavour, since there is such a virtue, and such a praise, to attain these things? Should we not lay out ourselves to the utmost, for this *ornament of a meek and quiet spirit*? For your direction in this endeavour, (if you be indeed willing to be directed,) I shall briefly lay before you,

1. Some Scripture-precepts concerning meekness.
2. Some patterns of it.
3. Some particular instances, in which we have special need of it.
4. Some good principles that we should abide by. And,
5. Some good practices that we should abound in, in order to our growth in this grace of meekness.

And in opening these things, we will endeavour to keep close to the law and to the testimony

SECTION I.

1. *Some Scripture-precepts concerning Meekness.*

If we lay the word of God before us for our rule, and will be ruled by it, we shall find the command of God making meekness and quietness to be as much our duty as they are our ornament. We are there told, as the will of God,

(1.) That we must seek meekness. This command we have, Zeph. ii. 3. and (which is especially observable) it is directed to the meek of the earth; *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth;—Seek meekness.* Though they were meek, and were pronounced so by him that searches the heart, yet they must seek meekness; which teaches us, that those who have much of this grace, have still need of more, and must desire and endeavour after more;* *Si dixisti, sufficit, periisti—if you say that you have enough, you must perish.* He that sits down content with the grace he has, and is not pressing forward toward perfection, and striving to grow in grace, to get the habits of it more strengthened and confirmed, and the operations of it more quickened and invigorated, it is to be feared has no true grace at all; but though he sit ever so high and ever so easy in his own opinion, yet sits down short of heaven. Where there is life, one way or other there will be growth, till we come to the perfect man. Job xvii. 9. *He that hath clean hands will be stronger and stronger:* Paul was a man of great attainments in grace, and yet we find him forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to those that are before, Phil. iii. 13, 14. Those who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, are yet told, that they have *need of patience*, Heb. x. 34, 36. Thus the meek of the earth (who being on the earth, are in a state of infirmity and imperfection, of trial and temptation) have still need of meekness; that is, they must learn to be yet more calm and composed, more steady, and even, and regular, in the government of their passions, and in the management of their whole conversation. They who have silenced all angry words, must learn to suppress the first risings and motions of angry thoughts.

It is observable, that when the meek of the earth are especially concerned to seek meekness, even when the decree is ready to bring forth, when the day of the Lord's anger hastens on, when the times are bad, and desolating judgments are breaking in, then we have occasion for all the meekness we have, and all we can get, and all is little enough. Meekness toward God, the author, and toward men, the instruments, of our trouble: meekness to bear the trial, and to bear our testimony in the trial. There is sometimes an *hour of temptation*, (Rev. iii. 10.) a critical day, when the exercise of meekness is the work of the day: sometimes the children of men are more than ordinarily provoking, and then the children of God have more than commonly need of meekness. When God is justly angry, and men are unjustly angry, when our mother's children are angry with us, and our Father angry too, there is anger enough stirring, and then "Blessed are the meek," that are careful to keep possession of their souls, when they can keep possession of nothing else, whose hearts are fixed, and quiet in shaking and unquiet times.

Now the way prescribed for the attainment of meekness, is to seek it. Ask it of God, pray for it, it is a fruit of the Spirit, it is given by the God of all grace, and to him we must go for it. It is a branch of that wisdom which he that *lacketh must ask of God*, and *it shall be given him*, Jam. i. 5. The God we address is called, *The God of patience and consolation*, (Rom. xv. 5.) and he is therefore the *God of consolation*, because the *God of patience*, (for the more patient we are, the more we are comforted under our afflictions,) and as such we must look to him, when we come to him for grace to make us like-minded, that is, meek and loving one toward another, which is the errand the apostle there comes upon to the throne of grace. God's people are, and should be, a generation of seekers, that covet the best gifts, and

* *Puto multos potuisse ad sapientiam pervenire, nisi putâssent se pervenisse.*—I am persuaded that many who have fallen short of wisdom, would have attained it, had they not supposed that they had attained it already. *Sen. de Tranq.*

make their court to the best giver, who never said to the wrestling seed of Jacob, *Seek in vain;* but has given us an assurance, firm enough for us to build upon, and rich enough for us to encourage ourselves with, *Seek and ye shall find.* What would we more? Seek meekness, and ye shall find it.

The promise annexed is very encouraging to the meek of the earth, that seek meekness; *It may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.* Though it be but a promise with an [*it may be,*] yet it ministers abundance of comfort: God's probabilities are better than the world's certainties; and the meek ones of the earth that hope in his mercy, and can venture their all upon an intimation of his good-will, shall find to their comfort, that when God brings a flood upon the world of the ungodly, he has an ark for all his Noahs, his resting quiet people, in which they shall be hid, it may be, from the calamity itself; however, from the sting and malignity of it; "HID" (as Luther said) "either in heaven, or under heaven, either in the possession, or under the protection, of heaven." See Ps. xci. 1, 2.

(2.) We must put on meekness. This precept we have, Col. iii. 12. *Put on therefore (as the elect of God, holy and beloved)—meekness.* It is one of the members of the new man, which, according to the obligations we lie under from our baptism, we must put on. Put it on as armour, to keep provocations from the heart, and so to defend the vitals. They that have tried it, will say it is "armour of proof." When you are putting on the whole armour of God, do not forget this. Put it on as attire, as your necessary clothing, which you cannot go without; look upon yourselves as ungirt, undrest, unblest without it. Put it on as a livery-garment, by which you may be known to be the disciples of the meek, and humble, and patient Jesus, and to belong to that peaceable family. Put it on as an ornament, as a robe and a diadem, by which you may be both beautified and dignified in the eyes of others. Put it on as the *elect of God, holy and beloved,** because you are so in profession; and that you may approve yourselves so in truth and reality, be clothed with meekness, as the *elect of God,* a choice people, a chosen people, whom God has set apart for himself from the rest of the world, as holy, sanctified to God, sanctified by him. Study these graces, which put such a lustre upon holiness, and recommend it to those that are without: as beloved, beloved of God, beloved of man, beloved of your ministers; for love's sake put on meekness. What winning persuasive rhetoric is here! enough (one would think) to smooth the roughest soul, and to soften and sweeten the most obstinate heart! Meekness is a grace of the Spirit's working, a garment of his preparing; but we must put it on, that is, we must lay our souls under the commanding power and influence of it. Put it on, not as a loose outer garment, to be put off in hot weather, but let it cleave to us, as the girdle cleaves to a man's loins; so put it on, as to reckon ourselves naked, to our shame, without it.

(3.) We must follow after meekness.—This precept we have, 1 Tim. vi. 11. Meekness is there put in opposition to those foolish and hurtful lusts that Timothy must flee from: *Thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness:* see what good company it is ranked with. Every Christian is in a sense a man of God, (though Timothy is called so as a minister,) and those that belong to God are concerned to be and do so, as to recommend themselves to him, and his religion to the world, therefore, let the men of God follow after meekness. The occasions and provocations of anger often set our meekness at a distance from us, and we have it to seek when we have most need of it; but we must follow after it, and not be taken off from the pursuit by any diversion whatsoever. While others are ingenious and industrious enough in following after malice and revenge, projecting and prosecuting angry designs, be you wise and diligent to preserve the peace, both within doors and without.——Following meekness bespeaks a sincere desire, and a serious endeavour, to get the mastery of our passion, and to check, govern, and moderate all the motions of it. Though we cannot fully attain this mastery, yet we must follow after it, and aim at it. Follow meekness, that is, *as much as in you lies live peaceably with all men,* endeavouring to *keep the unity of the Spirit:* we can but make one side of the bargain; if others will quarrel, yet let us be peaceable; if others will strike the fire, that is their fault; let not us be as tinder to it.

(4.) We must show all meekness unto all men. This is one of the subjects which Paul directs a young minister to preach upon, (Tit. iii. 2.) *Put them in mind to show all meekness.*——It is that which we have need to be often reminded of. Meekness is there opposed to brawling and clamour, which is the fruit and product of our own anger, and the cause and provocation of the anger of others. Observe, it is *all meekness* that is here recommended to us, *πασην πραοτητα—all kinds of meekness;* bearing meekness, and forbearing meekness; qualifying meekness, and condescending meekness; forgiving meekness; the meekness that endears our friends, and that which reconciles our enemies; the meekness of authority over inferiors, the meekness of obedience to superiors, and the meekness of wisdom towards all. *All meekness* is meekness in *all* relations, in reference to all injuries, all sorts of provocation,

* *Aliter induuntur milites, aliter sacerdotes, ergo induite vobis convenientia vestimenta.*—Soldiers are attired in one way, and priests in another; let every person wear what best becomes him. *Aquin. in loc.*

meekness in all the branches and instances of it; in this piece of our obedience we must be universal. Observe further, we must not only have meekness, all meekness, but we must show it, by drawing out this grace into exercise, as there is occasion: in our words, in our looks, in our actions, in every thing that falls under the observation of men, we must manifest that we have indeed a regard to the law of meekness, and that we make conscience of what we say and do when we are provoked. We must not only have the law of love written in our hearts, but in our tongues, too, we must have the law of kindness, Prov. xxxi. 26. And thus the tree is known by its fruit. This light must shine, that others may see the good works of it, and hear the good words of it too, not to glorify us, but to glorify our Father. We should study to appear in all our converse, so mild, and gentle, and peaceable, that all who see us may witness for us, that we are of the meek of the earth. We must not only be moderate, but let our *moderation be known*, Phil. iv. 5.

He that is in this respect a wise man, let him show it in the meekness of wisdom, Jam. iii. 13. What are good clothes worth, if they be not worn? Why has the servant a fine livery given him, but to show it for the honour of his master, and of the family he belongs to? How can we say we are meek, if we do not show it? The showing of our meekness will beautify our profession, and will adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and may have a very good influence upon others, who cannot but be in love with such an excellent grace, when thus, like the *ointment of the right hand, it betrayeth itself*, and the house is filled with the odour of it. Again, This meekness must be thus showed unto all men, foes as well as friends, those without, as well as those within, all that we have any thing to do with. We must show our meekness not only to those above us, that we stand in awe of, but to those below us, that we have an authority over. The poor indeed use entreaties, but, whatever is the practice, it is not the privilege of the rich to answer roughly, Prov. xviii. 23. We must *show our meekness not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, for this is thankworthy*, 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19. Our meekness must be as extensive as our love, so exceeding broad is this commandment, *All meekness to all men.* We must show this meekness most to those with whom we most converse. There are some that, when they are in company with strangers, appear very mild and good-humoured, their behaviour is plausible enough, and complaisant; but in their families they are peevish, and froward, and ill-natured, and those about them scarce know how to speak to them:* this shows that the fear of man gives greater check to their passions than the fear of God. Our rule is to be meek toward all, even to the brute creatures, over whom we are lords, but must not be tyrants: *a good man is merciful to his beast.*

Observe the reason which the apostle there gives why we should *show all meekness toward all men, for we ourselves also were sometime foolish*, † *v.* 3. Time was, when perhaps we were as bad as the worst of them we are now angry at; and if now it be better with us, we are purely beholden to the free grace of God in Christ, that made the difference: and shall we be harsh to our brethren, who have found God so kind to us? Has God forgiven us that great debt, and passed by so many wilful provocations, and shall we be extreme to mark what is done amiss against us, and make the worst of every slip and oversight? The great gospel-argument for mutual forbearance and forgiveness is, that God for Christ's sake has forgiven us, Col. iii. 13.

It may be of use also for the qualifying of our anger at our inferiors, to remember not only our former sinfulness against God in our unconverted state, but our former infirmities in the age and state of inferiors: were not we ourselves sometimes foolish? Our children are careless, and playful, and froward, and scarcely governable, and were not we ourselves so when we were of their age? And if we have now *put away childish things*, yet they have not.—*Children may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, without being provoked to wrath.*

(5.) We must study to be quiet, (1 Thess. iv. 11.) that is, study not to disturb others, nor to be ourselves disturbed by others; those are quiet that are apt not either to give or take offence, φιλοτιμεῖσθαι ἡσυχάζειν—*Be ambitious of this, as the greatest honour, to be quiet:* so the word signifies. The most of men are ambitious of the honour of great business, and power, and preferment; they covet it, they court it, they compass sea and land to obtain it: but the ambition of a Christian should be carried out towards quietness; we should reckon that the happiest post, and desire it accordingly, which lies most out of the road of provocation. I cannot avoid mentioning, for the illustration of this, that most excellent poem of my Lord Hale, (the sense of which is borrowed from a heathen,)

> Let him that will ascend the tottering seat
> Of courtly grandeur, and become as great
> As are his mounting wishes: as for me,
> Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.
> ——————Let my age
> Slide gently by, not overthwart the stage
> Of public action, unheard, unseen,
> And unconcern'd as if I ne'er had been.

* *Habet ubi se etiam in privato lare explicet magnus animus.*—A great mind has an opportunity of displaying itself within the narrow circle of a family scene. *Sen.*

† *Hæc et nos risimus aliquando; fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani.*—There was a time when we too made sport of these things; we were not born Christians, but become such. *Tertul.*

This is studying to be quiet. Subdue and keep under all those disorderly passions which tend to the disturbing and clouding of the soul. Compose yourselves to this holy rest; put yourselves in a posture to invite this blessed sleep which God gives to his beloved. Take pains, (as students in arts and sciences do,) to understand the mystery of this grace. I call it a mystery because St. Paul, who was so well versed in the deep things of God, speaks of this as a mystery, Phil. iv. 12. μεμυημαι, *I am instructed, as in a mystery, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need;* that is, in one word, *to be quiet.*——To study the art of quietness, is to take pains with ourselves, to work upon our own hearts the principles, rules, and laws of meekness; and to furnish ourselves with such considerations as tend to the quieting of the spirit in the midst of the greatest provocations. Others are studying to disquiet us; the more need we have to study how to quiet ourselves, by a careful watching against all that which is ruffling and discomposing. Christians should, above all studies, study to be quiet, and labour to be actuated by an even spirit, under all the unevennesses of Providence; and remember that one good word which Sir *William Temple* tells us the then Prince of Orange (late K. William) said he learnt from the master of his ship, who, in a storm, was calling to the steersman with this word, *Steady, steady.* Let but the hand be steady, and the heart quiet, and then, though our passage be rough, we may make a shift to weather the point, and get safe to the harbour.

SECTION II.

2. *Some Scripture-patterns of meekness and quietness of Spirit.*

Good examples help very much to illustrate and enforce good rules, bringing them closer to particular cases, and showing them to be practicable. Precedents are of great use in the law. If we would be found walking in the same spirit, and walking in the same steps, with those that are gone before us to glory, this is the spirit we must be actuated by, and these are the steps we must walk in: this is the way of good men, for wise men, to walk in. Let us go forth then by the footsteps of the flock, and set ourselves to follow them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses, who will bear their testimony to the comfort of meekness, and upon trial recommend it to us; but we shall single out only some few from the Scripture.

(1.) Abraham was a pattern of meekness, and he was *the father of the faithful.* The apostle here, in the verse but one before the text, proposes Sarah for an example to women, particularly an example of meekness in an inferior relation; she obeyed Abraham, and (in token of the respect due to a husband) she called him Lord. Now Abraham is a pattern of the same grace in a superior. He that was famous for faith, was famous for meekness: for the more we have of faith toward God, the more we shall have of meekness toward all men.——How meek was Abraham, when there happened a strife betwixt his herdsmen and Lot's, which, had it proceeded, might have been of ill consequence, for the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land; but it was seasonably taken up by the prudence of Abraham, (Gen. xiii. 8.) *Let there be no strife, I pray thee:* though he might command the peace, yet for love's sake he rather beseeches. Every word has an air of meekness, and a tendency to keep the peace. And when the expedient pitched upon for the prevention of strife was their parting from each other, though Lot was the junior, yet Abraham, for peace-sake, quitted his right, and gave Lot the choice, *v.* 9. and the gracious visit which God gave him thereupon, *v.* 14. was an abundant recompence for his mildness and condescension. Another instance of Abraham's meekness we have in his carriage towards Sarah, when she quarrelled with him so unreasonably about her maid, angry at that which she herself had the doing of, (Gen. xvi. 5, 6.) *My wrong be upon thee;* ——*the Lord judge between thee and me.* Abraham might soon have replied, you may thank yourself, it was your own contrivance; but laying aside the present provocation, he abides by one of the original rules of the relation, *Behold, thy maid is in thy hand.* He did not answer passion with passion, that would have put all into a flame presently; but he answered passion with meekness, and so all was quiet. Another instance of Abraham's meekness, we have in the transactions between him and Abimelech his neighbour, Gen. xxi. 24, 25. He first enters into a covenant of friendship with him, which was confirmed by an oath, and then (not reproaches him, but) reproves him for a wrong that his servants had done him about a well of water; which gives us this rule of meekness, "Not to break friendship for a small matter of difference:" such and such occasions there are, which they that are disposed to it might quarrel about, but *what is that between thee and me?* If meekness rule, matters in variance may be fairly reasoned and adjusted without violation or infringement of friendship. This is the example of that great patriarch. The future happiness of the saints is represented as the bosom of Abraham, (Luke xvi. 23.) a quiet state. Those who hope to lie in the bosom of Abraham shortly, must tread in the steps of Abraham now, whose children we are, as long as we thus do well, "and who" (as Maimonides expresses it) "is the father of all who are gathered under the wings of the Divine Majesty."

(2.) Moses was a pattern of meekness, it was his master-grace, that in which, more than in any other, he excelled. This testimony the Holy Ghost gives of him, (Numb. xii. 3.) *That the man* Moses *was very meek,* above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.*

This character of him comes in there in a parenthesis, (probably inserted by the same inspired pen that wrote the last chapter of Deuteronomy,) upon occasion of an affront he received from those of his own house; which intimates, that his quiet and patient bearing of it was, of all others, the greatest proof and instance of his meekness. Those can bear any provocation, that can bear it from their near relations. The meekness of Moses, as the patience of Job, was tried on all hands. Armour of proof shall be sure to be shot at. It should seem that his wife was none of the best-humoured women; for what a passion was she in about the circumcising of her son, when she reproached him as a *bloody husband;* and we do not read of one word that he replied, but let her have her saying, Exod. iv. 25, 26. When God was angry, and Zipporah angry, it was best for him to be quiet. The lot of his public work was cast *in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness,* Ps. xcv. 8. But, as if all the mutinies of murmuring Israel were too little to try the meekness of Moses, his own brother and sister, (and those of no less a figure than Miriam the prophetess, and Aaron the saint of the Lord,) quarrel with him, speak against him, envy his honour, reproach his marriage, and are ready to head a rebellion against him, Numb. xii. 1, 2. God heard this, (*v.* 2.) and was angry, (*v.* 9.) but Moses, though he had reason enough to resent it wrathfully, was not at all moved by it, took no notice of it, made no complaint to God, no answer to them, and so little interested in the matter, that we do not find one word that he said, till we find him, (*v.* 13.) praying so heartily for his provoking sister, who was then under the tokens of God's displeasure for the affront she gave him. The less a man strives for himself, the more is God engaged in honour and faithfulness to appear for him. When Christ said, *I seek not mine own glory,* he presently added, *but there is one that seeketh and judgeth.* And it was upon this occasion that Moses obtained this good report, *He was the meekest of all the men on the earth.*—"No man could have given greater proofs of courage than Moses:" (it is the learned Bp. Hall's remark, *Contemp.* l. 6.) "He slew the Egyptian, beat the Midianite shepherds, confronted Pharaoh in his own court, not fearing the wrath of the king; he durst look God in the face amidst all the terrors of Mount Sinai, and draw near to the thick darkness where God was; and yet that Spirit which made and knew his heart, saith, he was the meekest, mildest man upon the earth. Mildness and fortitude may well lodge together in the same breast, which corrects the mistake of those that will allow none valiant but the fierce."

The meekness of Moses qualified him to be a magistrate, especially to be king in Jeshurun, among a people so very provoking, that they gave him occasion to use all the meekness he had, and all little enough, to bear their manners in the wilderness. When they murmured against him, quarrelled with him, arraigned his authority, and were sometimes ready to stone him, he resented these provocations with very little of personal application or concern; but instead of using his interest in heaven to summon plagues upon them, he made it his business to stand in the gap, and by his intercession for them to turn away the wrath of God from them; and this not once or twice, but many times.

And yet we must observe, that, though Moses was the meekest man in the world, yet when God's honour and glory were concerned, no one was more warm and zealous. Witness his resentment of the golden calf, when in a holy indignation at that abominable iniquity, he deliberately broke the tables. And when Korah and his crew invaded the priests' office, Moses, in a pious wrath, said unto the Lord, *respect not thou their offering,* Numb. xvi. 15. He that was a lamb in his own cause, was a lion in the cause of God; anger at sin, as sin, is very well consistent with reigning meekness. Nor can it be forgotten, that though Moses was eminent for meekness, yet he once transgressed the laws of it; when he was old, and his spirit was provoked, he *spake unadvisedly with his lips, and it went ill with him for it;* (Ps. cvi. 32, 33.) which is written, not for imitation, but for admonition; not to justify our rash anger, but to engage us to stand upon our guard at all times against it, that he who *thinks he stands, may take heed lest he fall;* and that he who has thus fallen, may not wonder if he come under the rebukes of divine Providence for it in this world, as Moses did, and yet may not despair of being pardoned upon repentance.

(3.) David was a pattern of meekness, and it is promised, (Zech. xii. 8.) *That the feeble shall be as* David. In this, as in other instances, he was a man after God's own heart. When his own brother was so rough upon him without reason, 1 Sam. xvii. 28. *Why camest thou down hither, &c.?* how mild was his answer! *What have I now done? Is there not a cause?* *v.* 29. When his enemies reproached him, he was not at all disturbed at it, (Ps. xxxviii. 13.) *I, as a deaf man, heard not.* When Saul persecuted him

* Josephus, *Antiq.* l. 4. *c.* 8. gives this character of Moses; *Affectus ita semper in potestate habuit, ut omnino illis carere videretur, et nomina tantum eorum ex his quæ in aliis hominibus conspiceret, cognita habere.*—He was so complete a master of himself, that he seemed altogether destitute of passions, and to be acquainted with them only from the manner in which he saw them agitate others.

with such an unwearied malice, he did not take the advantage which providence seemed to offer him, more than once, to revenge and right himself, but left it to God to do it for him. David's meek spirit concurred with the proverb of the ancients, *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, but my hand shall not be upon him*, 1 Sam. xxiv. 13. When Nabal's churlishness provoked him, yet Abigail's prudence soon pacified him, and it pleased him to be pacified. When Shimei cursed him with a bitter curse,* in the day of his calamity, he resented not the offence, nor would hear any talk of punishing the offender: *So let him curse; let him alone, for the Lord hath bidden him:* (2 Sam. xvi. 10, 12.) quietly committing his cause to God, who judges righteously, *v.* 12. And other instances there are in his story, which evidence the truth of what he said, (Ps. cxxxi. 2.) *My soul is even like a weaned child.* And yet David was † a great soldier, a man of celebrated courage, that slew a lion, and a bear, and a Philistine; (as much a ravenous beast as either of them;) which shows, that it was his wisdom and grace, and not his cowardice, that at other times made him so quiet. David was a man that met with very many disquieting and disturbing events in the several scenes of his life, through which (though sometimes they ruffled him a little, yet) for the main he preserved an admirable temper, and an evenness and composedness of mind, which was very exemplary. When, upon the surprise of a fright, *he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, and counterfeited that madness* which angry people realize, yet his mind was so very quiet and undisturbed, that at that time he penned the 34th Psalm, in which not only the excellency of the matter, and the calmness of the expression, but the composing of it alphabetically, (in the Hebrew,) speaks him to be even then in a sedate frame, and to have very much the command of his own thoughts. As, at another time, when his own followers spake of stoning him, though he could not still the tumult of his troops, he could those of his spirits, for then he *encouraged himself in the Lord his God*, 1 Sam. xxx. 6. As to those prayers against his enemies, which we find in some of his Psalms, and which, sometimes, sound a little harsh, surely they did not proceed from any such irregular passions, as did in the least clash even with the evangelical laws of meekness; we cannot imagine, that one who was so piously calm in his common conversation, should be sinfully hot in his devotion: nor are they to be looked upon as the private expressions of his own angry resentments, but as inspired predictions of God's judgments upon the public and obstinate enemies of Christ and his kingdom; as appears by comparing Ps. lxix. 22, 23. with Rom xi. 9, 10. and Ps. cix. 8. with Acts i. 20. Nor are they any more opposite to the spirit of the gospel, than the cries of the souls under the altar, (Rev. vi. 10.) or the triumphs of heaven and earth in the destruction of Babylon, Rev. xix. 1, 2.

(4.) St. Paul was a pattern of meekness. Though his natural temper seems to have been warm and eager, which made him eminently active and zealous, yet that temper was so rectified and sanctified, that he was no less eminently meek: *He became all things to all men.* He studied to please all with whom he had to do, and to render himself engaging to them, *for their good to edification.* How patiently did he bear the greatest injuries and indignities, not only from Jews and heathens, but from false brethren, that were so very industrious to abuse and undermine him! How glad was he that Christ was preached, though out of envy and ill-will, by those that studied to *add affliction to his bonds!* In governing the church, he was not led by the sudden resolves of passion, but always deliberated calmly concerning the use of the rod of discipline, when there was occasion for it; (1 Cor. iv. 21.) *Shall I come to you with a rod, or in the spirit of meekness?* That is, Shall I proceed immediately to censures, or shall I not rather continue the same gentle usage I have hitherto treated you with, waiting still for your reformation? Herein the spirit of meekness appears more open and legible than in the use of the rod, though that also is very well consistent with it.

Many other patterns of meekness might be adduced, but the time will fail me to tell of Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Joshua; of Samuel also, and Job, and Jeremiah, and all the prophets and apostles, martyrs and confessors, and eminent saints, who by meekness subdued (not kingdoms, but) their own spirits; stopt the mouths (not of lions, but) of more fierce and formidable enemies; quenched the violence (not of fire, but) of intemperate and more ungovernable passions; and so wrought righteousness, obtained promises, escaped the edge of the sword, and out of weakness were made strong: and by all this *obtained a good report*, Heb. xi. 32—34.——But, after all,

(5.) Our Lord Jesus was the great pattern of meekness and quietness of spirit: all the rest had their spots, the fairest marbles had their flaws, but here is a copy without a blot. We must follow the rest no further than they were conformable to this great ori-

* *Non ergo movebatur convitiis* David, *cui abundabat bonorum operum conscientia; itaque is qui cito injuria movetur, facit se dignum contumeliæ videri.*—David, having the abundant consciousness of good works, heard himself reproached without agitation; he who, when reproached, shows that he is greatly disturbed, induces a suspicion that he is not reproached without cause. *Ambr. de Offic. lib.* 1. *cap.* 6.

† David *fuit fortis in prælio, mansuetus in imperio, patiens in convitio, ferre magis promptus quam referre injurias.*—David was valiant in the field, clement on the throne, patient under reproach, and more willing to bear an injury than to resent it. *Ambr.* l. 2. *c.* 17.

ginal: *Be ye followers of me,* (says Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 1.) *as I am of Christ.* He fulfilled all righteousness, and was a complete exemplar of all that is holy, just, and good; but I think, in most, if not all, those places of Scripture where he is particularly and expressly propounded to us for an example, it is to recommend to us some or other of the duties of Christianity; those I mean which tend to the sweetening of our converse one with another: and therefore the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, that he might teach us how to dwell together in unity. We must *walk in love, as Christ loved us,* Eph. v. 2. *Forgive, as Christ forgave us,* Col. iii. 13. *Please one another, for Christ pleased not himself,* Rom. xv. 2, 3. *Be charitable to the poor, for we know the grace of our Lord Jesus,* 2 Cor. viii. 9. *Wash one another's feet,* that is, stoop to the meanest offices of love, for Christ did so, (John xiii. 14. Mat. xx. 27, 28.) *Doing all with lowliness of mind, for it is the same mind that was in Christ Jesus;* (Phil. ii. 3, 5.) and many other the like: but above all, our Lord Jesus was an example of meekness. Moses had this grace as a servant, but Christ as a son; he was anointed with it above measure. He is therefore called *The Lamb of God,* for his meekness, and patience, and inoffensiveness; and even in his exaltation he retains the same character. One of the elders told John, (Rev. v. 5.) *That the lion of the tribe of Judah would open the sealed book: and I beheld,* (says John, *v.* 6.) *and lo! a Lamb.* He that was a lion for strength and courage, was a lamb for mildness and gentleness: and if a lion, yet the lion of the tribe of Judah, which the dying patriarch describes to be a lion *gone up from the prey,* and that is *stooped down and couched, and not to be roused up;* (Gen. xlix. 9.) which speaks the quietness and repose even of this lion. If Christ be a lion, he is a lion resting; the devil is a lion *roaring,* 1 Pet. v. 8. But the adorations given to Christ by the heavenly hosts speak of him as *the Lamb,* Rev. v. 8, 12, 13. *Blessing and glory—to him that sits upon the throne;* they do not say, and to the lion of the tribe of Judah, but *to the Lamb;* though he has a name given him above every name, yet he will be known by that name which denotes his meekness, as if this were to be his name for ever, and this his memorial to all generations: as *he that rides upon the heavens,* by his name *Jah,* is the *Father of the fatherless, and the Judge of the widows,* Ps. lxviii. 4, 5. Some make his* name χριστος, to have an allusion to χρηστος, which signifies *kind,* and *gentle,* and *gracious.* Christ rides prosperously, *because of meekness,* Ps. xlv. 4.

Now it is the character of all the saints, that they follow the Lamb. Rev. xiv. 4. As a lamb they follow him in his meekness, and are therefore so often called *the sheep of Christ.* This is that part of his copy which he expressly calls us to write after, (Matt. xi. 29.) *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* If the master be mild, it ill becomes the servant to be froward. The apostle is speaking of Christ's meekness under his sufferings, when he says, that *he left us an example, that we should follow his steps,* 1 Pet. ii. 21.

Let us observe particularly the meekness of our Lord Jesus, both towards his Father, and towards his friends, and towards his foes; in each of which he is an example to us.

[1.] He was very meek toward God his Father, cheerfully submitting to his whole will, and standing complete in it. In his commanding will, *Lo, I come,* (says he,) *I delight to do thy will;* though it enjoined him a very hard piece of service, yet it was his *meat and drink,* (John iv. 34.) and *he always did those things that pleased his Father,* John viii. 29. So likewise in his disposing will, he acquiesced from first to last. When he was entering on that sharp encounter, though sense startled at it, and said, *Father, if it be possible, let the cup pass from me;* yet he soon submitted with a great deal of meekness; *Not as I will, but as thou wilt,* Matt. xxvi. 39, 42. Though it was a very bitter cup, yet his Father put it into his hand, and therefore he drank it without any struggle or reluctance, when it came to the point, reasoning himself from that topic into this compliance, (John xviii. 11.) *The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* And it comes in there as a reason why he would not have a sword drawn in his defence.

[2.] He was very meek towards his friends that loved and followed him. With what remarkable instances of mildness, and gentleness, and tenderness, did he train up his disciples; though from first to last he was *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;* and where the nature is corrupt, such are apt to be peevish and froward with those about them; yet how meek and calm his carriage was towards them all along, we may see,

First, In his bearing with their weaknesses and infirmities. After they had been long under the inspection and influence of such a teacher, and had all the advantages that men could have for getting acquaintance with the things of God; yet how weak and defective were they in knowledge, and gifts, and graces! How ignorant and forgetful were they! How slow of heart to understand and believe! And what blunders did they make! Dull scholars it should seem they were, and very bad proficients. But their hearts being upright with him, he did not cast them off, nor turn them out of his school; but

* The heathens, by mistake, called Christ *Chrestus*—Gracious; and the Christians, *Chrestiani:* So *Suetan. Vit. Claud. c.* 25. *Impulsore Chresto.* Lactantius takes notice of this, *Instit. l.* 4. *c.* 7. So doth Tertullian, *Apol. c.* 3. and thence calls the Christian name, *Nomen innocuum*—An innocent name.

made the best of them, rectified their mistakes, instructed them in their duty, and the doctrine they were to preach, by *precept upon precept*, and *line upon line;* and taught them as they were able to bear it, as one that considered their frame, and could have compassion on the *ignorant*, and on them that are *out of the way*, Heb. v. 2. As long as he was with them, so long he suffered them, Mark ix. 19. This, as it is a great encouragement to Christian learners, so it is a great example to Christian teachers.

Secondly, In his forgiving and passing by their unkindnesses and disrespects to himself. He was not extreme to mark, no, not what they did amiss of this kind. When they murmured at the cost that was bestowed upon him, and called it waste, and had indignation at it, he did not resent it as he might have done, nor seem to observe how much what they said reflected upon him; nor did he condemn them any other way, than by commending the woman, Matt. xxvi. 8, 11. When Peter, and James, and John, the first three of his disciples, were with him in the garden, and very unseasonably slept, while he was in his agony praying, so little concerned did they seem to be for him, and such a grievous slight did they put upon him; yet, observe, how meekly he spoke to them, did not give them any hard language, but, *Could ye not watch with me one hour?* And when they had not a word to say for themselves, so inexcusable was their fault, he had something to say for them, and instead of accusing them, he apologizes for them, *The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak*, Matt. xxvi. 40, 41. When Peter had denied him, and had cursed and sworn he did not know him, than which (besides the falsehood and perfidiousness of it) nothing could be more unkind; with what meekness did he bear it! It is not said, the Lord turned, and frowned upon Peter, though he deserved to be frowned into hell, but, *the Lord turned and looked upon Peter*, (Luke xxii. 61.) and that look recovered him into the way to heaven; it was a kind look, and not an angry one. Some days after, when Christ and Peter met in Galilee, and had dined together as a token of reconciliation, and some discourse passed between them, not a word was said of this matter: Christ did not upbraid him with his fault, nor chide him for it, nor did there appear any other fruit of the falling out of these lovers, but only the renewing of their love with greater endearments; (John xxi. 15—17.) which teaches us to forgive and forget the unkindnesses of those that (we are satisfied) are for the main our true friends, and if any occasion of difference happen, to turn it into an occasion of confirming our love to them, as the apostle expresses it, 2 Cor. ii. 8.

[3.] He was very meek toward his enemies, that hated and persecuted him. The whole story of his life is filled with instances of invincible meekness; while he *endured the contradiction of sinners against himself*, which was a constant jar, he had a perpetual serenity and harmony within himself, and was never in the least discomposed by it. When his preaching and miracles were cavilled at and reproached, and he himself represented under the blackest characters, not only as the drunkard's companion, but as the devil's confederate, with what a wonderful calmness did he bear it! How mildly did he answer, with reason and tenderness, when he could have replied in thunder and lightning! How well satisfied, under all such invidious reflections, with this, that *Wisdom is however justified of all her children!* Matt. xi. 19. When some of his disciples would have had fire from heaven upon those rude people that refused him entertainment in their town, he was so far from complying with the motion, that he rebuked it, (Luke ix. 55.) *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you*, Gal. v. 8. The design of Christ and of his holy religion is to shape men into a mild and merciful temper, and to make them sensibly tender of the lives and comforts even of their worst enemies. Christianity was intended to revive humanity, and to make those men, who had made themselves beasts. But our Lord Jesus did in a more especial manner evidence his meekness when he was in his last sufferings, that awful scene. Though he was the most innocent and the most excellent person that ever was, who by the doctrine he had preached, and the miracles he had wrought, had richly deserved all the honours and respects that the world could pay him, and infinitely more, and though the injuries he received were ingeniously and industriously contrived to the highest degree of affront and provocation, yet he bore all with an undisturbed meekness, and with that shield quenched all the fiery darts which his malicious enemies shot at him.

His meekness towards his enemies appeared,

First, In what he said to them, not one angry word, in the midst of all the indignities they offered him: *When he was reviled, he reviled not again*, 1 Pet. ii. 23. When he was buffeted and spit upon, and abused, he took it all patiently; one would wonder at the gracious words which even then proceeded out of his mouth, witness that mild reply to him that smote him, (John xviii. 23.) *If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?*

Secondly, In what he said to God for them; *Father, forgive them*,——so giving an example to his own rule, (Matt. v. 44.) *Pray for them which despitefully use you.* Though he was then deeply engaged in the most solemn transaction that ever passed between heaven and earth; though he had so much to do with God for himself and his friends, yet he did not forget to put up this prayer for his enemies. The

mercy he begged of God for them, was the greatest mercy, (that which he was then dying to purchase and procure,) the pardon of their sins: not only, Father, spare them, or reprieve them, but, *Father, forgive them:* the excuse he pleaded for them, was the best their crime was capable of: *They know not what they do.* They did it ignorantly, 1 Cor. ii. 8. 1 Tim. i. 13.

Now in all these things our Master has left us an example. What is the practice of religion but the imitation of God endeavoured by us? And what the principle of it, but the image of God renewed in us? We are bid to be followers of God, as dear children. But this sets the copy we are to write after at a mighty distance, for God is in heaven, and we are upon earth; and therefore in the Lord Jesus Christ, God incarnate, God in our nature, the copy is brought among us, and the transcribing of it, in some measure, appears more practicable: *He that hath seen me,* (says Christ,) *hath seen the Father,* (John xiv. 9.) and so he that imitates Christ imitates the Father. The religion which our Lord Jesus came into the world to establish, being every way so well calculated for the peace and order of the world, and being designed to recover the lapsed souls of men from their degenerate state, and to sweeten their spirits and temper; and so to befriend human society, and to make it some way conformable to the blessed society above; he not only gave such precepts as were wonderfully fitted to this great end, but recommended them to the world by the loveliness and amiableness of his own example. Are we not called Christians from Christ, whom we call Master and Lord, and shall we not endeavour to accommodate ourselves to him? We profess to rejoice in him, as our forerunner, and shall we not run after him? To what purpose were we listed under his banner, but that we might follow him as our leader? We have all of us reason to say, that Jesus Christ is very meek, or else we, that have provoked him so much and so often, had been in hell long ago: we owe it to his meekness, to whom all judgment is committed, that we have not ere this been carried away with a swift destruction, and dealt with according to the desert of our sins; which, if duly considered, one would think should tend greatly to the softening of us. The apostle fetches an argument from that kindness and love to us, which we ourselves have experienced, who were foolish and disobedient, to persuade us to *be gentle, and to show all meekness;* (Tit. iii. 2—4.) and he beseeches the Corinthians, by *the meekness and gentleness of Christ,* as a thing very winning, and of dear and precious account, (2 Cor. x. 1.) *Let the same mind therefore be in us,* not only which was, but which, as we find to our comfort, *still is, in Christ Jesus,* Phil. ii. 5. That we may not forfeit our interest in his meekness, let us tread in the steps of it; and as ever we hope to be like him in glory hereafter, let us study to be like him in grace, in this grace, now. It is a certain rule, by which we must all be tried shortly, *that if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ,* (that is, if he be not spirited, in some measure, as Christ was spirited,) *he is none of his,* Rom. viii. 9. And if we be not owned as his, we are undone for ever.

SECTION III.

3. *Some particular instances wherein the exercise of Meekness is in a special manner required.*

The rule is general; we must *show all meekness:* it will be of use to observe some special cases to which the Scripture applies this general rule.

(1.) We must give reproofs with meekness. It is the apostle's direction, (Gal. vi. 1.) *If a man be overtaken in a fault,* (that is, if he be surprised by a temptation and overcome, as the best may be, if God leave them to themselves,) *ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness.* By the spiritual man, to whom he gives this rule, he means not ministers only, as if none were spiritual but they; though they perhaps are chiefly intended, because they are, as the prophet speaks, (Isa. xxix. 21.) *reprovers in the gate,* that is, reprovers by office: yet doubtless it is a rule to private Christians; all that have opportunity must reprove, and all that reprove must do it with meekness. Ye that are spiritual, if you would approve yourselves so indeed, actuated by the Holy Spirit, and minding the things of the Spirit, be careful in this matter. Especially, let those that are Christians of the highest form, that excel in grace and holiness, and the best gifts, (such are called spiritual in distinction from the babes in Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 1.) let them look upon themselves as obliged, in a more peculiar manner, to help others; for where God gives five talents, he expects the improvement of five; the strong must *bear the infirmities of the weak,* (Rom. xv. 1.) Do you therefore *restore such a one,* καταρτίζετε—*set him in joint again.* The setting of a dislocated joint, or a broken bone, is, for the present, painful to the patient, but it must be done, and it is in order to the making of *broken bones to rejoice.* Now this ye must do with the spirit of meekness, with all the candour, and gentleness, and convincing evidences of love and kindness that can be. The three qualifications of a good surgeon, are very requisite in a reprover, viz. to have an eagle's eye, a lion's heart, and a lady's hand; that is, that he be endued with a great deal of wisdom, and courage, and meekness. Though sometimes it is needful to reprove with warmth, yet we must never reprove with wrath, *for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God,* Jam. i. 20. There is an observable difference, but no contradiction, betwixt the directions Paul gives to Timothy,

and those he gives to Titus, in this matter. To Titus he writes, to *reprove sharply*, (Tit. i. 13.) and to rebuke *with all authority*, *ch.* ii. 15. To Timothy he writes, *not to strive*, but *to be gentle*, (2 Tim. ii. 24.) to reprove *with all long-suffering*, *ch.* iv. 2. The reason of which may be taken either, [1.] From the different temper of those they had to deal with. Timothy was among the Ephesians, a tractable complaisant people, that would be easily managed, and with them he must always deal gently. Titus was among the Cretians, that were head-strong and rough-hewn, and not to be wrought upon but by sharper methods. Thus, in reproving, a difference must be made: of some we must have compassion, and others save with fear, but never with anger, plucking them out of the fire, Jude 23. Or, [2.] The reason may be taken (as Gregory, one of the ancients, assigns it) from the different temper of Timothy and Titus. "Titus was a man of very soft and mild temper, and he had need of a spur to quicken him to a needful acrimony in his reproofs; but Timothy was a man of a more warm and sanguine temper, and he had need of a bridle to keep him from an intemperate heat in his reproofs;" and then it teaches us, that those who are naturally keen and fervent, should double their guard upon their own spirits, when they are reproving, that they may do it with all meekness. Christ's ministers must be careful, while they display God's wrath, to conceal their own; and be very jealous over themselves, lest sinful anger shelter itself under the cloak of zeal against sin. When reproving (whoever be the reprover) degenerates into railing and reviling, and opprobrious language, how can we expect the desired success? It may provoke to contention, and every evil work, but it will never provoke to love, and to good works. The work of heaven is not likely to be done by a tongue set on fire of hell. Has Christ need of mad men? or will you talk deceitfully and passionately for him? A potion given too hot, scalds the patient, and does more hurt than good; and so many a reproof, good for the matter of it, hath been spoiled by an irregular management. Meekness hides the lancet, gilds the pill, and makes it passable; dips the nail in oil, and then it drives the better. Twice we find Jonathan reproving his father for his rage against David; once he did it with meekness, and it succeeded well, (1 Sam. xix. 4, 5.) *Let not the king sin against his servant*, [*against David,*] and it is said, *v.* 6. *Saul hearkened to him.* But another time his spirit was provoked, and he did it in a heat, *ch.* xx. 32. *Wherefore shall he be slain?* and the issue of it was ill. Saul was not only impatient of the reproof, but enraged at the reprover, and cast a javelin at him, *v.* 33. Reproofs are then likely to answer the intention, when they manifestly evidence the good will of the reprover, and are made up of soft words and hard arguments. This is to restore with the spirit of meekness, and there is a good reason added, considering thyself: *ille hodie, ego cras—he may fall to-day, I may to-morrow.* Those who think they stand fast, know not how soon they may be shaken and overthrown, and, therefore, we must treat those that are overtaken in a fault, with the same tenderness and compassion that we would wish to find, if it were our own case.

(2.) We must receive reproofs with meekness. If we do that which deserves rebuke, and we meet with those that are so just and kind to give it us, we must be quiet under it, not quarrelling with the reprover, nor objecting against the reproof, nor fretting that we are touched in a sore place; but submit to it, and lay our souls under the conviction of it. If reproofs be physic, it becomes us to be patient.* *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness and an excellent oil*, healing to the wounds of sin, and making the face to shine; and let us never reckon that it *breaks the head*, if it do but help to *break the heart*. Meekness suffers the word of admonition, and takes it patiently and thankfully, not only from the hand of God that sends it, but from the hand of our friend that brings it. We must not be like the reprobate Sodomites, (Gen. xix. 9.) or that pert Hebrew, (Exod. ii. 14.) that flew in the face of their reprovers, (though really they were the best friends they had,) with, *Who made thee a judge?* but like David, who, when Abigail so prudently scotched the wheels of his passion, not only blest God that sent her, and blest her advice, but blest her, (1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33. and *v.* 35.) not only *hearkened to her voice, but accepted her person.* Though perhaps the reprover supposes the fault greater than really it was, and though the reproof be not given with all the prudence in the world; yet meekness will teach us to accept it quietly, and to make the best use we can of it. Nay, if indeed we be altogether innocent of that which we are reproved for, yet, the meekness of wisdom would teach us to apply the reproof to some other fault which our own consciences convict us of; we would not quarrel with a real intended kindness, though not done with ceremony, and though in some circumstances mistaken or misplaced.

You that are in inferior relations, children, servants, scholars, must with all meekness and submission receive the reproofs of your parents, masters, and teachers: their age supposes them to have more understanding than you; however, their place gives them an authority over you, to which you are to pay a deference, and in which you are to acquiesce, else farewell all order and peace in societies. The angel

* *Neque ulli patientius reprehenduntur, quam qui maxime laudari meretur.*—Those who deserve the loudest applause, receive reproof with the best temper. *Plin.*

rebuked Hagar for flying from her mistress, though she dealt hardly with her, and obliged her to return and submit herself *under her hands*, Gen. xvi. 6, 9. *If the spirit of any ruler rise up against thee*, and thou be chidden for a fault, *leave not thy place*, as an inferior, *for yielding pacifies great offences done*, and prevents the like, Eccl. x. 4. *If thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth*, to keep that evil thought from breaking out in any undue and unbecoming language, Prov. xxx. 32. Reproofs are then likely to do us good, when we meekly submit to them; then are they as an *ear-ring* of *gold*, and an *ornament of fine gold*, when an obedient ear is given to a *wise reprover*, Prov. xxv. 12. Nay, even superiors are to receive reproofs from their inferiors with meekness, as they would any other token of kindness and good will. Naaman, when he turned away from the prophet in a rage, yet hearkened to the reproof his own servants gave him, and was overruled by the reason of it, (2 Kings v. 11—14.) which was no more a disparagement to him, than it was, to receive instruction from his wife's maid, to *whom to go for a cure of his leprosy*, v. 2, 3. Meekness teaches us, when a just reproof is given, to regard not so much who speaks, as what is spoken.

(3.) We must instruct gainsayers with meekness, 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. It is prescribed to ministers, that they must not strive, but be *gentle to all men, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*. They serve the Prince of peace, they preach the gospel of peace, they are the ambassadors of peace, and therefore must be sure to keep the peace. The apostles, those prime-ministers of state in Christ's kingdom, were not military men, or men of strife and noise, but fishermen, that follow their employment with quietness and silence. It is highly necessary that the guides of the church be strict governors of their own passions: *Learn of me*, (says Christ,) *for I am meek and lowly*, and therefore fit to teach you, Matt. xi. 29. We must contend earnestly, but not angrily and passionately, no not *for the faith once delivered to the saints*, Jude 3. When we have ever so great an assurance that it is the cause of truth we are pleading, yet we must so manage our defence of it against those who gainsay, as to make it appear, that it is not the confusion of the erroneous, but the confutation of the error, that we intend. This meekness would teach us not to pre-judge a cause, nor to condemn an adversary unheard, but calmly to state matters in difference, as knowing that a truth well opened is half confirmed. It would teach us not to aggravate matters in dispute, nor to father upon an adversary all the absurd consequences which we think may be inferred from his opinion: it would teach us to judge charitably of those that differ from us, and to forbear all personal reflections in arguing with them. God's cause needs not the patronage of our sinful heats and passions, which not only shatter the peace, but often give a mighty shock even to the truth itself we plead for. Meekness would prevent and cure that bigotry which has been so long the bane of the church, and contribute a great deal towards the advancement of that happy state, in which, notwithstanding little differences of apprehension and opinion, *The Lord shall be one, and his name one*. Public reformations are carried on with most credit and comfort, and are most likely to settle on lasting foundations, when meekness sits at the stern, and guides the motions of them. When Christ was purging the temple, though he was therein actuated by a zeal for God's house that even ate him up, yet he did it with meekness and prudence, which appeared in this instance, that when he drove out the sheep and oxen, which would be easily caught again, he said to them that sold doves, *Take these things hence*, John ii. 16. He did not let loose the doves, and send them flying, for that would have been to the loss and prejudice of the owners. Angry, noisy, bitter arguings ill become the asserters of that truth which is great, and will prevail without all that ado. It was a very froward and perverse generation our Lord Jesus lived in, and yet it is said, (Matt. xii. 19.) *He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the street;* though he could have broken them as easily as a bruised reed, and extinguish them as soon as one could quench the wick of a candle newly lighted, yet he will not do it till the day comes when he shall *bring forth judgment unto victory*. Moses dealt with a very obstinate and stiff-necked people, and yet *my doctrine* (says he) *shall drop as the dew, and distil as the small rain*, Deut. xxxii. 2. It was not the wind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire, that brought Elijah into temper, (for the Lord was not in them,) but the still small voice did it; when he heard that, he *wrapt his face in his mantle*, 1 Kings xix. 11—13. In dealing with gainsayers, a spirit of meekness will teach us to consider their temper, education, custom, the power of prejudice they labour under, the influence of others upon them, and to make allowances accordingly, and not to call (as passionate contenders are apt to do) every false step an apostasy; every error a mistake; nay, every misconstrued, misplaced word, a heresy; and every misdemeanour, no less than treason and rebellion; methods of proceeding more likely to irritate and harden, than to convince and reduce, gainsayers. I have heard it observed long since, "That the scourge of the tongue has driven many out of the temple, but never drove any into it."

(4.) We must make profession of the hope that is in us with meekness. 1 Pet. iii. 15. *Be ready always to give answer*, (to make your defence or apology, so the word is, ετοιμοι προς απολογιαν) whether judicially or extrajudicially, as there is occasion *to every man that* (soberly, not scoffingly and in derision) *asks you a reason*, or an account, *of the hop*

that is in you, that is, of the hope you profess, which you hope to be saved by, with meekness and fear. Observe, it is very well consistent with Christian quietness, to appear in the defence of truth, and to avow our Christian profession, when at any time we are duly called to it. That is not meekness, but base cowardice, that tamely betrays and delivers up any of Christ's truths or institutions, by silence, as if we were ashamed or afraid to confess our Master. But the office of meekness at such a time, is to direct us how and in what manner to bear our testimony, not with pride and passion, but with humility and mildness. Those that would successfully confess the truth, must first learn to deny themselves: and we must give an account of our hope, with a holy fear of missing it in such a critical juncture. When we give a reason for our religion, we must not boast of ourselves or of our own attainments, nor reflect contempt and wrath upon our persecutors, but remember that the *present truth*, (so it is called, 2 Pet. i. 12.) the truth which is now to be asserted, is the same with *the word of Christ's patience*, (Rev. iii. 10.) that is the word which must be patiently suffered for, according to the example of him, who with invincible meekness (before Pontius Pilate) *witnessed a good confession*, 1 Tim. vi. 13. A great abasement and diffidence of ourselves, may very well consist with a firm assurance of the truth, and a profound veneration for it.

In lesser things, wherein wise and good men are not all of a mind, meekness teaches us not to be too confident that we are in the right, nor to censure and condemn those that differ from us, as if we were the people, and wisdom should die with us; but quietly to walk according to the light that God has given us, and charitably to believe that others do so too, waiting till God shall reveal either this to them, Phil. iii. 15.) or that to us. Let it in such cases suffice to vindicate ourselves, which every man has a right to do, without a magisterial sentencing of others; why should we be many masters, when we are all offenders, (Jam. iii. 1, 2.) and the bar is our place, not the bench? Meekness will likewise teach us to manage a singular opinion wherein we differ from others, with all possible deference to them, and suspicion of ourselves; not resenting it as an affront to be contradicted, but taking it as a kindness to be better informed. Nor must we be angry that our hope is inquired into: even such a trial of it, if we approve ourselves well in it, may be *found to praise, and honour, and glory*; to which our meekness will very much contribute, as it puts a lustre upon, and a convincing power into, the testimony we bear: we then walk worthy of the *vocation wherewith we are called, when we walk in all lowliness and meekness*, Eph. iv. 1, 2.

(5.) We must bear reproaches with meekness. Reproach is a branch of that persecution which all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must count upon; and we must submit to it, behaving ourselves quietly, and with a due decorum, not only when princes sit and speak against us, but even when the abjects gather themselves together against us, and we become the song of the drunkards. Sometimes we find it easier to keep calm in a solemn and expected engagement, than in a sudden skirmish, or a hasty rencounter; and therefore, even against those slight attacks, it is requisite that meekness be set upon the guard. If we be nick-named, and slandered, and have all manner of evil said against us falsely, our rule is, not to be disturbed at it, nor *to render railing for railing*, (1 Pet. iii. 9.) but though we may, as we have opportunity, with meekness, deny the charge, as Hannah did, when Eli overhastily censured her for a drunkard; *No, my lord, I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink*, 1 Sam. i. 15. Yet, when that is done, we must, without meditating any revenge, quietly commit our cause to God, who will, sooner or later, clear up our *innocency as the light*, which is promised, (Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6.) and therefore *fret not thyself, but wait patiently*, v. 7. *cease from anger, and forsake wrath*, v. 8. Mr. Dod was wont to charm his friends into silence under reproaches, with this, "That if a dog bark at a sheep, the sheep will not bark at the dog again." We do but gratify our great adversary, and do his work for him, when we suffer the peace and serenity of our minds to be broken in upon by the reproaches of the world: for me to disquiet myself, and put myself into a passion, because another abuses me, is as if I should scratch up the skin of my face, to fetch off the dirt which my adversary throws in it. When reproaches provoke our passions, which put us upon rendering bitterness for bitterness, we thereby lose the comfort, and forfeit the honour and reward, which the divine promise has annexed to the reproach of Christ; and shall we suffer so many things in vain? We likewise thereby give occasion to those who had spoken evil of us falsely, to speak evil of us truly; and perhaps our religion suffers more by our impatience under the reproach, than by the reproach itself. What have we the law, and pattern, and promise of Christ for, but to calm our spirits under reproaches for well-doing? Truly those can bear but a little for Christ, who cannot bear a hard or an unkind word for him. If we either faint or fret in such a day of adversity, it is a sign our strength is small indeed. May it not satisfy us, that by our meekness and quietness under reproaches, we engage God for us, who has promised that he will *with righteousness judge the poor*, the poor in spirit, *and will reprove with equity for the meek of the earth*, Isa. xi. 4.—He that has bid us *to open our mouths for the dumb*, (Prov. xxxi. 8.) will not himself be silent. And shall we not learn at last, instead of fretting and being exceeding angry, to *rejoice and*

to *be exceeding glad*, (Matt. v. 11, 12.) when we suffer thus for righteousness sake? May we not put such reproaches as pearls in our crown, and be assured that they will pass well in the account another day, when there will be an advantageous resurrection of names as well as bodies; in the prospect of which we have reason to rejoice,* *that we are counted worthy to suffer shame for his name*, (Acts v. 41.) that we are honoured to be dishonoured for him, who for our sakes endured the cross, and despised the shame. It is one of the laws of meekness, *Spernere se sperni —to despise being despised.*

SECTION IV.

4. *Some good principles or considerations which tend to make us meek and quiet.*

In order to the well-governing of the soul, the judgment must be furnished with proper dictates, else it will never be able to keep the peace in the affections; the motions of the soul are then likely to be even, and regular, and constant, when we have fixed to ourselves good principles which we are governed by, and act under the influence of. There are some carnal corrupt principles, which angry froward people are guided by; such as these, "That the forgiving one injury invites another,"† whereas it often qualifies an adversary; or if otherwise, the forgiving of one offence will enable us to bear the next the more easily. And, "That we must have satisfaction given us for every wrong done us;" whereas, if we have not satisfaction for it, yet if it be not our own fault, we may have satisfaction under it, and that is as good. And, "That there is no living in the world without huffing and hectoring, and frightening people; *Oderint dum metuant.— Let them hate, provided they fear:*" whereas, to live continually in that element, is to live in a hell upon earth; mutual indignation and mutual fear perhaps contributing to the torment of devils and damned spirits: but, in opposition to these and the like ill principles, shall we treasure up these few good truths, chosen out of many which might be mentioned, proper for this purpose, and make use of them as there is occasion?

(1.) That he has the sweetest and surest peace, who is the most master of his own passions. The comfort that a man has in governing himself, is much greater than he could have in having people to serve him, and nations to bow down to him. It is certain, the worst enemies we have, if ever they break loose and get head, are in our own bosoms. Enemies without threaten only the evil of pain; they can but kill the body, and no great hurt in that to a child of God, if they do not provoke the enemies within, our own irregular passions, which, if they be not kept under, plunge us in the evil of sin, and that is a much greater evil. An invasion from abroad does not so much disturb the peace of a kingdom as an insurrection at home; and therefore it concerns us to double our guard, where our danger is greatest, and above all keepings to keep our hearts, that no passion be allowed to stir, without a good reason to be given for it, and a good use to be made of it; and then, if we be *troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, yet not in despair*, (2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.) offended by our fellow-servants, but not offending our master; reproached by our neighbours, but not by our own consciences; this is like Zion's peace, *peace within the walls*, Ps. cxxii. 7. We have need to pray as one did, *Libera me à malo isto homine, me-ipso—Lord, deliver me from that ill man, mine own self*, and then I am safe enough. The *lusts that war in our members*, (Jam. iv. 1.) are the *enemies that war against our souls*, 1 Pet. ii. 11. If this war be brought to a good issue, and those enemies suppressed, whatever other disturbances are given, peace is in the soul, *with grace and mercy from God, and from the Lord Jesus.* Nehemiah was aware of this, as the design of his enemies, when they hired a pretended prophet to give an alarm, and to advise him meanly to shift for himself; it was, (says he, Neh. vi. 13.) *that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin.* Whatever we lose, we should not lose our peace, if we do but keep our integrity; therefore, instead of being solicitous to subdue our enemies that lay siege to us, let us double our watch against the traitors within the garrison, from whom, especially, our danger is; since we cannot prevent the shooting of the fiery darts, let us have our shield ready, wherewith to quench them. If we would not hurt ourselves, blessed be God, no enemy in the world can hurt us. Let us but keep the peace within by the governing of our passions; and then, whatever assaults may be made upon us, we may therein, with the daughter of Zion, despise them, and laugh them to scorn, and shake our head at them. Isa. xxxvii. 22. Let us believe, that in hurrying and disquieting times, our strength is to sit still, in a holy quietness and composure of mind: *This is the rest wherewith you may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing*, and it is enough. Isa. xxviii. 12.

(2.) That in many things we all offend. This truth we have, Jam. iii. 2. and it comes in as a reason why we must not be many masters, *v.* 1. It would help to subdue and moderate our anger at the offences of others, if we would but consider,

[1.] That it is incident to human nature to offend

* *Dominus ipse maledictus est, et tamen solus est benedictus.*—The Lord himself, the only blessed, is pronounced accursed. *Tertul. de Patient* cap. 8

† *Veterem ferendo injuriam invitas novam.*—*Dict. Pub. Min.*

While we are in this world, we must not expect to converse with angels, or the spirits of just men made perfect; no, we are obliged to have a communication with creatures that are foolish and corrupt, peevish and provoking, and who are all subject to like passions; such as these we must live among, else must we needs go out of the world. And have we not reason then to count upon something or other uneasy and displeasing in all relations and conversations. The best men have their roughnesses and unevennesses in this imperfect state; those who are savingly enlightened, yet knowing but in part, have their blind side; the harmony, even of the communion of saints, will sometimes be disturbed with jarring strings; why then should we be surprised into passion and disquiet, when that which gives us the disturbance, is no more than what we looked for? Instead of being angry, we should think with ourselves thus: Alas! what could I expect but provocation from corrupt and fallen man? Among such foolish creatures as we are, it must needs be, that offences will come; and why should not I have my share of those offences? The God of heaven gives this as a reason of his patience towards a provoking world, that it is in their nature to be provoking, (Gen viii. 21.) *I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth*, and therefore better is not to be expected from him. And upon this account he had compassion on Israel, (Ps. lxxviii. 39.) *For he remembered that they were but flesh;* not only frail creatures, but sinful, and bent to backslide. *Do men gather grapes of thorns? I knew that thou wouldst deal treacherously, for thou wast called a transgressor from the womb*, Isa. xlviii. 8. And should not we, much more, be governed by the same consideration? *If thou seest the violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province*, remember what a provoking creature sinful man is, and then thou wilt not *marvel at the matter*, Eccl. v. 8. The consideration of the common infirmity and corruption of mankind, should be made use of, not to excuse our own faults to ourselves, which does but take off the edge of our repentance, and is the poor subterfuge of a deceived heart; but to excuse the faults of others, and so take off the edge of our passion and displeasure, and preserve the meekness and quietness of our spirits.

[2.] That it is incident to ourselves, among the rest, to offend. The apostle there puts himself into the number,* *We all offend.* We offend God; if we say we do not, we deceive ourselves, and yet he bears with us from day to day, and is not extreme to mark what we do amiss; though our debts to him are talents, our brethren's to us but pence. Think then, if God should be as angry with me for every provocation, as I am with those about me, what would become of me? They are careless in their observance, and perhaps wilful in their offence, and am not I so to God? yea, am not I a thousand times worse? Job said, when his servants were provoking, and he was tempted to be harsh with them, *What then shall I do, when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?* Job xxxi. 13, 14.

And are we not apt enough likewise to offend our brethren? Either we have offended, or may offend; so that we have need that others should bear† with us, and why should we not bear with them? *Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim—Let us seek and grant pardon alternately.* Our rule is, *What we would that men should do to us when we offend them, the same we should do to them when they offend us*, for *this is the law and the prophets*, Matt. vii. 12.‡ Solomon appeals to our consciences herein, Eccl. vii. 22. For *oftentimes also thine own heart* (which is instead of a thousand witnesses) *knoweth that thou thyself likewise hath cursed others.* The penitent remembrance of former guilt would greatly help to curb the passionate resentment of present trouble. When the undutiful rebellious son (in a story that I once read) dragged his father by the hair of the head to the house door, it appeased the anger of the old man, to remember, that, just so far he had dragged his father; and it seems to have silenced Adonibezek, that he was now treated no otherwise than he had treated others, Judg. i. 7.

(3.) That men are God's hand: so it is said, Ps. xvii. 14. *From men which are thy hand, O Lord*, or rather, *tools* in thy hand, so *v.* 13. which are thy *sword.* We must abide by this principle, that whatever it is that crosses us, or is displeasing to us, at any time, God has an overruling hand in it. David was governed by this principle, when he bore Shimei's spiteful reproaches with such invincible patience; *So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David;* (2 Sam. xvi. 10. and *v.* 11.) *Let him alone, for the Lord hath bidden him.* This consideration will not only silence our murmurings against God, [the author] but all our quarrellings with men [the instruments of our trouble and vexation]. Men's reproaches are God's rebukes, and whoever he be that affronts me, I must see, and say, that therein my Father corrects me. This quieted the spirit of Job, in reference to the injuries of the Chaldeans and Sabeans, though he dwelt as a *king in the army*, (*ch.* xxix. 25.) and his power and interest seem to have been sustained, when those intruders first

* Συνδουλος και αυτος.—Himself a fellow-servant.

† *Patienter illatam injuriam tolerat, qui pie meminit quod fortasse adhuc habeat in quo debeat ipse tolerari.*—That man patiently endures wrong, who piously remembers that perhaps there is something in his conduct, which requires forbearance.—*Greg. M. in Job, l. 5. c. 32.*

‡ *Cogitemus alios non facere injuriam, sed reponere.*—We should consider, that when others do a mischief, they may be not so much inflicting an injury as revenging it. *Sen.*

made that inroad upon him, and so he could not but see his help in the gate; yet we find him not meditating any revenge, but calming the disturbances of his own soul with the consideration of God's sovereign disposal, overlooking all the instruments of his trouble, thoughts of which would but have mingled anger (the more disquieting passion) with his sorrow: this therefore suffices to still the storm, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord, ch.* i. 21. When his brethren stood aloof from him, his kindred and his friends looked scornfully upon him, as an alien, and instead of oil, poured vinegar into his wounds, so that his *eye continued in this provocation,* yet even in that part of his trouble he owns the hand of God, (*ch.* xix. 13.) *He hath put my brethren far from me.* It is a very quieting truth, (the Lord help us to mix faith with it,) that every creature is that to us, and no more, that God makes it to be; and, that while many seek the ruler's favour, and more perhaps fear the ruler's displeasure, *every man's judgment proceedeth from the Lord.* Would we but more closely observe, and readily own, the hand of God, in that which disquiets and provokes us, surely, though we regarded not man, yet if we had any fear of God before our eyes, that would reconcile us better to it, and suppress all intemperate and undue resentments. In murmuring at the stone, we reflect upon the hand that throws it, and lay ourselves under the woe pronounced against him *that strives with his Maker,* Isa. xlv. 9. We know it is interpreted a taking up arms against the king, if we take up arms against any that are commissioned by him.

(4.) That there is no provocation given us at any time, but, if it be skilfully and graciously improved, there is good to be gotten by it. If we have but that wisdom of the prudent, which is *to understand his way,* and all the advantages and opportunities of it, doubtless we may, quite contrary to the intention of those who trespass against us, gain some spiritual, that is, some real, benefit to our souls, by the injuries and offences that are done to us, for even these are made to *work together for good to them that love God.* This is a holy and a happy way of opposing our adversaries, and resisting evil. It is an ill weed indeed out of which the spiritual bee cannot extract something profitable, and for its purpose. Whatever lion roars against us, let us but go in the strength and spirit of the Lord, as Samson did, and we may not only rend it as a kid, so that it shall do us no real harm, but we may withal get *meat out of the eater, and sweetness out of the strong.* As it turns to the unspeakable prejudice of many, that they look upon reproofs as reproaches, and treat them accordingly with anger and displeasure, so it would turn to our unspeakable advantage, if we could but learn to call reproaches reproofs, and make use of them as such, for our conviction and humiliation; and thus the reproach of Christ may become true riches to us, and greater than the treasures of Egypt.

We are told of an imposthume that was cured with the thrust of an enemy's sword; and of one that was happily converted from drunkenness, by being called (in reproach) "a tippler." It is very possible that we may be enlightened, or humbled, or reformed, may be brought nearer to God, or weaned from the world, may be furnished with matter for repentance, or prayer, or praise, by the injuries that are done us, and may be much furthered in our way to heaven by that which was intended for an affront or provocation.* This principle would put another aspect upon injuries and unkindnesses, and would quite alter the property of them, and teach us to call them by another name: whatever the subordinate instrument intended, it is likely *he meant not so, neither did his heart think so,* (Isa. x. 7.) but God designed it, as our other afflictions, to yield the *peaceable fruit of righteousness;* so that instead of being angry at the man that meant us ill, we should rather be thankful to the God that intended us good, and study to answer his intention. This kept Joseph in that good temper towards his brethren, though he had occasion enough to quarrel with them, Gen. l. 20. *You thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good.* This satisfied Paul, in reference to the thorn in the flesh, that is, the calumnies and oppositions of the false apostles, which touched him more sensibly than all the efforts of persecuting rage; that it was intended to hide pride from him, *lest he should be exalted above measure, with the abundance of revelations,* (2 Cor. xii. 7.) and there seems to be an instance of that good effect it had upon him, immediately upon the mention of it, for within a few lines after he lets fall that humble word, (*v.* 11.) *I am nothing.* We should be apt to think too highly of ourselves, and too kindly of the world, if we did not meet with some injuries and contempts, by which we are taught to cease from man. Did we but more carefully study the improvement of an injury, we should not be so apt to desire the revenge of it.

(5.) That what is said and done in haste, is likely to be matter for deliberate repentance. We find David often remembering with regret, what he said in his haste, particularly one angry word he had said in the day of his distress and trouble, which seemed to reflect upon Samuel, and indeed upon all that had given him any encouragement to hope for the kingdom, Ps. cxvi. 11. *I said in my haste, all men are liars;* and this hasty word was a grief to him long after. *He that hasteth with his feet sinneth*

* Ταραττει τους ανθρωπους ου τα πραγματα αλλα τα περι των πραγματων δογματα —Mortals are made unhappy, not so much by EVENTS as by the OPERATION of their minds upon them. *Epict. Ench. c.* 10.

Prov. xix. 2. When a man is transported by passion into any impropriety, we commonly qualify it with this, "that he is a little hasty," as if there were no harm in that, but we see there is harm in it; he that is in haste, may contract much guilt in a little time. What we say or do unadvisedly when we are hot, we must unsay or undo again when we are cool, or do worse. Now who would wilfully do that, which sooner or later he must repent of? A heathen that was tempted to a chargeable sin, could resist the temptation with this consideration, "that he would not buy repentance so dear." Is repentance such a pleasant work that we should so industriously treasure up unto ourselves wrath against the day of wrath, either the day of God's wrath against us, or our own against ourselves. You little think what a torrent of self-affliction you let in, when you let the reins loose to an immoderate ungoverned passion. You are angry at others, and reproach them, and call them hard names, and are ready to abhor them, and to revenge yourselves upon them; and your corrupt nature takes a strange kind of pleasure in this; but do you know that all this will at last rebound in your own faces, and return into your own bosoms? Either here, or in a worse place, you must repent of all this; that is, you must turn all these passions upon yourselves, you must be angry at yourselves, and reproach yourselves, and call yourselves fools, and abhor yourselves, and smite upon your own breasts; nay, and if God give you grace, take a holy revenge upon yourselves; (which is reckoned among the products of godly sorrow, 2 Cor. vii. 11.) and what can be more uneasy than all this? You take a mighty liberty in chiding those that you have under your power, and giving them very ill-favoured language, because you know they are not chide you again; but dare not your own hearts smite you, and your consciences chide you? And is it not easier to bear the chidings of any man in the world, (which may either be avoided, or answered, or slighted,) than to bear the reproaches of our own consciences, which, as we cannot get out of the hearing of, so we cannot make a light matter of? for when conscience is awake, it will be heard, and will tell us home, wherein *we are verily guilty concerning our brother*, Gen. xlii. 21. Let this ought therefore quiet our spirits, when they begin to be tumultuous, that hereby we shall but make work for repentance; whereas, on the contrary, as Abigail suggested to David, (1 Sam. xxv. 30, 31.) the bearing and forgiving of an injury will be no trouble or grief of mind afterwards. Let wisdom and grace therefore do that which time will do; that is, cool our heat, and take off the edge of our resentment.

(6.) That that is truly best for us which is most pleasing and acceptable to God, and that a meek and quiet spirit is so. No principle has such a commanding influence upon the soul, as that which has a regard to God, and wherein we approve ourselves to him. It was a good hint which the woman of Tekoah gave to David, when she was suing for a merciful sentence, (2 Sam. xiv. 11.) *I pray thee, let the king remember the Lord thy God*:——nor could any thought be more appeasing than that. Remember how gracious, and merciful, and patient God is, how slow to anger, how ready to forgive, and how well pleased he is to see his people like him: remember the eye of thy God upon thee, the love of thy God towards thee, and the glory of thy God set before thee. Remember how much it is thy concern to be accepted of God, and to walk worthy of thy relation to him, unto all well-pleasing; and how much meekness and quietness of spirit does contribute to this, as it is consonant to that excellent religion which our Lord Jesus has established, and as it renders the heart a fit habitation for the blessed Spirit; *This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, to lead quiet and peaceable lives*, 1 Tim. ii. 2, 3. It is a good evidence of our reconciliation to God, if we be cordially reconciled to every cross providence, which necessarily includes a meek behaviour toward those who are any ways instrumental in the cross. Very excellently does St. Austin express it, (in Ps. cxxii.) *Quis placet Deo? cui Deus placuerit—Those please God who are pleased with him*, and with all he does, whether immediately by his own hand, or mediately by the agency of provoking injurious men. This is standing complete in all the will of God, not only his commanding but his disposing will, saying it, without reluctance, *The will of the Lord be done.*——He that acts from an honest principle of respect to God, and sincerely desires to stand right in his favour, cannot but be in some measure adorned with that meek and quiet spirit, which he knows to be in the sight of God of great price.

Such as these are softening principles, and as many as walk according to these rules, peace shall be upon them, and mercy, and no doubt it shall be upon the Israel of God.

SECTION V.

5. *Some rules of direction.*

The laws of our holy religion are so far from clashing and interfering, that one Christian duty does very much further and promote another; the fruits of the Spirit are like links in a chain, one draws on another; it is so in this; many other graces contribute to the *ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.*

You see how desirable the attainment is; will you therefore, through desire, *separate* yourselves to the pursuit of it, and *seek* and *intermeddle with all wisdom*, (Prov. xviii. 1.) and all little enough, that you may reach to the meekness of wisdom.

(1.) Sit loose to the world, and to every thing in it. The more the world is crucified to us, the more our corrupt passions will be crucified *in* us. If we would keep calm and quiet, we must by faith live above the stormy region. It is certain, those that have any thing to do in the world, cannot but meet with that every day from those with whom they deal, which will cross and provoke them; and if the affections be set upon these things, and we be filled with a prevailing concern about them, as the principal things, those crosses must needs pierce to the quick, and inflame the soul, and that which touches us in these things, touches us in the apple of our eye. If the appetites be carried out inordinately towards those things that are pleasing to sense, the passions will be to the very same degree carried out against those that are displeasing. And therefore Christians, whatever you have of the world in your hands, be it more or less, as you value the peace, as well as the purity, of your souls, keep it out of your hearts, and evermore let out your affections towards your possessions, enjoyments, and delights in the world with a due consideration of the disappointment and provocation which probably you will meet with in them, and let that restrain and give check to their inordinacy.

It is the excellent advice of Epictetus, whatever we take a pleasure in, to consider the nature of the thing, and to proportion our complacency accordingly: Αν χυτραν τεργης, μεμνησο οτι χυτραν τεργεις, κατεαγεισης γαρ αυτης ϑ ταραχϑηση—*If thou art in love with a China cup, or a Venice glass, love it as a piece of brittle ware, and then the breaking of it will be no great offence*, nor put thee into any disturbing passion, for it is but what thou didst expect. Those that idolize any thing in this world, will be greatly discomposed if they be crossed in it. "The money which Micah's mother had, was her god, (it is Bishop Hall's note,) before it had the shape either of a graven or a molten image, else the loss of it would not have set her a cursing, as it seems it did, Judges xvii. 2. Those that are greedy of gain, trouble their own hearts, as well as their own houses, (Prov. xv. 27.) they are a burthen to themselves, and a terror to all about them. They who will be rich, who are resolved upon it, come what will, cannot but fall into these foolish and hurtful lusts, 1 Tim. vi. 9. And those also who serve their own bellies, who are pleased with nothing, unless it be wound up to the height of pleasure, who are like *the tender and delicate woman, that would not set so much as the sole of her foot to the ground for tenderness and delicacy*; lie very open to that which is disquieting, and cannot, without a great disturbance to themselves, bear a disappointment; and therefore Plutarch (that great moralist) prescribes it for the preservation of our *meekness*,* "Not to be curious in diet, or clothes, or attendance; for (says he) they who need but few things, are not liable to anger if they be disappointed of many."

Would we but learn in these things to cross ourselves, we should not be so apt to take it unkind if another crosses us. And therefore the method of the lessons in Christ's school, is first to *deny ourselves*, and then to *take up our cross*, Matt. xvi. 24. We must also mortify the desire of the applause of men, as altogether impertinent to our true happiness. If we have learnt not to value ourselves by their good word, we shall not much disturb ourselves for their ill word. St. Paul bore reproaches with much meekness, because he did not build upon the opinion of man, reckoning it a small thing to be *judged of man's judgment*, 1 Cor. iv. 3.

(2.) Be often repenting of your sinful passion, and renewing your covenants against it. If our rash anger were more bitter to us in the reflection afterwards, we should not be so apt to relapse into it. Repentance in general, if it be sound and deep, and grounded in true contrition and humiliation, is very meekening, and disposes the soul to bear injuries with abundance of patience. Those who live a life of repentance, (as we have every one of us reason to do,) cannot but live a quiet life; for nobody can lightly say worse of the true penitent, than he says of himself. Call him a fool, (an affront which many think deserves a challenge,) the humble soul can bear it patiently with this thought, "Yea, a fool I am," and I have called myself so many a time; *more brutish than any man; I have not the understanding of a man*, Prov. xxx. 2. But repentance does in a special manner dispose us to meekness, when it fastens upon any irregular inordinate passion with which we have been transported. Godly sorrow for our former transgressions in this matter will work a carefulness in us, not again to transgress If others be causelessly or excessively angry with me am not I justly requited for the like or more indecen passions. Charge it home therefore with sorro and shame upon your consciences, aggravating th sin, and laying a load upon yourselves for it, an you will find that "the burnt child," especiall while the burn is smarting, "will dread the fire, Job xlii. 6.

With our repentance for our former unquietnes we must engage ourselves by a firm resolution i the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ to be mo mild and gentle for the future. Say, *you will ta heed to your ways that you offend not*, as you ha done, *with your tongue;* and be often rememberi that you said so, as David does, Ps. xxxix. 1. F solution would do much towards the conquering the most rugged nature, and the quiet bearing of

* *Ne quære molliane tibi contingant dura.*—Ask not whether your allotment will be pleasing or painful. *Phurnut.*

greatest provocation; it would be like the bit and the bridle to the horse and mule, that have no understanding. It may be of good use every morning to renew a charge upon our affections to keep the peace, and having welcomed Christ in faith and meditation, let no rude or unruly passion stir up or awake our love.

(3.) Keep out of the way of provocation, and stand upon your guard against it. While we are so very apt to offend in this matter, we have need to pray, (and to practise accordingly,) *Lord, lead us not into temptation.*——Those are enemies to themselves and to their own peace, as well as to human society,* who seek occasion of quarrel, who fish for provocations and dig up mischief; but meek and quiet people will on the contrary studiously avoid even that which is justly provoking, and will see it as if they saw it not. Those that would not be angry, must wink at that which would stir up anger, or put a favourable construction upon it. The advice of the wise man is very good to the purpose, (Eccl. vii. 21.) *Also take no heed to all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee;* and it is better for thee not to hear it, unless thou couldst hear it patiently,† and not to be provoked to sin in the hearing of it. It is a common story of Cotys, that being presented with a cupboard of curious glasses, he returned his thanks to his friend that had sent them, and gratified the messenger that brought them, and then deliberately broke them all, lest by the casual breaking of them severally, he should be provoked to passion. And Dion relates it to the honour of Julius Cæsar, that Pompey's cabinet of letters coming to his hand, he would not read them, because he was his enemy, and he would be likely to find in them that which would increase the quarrel; "and therefore" (as Dr. Reynolds expresses it) "he chose rather to make a fire on his hearth, than in his heart:" *De non existentibus et non apparentibus eadem est ratio—Keep the injury out of sight, and it will be out of mind.*

But seeing *briers and thorns are with us,* and *we dwell among scorpions,* (so the prophet, Ezek. ii. 6.) and it must needs be that offences will come, let us be so much the more careful, as we are when we go with a candle among barrels of gunpowder, and exercise ourselves to have consciences void of offence, not apt to offend others, nor to resent the offences of others. When we are at any time engaged in business or company, where we foresee provocation, we must double our watch, and be more than ordinarily circumspect. *I will keep my mouth with a bridle,* (says David,) that is, with a particular actual care and diligence, *while the wicked is before me,* and frequent acts will confirm the good disposition, and bring it to a habit. Plutarch advises, "To set some time to ourselves for special strictness: so many days or weeks in which, whatever provocations do occur, we will not suffer ourselves to be disturbed by them." And thus he supposes, by degrees, the habit of vitious anger may be conquered and subdued. But after all, the grace of faith has the surest influence upon the establishment and quietness of the spirit: faith established the mercy of God, the meekness of Christ, the love of the Spirit, the commands of the word, the promises of the covenant, and the peace and quietness of the upper world; this is the approved shield, with which we may be able *to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one,* and all his wicked instruments.

(4.) Learn to pause. It is a good rule, as in our communion with God, so in our converse with men, (Eccl. v. 2.) *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing.* When at any time we are provoked, delays may be as advantageous, as in other cases they are dangerous. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger,* Prov. xix. 11. *Cædissem nisi iratus essem—I would beat thee*‡ (said Socrates to his servant) *if I were not angry;* but he that is hasty of spirit, that joins in with his anger upon the first rise of it, *exalteth folly,* Prov. xiv. 29. The office of reason is to govern the passions, but then we must give time to act, and not suffer the tongue to overrun it. Some have advised, when we are provoked to anger, to take, at least, so much time to deliberate, as while we repeat the alphabet; and others have thought it more proper to repeat the Lord's Prayer, and perhaps by that time we are past the fifth petition, [*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us,*] we may be reduced into temper. It is a good rule, "To think twice before we speak once;" for *he that hasteth with his feet, sinneth.* It was the noted saying of a great statesman in Q. Elizabeth's court, "*Take time, and we shall have done the sooner.*" || Nor can there be any thing lost by deferring our anger; for there is nothing said or done in our wrath, but it might be better said, and better done, in meekness.

(5.) Pray to God by his Spirit to work in you this excellent grace of meekness and quietness of spirit. It is a part of that comeliness which he puts upon the soul, and he must be sought unto for it. If any man lack this meekness of wisdom, let him ask it of God, who gives liberally, and does not upbraid us with our folly. When we begin at any time to be froward and unquiet, we must lift a prayer to

* *Facilius est excludere perniciosa quam regere, et non admittere quam admissa moderari.*—It is easier to exclude pernicious passions than to govern them; not to admit them, than to manage them when admitted. *Seneca.*

† *Non vis esse iracundus? Ne sis curiosus.*—Wouldst thou avoid anger? Suppress curiosity. *Sen.*

‡ *Seneca* makes it the saying of *Socrates; Ambr. de Offic.* and others ascribe it to *Archytas Tarentinus.*

|| *Potest pœna dilata exigi, non potest exacta revocari.*—Punishment though deferred, may be inflicted; but when once inflicted, it cannot be recalled. *Sen. de Irâ.*

him who stills the noise of the sea, for that grace which establishes the heart. When David's heart was hot within him, the first word that broke out was a prayer, Ps. xxxix. 3, 4. When we are surprised with a provocation, and begin to be in a ferment upon it, it will not only be a present diversion, but a sovereign cure, to lift up an ejaculation to God for grace and strength to resist and overcome the temptation: "Lord, keep me quiet now!" *Let your requests* in this matter *be made known to God; and the peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds*, Phil. iv. 6, 7. You are ready enough to complain of unquiet people about you; but you have more reason to complain of unquiet passions within you; the other, are but thorns in the hedge, these are thorns in the flesh, against which, if you beseech the Lord, as Paul did, (2 Cor. xii. 8.) with faith, and fervency, and constancy, you shall receive *grace sufficient*.

(6.) Be often examining your growth and proficiency in this grace.* Inquire what ground you have got of your passion, and what improvements you have made in meekness. Provocations recur every day, such as have been wont perhaps to put you into a passion; these give you an opportunity to make the trial. Do you find that you are less subject to anger, and when angry that you are less transported by it, than formerly, that your apprehension of injuries is less quick, and your resentments less keen, than usual? Is the little kingdom of your mind more quiet than it has been, and the discontented party weakened and kept under? It is well if it be so, and a good sign that the soul prospers, *and is in health*. We should examine every night, whether we have been quiet all day? We shall sleep the better if we find we have. Let conscience keep up a grand inquest in the soul, under a charge from the judge of heaven and earth, to inquire, and due presentment make of all riots, routs, and breaches of the peace, and let nothing be left unpresented for favour, affection, or self-love; nor let any thing presented be left unprosecuted according to law. Those whose natural temper, or their age, or distemper, leads them to be hot, and hasty, and unquiet, have an opportunity, by their meekness and gentleness, to discover both the truth and strength of grace in general; for it is the surest mark of uprightness to keep ourselves *from our own iniquity*, Ps. xviii. 23. And yet, if the children of God bring forth these fruits of the Spirit in old age, when commonly men are most froward and peevish, it shows not only that they are upright, but rather that the Lord is upright, in whose strength they stand, that he is their rock, and there *is no unrighteousness in him*, Ps. xcii. 14, 15.

7. Delight in the company of meek and quiet persons. Solomon prescribes it as a preservative against foolish passion, to *make no friendship with an angry man, lest thou learn his ways*, Prov. xxii. 24, 25. When thy neighbour's heart is on fire, it is time to look to thy own. But man is a sociable creature, and cut out for converse; let us, therefore, since we must have some company, choose to have fellowship with those who are meek and quiet, that we may learn their way, for it is a good way. The wolf is no companion for the lamb, nor the leopard for the kid, till they have forgot to hurt and destroy. Company is assimilating, and we are apt insensibly to grow like those with whom we ordinarily converse, especially with whom we delight to converse, therefore, let the quiet in the land be the men of our choice, especially into standing relations and bosom-friendship. Observe in others how sweet and amiable meekness is, and what a heaven upon earth those enjoy who have the command of their own passions; and study to transcribe such copies.——There are those who take a pleasure in riotous company, and are never well but when they are in the midst of noise and clamour; sure heaven would not be heaven to such, for that is a calm and quiet region; no noise there, but what is sweet and harmonious.

8. Study the cross of our Lord Jesus.——Did we but know more of Jesus Christ, and him crucified, we should experience more of the fellowship of his sufferings. Think often how and in what manner he suffered; see him led as a lamb to the slaughter, and arm yourselves with the same mind. Think also why and for what end he suffered, that you may not in any thing contradict the design of your dying Saviour, nor receive his grace in vain. Christ died as the great peace-maker, to take down all partition-walls, to quench all threatening flames, and to reconcile his followers, not only to God, but one to another, by the *slaying of all enmities*, Eph. ii. 14, 16. The apostle often prescribes a believing regard to the sufferings of Christ, as a powerful allay to all sinful and intemperate heats, as Eph. v. 2. Phil. ii. 5, &c. Those who would show forth the meek and humble life of Christ in their mortal bodies, must *bear about with them continually the dying of the Lord Jesus*, 2 Cor. iv. 10. The ordinance of the Lord's supper, in which we show forth the Lord's death, and the new testament in his blood, must therefore be improved by us to this blessed end, as a love-feast, at which all our sinful passions must be laid aside, and a marriage feast, where the ornament of a meek, quiet spirit is considerable part of the wedding-garment. The forgiving of injuries, and a reconciliation to our

* Αρξαι απο των μικρων, εκχειται το ελαδιον; κλεπτεται οιναριον; επιλεγε, οτι τοσυτυ πωλειται απαθεια τοσυτυ ατραξια.—Begin with little things, Is the oil spilt? Is a trifling quantity of wine stolen? Say to thyself, "So much tranquillity is sold, so much composure." *Epict. c.* 17.

brother, is both a necessary branch of our preparation for that ordinance, and a good evidence and instance of our profiting by it. If God has there spoken peace to us, let not us go away and speak war to our brethren. The year of release under the law, which put an end to all actions, suits, and quarrels, begun in the close of the day of atonement; then the jubilee-trumpet sounded.

9. Converse much in your thoughts with the dark and silent grave. You meet with many things now that disturb and disquiet you, and much ado you have to bear them: think how quiet death will make you, and how incapable of resenting or resisting injuries; and what an easy prey this flesh, you are so jealous for, will shortly be to the worm that shall feed sweetly on it. You will ere long be out of the reach of provocation, there where the wicked cease from troubling, and where their envy and their hatred is for ever perished. And is not a quiet spirit the best preparative for that quiet state? Think how all these things, which now disquiet us, will appear when we come to look death in the face; how small and inconsiderable they seem to one that is stepping into eternity. Think, "what need is there that I should so ill resent an affront or injury, that am but a worm to-day, and may be worms' meat to-morrow." They say, when bees fight, the throwing up of dust among them quickly parts the fray.

Hi motus animorum atque hæc certamina tanta
*Pulveris exigui jactu compressa quiescunt.**

A little sprinkling of the dust of the grave, which we are upon the brink of, would do much towards the quieting of our spirits, and the taking up of our quarrels. Death will quiet us shortly, let grace quiet us now. When David's heart was *hot within him*, he prayed, *Lord, make me to know my end*, Ps. xxxix. 3, 4.

To conclude: I know no errand that I can come upon of this kind to you, in which methinks I should be more likely to prevail, than in this; so much does meekness conduce to the comfort and repose of our own souls, and the making of our lives sweet and pleasant to us. *If thou be wise herein, thou shalt be wise for thyself.* That which I have been so intent upon in this discourse, is only to persuade you not to be your own tormentors, but to govern your passions, so that they may not be furies to yourselves. The ornament I have been recommending to you is confessedly excellent and lovely; will you put it on, and wear it, that by this all men may know that you are Christ's† disciples, and you may be found among the sheep, on the right hand, at the great day, when Christ's angels shall *gather out of his kingdom every thing that offends?* Every one will give meekness a good word; but in this, as in other instances, *Probitas laudatur et alget—Honesty is applauded, yet neglected.*

Love is commended by all, and yet the love of many waxeth cold: but let all that would not be self-condemned practise what they praise. And as there is nothing in which I should more expect to prevail, so there is nothing in which it will easier appear whether I have prevailed or no; this tree will soon be known by its fruits; so many are the circumstances of almost every day, which call for the exercise of this grace, that our profiting therein will quickly appear to ourselves, and to all with whom we converse. Our meekness and quietness is more obvious, and falls more directly under a trial and observation, than our love to God and our faith in Christ, and other graces, the exercise whereof lies more immediately between God and our own souls. Shall we therefore set ourselves to manifest, in all our converse, that we have indeed received good by this plain discourse; that our relations and neighbours, and all that we have dealings with, may observe a change in us for the better, and may take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus? And let not the impressions of it ever wear off, but, living and dying, let us be found among the *quiet in the land.* We all wish to see quiet families, and quiet churches, and quiet neighbourhoods, and quiet nations; and it will be so if there be quiet hearts; and not otherwise.

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* *Virg. Geor. lib* 4.

Yet all those dreadful deeds, this dreadful fray,
A cast of scatter'd dust will soon allay. *Dryden.*

† *Chrysostom* argues excellently from the easiness of forgiving, and being meek: Τι ευκολωτερον της οργης αφειναι, μη γαρ μακραν αποδημιαν εσι σειλαθαι, μη χρηματα δαπανησαι, αρκει θελησαι μονον, &c.—What is more easy than to dismiss anger; for there is no necessity of sending to a remote country, nor to spend money; to will is all that is wanting. *Hom.* 19. *ad. Pop. Antioch.* This is one of *Epictetus's* τα εφ' ἡμιν—things within our power.

A

SERMON,

SHOWING

THAT THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS NOT A SECT,

AND YET THAT IT IS EVERY WHERE SPOKEN AGAINST.

Acts xxviii. 22.

——For as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

Would you think that such a false and invidious representation as this should ever be given of the Christian religion, that [a] pure religion and undefiled, which came into the world supported by the strongest evidences of truth, and recommended by the most endearing allurements of grace and goodness, the [b] sayings whereof are so faithful, and so well worthy of acceptation; that sacred institution which scatters the brightest rays of divine light and love that ever were darted from heaven to earth? That it is, which is here so invidiously called a *sect*, and is said to be *every where spoken against*.

It will be worth while to observe,

1. Who they were that said this, they were the chief of the Jews who were at Rome, *v.* 17. The Jews were looked upon (at least they looked upon themselves) as a very knowing people; the Jews at Rome (a place of learning and inquiry) thought themselves more knowing than the other Jews. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, *ch.* ii. 17—20. takes notice of it: *Thou art called a Jew, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will,—and art confident that thou thyself art a guide to the blind, a light of them which are in darkness*, &c. And we have reason to suppose, that the chief of the Jews there, who had the greatest advantages of education and correspondence, were the most intelligent. It might also be justly expected, that upon the first notices of the gospel, the Jews should have been of all people most ready to acquaint themselves with a religion which was so much the honour and perfection of their own; and yet, it seems, the Jews, the chief of the Jews at Rome, knew no more of Christianity than this, that it was *a sect every where spoken against*. This we know, (say they,) and it was all they knew concerning it.

The Jews were of all other the most bitter and inveterate enemies to the Christians. While the Roman emperors tolerated them, (as they did till Nero's time,*) the Jews with an unwearied malice persecuted them from city to city, and were the first wheel in most of the opposition that the gospel met with, when it was first preached. Now one would think they would not have been so vigorous and industrious to suppress Christianity, if they had not very well acquainted themselves with it, and known it to deserve such opposition: but it seems by this, they knew little or nothing of the religion they so much maligned, had never searched into the merits of its cause, nor weighed the proofs of its divine authority; but against all law and reason condemned it, (*δια την φημην—merely upon common fame*, as Justin Martyr complains;†) and follow the cry to run it down, because it was *every where spoken against*.

2. Upon what occasion they said this. They were now appointing a time to discourse with St. Paul upon the grand question in debate, Whether Jesus of Nazareth were the true Messiah or no? And they seemed willing to hear what that great man had to say in defence of the religion he preached: *We desire* (say they) *to hear of thee what thou thinkest.* ——Now, one would expect that so good a cause, managed by such a skilful advocate, could not but carry the day, and be victorious, and that they would all have been brought over to the belief of Christianity; but we find, *v.* 24. that it proved otherwise. After all, there were those that believed not; and the text intimates the reason of their infidelity, they came to hear the word under a prejudice; they had

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[a] Jam. i. 27. [b] 1 Tim. i. 15.

* Tertullian confidently asserts, *Primum Neronem in hanc Sectam tum maxime Romæ orientem Cæsariano gladio ferocisse.*—That Nero was the first who raged with the imperial sword against this sect rising at that time into general notice at Rome. *Apol. c. 5.*

† *Inquisitione et agnitione neglecta nomen detinetur, nomen expugnatu —vox sola prædamnat.*—All inquiry into the merits of the case i omitted; the name only is attacked, the name only consigns t condemnation. *Tert. Ap. c. 3.*

already imbibed an ill opinion of the way, which, right or wrong, they resolved to hold fast: and though some of them, by the help of divine grace, got over this stumbling-block, (that like the Bereans were more noble than the rest, and of freer thought,) yet, many of them continued under the power of those prejudices, and were sealed up under unbelief, *v.* 26, 27. Thus is the power of the word in many baffled by the power of prejudice: they do not believe, because they are resolved they will not: they conclude that no good thing can [c] come out of Nazareth, and will not be persuaded to come and see. Thus do they prejudge the cause, [d] *answering the matter before they hear it*, and it will prove *folly* and *shame* to them.

Now in the account they here give of their knowledge of the Christian religion, we may observe,

(1.) That they looked upon it to be a *sect*, and we will prove that to be false.

(2.) A sect *every where spoken against*, and we will grant that to be true, that it is generally spoken against, though it is most unreasonable and unjust it should be so.

(1.) The Christian religion is here called (but miscalled) a [*] *sect*, αιρεσις—*a heresy*. *After the way which they call heresy*, (says St. Paul, Acts xxiv. 14.) *so worship I the God of my fathers.—The sect of the Nazarenes;* so Tertullus calls it in his opening the indictment against Paul, Acts xxiv. 5. It is called *this way*, Acts ix. 2. and *that way*, Acts xix. 9. as if it were a by-path out of the common road. The practice of serious godliness is still looked upon by many as a sect, that is, a party-business, and a piece of affected singularity in opinion and practice, tending to promote some carnal design, by creating and supporting invidious distinctions among men. This is the proper notion of a sect, and therefore the masters and maintainers of sects are justly in an ill name, as enemies to the great corporation of mankind; but there is not the least colour of reason to put this invidious and scandalous character on the Christian religion; however it may be mistaken and misrepresented, it is very far from being really a sect. There were sects of religion among the Jews; we read of the sect of the Sadducees, (Acts v. 17.) which was built on peculiar notions, such as overturned the foundation of natural religion, by denying a future state of rewards and punishments. There was also the sect of the Pharisees, (Acts xv. 5.) the *straitest sect of* their *religion*, (Acts xxvi. 5.) which was founded in the observance and imposition of singular rites and customs, with an affected separation from, and contempt of, all mankind. These were sects; but there is nothing of the spirit and genius of these in the Christian religion, as it was instituted by its great author.

[1.] True Christianity establishes that which is of common concern to all mankind, and therefore is not a sect. The truths and precepts of the everlasting gospel are perfective of, and no way repugnant to, the light and law of natural religion. Is that a sect, which gives such mighty encouragements and assistances to those that *in every nation fear God, and work righteousness?* Acts x. 35. Is that a sect, which tends to nothing else but to reduce the revolted race of mankind to their ancient allegiance to their great Creator, and to renew that image of God upon man, which was his primitive rectitude and felicity? Is that a sect which proclaims God in Christ, [e] *reconciling the world unto himself*, and recovering it from that degenerate and deplorable state into which it was sunk? Is that a sect which publishes [f] good-will towards men, and Christ the [g] *Lamb of God, taking away the sins of the world?* Surely, that which concurs so much with the uncorrupted and unprejudiced sentiments, and conduces much more to the true and real happiness of all mankind, cannot be thought to take its rise from such narrow opinions, and private interests, as sects owe their original to.

[2.] True Christianity has a direct tendency to the uniting of the children of men, and the gathering of them together in one,† and therefore is far from being a sect, which is supposed to lead to a division, and to sow discord among brethren. The preaching of the gospel did indeed prove the occasion of contention. Our Saviour foresaw and foretold, (Luke xii. 51—53.) that his disciples and followers would be *men of strife*, in the same sense that the prophet Jeremiah was, (Jer. xv. 10.) not men striving, but men striven with: but the gospel was by no means the cause of this contention, for it was intended to be the cure of all contention. If there be any who, under the cloak and colour of the Christian name, cause divisions, and propagate feuds and quarrels among men, let them bear their own burthen; but it is certain that the Christian religion, as far as it obtains its just power and influence upon the minds of men, will make them meek and quiet, humble and peaceable, loving and useful, condescending and forgiving, and every way easy, and acceptable, and profitable one to another. Is that a sect which was introduced with a proclamation of *peace on earth?* That which beats swords into plow-shares, and spears into pruning hooks? Or was he the author of a sect, who is the great centre of unity, and who died to break down [h] *partition walls*, and to *slay* all *enmities*, that he might [i] *gather together in one the children of God, that were scattered abroad?*

[c] John i. 46. [d] Prov. xviii. 13. John vii. 51.

[*] Αιρεσις, *Electio, optio.* An opinion not forced upon us by the evidences of truth, but chosen by us with some foreign design.

[e] 2 Cor. v. 19. [f] Luke ii. 14.

† Secta *dicitur a* Secando—It is called a sect from *secando*—to be separated.

[g] John i. 29. iii. 16. 1 John ii. 2.

[h] Eph. ii. 14—16. [i] John xi. 52.

Was he the author of a sect, who came into the world [k] *not to destroy men's lives, but to save* them; and who taught his followers not only to love one another, but to love their enemies, and to count every one their [l] neighbour, to whom they could be any way serviceable?

[3.] True Christianity aims at no worldly benefit or advantage, and therefore must by no means be called a sect. Those who espouse a sect, are supposed to be governed in it by their secular interest, and to aim at wealth, or honour, or the gratification of some base lust. The Pharisees proved themselves to be a sect, by their thirst after the praise of men, and their greedy devouring of widows' houses: but the professors of Christianity have not only been taught, by the law of their religion, to live above this world, and to look upon it with a holy contempt, but have been exposed by their profession to the loss and ruin of all their secular comforts and enjoyments. Are those to be accounted politic and designing sectaries, who have for Christ cheerfully [m] *suffered the loss of all things?* Is that a sect, which instead of preferring a man to honour, or raising him an estate, lays him open to disgrace and poverty, renders him obnoxious to fines and forfeitures, banishments and imprisonments, racks and tortures, flames and gibbets, which were the common lot of the primitive Christians. Cæsar Vaninus, a sworn enemy to the Christian religion, and one who was industrious in searching out objections against it, owned that he could find nothing in it that savoured of a carnal and worldly design: no, it has always approved itself a [n] *heavenly calling*, and the strictest professors of it (even their enemies themselves being judges) have had [o] *their conversation in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom.* Very unjustly therefore is it called a sect.

As to this, therefore, suffer a word of caution and exhortation:

First, Let us take heed lest our profession of religion degenerate into any thing which may make it look like a sect. Christianity, as it was instituted by Christ, is not a sect; let not Christians then be sectaries. We make our profession of religion a sect, when we monopolize the church and its ministry and sacraments, and spend that zeal in matters of doubtful disputation which should be reserved for the weightier matters of the law; when we place our religion in [p] *meats* and *drinks*, which should be placed in *righteousness*, and *peace*, and *joy in the Holy Ghost*; when we profess religion with a conceit of ourselves, and a contempt of others, and with any worldly design; when we sacrifice the common interests of Christ's kingdom to the particular interests of a party; and, in a word, when our profession is tainted with the [q] *leaven of the Pharisees*, which is both souring and swelling; then it degenerates into a sect. Let us therefore adhere to the sure and large foundations, and be actuated by a principle of love to, and so maintain communion with, [r] *all that in every place*, and under every denomination, *call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.* Let us be modest in our opinions, charitable and candid in our censures, self-denying in all our converse; acting always under the influence of that *wisdom that is from above*, which is *first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy*; that by this well-doing we may [s] *put to silence the ignorance of* those who call religion a sect.

Secondly, Let us not be deterred from serious godliness, or any of the requirements of it, by the invidious name of a sect, which is put upon it. If a strict, and sober, and circumspect conversation, a conscientious government of our tongue, praying and singing psalms in our families, a religious observation of the Lord's day, a diligent attendance upon the means of grace, joining in religious societies for prayer and Christian conference, and endeavouring, in our places, the suppression of profaneness and immorality: if these, and the like, be called and counted the marks and badges of a sect, let us not be moved at it, but say as David did, (2 Sam. vi. 22.) *If this be to be vile, I will be yet more vile.* If the practice of piety be branded as a sect, it is better for us to come under the reproaches of men for following it, than under the *curse* of God for neglecting it. It is a [t] *very small thing to be judged of man's day, but he that judgeth is the Lord:* let us therefore be more afraid of being sectaries, than of being called so.

(2.) The Christian religion is here said to be *every where spoken against.* That it was spoken against, was evident enough; but that it was *every where* spoken against, was more than they could be sure of: they did not know all places, nor had they correspondence with, or intelligence from, every country; but we must not wonder if those who oppose the truth as it is in Jesus, make no conscience of transgressing the laws of truth in common conversation. But we will suppose that the acquaintance and converse of those Jews at Rome lay mostly with those who were enemies to Christianity, and spoke against it, and they therefore concluded it every where spoken against, because they found it spoken against in all places that they came to, or had advice from. Thus apt are we to embrace that as a general sentiment and observation, which we find received by those that we usually associate with, and so we run ourselves into mistakes, which larger and more impartial inquiries will soon rectify.

But we will take it for granted, however, that what they said was true, not because they said it,

k Luke ix. 56. l Luke x. 36, 37. m Phil. iii. 8.
n Heb. iii. 1. o 2 Cor. i. 12. p Rom. xiv. 17, 18.
q Luke xii. 1. r 1 Cor. i. 2. s 1 Pet. ii. 15.
t 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

but because the experience of all ages does confirm it, and concur with it: so that a little acquaintance with books and the world will prove the observation which we ground upon the text:

Doct. That it is, and always has been, the lot of Christ's holy religion, to be every where spoken against. Or thus:

That true Christianity has all along met with a great deal of opposition and contradiction in this world.

I purpose not to enter into a particular disquisition of that which has been, and is, spoken against religion, nor do I undertake at present to show how false and unreasonable it is; that has been done many a time by the best hands, and so effectually, that every impartial eye must needs look upon the cause of the adversaries of religion to be a baffled cause: but I shall only make some improvement of this general observation, which cannot be unseasonable in an age wherein the gates of hell seem to be making their utmost efforts against the church; and the devil, as the calumniator and false accuser, to be [u]*more wroth* than ever *with the woman* the church, and to push on the *war* with an unusual vigour against the *remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

I shall therefore, I. Inquire what it is in Christianity that is spoken against. And, II. Show you why so holy and excellent a religion is spoken against; And then, III. Draw some inferences from this observation.

I. Who and what it is that is spoken against.

1. Jesus Christ, the author of our religion, is *every where spoken against.* When the First-begotten was brought into the world, old Simeon, among other great things, pronounced this concerning him, that he was a *sign which* should be *spoken against*, and by that means was set *for the fall of many*, Luke ii. 34. When he was here upon earth, he was *spoken against.* [v]The stone which was designed to be the head of the corner, was rejected, and set at nought by the builders. It was not the least of his sufferings in the days of his flesh, that he *endured the contradiction of sinners against himself*, Heb. xii. 3. They spoke against his person, as mean and contemptible, and one that had *no form, nor comeliness:*[w] they spoke against his preaching, as false and deceiving, (John vii. 12.) as factious and seditious, (Luke xxiii. 2.) as senseless and ridiculous, for the Pharisees derided him for it, Luke xvi. 14. They spoke against his miracles, as done in confederacy with Beelzebub the prince of the devils, Matt. xii. 24. They spoke against his morals, charging him with blasphemy against God, profanation of the sabbath day, and all the instances of debauchery which were usually met with in a gluttonous man, a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners, Matt. xi. 19. They spoke against his followers, as a company of ignorant despicable people, John vii. 48, 49. Pass through all the steps and stages of his sufferings, and you will find him every where spoken against. They reproached him in all his offices; in his office of teaching, when they challenged him to tell who smote him; in his office of saving, when they challenged him to save himself as he had saved others; in his office of ruling, when they challenged him to prove himself the King of the Jews by coming down from the cross. The common people spoke against him, even they that [x]passed by reviled him. The Pharisees and chief priests, the grandees of the church, were as severe as any in their reflections on him. *Princes also* did *sit and speak against him.* [y]Herod and his men of war set him at nought, ἐξουθένησας—*made nothing* of him that made all things.

Nay, even now that he is set down at the right-hand of the Majesty on high, *far above all principalities and powers,*[z] (that is, both good and evil angels, so as to be no more hurt by the contradictions of the one, than he is benefited by the adorations of the other,) yet still he is spoken against. Besides the contempt cast upon him by the Jews and Mahometans, are there not with us, even with us, those who daringly speak against him? Arians and Socinians are daily speaking against him as a mere man, thinking that a robbery in him, which he thought none, to be [a]equal with God. Quakers and enthusiasts speak against him as a mere name, setting up I know not what Christ within them, while they explode that Jesus that was crucified at Jerusalem. Atheists and deists speak against him as a mere cheat, accounting the religion he established a great imposture, and his gospel a jest. Profane and ignorant people speak slightly of him, as if our [b]beloved were no more than *another beloved;* and some speak scornfully of him, as Julian the apostate did, that called him in disdain the *Galilean*, and the *Carpenter's Son.* Such as these are the hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him: the Lord rebuke them, even the Lord that has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke them.

2. God himself, the great object of our religious regards, is *every where spoken against.* It is not only the Christian revelation that is thus attacked by virulent and blasphemous tongues, but even natural religion also. The glorious and blessed God, the great Creator and Benefactor of the universe, that does good to all, and whose *mercies are over all his works*, even he is *every where spoken against.* Some deny his being; though his existence be so necessary, so evident, that if he be not, it is impossible

u Rev. xii. 17.
w Isa. liii. 2, 3.
v Ps. cxviii. 22.
x Matt. xxvii. 39.
y Luke xxiii. 11.
a Phil. ii. 6.
z Eph. i. 20, 21.
b Cant. v. 9.

any thing else should be, yet there are fools who *say in their hearts*, what they dare not speak out, that *there is no God*, Ps. xiv. 1. And he that says there is no God, wishes there were none, and if he could help it there should be none. Others blaspheme the attributes of God, who charge the all-seeing eye with blindness, saying, *The Lord shall not see;* (Ps. xciv. 7.) that charge the eternal mind with forgetfulness, saying, *God hath forgotten;* (Ps. x. 11.) that charge the almighty arm with impotency, saying, *Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?* which is there called *speaking against God*, Ps. lxxviii. 19, 20. Those speak against God that promise themselves impunity in sin, saying, [c] *They shall not surely die*, and, *God* [d] *will not require it.* And those that boldly avow their impiety and irreligion, saying to the Almighty, *Depart from us*,—Job xxi. 14, 15. Some speak meanly of God, though he is infinitely great and glorious; others speak hardly of him, though he is infinitely just and good. The name of God is spoken against by the profane using of it; so it is construed, (Ps. cxxxix. 20.) *They speak against thee wickedly, thine enemies take thy name in vain.* Can there be a greater slight put upon the eternal God, than for men to use his sacred and blessed name as a by-word, with which they give vent to their exorbitant passions, or fill up the vacancies of their other idle words? The name of God is thus abused, not only by those who utter dreadful oaths and curses, which make the ears of every good man to tingle, but by those who mention the name of God slightly and irreverently in their common conversation, in whose [e] *mouths* he is *near* when he is *far from their reins.* To use those forms of speech which properly signify an acknowledgment and adoration of God's being, as *O God!* or *O Lord!* or an appeal to his omniscience, as *God knows;* or an invocation of his favour, as *God bless me*, or *God be merciful to me:* I say, to use these or the like expressions impertinently, and intending thereby to express only our wonder or surprise, or our passionate resentments, or any thing but that which is their proper and awful signification, is an evidence of a vain mind, that wants a due regard to that glorious and fearful name, [f] *The Lord our God.* I see not that the profanation of the ordinance of praying is any better than the profanation of the ordinance of swearing. The serious consideration of this, I hope, will prevent much of that dishonour which is done to God, and to his holy name, by some that run not, with others, to an excess of riot.

The providence of God is likewise *every where spoken against* by [g] murmurers and complainers, who quarrel with it, and find fault with the disposal of it, and, when they are [h] *hardly bestead, curse their King and their God.* Thus is the *mouth* of the ungodly *set against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.* [i]

3. The Word of God, the great rule of our religion, is *every where spoken against.* So it was when it was first preached; wherever the apostles went preaching the doctrine of Christ they met with those that *spake against it, contradicting and blaspheming*, Acts xiii. 45. So it is now that it is written. Atheists speak against the Scripture as not of authority; papists speak against it as dark and uncertain, further than it is expounded and supported by the authority of their church, which receives * unwritten traditions *pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia—with the same pious affection and reverence* that they receive the Scriptures; nay, and, if we may judge by their practice, with much more. Thus is the word of God blasphemed by them, who call themselves *The temple of the Lord.* But if we take away revelation (as the deists do) all religion will soon be lost; and if we derogate from the Scriptures (as the papists do) all revelation is much endangered.

Those also speak against the Scriptures who profanely jest with them; and that they may the more securely rebel against scripture laws, make themselves and their idle companions merry with the scripture language: *The word of the Lord is unto them a reproach*, as the prophet complains, Jer. vi. 10. And another prophet found it so, whose serious word of the necessity of *precept upon precept* was turned into an idle song, (as Grotius understands it,) Isa. xxviii. 13. *The word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept.*—Very likely it was done by the drunkards of Ephraim, spoken of, *v.* 1. and it gave occasion to that caution, *v.* 22. *Be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong.* Profligate and debauched minds relish no wit like that which ridicules the sacred text, and exposes that to contempt; as of old the insulting Babylonians must be humoured with the [k] *Songs of Sion;* and no cups can please Belshazzar in his drunken frolic, but the sacred [l] vessels of the temple. Thus industrious are the powers of darkness to vilify the Scriptures, and make them contemptible: but he that sits in heaven shall laugh at them; for in spite of all the little efforts of their impotent malice, *He will magnify the law, and make it honourable*, according to the word which he has spoken, Isa. xlii. 21.

4. The people of God, the professors of this religion, are every where spoken against. Not only those of some particular persuasion or denomination, but (without regard to that) such as have been zealous in fearing God and working righteousness, have been, in many places, very much *spoken against.* Our blessed Saviour has told his disciples what treatment of this kind they must expect, that they should be *reviled*, and have *all manner of evil said against them*

c Gen. iii. 4. d Ps. x. 13. e Jer. xii. 2.
f Deut. xxviii. 58. g Jude 16. h Isa. viii. 21.

* *Trident. Conc.* Ses. 4.
i Ps. lxxiii. 9. k Ps. cxxxvii. 3. l Dan. v. 2.

falsely, (Matt. v. 11, 12.) that they and their *names* should be *cast out as evil*, Luke vi. 22. And if they called our Master, Beelzebub, no nick-names fastened on his followers can seem strange. Mocking was an old way of persecuting the covenant seed, for thus, *he that was after the flesh, betimes persecuted them that were after the Spirit.* Compare Gen. xxi. 9. with Gal. iv. 29. God's heritage has always been as a [m] *speckled bird*, that all the birds are against, (Jer. xii. 9.) and his children *for signs and for wonders in* Israel, that every one has a *saying to*, Isa. viii. 18. Even Wisdom's children have been called and counted fools, and their life madness; the quiet in the land represented as enemies to the public peace, and those who are the greatest blessings of the age, branded as the troublers of Israel. The primitive Christians were painted * out to the world under the blackest and most odious characters that could be, as men of the most profligate lives and consciences, and that even placed their religion in the grossest impieties and immoralities imaginable. Their enemies found it necessary for the support of the kingdom of the devil, the father of lies and slanders, *fortiter calumniari—to characterize them as the worst of men*, to whom they were resolved to give the worst and most barbarous treatment. It had not been possible to have baited them if they had not first dressed them up in the skins of wild beasts. And as then, so ever since, more or less, in all ages of the church, reproach has been entailed upon the most serious and zealous professors of Christian religion and godliness.

5. The ministers of Christ, the preachers of this religion, are with a distinguishing enmity every where spoken against. Under the Old Testament God's messengers and his prophets were generally mocked and misused, and it was Jerusalem's measure-filling sin, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. It was one of the devices they devised against Jeremiah, *to smite him with the tongue*, because they would not, and they desired that others might not, *give heed to any of his words*, Jer. xviii. 18. Those to whom the prophet Ezekiel was a very lovely song, and with their mouths showed much love to him, yet were still *talking against him by the walls, and in the doors of their houses*, and God lets him know it, Ezek. xxxiii. 30—32. And then it is not strange if the ministers of the New Testament (in which truth shines with a stronger light) be with no less enmity spoken against by those that love darkness rather than light. The apostles, those prime ministers of state in Christ's kingdom, were so loaded with reproach, that they were made a spectacle to the world,† a spectacle of pity to those that have either grace or good-nature, but a spectacle of scorn to those that had neither. They were trampled upon as the filth of the world; and whereas the off-scouring of any thing is bad enough, they were looked upon as the *off-scouring of all things*, even *unto this day*; after they had in so many instances approved themselves well, and could not but be made manifest in the consciences of their worst enemies, 1 Cor. iv. 9, 13. And it has all along been the policy of the church's enemies, by all means possible to bring the ministry into contempt, and to represent the church's Nazarites, even those that were *purer than snow, whiter than milk*, and *more ruddy than rubies*, with a *visage blacker than a coal*, so that they *have not been known in the streets*. I allude to that complaint, Lam. iv. 7, 8. Marvel not if the standard-bearers be most struck at.

6. The Christian religion itself has been, and still is, *every where spoken against*. The truths of it contradicted as false and groundless, the great doctrines of the mediation of Christ, and the resurrection of the dead, were ridiculed by the Athenian philosophers. The laws of it described as grievous and unreasonable, as *hard sayings*, which could not be borne by those who bid open defiance to the obligation of them, and say, *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us*, Ps. ii. 3. The ordinances of it despised as mean, and having no form nor comeliness. Sabbaths mocked at, as of old, (Lam. i. 7.‡) and the sanctification of them represented as only a cloak for idleness. Sacraments reproached, and the sacred memorial of Christ's death and sufferings, by the persecutors of the primitive Christians, represented to the world, as the bloody and ‖ inhuman killing and eating of a child; and their love-feasts, and holy kiss, (which were then in use,) as only introductions to the most abominable uncleanness. Primitive Christianity was industriously put into an ill name; it was called emphatically "The Atheism," because it overthrew idolatry, and undermined the false gods and worships that had so long obtained. This was the outcry at Ephesus, that if Paul's doctrine took place, the *temple of the great goddess* would be despised, Acts xix. 26, 27. It was also branded as a novelty, and an upstart doctrine, because it took people off from that [n] vain conversation, which they had *received by tradition from their fathers*. It was called at Athens a [o] *new doctrine*, and industriously represented in all places as a mushroom sect, that was but of yesterday. § It was looked upon as nearly allied to Judaism, because it was so much supported by the Scriptures of the Old

[m] Zech. iii. 8.

* See this at large, represented by *Cæcilius* in *Minucius Felix*.

† Θεατρον εγενηθημεν.—the *theatre* they played upon.

‡ ——*Cui septima quæque fuit lux*
Ignava.——
Who made every seventh day a day of idleness. *Juvenal.*

‖ *Dicimur sceleratissimi de Sacramento infanticidii, et pabulo inde, et post convivium incesto.*—We are charged with murdering and eating our children at the sacrament, and we are represented as incestuous, &c. *Tertull. Apol. c. 7.*

[n] 1 Pet. i. 18.

[o] Acts xvii. 18, 19.

§ See Dr. Cave's Primitive Christianity, *lib. 1. chap. 1.*

Testament, and nothing was more despicable among the Romans than the Jews and their religion. The professors of Christianity were looked upon as unlearned and ignorant men, (Acts iv. 13.) the very dregs and refuse of the people.* Julian forbad the calling of them Christians, and would have them called nothing but Galileans, thereby to expose them to the contempt of those who are (as indeed most people are) governed more by a sound of words than by the reason of things. Thus when the devil was silenced in his oracles (as it is well known he was, upon the setting up of Christianity in the world) his mouth was opened in lies and slanders; and being forced to quit his pretensions to a deity, he appears barefaced, as a *devil*, (διαβολος) a *false accuser*.

The reformed religion in these latter ages has been in like manner *spoken against*. Though it maintains all that [and only that] doctrine which Christ and his apostles preached, and was before Luther there, where popery, as such, never was before or since, that is, in the Holy Scriptures; yet the professors and preachers of it have been called and counted heretics and schismatics,† and by all possible artifices exposed to the odium of the people, that *none might buy or sell*, that is, have the benefit and comfort of civil society and commerce, that [r] *had not the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

Nay, even among some that profess the Christian and reformed religion, the practice of serious godliness is very much *spoken against*. The power of religion is not only disliked and denied, but contradicted and condemned, by those who rest in the form. They that call the evil good, will call the good evil;[s] and it is not strange if they, who abandon themselves to work all uncleanness with greediness, speak ill of such as *run not* with them *to the same excess of riot*, [t] where the *wicked walk on every side*,[u] *he that departeth from evil, maketh himself a prey*.[v] The old enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent is still working, and the old game every day played over again. [w] The *truth as it is in Jesus*, and the *truth which is according to godliness*, will be contradicted by those that *lie in wait to deceive*. Bigots on all sides will have something to say against catholic charity and moderation: they that are *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*, and *forward to every good work*, must expect to be evil spoken of by such as affect a lukewarmness and indifferency in religion: nor can those who *walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise*, escape the lash of their tongues who live at large, and walk loosely, and at all adventures, as the *fools in Israel*.

II. I come now, in the second place, to inquire what is the reason that so holy and excellent a religion as Christianity is, meets with such hard usage, and is thus spoken against, *every where spoken against*. When we hear such an outcry as this made against Christianity, it is natural for us to inquire, as Pilate did, when such a clamour was raised against its author, *Why, what evil hath it done?* Truly we may say concerning it, as Pilate did concerning him, *We find no fault in it*. Which of all its opposers convinces it of sin or error? It invades no man's right, breaks in upon no man's property, is no disturbance of the peace, no enemy to the welfare of families and societies, is no prejudice at all to the interests of states and princes, but to all these highly beneficial and advantageous: why then is it thus accused, condemned, and spoken against? We will endeavour to find out the true reason of it, though it is impossible to assign a justifiable reason for that which is most unreasonable.

1. The adversaries of religion speak against it because they do not know it. Sound knowledge has not a greater enemy in the world than ignorance. Our Lord Jesus was therefore despised and hated by the world, because the world knew him not, John i. 10. If they had known the dignity of his person, the excellency of his doctrine, and the gracious design and purpose of his coming into the world, certainly they *would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8. [x] They that did it, did it through ignorance, and knew not what they did. Thus they who say to the Almighty, [y] *Depart from us*, could not say so if they did not at the same time studiously decline the knowledge of his ways. No man will speak against religion and the power of it, that has either seriously weighed the proofs and evidences of it, or impartially tried the comfort and benefit of it. [z] If they knew this gift, this inestimable gift of God, instead of speaking against it, they would covet it earnestly as the best gift. "He that looks at a distance upon men dancing, would think them to be mad;" (it was Peter Martyr's comparison, in a sermon which had so good an influence upon the conversion of the Marquis of Vico;) "but let him come nearer them, and observe the regularity and harmony of all their motions and postures, and he will not only admire their order, but find in himself an inclination to join with them. So he that contents himself with a distant and transient view of the practice of piety, will perhaps take up hard thoughts of it; but a better acquaintance will rectify the mistake." When the spouse in the Canticles had given a description of her beloved to the daughters of Jerusalem, the same, who before had scornfully asked, [a] *What is thy beloved more than another*

* Greg. Nazian. *Invect. in* Julian. *Orat.* 1. *p.* (mihi) 42.
† *Lollards* from *lolium—tares:* so my Lord Coke from Mr. Fox.
r Rev. xiii. 17. s Isa. v. 20. t 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4.
u Psalm xii. 8. v Isa. lix. 15.
w Eph. iv. 21. compared with Tit. i. 1.
x Acts iii. 15, 17. Luke xxiii. 34. y Job xxi. 14.
z John iv. 10. a Cant. v. 9. vi. 1.

beloved? now as seriously inquire, *Whither is thy beloved gone, that we may seek him with thee?* The people of God are called his [b] *hidden ones*, and their life is a [c] *hidden life*, their [d] way *above;* and therefore it is that the world speaks evil of them, because it *knows them not*, 1 John iii. 1. They who *speak evil of* these *dignities, speak evil of those things which they know not*, as the apostle speaks, Jude 8, 10. How unjust then and unreasonable is the enmity and malice of the adversaries of religion, to condemn what they never inquired * into, and to load that with the vilest reproaches, which, for ought they know, merits the highest encomiums! And how excellent then are the ways of God, which none speak ill of but those that are unacquainted with them! while those that know them, witness to the goodness of them, and *Wisdom is justified of her children*, Matt. xi. 19.

2. They speak against it, because they do not like it; and we know that ill-will never speaks well. Though they have little acquaintance with religion, yet they know this concerning it in general, that it is not agreeable † with the way of their hearts, which they are resolved to walk in, nor with the course of this world, which is the chart and compass they steer by, and from which they take their measures. They know this, that it lays a restraint on their appetites and passions, and consists much in the mortifying their beloved lusts and corruptions; and therefore they have a secret antipathy to it: [e] the *carnal mind*, which is *enmity against God*, is so against all who bear the image of God. Christ has bid his disciples to expect the hatred of the world, and not to marvel at it, John xv. 18, &c. They who hate to be themselves reformed, will never love those that are reformed: *out of the abundance* therefore *of the heart*, and the malignity that is there, it is no marvel if *the mouth speak;* where the root of bitterness is, it will bear gall and wormwood. The daring sinner, that *stretches out his hand against God*, finds it too short to *reach* him; but, [f] *say they, with our tongue we will prevail, our lips are our own.* The beast that made war with heaven, in the apocalyptic vision, though he had ten horns, and those crowned, yet is not described doing mischief with them, but *opening his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven*, Rev. xiii. 5, 6. The poison of the serpent's seed is under their tongue, Rom. iii. 13.

3. They speak against religion because it speaks against them. They who have fellowship with the *unfruitful works of darkness*, hate the light which discovers them: nor do any curse the rising sun, but those who are scorched by it. Why were the Pharisees so exasperated against our Saviour,[g] but because he spake his parables against them, and laid them open in their own colours? Why did the world hate him who so loved the world,[h] but because he *testified of it that its works are evil?* Why had Joseph's brethren such a spleen against him, but [i] because he was a witness against them, and brought to his father their evil report? Why did Ahab hate Micaiah, and call Elijah his enemy, [k] but because they were the faithful reprovers of his wickedness, and *never prophesied good concerning him, but evil?* Why did the inhabitants of the earth rejoice when the witnesses were slain, [l] but because those two prophets, by their plain and powerful preaching, *tormented them that dwelt upon the earth?*

The everlasting gospel is a testimony, either to us to convince us, or against us to condemn us; and then, no wonder if those speak against it, who hate to be convinced by it, and dread to be condemned by it. [m]The prophet complains of those that laid *snares for him that reproveth in the gate;* and why is it that faithful ministers are so much hated, but because their ‡ business is to show people their transgressions? If they would flatter sinners that flatter themselves in a sinful way, and cry peace to them to whom the God of heaven does not speak peace, they might avoid a great deal of reproach and censure; but they dare not do it. They are not to make a new law and gospel, but to preach that which is made; they have their rule in that caution given to the prophet, (Jer. xv. 19.) *Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them.* The hearts and lives of men must be brought to comply with the word of God; the word of God can never be made to comply with the humours and fancies of men. Ministers, as they would not for the world make the way to heaven any straiter or narrower than Christ has made it; so they dare not make it any broader or easier, nor offer life and salvation on any other terms than the gospel has already settled. If they aim at [n] pleasing men, they cannot approve themselves the servants of Christ; and therefore are they so much spoken against. And the same is the reason why the most strict and serious Christians are so much spoken against, because their piety and devotion, their justice and sobriety, their zeal and charity, are standing reproofs to the wicked world,

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[b] Psal. lxxxiii. 3. [c] Col. iii. 3. [d] Prov. xv. 24. Psal. x. 5.

* *Quid iniquius quam ut oderint homines quod ignorant? Tunc enim meretur, quando cognoscitur an mereatur.*—What is more unjust than for men to hate what they are ignorant of? First, let the merits of a cause be known, and then let sentence be pronounced. *Tertul. Apol. c.* 1.

† *Ante nos incipiunt odisse quam nôsse, ne cognitos aut imitari possint, aut damnare non possint.*—They commence their hatred before they commence their acquaintance, lest, should they commence an acquaintance with us, they should either be constrained to imitate us, or, at best, forbear condemnation. *Min. Fel. p. (mihi)* 30.

[e] Rom. viii. 7. 1 John iii. 13. [f] Psal. xii. 4. [g] Matt. xxi. 45. [h] John vii. 7. [i] Gen. xxxvii. 2. [k] 1 Kings xxii. 8. xxi. 20. [l] Rev. xi. 10. [m] Isa. xxix. 21. and lviii. 1.

‡ *Naturale est et odisse quem times; et quem metueris, infestare si possis.*—It is natural for us to hate, and if possible, to injure, the person whom we fear. *Min. Fel.*

[n] Gal. i. 10.

and condemn it,[o] as the faith and holy fear of Noah condemned the infidelity and security of the old world. The Sodomites were vexed at Lot's godly conversation, as much as he was at their filthy conversation. [p] Wherefore does the *blood-thirsty* hate and revile the *upright*, while the *just seek his soul?* but for the same reason for which Cain hated Abel, [q] because *his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.*

III. *Now, for the application of this doctrine,*

Let us see what good use we may make of this observation concerning the wickedness of the wicked, in speaking so much against religion and godliness, and what is our duty in reference hereunto.

1. Let us admire the patience and forbearance of the God of heaven, in that he bears so much and so long with those who thus speak against him and his holy religion. The affront hereby given him is very great, and (we would think) intolerable; even hard speeches, that reflect upon an infinite majesty, have in them a kind of infinite malignity. He hears and knows all that which is said against him, and against his truth and ways, and as a jealous God resents it. He has always power in his hands to punish the proudest of his enemies; nor would their immediate ruin be any loss to him: and yet, [r] sentence against these evil words and works is not executed speedily. Be astonished, O heavens! at this, and wonder, O earth! that these wretches who rebel against the beams of such light and glory, who spurn at the bowels of such love and grace, are not immediately made the visible monuments of divine wrath and vengeance; and, like Sodom and Gomorrah, set forth for an example! That the blasphemers and scoffers of these last days are not instantly struck dumb, struck dead. That he, who has so much said against him, does himself keep silence, and does not answer all these reproaches and contradictions (as he easily could) in thunder and lightning. Though his silence and forbearance are turned to his reproach, even by those that have the benefit of it, who, therefore, think him altogether such an one as themselves, and take occasion from his patience to question his faithfulness, and challenge his justice, saying, [s] *Where is the promise of his coming?* Yet he bears, and his patience is stretched out even to long-suffering, because he is [t] *not willing that any should perish*, nor that any means should be left untried, to prevent their perishing. Therefore he bears with sinners, because this is the day of his patience, and of their probation. The [u] *wrath of God is revealed from heaven* in the word of God, that we might be awed by faith more than in present providences, which would be an awe to sense. But there is a day coming, a dreadful day, when our [v] *God shall come*, and shall no longer *keep silence;* a day foretold in the early ages of the world, by [w] Enoch, the seventh from Adam; when judgment shall be executed upon ungodly sinners, *for all their hard speeches*, which day he will not anticipate, for *he knows it is coming*, Ps. xxxvii. 13. It is agreeable to the regular course of justice, that all judgments be adjourned to the judgment-day, and all executions deferred till execution-day; and, therefore, now he condescends to reason with those that speak against him, for their conviction, as he does by the prophet, (Ezek. xviii. 25, &c.) where he fairly debates the case with those who said, *The way of the Lord is not equal;* that every mouth may be stopped with an unanswerable argument before it be stopped with an irreversible sentence, and those who have spoken against him, may be sent [x] *speechless* to hell. He keeps silence now, because, when he does speak, he will be justified. When our Lord Jesus was here upon earth, with what an invincible patience did he endure the contradiction of sinners! When so many ill things were witnessed against him, he was silent to admiration, [y] answered not a word to all their unjust calumnies and accusations; but at the same time he *bound them over* to the judgment of the great day, by that awful declaration, (Matt. xxvi. 64.) *Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power;*—[z] and still he *bears* with us in expectation of that same day. He does not take vengeance presently, because he has an eternity before him for the doing of it.

And, by the way, we may infer hence, that those, who would be like their heavenly Father, must bear reproach and contradiction patiently. When any thing is said against us, reflecting ever so little disparagement upon us, or our families, our resentments of it are very sensible, and we are apt to take it improperly; nay, and to say we *do well to be angry*, for it is not a thing to be endured. Not to be endured? O think how much God bears with the contempt and reproach cast upon his great name, and that will surely qualify our resentments of any indignity done to our little names! Who are we, that we must not be spoken against? or what are our sayings, that they must not be contradicted? Such affronts as these we should learn to bear, as David did when Shimei cursed him, [a] *So let him curse;* and as the Son of David did when his enemies reviled him, *blessing them that curse us*, and *praying for them that thus persecute us, that we may be the children of our Father who is in heaven.* God adjourns his vindication to the great day, and then

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o Heb. xi. 7.
p Prov. xxix. 10.
q 1 John iii. 12.
r Eccl. viii. 11.
s 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.
t 2 Pet. iii. 9.
u Rom. i. 18
v Ps. l. 3.
w Jude 14, 15.
x Matt. xxii. 12. Matt. xxvi. 63.
y John xix. 9.
z Heb. x. 13.
a 2 Sam. xvi. 10.

surely we may adjourn ours to that day, as St. Paul does his, 1 Cor. iv. 5.

2. Let us acknowledge the power of divine grace, in keeping up the Christian religion in the world, notwithstanding the universal contradiction and opposition it has met with. One would think, that a way thus spoken against every where, should have been long ere this lost and ruined, and the Christian name cut off, to be no more in remembrance; [b] which its adversaries have so industriously endeavoured: [c] if it had been of men, it had certainly come to nought quickly, though they had let it alone; but being of God, it was to admiration victorious over all opposition. A sect, a cheat, could never have supported itself against so much contradiction; no human power or policy could have kept it up, nor any thing less than an almighty arm. The continuance of the Christian religion in the world to this * day, is a standing miracle for the conviction of its adversaries, and the confirmation of the faith of those that adhere to it. When we consider what a mighty force was raised by the powers of darkness against Christianity, when it was in its infancy; how many they were who spoke against it, learned men, great men; books were written, laws were made, against it; those that spoke for it, how few were they! and how mean and despicable! the foolish things of the world, and the weak; [d] and, yet, we see the word of God mightily growing and prevailing: must we not needs say, *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?* The several false religions of the heathens, with their various superstitions and idolatries, though they gave very little opposition one to another, but agreed together well enough; yet having no foundation in truth, they all withered away, and dwindled to nothing: and after the mighty sway they had borne, and all means possible were used to support them, at length their day came to fall, their oracles were silenced, their altars were deserted, and the gods themselves were famished, (Zeph. ii. 11.) and perished from the earth; according to that prediction, Jer. x. 11. which is put into the mouths of the captive Jews, to retort upon their insulting enemies, and for that purpose is originally in the Chaldee dialect. We may ask triumphantly, not only, [e] *Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Henah, and Ivah,* those obscure and petty deities? But where are the gods of Babylon and Egypt, Greece and Rome? the illustrious names of Saturn and Jupiter, Juno and Diana? Where are the gods which our British and Saxon ancestors worshipped, before they received the light of the glorious gospel? Are they not all forgotten, as dead men out of mind, and their names written in the dust? But Christ's holy religion, though for some ages it was utterly destitute of all secular supports and advantages, and was assaulted on all hands by the most vigorous attacks of its daring and most implacable enemies; yet it has strangely weathered its point, and is in being; and, thanks be to God, in some places in a flourishing state to this day; its cause is an opposed, but never a baffled, cause. [f] Let us turn aside now, and see this great sight, a bush burning, and yet not consumed; and say, the Lord is in it of a truth; come and see the Captain of our salvation riding forth in the chariot of the everlasting gospel,[g] with his *crown* upon his head, and his bow in his hand, *conquering, and to conquer.*——That which was every where spoken against Christianity, was like the viper which fastened upon St. Paul's hand; [h] it gave people occasion to think very ill concerning it, and to look for its speedy fall; as the barbarous people concerning him, whom they concluded to be a murderer, and expected that he should have swollen, or fallen down dead. But it has in all ages shaken those venomous beasts into the fire, and taken no harm, and so has proved its own divine original. Let us herein acknowledge the wisdom and power of our Lord Jesus, who has so firmly built his church [i] upon a rock, that the gates of hell, that is, all its powers, and policies, and numbers, could never prevail against it. Mahomet, though he industriously adapted his religion to the sensual appetites of men, whose reason only, and not their lusts,† could object against it; yet he obtained no strength nor interest at all, till by a thousand artifices he had got the power of the sword, and with it forbad any, upon pain of death, to speak against him or his doctrine; charging his first followers, who were to propagate his religion, if they met with any that objected against it, not to dispute with them, but to *kill* them immediately: by which means that grand imposture, in a little time, got some footing in the world, and by the same barbarous and inhuman methods it has been supported now above a thousand years. And in like manner that great enemy of the church, represented in St. John's vision, maintains his interest, by causing that *as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed,* Rev. xiii. 15. Thus are errors and false religions propagated; strip them of these supports, and they fall to the ground of course: but, on the contrary, the Christian religion was planted and preserved not only without, but against, secular force, recommended and upheld by its own intrinsic truth and excellency, and that divine power which accompanied it. The preachers and professors of it *every where spoken against,* and

[b] Ps. lxxxiii. 3, 4. [c] Acts v. 38.

* See this excellently enlarged upon by the learned Grotius, *de V. R. C. l.* 2.

[d] Acts xix. 20. [e] 2 Kings xviii. 34. [f] Exod. iii. 3, 4.

[g] Rev. vi. 2. [h] Acts xxviii. 3. [i] Matt. xvi. 18.

† See the learned Dr. Humphrey Prideaux's excellent History of the Life of Mahomet.

yet every where getting ground, and strangely victorious, merely by the word of their testimony, and by not loving their lives unto the death. [k] *Thus is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ.*

3. Let us greatly lament the folly and wickedness of those who speak against Christ and his holy religion, and if we can do any thing, have compassion upon them, and help to undeceive them, and rectify their mistakes. Surely this is one of the abominations committed among us, for which we should be found among those that *sigh and cry*, (Ezek. ix. 4.) one of those instances of the pride of sinners for which our souls should *weep in secret*, Jer. xiii. 17. This is that reproach of the solemn assembly which is such a burthen to all good men, Zeph. iii. 18. Our ears should tingle, and our hearts tremble, to hear the reproach and contempt cast upon Christ and his religion, or to hear of it; and looking upon ourselves as nearly concerned in sacred things, we should be sensibly touched with the profanation of them.

To affect us herewith, let us consider,

(1.) The great dishonour hereby done to our God in the world. They that reflect upon his truths and ways, his word and ordinances, reflect upon him, he that touches these, touches the apple of his eye; if, therefore, we have any love to God, or concern for his honour, and have cordially espoused the interests of his kingdom, what is an affront to him, will surely be a grief to us. It cannot but be a very melancholy thought to every sensible soul, that the God who made the world, is made so light of in the world; that he who does so much good to the children of men, has so little honour from them, nay, and has so much dishonour done him by them every day, [l] and *his name continually blasphemed;* that the Lord Jesus, who so loved the world, is so much hated and despised by the world. [m] The reproaches of them who thus reproach our Master, if we be his faithful servants, we should feel as falling upon us. [n] And if he take what is said and done against his people, as said and done against himself, much more reason have they to find themselves aggrieved in that which is said and done against him. If we pray heartily that God's name may be hallowed, as we should do every day, we should grieve heartily that his name is dishonoured, as we see it is every day. And our resentments of the reproach cast upon God and religion, we should make an humble and pious remonstrance of before God in prayer, as king Hezekiah spread Rabshakeh's blasphemous letter before the Lord, with that tender and affectionate request, *Lord, bow down thine ear and hear: Open, Lord, thine eyes and see*, 2 Kings xix. 16. How pathetically does Joshua plead, (*ch.* vii. 9.) *What wilt thou do unto thy great name?* And with what a concern does the psalmist, in the name of the church, insist upon this, Ps. lxxiv. 10. *O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? Shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?* And, *v.* 18. *Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.* And how earnestly does he beg, *v.* 22. *Arise, O God, plead thine own cause.* Thus should the honour of God and religion lie nearer our hearts than any other concern whatsoever.

(2.) Consider the miserable condition of those who presumptuously speak against God and religion. Though they may do it with an air of assurance, as if they ran no hazard, yet he that rolls this stone, it will certainly return upon him sooner or later. They that speak against religion speak against their own heads, [o] and their own tongues will at last fall upon them. We have reason to bewail their madness, and to pity and pray for them, for they know not what they do. Miserable souls! How will they be deceived at last, when they shall find that [p] *God is not mocked!* And that while they were studying to put contempt on religion, they were but preparing eternal shame and confusion for themselves! The Lord is a jealous God, and will not hold them guiltless that thus profane his name: their wit, and learning, and figure in the world, may imbolden them in their sin, and bear them up a while in an open defiance of all that is sacred, but nothing can prevent their utter ruin, except a serious and sincere repentance; which is an unsaying, with shame and self-loathing, of all that which they have proudly spoken against God and godliness. They that pervert the right ways of the Lord, will certainly [q] fall therein; [r] and they that wrest the Scriptures, do it to their own destruction. Religion's motto is, *Nemo me impune lacessit.—He who injures me, injures himself*, "It is dangerous playing with edge-tools." [s] Jerusalem will certainly be a burthensome stone to all people that burthen themselves with it. They that spurn at the rock of Salvation, will not only be unable to remove it, but will find it [t] a *stone of stumbling*, and a *rock of offence*. And we find those who ridiculed the word of the Lord, [u] *broken, and snared, and taken.* Let all those, therefore, that mourn in Sion, weep over those that will not weep for themselves; and look with pity and compassion upon those who look upon them with scorn and contempt.

(3.) Consider the mischief that is hereby done to the souls of others. They who thus err, their error remains not with themselves, but this poisonous and malignant breath infects others. Words spoken against religion [v] *eat as doth a canker;* and they who speak them, seldom perish alone in their iniquity for [w] *many follow their pernicious ways.* Unwar-

k Rev. xii. 10, 11. l Isa. lii. 5. m Ps. lxix. 9.
n Matt. xxv. 45. o Ps. lxiv. 8. p Gal. vi. 7. q Hos. xiv. 9.
r 2 Pet. iii. 16. s Zech. xii. 3. t 1 Pet. ii. 8.
u Isa. xxviii. 13. v 2 Tim. ii. 17. w 2 Pet. ii. 2.

souls are easily beguiled, and brought to conceive rooted prejudices against that which they hear every where spoken against; and few have consideration and resolution enough, to maintain a good opinion of that which they who set up for wits make it their business to cry down. [x] Sergius Paulus was a prudent man, and yet St. Paul saw him in danger of being turned away from the faith, by the subtle suggestions of Elymas the sorcerer, which therefore the apostle resented with more than ordinary keenness. It is sad to think how many young people, who, perhaps, were well educated and hopeful, when they go abroad into the world, by conversing with those who lie in wait to deceive, have their minds insensibly vitiated and debauched, and, perhaps, they are made seven times more the children of hell than those that first seduced them. Under pretence of free thought and fashionable conversation, and a generous disdain of preciseness and singularity, atheistical principles are imbibed, the restraints of conscience shaken off, brutish lusts not only indulged, but pleaded for, and serious godliness and devotion looked on with contempt; and thus the heart is impregnably fortified for Satan against Christ and his gospel, *wrath* is *treasured up against the day of wrath*, and those who might have been the blessing, prove the plague, of their age; which is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, to all who wish well to the souls of men, and to those, especially, who are desirous of the welfare of the rising generation.

4. Let us take heed that none of us do at any time, directly or indirectly, speak against the ways of religion and godliness, or make a confederacy with those that do so. [y] Submit to divine instructions, given with a strong hand, not to walk in the way of those people who speak ill of religion. Take heed of embracing any notions which secretly tend to derogate from the authority of the Holy Scriptures, or to diminish the honour of religion in the soul; or of accustoming yourselves to such expressions as treat not sacred things with that awful regard which is due to them. Those were never reckoned wise men who would rather lose a friend than a jest; much less are they to be accounted so, who will rather lose the favour of their God. How can it be expected, that those, who in their common converse make themselves merry with serious things, should at any time be serious in them, or experience the influence and comfort of them? It is not likely that those who make the word of God the subject of their jests, should ever make it the guide of their way, or find it the spring of their joys. Let us not choose to associate with those who have light thoughts of religion, and are ready upon all occasions to speak against it. It is not without good reason, that among the many words with which St. Peter exhorted his new converts, this only is recorded, *save yourselves from this untoward generation*, Acts ii. 40. [z] Those that listen to the *counsel of the ungodly*, and *stand in the way of sinners*, as willing to walk with them, will come at length (if almighty grace prevent not) to *sit in the seat of the scornful*. Let us therefore abide by that which Job and Eliphaz, even in the heat of dispute, were agreed on, that *the counsel of the wicked shall be far from us;* which protestation we have, Job xxi. 16. and xxii. 18. It is dangerous making friendship with those who have an enmity to serious godliness, lest we learn their way, and get a snare to our souls.

There are two common pretences, and seemingly plausible ones, under which those who speak against religion shelter themselves; but they are neither of them justifiable.

(1.) They pretend that it is only for argument sake that they object against religion, and pick quarrels with it, and (so little esteem they have of the thing called sincerity) they will not be thought to mean as they say. And are the great principles of religion become such moot points, such matters of doubtful disputation, that it is indifferent which side of the question a man takes, and upon which he may argue, *pro* or *con—for or against*, at his pleasure? That grave and weighty [*] saying of a learned heathen is enough to silence this pretence, *Mala enim et impia consuetudo est, contra Deos disputandi, sive ex animo id sit, sive simulate—It is an evil thing to talk against religion, whether a man means as he says or no*, or (in the language of our age) whether he speak seriously, or only banter. Julian the apostate, who, before he threw off his disguise, frequently argued against Christianity, pretended it was only for disputation sake. But *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*, and whence can such evil things come, but from an evil treasure there?

(2.) They pretend that it is not religion that they ridicule and expose to contempt, but some particular forms and modes of religious worship which they do not like. And this is one ill effect of the unhappy divisions among Christians, that while one side has laboured to make the other contemptible, religion in general has suffered on all sides. To reprove what we think amiss with prudence and meekness, is well; but to reproach and make a jest of that which our fellow-Christians look upon as sacred, and make a part of their religion, cannot be to any good purpose at all. To scoff at the mistakes or weaknesses of our brethren, is the way to provoke and harden them, but not to convince and reform them. They who think to justify this way of ridiculing those that differ from them, by the instance of Elijah's jeering the priests of Baal, perhaps

[x] Acts xiii. 7—10. [y] Isa. viii. 11, 12. [z] Ps. i. 1.

[*] *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* lib. 2. *ad fin.*

[a] *know not what manner of spirit they are of*, no more than those disciples did who would have their intemperate heats countenanced by the example of that great prophet.

5. Let us, who profess the Christian religion, be very cautious that we do not give occasion to any to speak against it. If there are those, in all places, who are industrious to cast reproaches upon religion, then we have need to walk circumspectly, and to look well to our goings, that those who watch for our halting may have no occasion given them to blaspheme. It is certain, that though in religion there is nothing which may be justly spoken against; yet among those who profess it, there is too often found that which deserves to be taxed, and which cannot pass without just and severe reflections.——*Pudet hæc opprobria nobis—These reproaches are a disgrace to us.*—Are there not those within the pale of the church, through whom the name of God and his doctrine are blasphemed, [b] and *by reason of whom the way of truth is evil spoken of?* Are there not those who wear Christ's livery, but are a * scandal to his family, [c] spots in the love-feasts, and a standing reproach to that worthy name by which they are called? Now though it is certainly very unjust and unfair to impute the faults of professors to the religion they profess, and to reproach Christianity because there are those that are called Christians who expose themselves to reproach; yet it is, without question, the sin of those who give men occasion to do so. This was the condemnation in David's case, and entailed the sword upon his house, though the sin was pardoned, by which he had *given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme*, 2 Sam. xii. 14. Let us therefore double our diligence and care, to give no offence either to Jew or Gentile; that religion, which has so often been wounded in the house of her friends, may never be wounded through our misconduct.

If we inquire (as we are concerned to do) what it is that gives occasion of reflection upon religion, we shall find that the imprudence of those that profess it gives some occasion, but their immoralities much more.

(1.) The imprudence of Christians often turns to the reproach of Christianity. There may be such over-doing, even in well-doing, as may prove undoing. When more stress is laid than ought to be upon some instances of religion, to the exclusion of others, and the exercises of devotion are either mistimed, or misplaced, or misproportioned, religion is hereby misrepresented, or looked upon to disadvantage. Rash and indiscreet zeal may give occasion to those who seek occasion to speak against all religious zeal. Therefore [d] *walk in wisdom toward them that are without.* Religion is a most sweet, and pleasant, and amiable thing: let not us, by our indiscretion, make it a task to ourselves, and a terror to others. The more the children of God [e] are children of wisdom, the more they justify it, and its ways. Christian prudence is very much the beauty and strength of Christian piety. Though it will secure the welfare of our own souls if we walk in our integrity, yet it is necessary, for the preserving the credit of our profession, that we walk in wisdom, that [f] *wisdom of the prudent* which is to *understand his way*, that [g] *wisdom* which is *profitable to direct.* [h] And *if any man lack* this *wisdom, let him ask it of God*, who *gives liberally*, and *upbraids us not* with our folly. Pray with David, (Ps. xxvii. 11.) *Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.* (Hebr. because of mine observers.) Our enemies are our observers, and will be ready to reproach our way, for the sake of the false steps we take in it; and therefore we have need to ponder the path of our feet, and let discretion guide and govern our zeal.

(2.) The immoralities of those who profess Christianity turn much more to the reproach of that holy religion, when those who are called Christians are griping and covetous, and greedy of the world; when they are false and deceitful, and unjust in their dealings, sour and morose, and unnatural to their relations, turbulent and unquiet in societies; when they are froward and passionate, proud and haughty, hard-hearted and oppressive, loose and intemperate; when they are found guilty of lying and cheating, drunkenness or uncleanness; when it appears that they keep up some secret haunts of sin, under the cloak and covert of a specious profession; when they who profess the Christian faith, indulge themselves in those things that are contrary to the light and law even of natural religion: this is that which opens the mouths of the adversaries to speak reproachfully of that religion, the profession of which is made to consist with such vile practices, which cannot possibly consist with the power of it. This makes people ready to say, as that Mahometan prince did, when the Christians had broken their league with him, "O Jesus! are these thy Christians?" Or, as the complaint was upon another occasion, *Aut hoc non evangelium, aut hi non evangelium—Either this is not gospel, or these are not to be called professors of the gospel.* [i] If ministers *give offence in any thing*, not they only, but their *ministry*, will *be blamed.* Nay, if servants, and Christians of the lowest rank and figure, be unfaithful and disobedient to the government they are under, the [k] *name of*

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[a] Luke ix. 55. [b] 2 Pet. ii. 2.

* The foulest reproaches of the primitive Christians took rise from the vile practices of the Gnostics, and other Pseudo-christians. Of which, *Vid. Euseb.* Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 7.

[c] Jude 12. [d] Col. iv. 5.
[e] Luke vii. 35. [f] Prov. xiv. 8.
[g] Eccl. x. 10. [h] Jam. i. 5.
[i] 2 Cor. vi. 3. [k] 1 Tim. vi. 1.

God, and his doctrine, is likely to be *blasphemed*. Let us, therefore, who profess relation to the eternal God, and dependence upon the blessed Jesus, and a regard to the Holy Scriptures, as we value the reputation of our religion, [l]*walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing*. Let us order our conversation so, in every thing, that we may [m]*adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour*. While we are called by so good a name, let us not dare to do an evil thing. The disciples of Christ are as a [n]*city upon a hill*, and have many eyes upon them, and therefore have need to behave themselves with a great deal of caution, and to [o]*abstain from all appearance of evil*. Let us not do any thing that is unjust, or unbecoming us, nor allow ourselves in that which we know the gospel we profess does by no means allow of, lest we be to answer another day for all the reproach of religion which we have occasioned. How light soever we may make of this now, we shall find that it will greatly inflame the reckoning shortly, when God will assert the honour of his own name, and will be glorified upon those by whom he was not glorified. In consideration of this, let us see to it, that we [p]have our conversation honest among the adversaries of our religion, that they who speak against us as evil-doers, may, by our good works which they shall behold, be brought to glorify God, and to entertain good thoughts of religion; or at least, [q]that *we may with well doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*. Our religion, I am sure, is an honour to us; let not us then be a dishonour to it.

6. If there be those every where that speak against religion and godliness, let us then as we have opportunity be ready to speak for it. Every Christian should be both a witness and an advocate for his religion, and the rather because it is so much opposed and contradicted: next to our care not to be a shame to the gospel, should be our resolution not to be ashamed of the gospel: you are subpœnaed by the King of kings to appear for him in the world; *Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord*, Isa. xliii. 10. Do not betray this cause then by declining your testimony, how much soever you may be brow-beaten and confronted. Say with a holy boldness, as Elihu, (Job xxxvi. 2.) *Suffer me a little, and I will show you that I have yet to speak on God's behalf*. You hear what is daringly said against God, how his holy name is trampled upon and abused, his truths contradicted, his word and ordinances vilified, and have you never a word to say for him? Is our Lord Jesus appearing for us in heaven, pleading our cause there, pleading it with his own blood, and shall not we be ready to appear for him on earth, and plead his cause, though it were with the hazard of our blood? As it is then a time to keep silence, when we ourselves are spoken against, [r]*I as a deaf man heard not*; so it is then [s]*a time to speak* when God is spoken against, and the honour of our religion lies at stake: at such a time we must take heed, lest by a cowardly silence we wrong so just a cause, as if we were either ashamed or afraid to own it. Wisdom's children should take all occasions to justify wisdom, and vindicate her from the aspersions that are cast upon her. Read the doom of him that is ashamed of Christ and of his words in this adulterous generation, (Mark viii. 38.) *Of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father*. Not confessing Christ when we are called to it, is in effect denying him, and disowning relationship to him; [t]and they who do so, except they repent as Peter did, will shortly be denied and disowned by him. If we should, with an [v]angry countenance at least, drive away a backbiting tongue that reproaches our brother, much more a blasphemous tongue that reproaches our Maker. Should we hear a near relation, or a dear friend, (in whose reputation it is natural for us to reckon ourselves sharers,) spoken against and slandered, we would readily appear in his vindication; and have we no resentments of the contempt and contumely cast on religion? Can we sit by contentedly to hear God and Christ, and the Scripture and serious godliness, reflected on, and have we nothing to say in their behalf? Common equity obliges us to be the patrons of a just, but wronged, cause. And that we may not think ourselves discharged from this duty, by our inability to defend the truths and ways of God, and so make our ignorance and unskilfulness in the word of righteousness an excuse for our cowardice and want of zeal, we ought to take pains to furnish ourselves with a clear and distinct knowledge of the [w]*certainty of those things wherein we have been instructed*. We must labour to understand not only the truths and principles, but the grounds and evidences, of our religion, that we may be able to [x]*give an answer* (απολογιαν, an *apology*) *to every man that asks us a reason of the hope that is in us*. How industrious are the profane wits of the age to find out something to say against religion! and should not that quicken us to provide ourselves with the [y]*armour of righteousness both on the right hand and on the left*, aiming at the [z]*riches of the full assurance of understanding*? And if we do (as there is occasion) with humility and sincerity, and from a principle of zeal for God and his honour, appear in defence of religion and its injured cause, we may doubtless take encouragement from that promise, (Matt. x. 19.) *It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak*. God will own those that own him, and will not fail to furnish his faithful advocates with needful

l Col. i. 10. m Tit. ii. 10. n Matt. v. 14.
o Thes. v. 22. p 1 Pet. ii. 12. q 1 Pet. ii. 15.
r Ps. xxxviii. 13. s Eccl. iii. 7.
t Luke xii. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 10. v Prov. xxv. 23.
w Luke i. 4. x 1 Pet. iii. 15.
y 2 Cor. vi. 7. z Col. ii. 2.

instructions, and many times ordains such [a] *strength out of the mouth of babes and sucklings*, as strangely *stills the enemy and avenger*.

7. Let none of us ever think the worse of the way of religion and godliness for its being *every where spoken against*, nor be frightened hereby from walking in that way. The contempt cast on the practice of piety, is with many an invincible objection against it; their good impressions, good purposes, and good overtures, are hereby crushed and brought to nothing: they have that within them which tells them, that the way of sobriety and serious godliness is a very good way, and they sometimes hear that word behind them saying, [b] *This is the way, walk ye in it*; but they have those *about them* that tell them otherwise, and thus the convictions of conscience are overruled and baffled by the censures and reproaches of men, whose praise they covet *more than the praise of God*.

But to take off the force of this objection, let us consider these four things:

(1.) Consider who they are that speak against religion and godliness. Not only they who are mortal men, whom the [c] *moth shall eat up like a garment; men that shall die*, and the *sons of men, which shall be made as grass*, all whose thoughts will shortly perish with them, and therefore why should we *fear their reproach, or be afraid of their revilings?* Not only they who are fallible men, who may be mistaken, and whose judgment is by no means decisive; nor such as will bear us out: shall we put what men say in the scale against what God says? *Let God be true, and every man a liar*. We must not be judged hereafter, and therefore should not be ruled now, by the sentiments and opinions of men. Those who speak against religion are also for the most part bad men, men of unsettled heads, debauched consciences, and profligate lives. It is the fool, and none but he, that says in his heart, *There is no God*. The scoffers of the last days are men that walk after their own lusts, whose carnal fleshly interest retains them on that side. David was abused by the abjects, (Ps. xxxv. 15.) and the Christians at Thessalonica, by *certain lewd fellows of the baser sort*, Acts xvii. 5. Such as those are the men that make a mock at religion; and shall we be swayed and influenced in the greatest concerns of our immortal souls by such men as these? Shall those have the government of us, that have so little government of themselves? Shall the cavils and vain scoffs of those, who know not what it is to be serious, carry the day against the deliberate sentiments of all wise and good men, who have with one consent subscribed to the equity and goodness of religion's ways? If we choose such as these for our leaders, surely the *blind lead the blind*; and we know the consequence.

(2.) Consider how trifling and frivolous that is which is commonly said against religion and godliness. The devil made his first fatal assault upon mankind by lies and slanders, suggesting hard thoughts of God, and promising impunity in sin; and by the same wretched methods he still supports and carries on his interest in the world. They who speak against religion, make lies their refuge, and under falsehood they hide themselves. All those bold and daring things which are spoken against religion, are either groundless and unproved calumnies, or very unjust and unfair representations. Hence the enemies of religion are said to be [d] *absurd* and *unreasonable men*; men who, while they cry up the oracles of reason, rebel against all the light and laws of it. Put all that together which is spoken against godliness, and weigh it in the balances of right reason, and you will write *Tekel* upon it, *weighed in the balances and found wanting*. And, as if an overruling Providence had forced the scoffers of these last days to confess their own infatuation, some of those who have been most sharp in their invectives against religion, have been no less free in their satires against reason itself, as if they were resolved to answer the character of Solomon's fool, whose [e] *wisdom fails him* so far, that *he saith to every one that he is a fool*.

(3.) Consider how much is to be said for religion, notwithstanding it is *every where spoken against*. Religion has reason on its side, its cause is a good cause; and it is the right way, whoever speaks against it. [f] "It is no disparagement" (as that excellent pen expresses it) "to be laughed at, but to deserve to be so." You have heard religion reproached, but did you ever find that it deserved to be so? Nay, on the contrary, have you not found that it very well deserves your best affections and services? Inquire of those who have made trial of it, consult the experiences of others: [g] *Call now, if there be any that will answer thee, and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?* [h] *Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thine elders, and they will tell* [i] *thee, that the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding*. They will tell thee, [k] that religion's ways are *ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*, and that all the wealth and pleasure in this world is not worth one hour's communion with God in Jesus Christ. They will tell thee, that there are no truths so certain and weighty as divine truths, and that no statutes and judgments are so righteous as the divine law, which is holy, just, and good. They will tell thee, that real holiness and sancti-

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[a] Ps. viii. 2. [b] Isa. xxx. 21. [c] Isa. li. 7, 8, 12.
[d] 2 Thess. iii. 2. [e] Eccl. x. 3.
[f] Archbp. Tillotson's Sermon on 2 Pet. ii. 3.

[g] Job v. 1. [h] Deut. xxxii. 7.
[i] Job xxviii. 28. [k] Prov. iii. 17.

fication is the perfection of the human nature, as well as the participation of the divine nature; that a firm belief of the principles of religion is the greatest improvement of our intellectual powers, a strict adherence to its rules our surest guide in all our ways, and a cheerful dependence upon its promises, the fountain of better joys, and the foundation of better hopes, than any we can be furnished with in the things of sense and time. They will tell thee, that a life of serious godliness is incomparably the most sublime and honourable, the most sweet and comfortable, life a man can live in this world; and that nothing does more answer the end of our creation, better befriend societies, or conduce more to our true interest in both worlds, than that holy religion which is *every where spoken against.*

(4.) Consider that the cause of religion and godliness, however it be spoken against and opposed, will infallibly be the prevailing cause at last. We are sensible of a mighty struggle in the world between the *seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent;* Michael and his angels on the one side, and the dragon and his angels on the other. Many there are who speak against religion, and are very vigorous in opposing it, and some, though but a few, who are speaking for it, contending for the faith, and striving against sin. Now it is desirable to know which of these contesting interests will be victorious; and we may be assured that the cause of God and religion will certainly carry the day. Contradicted truths will be effectually cleared and vindicated; despised holiness will be honoured; mistakes rectified; reproaches rolled away; and every thing set in a true light. [l] *Then you shall return and discern* between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, which now it is not always easy to do. The day of the Lord is said to be in the *valley of decision,* (Joel iii. 14.) because then and there will this great cause be decided, which has been so long depending; and a definitive sentence given, from which there will be no appeal, and against which there will be no exception. [m] *Our God will* then *come, and will not keep silence:* whoever now speaks against religion, he will then speak for it, and will undoubtedly be [n] *justified when he speaks,* and *clear when he judgeth.* Particular parties and interests, as such, will wither and come to nothing, but catholic Christianity, that is, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, in expectation of the blessed hope; this is good, and the goodness of it being founded on the unchangeable will of the Eternal Mind, it is eternally good, and no doubt will be eternally glorious, whatever is said against it. This, this is that gold and silver, and those precious stones, which will stand the test of the fire that shall *try every man's work,* (1 Cor. iii. 12, 13.) and will be [o] *found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.*

Assure yourselves (Christians) there is a [p] *day of recompence for the controversy of* Sion coming, and it is at hand; [q] *Behold, the Judge standeth before the door.* Then vice and wickedness, which now appear so daring, so threatening, will be effectually and irrecoverably crushed; and such a fatal and incurable blow given to the serpent's head, that he shall never hiss, shall never spit his venom, any more: then shall the *upright have the dominion,* (Ps. xlix. 14.) and all the faithful soldiers of the Lord Jesus shall be called to [r] *set* their *feet upon the necks* of principalities and powers. Then atheists and blasphemers, the debauchees and profane scoffers of the age, will have their mouths stopped with an irresistible conviction; will have all their vile calumnies visibly confuted, their hearts filled with unspeakable horror, and their faces with everlasting shame: their refuge of lies will then be swept away, and [s] *rocks and mountains* called upon in vain to shelter them: [t] then shall *the righteous,* who are now trampled upon and despised, *shine as the sun in the firmament of their Father.* Wisdom and her children shall be first justified, and then glorified, before all the world: and they who through grace have [u] *gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image,* shall solace themselves, and praise their Redeemer with everlasting songs of triumph. The dust that is now unjustly thrown upon them, will not only be wiped off, but will add to their glory,[v] and every reproach for the testimony of Jesus, will be a pearl in their crown. The righteous Judge of heaven and earth [w] *will* shortly *render to every man according to his work: To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality* in the other world, and (in pursuit of that) patiently bear disgrace and contempt in this, to them he will render *eternal life,* which will make them as happy as they can desire, far more happy than they can conceive. But to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but contradict it, and rebel against the light and laws of it, being resolved to obey unrighteousness, to them he will render, with a just and almighty hand, indignation and wrath; the effect of which will be such tribulation and anguish to the soul, as will make them feel eternally, what now they will not be persuaded to believe, that [x] *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;* for never any hardened their hearts against him and prospered. Brethren, [y] *these are the true sayings of God,* on the certainty of which we may venture our immortal souls.

They who speak and act so much against religion, design to run it down, and extirpate it, that the [z] *name of it may be no more in remembrance;* and

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instructions, and many times ordains such [a] *strength out of the mouth of babes and sucklings*, as strangely *stills the enemy and avenger*.

7. Let none of us ever think the worse of the way of religion and godliness for its being *every where spoken against*, nor be frightened hereby from walking in that way. The contempt cast on the practice of piety, is with many an invincible objection against it; their good impressions, good purposes, and good overtures, are hereby crushed and brought to nothing: they have that within them which tells them, that the way of sobriety and serious godliness is a very good way, and they sometimes hear that word behind them saying, [b] *This is the way, walk ye in it*; but they have those *about them* that tell them otherwise, and thus the convictions of conscience are overruled and baffled by the censures and reproaches of men, whose praise they covet *more than the praise of God*.

But to take off the force of this objection, let us consider these four things:

(1.) Consider who they are that speak against religion and godliness. Not only they who are mortal men, whom the [c] *moth shall eat up like a garment; men that shall die*, and the *sons of men, which shall be made as grass*, all whose thoughts will shortly perish with them, and therefore why should we *fear their reproach, or be afraid of their revilings?* Not only they who are fallible men, who may be mistaken, and whose judgment is by no means decisive; nor such as will bear us out: shall we put what men say in the scale against what God says? *Let God be true, and every man a liar.* We must not be judged hereafter, and therefore should not be ruled now, by the sentiments and opinions of men. Those who speak against religion are also for the most part bad men, men of unsettled heads, debauched consciences, and profligate lives. It is the fool, and none but he, that says in his heart, *There is no God.* The scoffers of the last days are men that walk after their own lusts, whose carnal fleshly interest retains them on that side. David was abused by the abjects, (Ps. xxxv. 15.) and the Christians at Thessalonica, by *certain lewd fellows of the baser sort*, Acts xvii. 5. Such as those are the men that make a mock at religion; and shall we be swayed and influenced in the greatest concerns of our immortal souls by such men as these? Shall those have the government of us, that have so little government of themselves? Shall the cavils and vain scoffs of those, who know not what it is to be serious, carry the day against the deliberate sentiments of all wise and good men, who have with one consent subscribed to the equity and goodness of religion's ways? If we choose such as these for our leaders, surely the *blind lead the blind*; and we know the consequence.

(2.) Consider how trifling and frivolous that is which is commonly said against religion and godliness. The devil made his first fatal assault upon mankind by lies and slanders, suggesting hard thoughts of God, and promising impunity in sin; and by the same wretched methods he still supports and carries on his interest in the world. They who speak against religion, make lies their refuge, and under falsehood they hide themselves. All those bold and daring things which are spoken against religion, are either groundless and unproved calumnies, or very unjust and unfair representations. Hence the enemies of religion are said to be [d] *absurd* and *unreasonable men*; men who, while they cry up the oracles of reason, rebel against all the light and laws of it. Put all that together which is spoken against godliness, and weigh it in the balances of right reason, and you will write *Tekel* upon it, *weighed in the balances and found wanting.* And, as if an overruling Providence had forced the scoffers of these last days to confess their own infatuation, some of those who have been most sharp in their invectives against religion, have been no less free in their satires against reason itself, as if they were resolved to answer the character of Solomon's fool, whose [e] *wisdom fails him* so far, that *he saith to every one that he is a fool.*

(3.) Consider how much is to be said for religion, notwithstanding it is *every where spoken against.* Religion has reason on its side, its cause is a good cause; and it is the right way, whoever speaks against it. [f] "It is no disparagement" (as that excellent pen expresses it) "to be laughed at, but to deserve to be so." You have heard religion reproached, but did you ever find that it deserved to be so? Nay, on the contrary, have you not found that it very well deserves your best affections and services? Inquire of those who have made trial of it, consult the experiences of others: [g] *Call now, if there be any that will answer thee, and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?* [h] *Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thine elders, and they will tell* [i] *thee, that the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding.* They will tell thee, [k] that religion's ways are *ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*, and that all the wealth and pleasure in this world is not worth one hour's communion with God in Jesus Christ. They will tell thee, that there are no truths so certain and weighty as divine truths, and that no statutes and judgments are so righteous as the divine law, which is holy, just, and good. They will tell thee, that real holiness and sancti-

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[a] Ps. viii. 2. [b] Isa. xxx. 21. [c] Isa. li. 7, 8, 12.
[d] 2 Thess. iii. 2. [e] Eccl. x. 3.
[f] Archbp. Tillotson's Sermon on 2 Pet. ii. 3.

[g] Job v. 1. [h] Deut. xxxii. 7.
[i] Job xxviii. 28. [k] Prov. iii. 17.

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CHAPTER I.

THE NAMES BY WHICH THIS ORDINANCE IS USUALLY CALLED.

In discoursing of this great and solemn ordinance, which every serious Christian looks upon with a peculiar regard and veneration, because I purpose, as God shall enable me, to open as well the doctrine as the duty of it, it will be proper enough, and, I hope, profitable, to take some of the several names by which it is known.

I. We call it the Sacrament. This is the name we commonly give it, but improperly, because it does not distinguish it from the ordinance of baptism, which is as much a sacrament as this; a sacrament which we have all received, are all bound by, and are concerned to improve, and live up to. But when we call this ordinance the Sacrament, we ought to mind ourselves that it is a sacrament: that is, it is a sign, and it is an oath.

1. It is a sign, an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace: for, *such* sacraments are designed to be. It is a parable to the eye; and in it God uses similitudes, as he did of old, by his servants the prophets, Hosea xii. 10. In it Christ tells us earthly things, (John iii. 12.) that thereby we may come to be more familiarly acquainted, and more warmly affected, with spiritual and heavenly things. In it Christ speaks to us in our own language, and accommodates himself to the capacities of our present state. Man consists of body and soul; and the soul admits impressions, and exerts its powers, by the body. Here is an ordinance, therefore, which consists of body and soul too; wherein Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are, in the instituted elements of bread and wine, set before us, and offered to us. We live in a world of sense, not yet in the world of spirits; and because we find it hard to look above the things that are seen, we are directed in a sacrament to look through them, to those things not seen, which are represented by them. That things merely sensible may not improve the advantage they have from our present state, wholly to engross our thoughts and cares; in compassion to our infirmity, spiritual things are in this ordinance made in a manner sensible.

Let us therefore rest contented with this sign, which Christ has appointed; in which he is *evidently set forth crucified among us*, (Gal. iii. 1.) and not think it can be any honour to him, or advantage to ourselves, but on the contrary, a dishonour to him, and an injury to ourselves, to represent by images and pictures, the same things which this ordinance was designed to be the representation of. If Infinite Wisdom thought this sign sufficient, and most proper to affect the heart, and excite devotion, and stamp it accordingly with an institution; let us acquiesce in it.

Yet let us not rest contented with the sign only, but converse by faith with the things signified; else we receive the grace of God in this appointment in vain, and sacraments will be to us, what parables were to them that were wilfully blind, blind us the more, Mark iv. 11, 12. What will it avail us to have the shadow without the substance, the shell without the kernel, the letter without the spirit? As the body without the soul is dead, so our seeing and receiving the bread and wine, if, therein, we see not and receive not Christ crucified, is dead also.

2. It is an oath. That is the ancient signification of the word sacrament. The Romans called the oath which soldiers took to be true to their general, *Sacramentum militare—a military oath;* and our law still uses it in this sense, *dicunt super sacramentum suum—they say upon their oath;* so that, to take the sacrament, is to take an oath, a solemn oath, by which we bind our souls with a bond unto the Lord, Numb. xxx. 2. It is an oath of allegiance unto the Lord Jesus, by which we engage ourselves to be his dutiful and loyal subjects, acknowledging him to be our rightful Lord and Sovereign. It is as a freeman's oath, by which we enter ourselves members of Christ's mystical body, and oblige ourselves to observe the laws, and seek the good, of that Jerusalem which is from above, that we may enjoy the privileges of that great charter by which it is incorporated. An oath is an appeal to God's knowledge of our sincerity and truth in what we assert, or promise; and in this ordinance we make such an appeal as St. Peter did, *Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee,* John xxi. 17. An oath is an imprecation of God's wrath upon ourselves, if we deal falsely, and wilfully prevaricate: and something of that also there is in this sacrament; for if we continue in league with sin, while we pretend to covenant with God, we *eat and drink judgment to ourselves,* 1 Cor. xi. 29.

Let us therefore, according to the character of a virtuous man, (Eccl. ix. 2.) fear this oath: not fear to take it; for it is our duty, with all possible solemnity, to devote ourselves to the Lord; but fear to break it; for oaths are not to be jested with, God has said it, and has sworn it by himself, (Isa. xlv. 23.) *Unto me every tongue shall swear;* but he has said also, (Jer. iv. 2.) that we must swear to him *in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness;* and having sworn, we must perform it, Ps. cxix. 106. If we come to this sacrament carelessly and inconsiderately, we incur the guilt of rash swearing: if we go away from this sacrament, and walk contrary to the engagements of it, we incur the guilt of false swearing. Even natural religion teaches men to make conscience of an oath; much more does the Christian religion teach us to make conscience of this oath, to which God is not only a witness, but a party.

II. We call it the Lord's Supper, and very pro-

perly, for so the Scripture calls it, 1 Cor. xi. 20. where the apostle, reproving the irregularities that were among the Corinthians in the administration of this ordinance, tells them, *This is not to eat the Lord's supper.*

1. It is a supper. A supper is a stated meal for the body; this is so for the soul, which stands in as much need of its daily bread as the body does. Supper was then accounted the principal meal; this ordinance is so among Christ's friends, and in his family it is the most solemn entertainment. It is called a supper, because it was first instituted in the evening, and at the close of the passover supper; which, though it tie not us always to administer it about that time, because it would be inconvenient for religious assemblies; yet it signifies, (1.) That Christ now, in the end of the world, in the declining part of its day, as the great evening sacrifice, *has appeared to put away sin*, Heb. ix. 26. This glorious discovery was reserved for us, *upon whom the ends of the world are come*, 1 Cor. x. 11. (2.) That comfort in Christ is intended for those only who dwell in God's house, who are night lodgers there, and not only day visitants; and for those only who have done the work of the day, in its day, according as the duty of every day required. They only that work with Christ, shall eat with him. (3.) That the chief blessings of the new covenant are reserved for the evening of the day of our life. The everlasting feast is a supper, designed for us when we have accomplished as a hireling our day, and come home at night.

2. It is the Lord's supper, the Lord Christ's supper. The apostle, in his discourse concerning this ordinance, (1 Cor. xi. 23, &c.) all along calls Christ the Lord, and seems to lay an emphasis on it. For as the ordaining of this sacrament was an act of his dominion, and as his churches' Lord he appointed it; so, in receiving this sacrament, we own his dominion, and acknowledge him to be our Lord. This also puts an honour upon the ordinance, and makes it look truly great, however to a carnal eye it have no form nor comeliness, that it is the supper of the Lord. The sanction of this ordinance is the authority of Christ; the substance of this ordinance is the grace of Christ. It is celebrated in obedience to him, in remembrance of him, and for his praise. Justly it is called the Lord's supper; for it is the Lord Jesus that sends the invitation, makes the provision, gives the entertainment. In it we feed upon Christ, for he is the *Bread of Life;* we feed with Christ, for he is our Beloved, and our Friend, and he it is that bids us welcome to his table. In it, Christ sups with us, and we with him. He does us the honour to sup with us, though he must bring his own entertainment along with him. He gives us the happiness of supping with him upon the dainties of heaven, Rev. iii. 20.

Let our eye therefore be to the Lord, to the Lord Christ, and to the remembrance of his name, in this ordinance. We see nothing here, if we see not the beauty of Christ; we taste nothing here, if we taste not the love of Christ. The Lord must be looked upon as the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, *the beginning and the end*, and all in all in this solemnity. If we receive not Christ Jesus the Lord here, we have the supper, but not the Lord's supper.

III. We call it the Communion, the Holy Communion. And justly do we call it so; for,

1. In this ordinance we have communion with Christ our head; *Truly our fellowship* is with him, 1 John i. 3. He here manifests himself to us, and gives out to us his graces and comforts: we here set ourselves before him, and tender him the grateful return of love and duty. A kind correspondence between Christ and our souls is kept up in this ordinance; such as our present state will admit. Christ, by his word and Spirit, abides in us; we, by faith and love, abide in him. Here, therefore, where Christ seals his word, and offers his Spirit, and where we exercise our faith, and have our love inflamed, there is communion between us and Christ.

This communion supposes union; this fellowship supposes friendship; for *can two walk together except they be agreed?* Amos iii. 3. We must therefore, in the bond of an everlasting covenant, join ourselves to the Lord, and entwine interests with him, and then, pursuant thereto, concern him in all the concerns of our happiness, and concern ourselves in all the concerns of his glory; and this is communion.

2. In this ordinance we have communion with the universal church, even *with all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours*, 1 Cor. i. 2. Hereby we profess, testify, and declare, that *we being many, are one bread and one body*, by virtue of our common relation to one Lord Jesus Christ; *for we are all partakers of that one bread*, Christ the bread of life, signified and communicated in the sacramental bread, 1 Cor. x. 17. All true Christians, though they are many, yet they are one, and we express our consent to, and complacency in, that union, by partaking of the Lord's supper. I say, though they are many, that is, though they are numerous, yet as a vast number of creatures make one world, governed by one providence, so a vast number of Christians make one church, animated by one spirit, the soul of that great body. Though they are various, far distant from each other in place, of distinct societies, different attainments, and divers apprehensions in lesser things, yet all meeting in Christ they are one. They are all incorporated in one and the same covenant, and stamped with one and the same image, partakers of the same new and divine nature, and all entitled to one and the same inheritance. In the Lord's supper we are *made to drink into one spirit*, (1 Cor.

xii. 13.) and therefore, in attending on that ordinance, we are concerned not only to preserve, but to cultivate and improve, Christian love and charity; for what will this badge of union avail us, without the unity of the Spirit.

IV. We call it the Eucharist; so the Greek church called it, and we from them. It signifies a thanksgiving; and it is so called,

1. Because Christ, in the institution of it, *gave thanks*, 1 Cor. xi. 24. It should seem that Christ frequently offered up his prayers in the form of thanksgivings, John xi. 41. *Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me;* and so he blessed the bread and the cup, by giving thanks over them; as the true Melchisedec, who, when he brought forth bread and wine to Abraham, blessed the Most High God, Gen. xiv. 18, 20. Though our Saviour, when he instituted the sacrament, had a full prospect of his approaching sufferings, with all their aggravations, yet he was not thereby indisposed for thanksgiving; for praising God is a work that is never out of season. Though the Captain of our salvation was now but girding on the harness, yet he gives thanks as though he had put it off, being confident of a glorious victory; in the prospect of which, even before he took the field, he did in this ordinance divide the spoils among his followers, and *gave gifts unto men*, Ps. lxviii. 18.

2. Because we, in the participation of it, must give thanks likewise. It is an ordinance of thanksgiving appointed for the joyful celebrating of the Redeemer's praises. The sacrifice of atonement Christ himself offered once for all, and it must not, it cannot, be repeated; but sacrifices of acknowledgment Christians must offer daily, that is, *the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name*, Heb. xiii. 15. The cup of salvation must be a cup of blessing, with which, and for which, we must bless God, as the Jews were wont to do very solemnly at the close of the passover supper; at which time Christ chose to institute this sacrament, because he intended it for a perpetual thanksgiving, till we come to the world of praise.

Come, therefore, and let us sing unto the Lord in this ordinance; let the high praises of our Redeemer be in our mouths, and in our hearts. Would we have the comfort, let him have the praise, of the great things he has done for us. Let us remember, that thanksgiving is the business of the ordinance, and let that turn our complaints into praises; for, whatever matter of complaint we find in ourselves, in Christ we find abundant matter for praise; and that is the pleasant subject which in this ordinance we should dwell upon.

V. We call it the Feast, the Christian Feast. *Christ our passover being sacrificed for us*, in this ordinance we keep the feast, 1 Cor. v. 8. They who communicate are said to *feast with us*, Jude 12. This name, though not commonly used, yet is very significant; for it is such a supper as is a feast. Gospel preparations are frequently compared to a feast, as Luke xiv. 16. The guests are many, the invitation solemn, and the provision rich and plentiful, and therefore fitly it is called a feast, a feast for souls. A *feast is made for laughter*, Eccl. x. 19. so is this for spiritual joy; the wine here is designed to make glad the heart. A feast is made for free conversation, so is this for communion between heaven and earth; at this banquet of wine, the golden sceptre is held out to us, and this fair proposal made, *What is thy petition, and it shall be granted thee?*

Let us see what kind of feast it is.

1. It is a royal feast; a feast *like the feast of a king*, (1 Sam. xxv. 36.) that is, a magnificent feast, like that of king Ahasuerus, (Esth. i. 3—5.) a feast for all his servants, and designed, as that was, not only to show his good will to those whom he feasted, but to *show the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty.* The treasures hid in Christ, even his unsearchable riches, are here set open, and the glories of the Redeemer illustriously displayed. He, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, here issues out the same orders that we find him giving, Rev. xix. 16, 17. *Come, gather yourselves together, to the supper of the great God;* and that must needs be a great supper. The wisest of kings introduces Wisdom herself, as a queen or princess, making this feast, (Prov. ix. 1, 2.) *Wisdom hath killed her beasts, and mingled her wine.* At a royal feast the provision, we may be sure, is rich and noble, such as becomes a king to give, though not such as we beggars are to expect; the welcome also, we may be sure, is free and generous: Christ gives like a king.

Let us remember, that in this ordinance we *sit to eat with a Ruler*, with the Ruler of rulers, and therefore must *consider diligently what is before us*, and observe decorum, Prov. xxiii. 1. He is a King that comes in to see the guests, (Matt. xxii. 11.) and therefore we are concerned to behave ourselves well.

2. It is a marriage feast: it is a feast made by a king at the marriage of his son; so our Saviour represents it, (Matt. xxii. 2, 3.) not only to declare it exceeding rich and sumptuous, and celebrated with extraordinary expressions of joy and rejoicing, but because the covenant, here sealed between Christ and his church, is a marriage covenant, such a covenant as makes two one, (Eph. v. 31, 32.) a covenant founded in the dearest love, founding the nearest relation, and designed to be perpetual. In this ordinance, (1.) We celebrate the memorial of the virtual espousals of the church of Christ, when he died upon the cross, *to sanctify and cleanse it, that he might present it to himself*, Eph. v. 26. That was the day of his espousals, the day of the gladness of his heart. (2.) The actual espousals of believing

souls to Christ are here solemnized, and that agreement ratified, (Cant. ii. 16.) *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.* The soul that renounces all other lovers which stand in competition with the Lord Jesus, and joins itself by faith and love to him only, is in this ordinance presented as a chaste virgin to him, 2 Cor. xi. 2. (3.) A pledge and earnest of the public and complete espousals of the church of Christ at his second coming, is here given: then the *marriage of the Lamb comes,* (Rev. xix. 7.) and we, according to his promise, hereby declare that we look for it.

If we come to a marriage feast, we must not come without a wedding garment, that is, a frame of heart and a disposition of soul agreeable to the solemnity; conforming to the nature, and answering the intentions, of the gospel, as it is exhibited to us in this ordinance. Holy garments, and garments of praise, are the wedding garments: put on Christ, put on the new man, these are the wedding garments. In these we must, with our lamps in our hands, as the wise virgins, go forth with all due observance, to attend the royal bridegroom.

3. It is a feast of memorial, like the Feast of the Passover, of which it is said, (Exod. xii. 14.) *This day shall be unto you for a memorial, and you shall keep it a feast of the Lord——a feast by an ordinance for ever.* The deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, was a work of wonder never to be forgotten: the feast of unleavened bread was therefore instituted to be annually observed throughout all the ages of the Jewish church, as a solemn memorial of that deliverance, that the truth of it, being confirmed by this traditional evidence, might never be questioned, and that the remembrance of it, being frequently revived by this service, might never be lost by tract of time. Our redemption by Christ from sin and hell, is a greater work of wonder than that was, more worthy to be remembered, and yet (the benefits that flow from it being spiritual) more apt to be forgotten: this ordinance was therefore instituted, (and instituted in the close of the Passover Supper, as coming in the room of it,) to be a standing memorial in the church of the glorious achievements of the Redeemer's cross, the victories obtained by it over the powers of darkness, and the salvation wrought by it for the children of light. Thus *the Lord hath made his wonderful works to be remembered,* Ps. cxi. 4.

4. It is a feast of dedication. Solomon made such a feast for all Israel, when he dedicated the temple, (1 Kings viii. 65.) as his father David had done, when he brought the ark into the tabernacle, 2 Sam. vi. 19. Even the children of the captivity kept the dedication of the house of God with joy, Ezra vi. 16. In the ordinance of the Lord's supper we dedicate ourselves to God as living temples, *temples of the Holy Ghost,* separated from every thing that is common and profane, and entirely devoted to the service and honour of God in Christ; to show that we do this with cheerfulness and full satisfaction; and, that it may be done with an agreeable solemnity, this feast is appointed for the doing of it, that we may, like the people of Israel, when Solomon dismissed them from his feast of dedication, go *to our tents joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the Lord has done for* David *his servant, and for* Israel *his people.*

5. It is a feast upon a sacrifice. This methinks is as proper a notion of it as any other. It was the law and custom of sacrifices, both among the Jews, and in other nations, that when the peace-offering was slain, the blood sprinkled, the fat, and some select parts of it, burnt upon the altar, and the priest had his share out of it; then the remainder was given back to the offerer, on which he and his family and friends feasted with joy. Hence we read of Israel after the flesh, eating the sacrifices, and so partaking of the altar, (1 Cor. x. 18.) that is, in token of their partaking of the benefits of the sacrifice, and their joy therein. And this eating of the sacrifices was a religious rite, expressive of their communion with God in and by the sacrifice.

Now, (1.) Jesus Christ is the great and only sacrifice, who by being *once offered, perfected for ever them which are sanctified,* and this offering never needs to be repeated; that once was sufficient.

(2.) The Lord's supper is a feast upon this sacrifice, in which we *receive the atonement,* as the expression is; (Rom. v. 11.) that is, we give consent to, and take complacency in, the method which Infinite Wisdom has taken of justifying and saving us, by the merit and mediation of the Son of God incarnate. In feasting upon the sacrifice, we apply the benefit of it to ourselves, and ascribe the praise of it to God with joy and thankfulness.

6. It is a feast upon a covenant. The covenant between Isaac and Abimelech was made with a feast, (Gen. xxvi. 30, 31.) so was that between Laban and Jacob, (Gen. xxxi. 46, 54.) and the feasting upon the sacrifices was a federal rite, in token of peace and communion between God and his people. In the Lord's supper we are admitted to feast with God, in token of reconciliation between us and him through Christ. Though we have provoked God, and been enemies to him in our minds by wicked works, yet he thus graciously provides for us, to show that now he has reconciled us to himself, Col. i. 21. His enemies hungering, he thus feeds them; thirsting, he thus gives them drink; which, if like *coals of fire heaped upon their heads,* it melt them into a compliance with the terms of his covenant, they shall thenceforth, as his own familiar friends, eat bread at his table continually, till they come to sit down with him at his table in his kingdom.

CHAPTER II.

THE NATURE OF THIS ORDINANCE.

When the Jews, according to God's appointment, observed the passover yearly throughout their generations, it was supposed their children would ask them, *What mean ye by this service?* And they were directed what answer to give to that inquiry, Exod. xii. 26, 27. The question may very fitly be asked concerning our gospel passover, *What mean ye by this service?* We come together in a public and select assembly of baptized Christians, under the conduct and presidency of a gospel minister; we take bread and wine, sanctified by the word and prayer, and we eat and drink together in a solemn religious manner, with an eye to a divine institution, as our warrant and rule in so doing: this we do often; this all the churches of Christ do, and have done in every age from the death of Christ down to this day, and we doubt not but it will continue to be done till time shall be no more. Now what is the true intent and meaning of this ordinance? What did Christ design it for in the institution, and what must we aim at in the observance, of it?

It was appointed to be a commemorating ordinance, and a confessing ordinance; a communicating ordinance, and a covenanting ordinance.

I. The ordinance of the Lord's supper is a commemorating ordinance. This explication our Lord himself gave of it when he said, (Luke xxii. 19.) *Do this in remembrance of me.* Εις την εμην αναμνησιν—*do it for a memorial*, do it *for a remembrance, of me.* In this ordinance he has recorded his name for ever, and this is his memorial throughout all generations. We are to do this,

1. In remembrance of the person of Christ, as an absent friend of ours.——It is a common ceremony of friendship, to lay up something in remembrance of a friend we have valued, which, we say, we keep for his sake, when he is gone, or is at a distance; as it is usual likewise to drink to one another, remembering such a friend that is absent. Jesus Christ is our beloved, and our friend; the best friend that ever souls had: he is now absent; he has left the world and is gone to the Father, and the heavens must contain him till the time of the restitution of all things. Now this ordinance is appointed for a remembrance of him. We observe it in token of this, that though the blessed Jesus be out of sight, he is not out of mind. He that instituted this ordinance, did as it were engrave this upon it for a motto,

When this you see,
Remember me.

Remember him! Is there any danger of our forgetting him? If we were not wretchedly taken up with the world and the flesh, and strangely careless in the concerns of our souls, we could not forget him. But, in the consideration of the treachery of our memories, this ordinance is appointed to remind us of Christ.

Ought we not to remember, and can we ever forget, such a friend as Christ is? a friend that is our near and dear relation; bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, and not ashamed to call us brethren? A friend in covenant with us, who puts more honour upon us than we deserve, when he calls us his servants; and yet is pleased to call us friends. John xv. 15. a friend that has so wonderfully signalized his friendship and commended his love? He has done that for us, which no friend we have in the world did, or could do for us; he has laid down his life for us then, when the redemption of our souls was grown so precious, as otherwise to have ceased for ever. Surely we must forget ourselves, if ever we forget him, since our happiness is entirely owing to his kindness.

Ought we not to remember, and can we ever forget, a friend who, though he be absent from us, is negociating our affairs, and is really absent for us? He is gone, but he is gone upon our business; as the forerunner, he is for us entered: he is gone to *appear in the presence of God for us*, as our advocate; is gone to *prepare a place for us*, as our agent. May we be unmindful of him, who is always mindful of us; and who, as the great High Priest of our profession, bears the names of all his spiritual Israel on his breastplate, near his heart, within the veil?

Ought we not to remember, and can we ever forget, a friend, who though he now be absent, will be absent but a while? We see him not, but we expect to see him shortly, when he will come in the clouds, and every eye shall see him; will come to receive us to himself, to share in his joy and glory. Shall we not be glad of any thing that helps us to remember him, who not only remembered us once in our low estate, but, having once remembered us, will never forget us? Shall not his name be written in indelible characters upon the tables of our hearts, who has *graven us upon the palms of his hands?* Surely we must continually remember our Judge and Lord, when behold, *The Lord is at hand*, and *the Judge standeth before the door.* Thus must we show him forth till he comes; for he comes quickly.

2. We are to do this in remembrance of the death of Christ, as an ancient favour done us. This ordinance was instituted in the night wherein our Master was betrayed, (that *night of observations*, as the first passover night is called, Exod. xii. 42.) which intimates the special reference this ordinance was to have to that which was done that night and the day following. In it we are to know Christ and him crucified, (1 Cor. ii. 2.) and to remember his sufferings to remember his bonds in a special manner. Al

the saints and all the churches could not see Christ upon the cross, therefore in this ordinance that great transaction is set before us, upon which the judgment of this world turned, (John xii. 31.) *Now is the judgment of this world.*

Here we *remember* the dying of the Lord Jesus; that is,

(1.) We endeavour to preserve the memory of it in the church, and to transmit it pure and entire through our age, to the children which shall be created; that the remembrance of it may be ever fresh, and may not die in our hands. That good thing which was committed to us as a trust, we must thus carefully keep, and faithfully deliver down to the next generation; evidencing that we firmly believe and frequently think of Christ's dying for us, and desiring that those who shall come after us may do so too.

(2.) We endeavour to revive and excite the remembrance of it in our own hearts. The ordinance was intended to stir up our pure minds, (our impure minds we have too much reason to call them,) *by way of remembrance*, as the expression is, 2 Pet. iii. 1. That giving so earnestly heed to the things that belong to the great salvation, as the solemnity of this ordinance calls for, we may *not at any time let them slip*, or, if we do, we may in the use thereof speedily recover them, Heb. ii. 1, 3. The instituted images of Christ crucified are in this ordinance very strong and lively, and proper to make deep impressions of his grace and love upon the minds which are prepared to receive them, and such as cannot be worn out.

We see then what we have to do in our attendance upon this ordinance; we must remember the sufferings of Christ there, else we do nothing.

[1.] This supposes some acquaintance with Christ crucified; for we cannot be said to remember that which we never knew. The ignorant therefore, to whom the great things of the gospel are as a strange thing, which they are not concerned to acquaint themselves with, cannot answer the intention of this ordinance; but they offer the blind for sacrifice, not discerning the Lord's body, and the breaking of it. It concerns us therefore to cry after this knowledge, and to labour after a clearer insight into the mystery of our redemption by the death of Christ: for, if we be ignorant of this, and rest in false and confused notions of it, we are unworthy to wear the Christian name, and to live in a Christian nation.

[2.] It implies a serious thought and contemplation of the sufferings of Christ, such as is fed and supplied with matter to work upon, not from a strong fancy, but from a strong faith. Natural passions may be raised, by the power of imagination representing the story of Christ's sufferings as very doleful and tragical, but pious and devout affections are best kindled by the consideration of Christ's dying as a propitiation for our sins, and the Saviour of our souls; and this is the object of faith, not of fancy. We must here look unto Jesus, as he is lifted up in the gospel, take him as the word makes him, and so behold him.

[3.] This contemplation of the sufferings of Christ must make such an impression upon the soul, as to work it into a fellowship with, and conformity to, Christ in his sufferings. This was the knowledge and remembrance of Christ which blessed Paul was ambitious of, to *know Christ, and the fellowship of his sufferings*, (Phil. iii. 10.) and we all by our baptism are in profession *planted together in the likeness of his death*, Rom. vi. 5. Then we do this in remembrance of Christ effectually, when we experience the death of Christ killing sin in us, mortifying the flesh, weaning us from this present life, weakening vicious habits and dispositions in us, and the power of Christ's cross, both as a moral argument, and as the spring of special grace, *crucifying us to the world, and the world to us*, Gal. vi. 14. When, in touching the hem of his garment, we find (like that good woman, Mark v. 27.) *virtue comes out of him* to heal our souls, then we rightly remember Christ crucified.

II. It is a confessing ordinance. If the *heart believe unto righteousness*, hereby *confession is made unto salvation*, Rom. x. 10. The Lord's supper is one of the peculiarities of our holy religion, by the observance of which, the professors of it are distinguished from all others. Circumcision, which was the initiating ordinance among the Jews, by leaving its mark in the flesh, was a lasting badge of distinction; baptism, which succeeds it, leaves no such indelible character in the body; but the Lord's supper is a solemnity by which we constantly avow the Christian name, and declare ourselves not ashamed of the banner of the cross, under which we were listed, but resolve to continue Christ's faithful servants and soldiers to our lives' end, according to our baptismal vow.

In the ordinance of the Lord's supper we are said to show the Lord's death, (1 Cor. xi. 26.) that is,

1. We hereby profess our value and esteem for Christ crucified. Καταγγελλετε,—*ye show it forth*, with commendation and praise, so the word sometimes signifies. The cross of Christ was to the Jews a stumbling-block, because they expected a Messiah in temporal pomp and power. It was *to the Greeks foolishness*, because the doctrine of man's justification and salvation by it was not agreeable to their philosophy. The wisdom of this world, and the princes of it, judged it absurd to expect salvation by one that died a captive, and honour by one that died in disgrace; and turned it to the reproach of Christians, that they were the disciples and followers of one that was *hanged upon a tree* at *Jerusalem*. They who put him to such an ignominious death,

and loaded him with all the shame they could put upon him, hoped thereby to make every one shy of owning him, or expressing any respect for him: but the wisdom of God so ordered it, that the cross of Christ is that which above any thing else Christians have cause to glory in, Gal. vi. 14. Such are the fruits, the purchases, the victories, the triumphs of the cross, that we have reason to call it our crown of glory, and diadem of beauty. The politicians thought it had been the interest of Christ's followers to have concealed their Lord's death, and that they should have endeavoured to bury it in forgetfulness; but instead of that, they appointed to show forth their Lord's death, and to keep it in everlasting remembrance before angels and men.

This then we mean, when we receive the Lord's supper: we thereby solemnly declare, that we do not reckon the cross of Christ any reproach to Christianity, and that we are so far from being ashamed of it, that, whatever constructions an unthinking, unbelieving world may put upon it, to us it is the *wisdom of God, and the power of God;* it is all our salvation, and all our desire. We think never the worse of Christ's holy religion, for the ignominious death of its great author; for we see God in it glorified, man by it saved. *Then is the offence of the cross ceased;* then is the reproach of it rolled away for ever.

2. We hereby profess our dependence upon, and confidence in, Christ crucified. As we are not ashamed to own him, so we are not afraid to venture our souls, and their eternal salvation, with him; believing him *able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him*, and as willing as he is able; and making confession of that faith. By this solemn rite, we deliberately and of choice put ourselves under the protection of his righteousness, and the influence of his grace, and the conduct and operation of his Holy Spirit. The concerns that lie between us and God, are of vast consequence; our eternal weal or woe depends upon the right management of them: now hereby we solemnly declare, that having laid them near our own hearts, in a serious care about them, we choose to lodge them in the Redeemer's hands, by a judicious faith in him, which we can give a good reason for. God having declared himself well pleased in him, we hereby declare ourselves well pleased in him too: God having committed all judgment to the Son, we hereby commit all our judgment to him likewise, as the sole referee of the great cause, and the sole trustee of the great concern; *knowing whom we have believed, even one who is able*, and faithful, *to keep* what we have committed to him *against that day*, that great day when it will be called for, 2 Tim. i. 12.

This then we mean, when we receive the Lord's supper: we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and own ourselves to be his subjects, and put ourselves under his government: we confess that he is a skilful physician, and own ourselves to be his patients, resolving to observe his prescriptions: we confess that he is a faithful advocate, and own ourselves to be his clients, resolving to be advised by him in every thing. In a word, in this ordinance we profess that we are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, nor of the cross of Christ; in which his gospel is all summed up; knowing it to be *the power of God unto salvation, to all them that believe*, Rom. i. 16. and having found it so to us.

III. It is a communicating ordinance. Here are not only gospel truths represented to us, and confessed by us, but gospel benefits offered to us, and accepted by us; for it is not only a faithful saying, but well worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus died to save sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15. This is the explication which the apostle gives of this ordinance, (1 Cor. x. 16.) *The cup of blessing which we bless*, that is, which we pray to God to bless, which we bless God with and for, and in which we hope and expect that God will bless us, it *is the communion* (κοινωνια—*the communication*) *of the blood of Christ; the bread which we break is the communion*, or communication, *of the body of Christ*, which was not only broken for us upon the cross, when it was made an offering for sin, but it is broken to us, as the children's bread is broken to the children, in the everlasting gospel, wherein it is made the food of souls.

By the body and blood of Christ, which this ordinance is the communion of, we are to understand all those precious benefits and privileges, which were purchased for us by the death of Christ, and are assured to us upon the gospel terms in the everlasting covenant. When the sun is said to be with us, and we say we have the sun, as in the day, as in the summer, it is not the body and bulk of the sun that we have, but his rays and beams are darted down upon us, and by them we receive the light, warmth, and influence of the sun; and thus the sun is communicated to us, according to the law of creation: so, in this ordinance, we are *partakers of Christ;* (Heb. iii. 14.) not of his real body and blood, it is senseless and absurd, unchristian and inhuman, to imagine so; but of his merit and righteousness for our justification, his spirit and grace for our sanctification. We must not dream of ascending up into heaven, or of going down to the deep, to fetch Christ into this ordinance, that we may partake of him: no, *the word is nigh thee*, and Christ in the word, Rom. x. 6—8.

Unworthy receivers, that is, those who resolve to continue in sin, because grace has abounded, partake of the guilt of Christ's body and blood, and have communion with those who crucified him; for, *as much as in them lies*, they *crucify him afresh*, Heb. vi. 6. What they do, speaks such ill thoughts of Christ, that we may conclude, if they had been at

Jerusalem when he was put to death, they would have joined with those that cried, *Crucify him, crucify him.*

But humble and penitent believers partake of the blessed fruits of Christ's death; his body and blood are their food, their physic, their cordial, their life, their all. All the riches of the gospel are virtually in them.

1. Christ, and all his benefits, are here communicated to us. Here is not only bread and wine set before us to be looked at, but given to us to be eaten and drank; not only Christ made known to us, that we may contemplate the mysteries of redemption, but Christ made over to us, that we may participate of the benefits of redemption. God, in this ordinance, not only assures us of the truth of the promise, but, according to our present case and capacity, conveys to us by his Spirit the good things promised. Receive Christ Jesus the Lord, Christ and a pardon, Christ and peace, Christ and grace, Christ and heaven: it is all your own, if you come up to the terms on which it is offered in the gospel.

Fountains of life are here broken up, wells of salvation are here opened; the stone rolled away from the well's mouth, and you are called upon to come and draw water with joy. The well is deep; but this ordinance is a bucket, by which it is easy to draw. Let us not forsake these living streams for puddle water. *Breasts of consolation* are here drawn out to us, from which we may suck and be satisfied. These are wisdom's gates, where we are appointed to wait for wisdom's gifts: and we shall not wait in vain.

2. Christ, and all his benefits, are here to be received by us. If we do indeed answer the intention of the ordinance, in receiving the bread and wine, we accept the offer that is made us: "Lord, I take thee at thy word; be it unto thy servant according to it." We hereby interest ourselves in Christ's mediation between God and man, and take the benefit of it, according to the tenor of the everlasting gospel. Christ, in this ordinance, is graciously condescending to show us the print of the nails, and the mark of the spear, to show us his pierced hands, his pierced side, those tokens of his love and power as Redeemer: we, by partaking of it, comply with his intentions, we consent to him, and close with him, saying, as Thomas did, (John xx. 28.) *My Lord, and my God!* None but Christ. None but Christ.

We here, likewise, set ourselves to participate of that spiritual strength and comfort, which through grace flow into the hearts of believers, from their interest in Christ crucified. The gospel of Christ here solemnly exhibited, is meat and drink to our souls; it is bread, that strengthens man's heart, and is the staff of life; it is wine, that makes glad the heart, and revives the spirit. Our spiritual life is supported and maintained, and the new man enabled for its work and conflicts, by the spiritual benefits which here we communicate of, as the natural life and the natural body is by our necessary food. From the fulness that is in Christ crucified, we here derive grace for grace; grace for gracious exercises, as the branches derive sap from the root, and as the lamps derive oil from the olive-tree, (Zech. iv. 11, 12. John i. 16.) and so, like healthy growing children, *are nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine*, (1 Tim. iv. 6.) till we are *come to the perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* Thus it is our communion with, and communicating, Christ's body and blood.

IV. It is a covenanting ordinance. *This cup*, our Saviour tells us, (that is, this ordinance,) *is the New Testament*, (Luke xxii. 20.) not only pertaining to the New Testament, but containing it: it has the whole New Testament in it, and is the sum and substance of it. The word διαθηκη signifies both a *testament*, and a *covenant:* in general, it is an instrument, by which a right passes and is conveyed, and a title to some good thing given. The gospel revelation of God's grace and will, is both a *testament* and a *covenant;* and the Lord's supper has a reference to it, as both.

1. It is the new testament. The everlasting gospel is Christ's last will, by which he has given and bequeathed a great estate to his family on earth, with certain precepts and injunctions, and under certain provisos and limitations. This will is become of force by *the death of the Testator*, (Heb. ix. 16, 17.) and is now unalterable: it is proved in the court of heaven, and administration given to the blessed Spirit, who is as the executor of the will; for of him the Testator said, (John xvi. 14.) *He shall receive of mine, and show it unto you.* Christ having purchased a great estate by the merit of his death, by his testament he left it all to his poor relations, who have need enough of it, and for whom he bought it; so that all those who can prove themselves related to Christ, by their being born from above, (John iii. 3.) their partaking of a divine nature, (2 Pet. i. 4.) and their doing the will of God, (Matt. xii. 50.) may claim the estate by virtue of the will, and shall be sure of a present maintenance, and a future inheritance out of it.

The Lord's supper is this new testament, it is not only a memorial of the Testator's death, but is the seal of the testament. A true copy of it, attested by this seal, and pleadable, is hereby given into the hands of every believer, that he may have strong consolation. The general record of the New Testament, which is common to all, is hereby made particular.

(1.) The charge given by the will is hereby applied and enforced to us. The Testator has charged us to remember him, has charged us to follow him whithersoever he goes; he has charged us to love one ano-

ther, (John xiii. 34.) and the estate he has left us is so devised, as not to give any occasion to quarrel, but rather to be a bond of union. He has charged us to espouse his cause, serve his interest, and concern ourselves in his concernments in the world, to seek the welfare of the great body, and all the members of it. He has likewise charged us to expect and prepare for his second coming: his word of command is, *Watch*. Now in the Lord's supper we are reminded of this charge, and bound afresh faithfully to observe whatsoever Christ has commanded, as the Rechabites kept the command of their father, Jer. xxxv. 6, 8.

(2.) The legacies left by the will are hereby particularly consigned to us; paid in part, and the rest secured to be paid when we come to age, even at the time appointed by the Testator. What is left for us is not only sufficient to answer the full intention of the will, enough for all, enough for each, but it is left in good hands, in the hands of the Spirit of truth, who will not deal unfaithfully with is; for, as Christ tells us, (John xiv. 17.) *We know him.* Nay, Christ himself is risen from the dead, to be the overseer of his own will, and to see it duly executed, so that we are in no danger of losing our legacies, unless by our own default. These are good securities, and what we may with abundant satisfaction rely upon; and yet our Lord Jesus, *more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immortality of his counsel, has confirmed it by an oath,* (by a sacrament, which is his oath to us, as well as ours to him,) *that by all those immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation,* who have ventured our all in the New Testament, Heb. vi. 17, 18.

2. It is the new covenant.——Though God is our sovereign Lord and Owner, and we are in his hand as the clay in the hands of the potter, yet he condescends to deal with us about our reconciliation and happiness in the way of a covenant, that they which are saved may be the more comforted, and they which perish may be rendered the more inexcusable. The tenor of this covenant is, (Acts xvi. 31.) *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* Salvation is the great promise of the covenant, believing in Christ the great condition of the covenant. Now this cup is the covenant, that is, it is the seal of the covenant. There seems to be an allusion to that solemnity which we read of, Exod. xxiv. 7, 8. *Moses* read the book of the covenant in the audience of the people, and the people declared their consent to it, saying, *All that the Lord hath said we will do, and will be obedient:* and then Moses took the blood and sprinkled it upon the people, part of it having before been sprinkled on the altar, and said, *Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you, concerning all these words.* Thus the covenant being made by sacrifice, (Ps. l. 5.) and the blood of the sacrifice being sprinkled both upon the altar of God, and upon the representatives of the people, both parties did, as it were, interchangeably put their hands and seals to the articles and agreement. So the blood of Christ having satisfied for the breach of the covenant of innocency, and purchased a new treaty, and being the sacrifice by which the covenant is made, is fitly called, *The blood of the covenant.* Having sprinkled this blood upon the altar in his intercession, when by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, he does in this sacrament sprinkle it upon the people: as the apostle explains this mystery, Heb. ix. 12—20.

A bargain is a bargain, though it be not sealed, but the sealing is the ratification and perfection of it. The internal seal of the covenant, as administered to true believers, is *the Spirit of promise,* (Eph. i. 13.) *whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption,* Eph. iv. 30. But the external seals of the covenant, as administered in the visible church, are the sacraments, particularly this of the Lord's supper. Sealing ordinances are appointed to make our covenant with God the more solemn, and consequently the more affecting, and the impressions of it the more abiding. The covenant of grace is the covenant *never to be forgotten,* (Jer. v. 50.) This ordinance therefore was instituted to assure us that God never will forget it, and to assist us that we never may forget it. It is the seal of the new covenant, that is,

(1.) God does in and by this ordinance seal to us to be to us a God. This article of the covenant is inclusive of all the rest: in giving himself to us, to be ours, he gives us all things, for he is God all-sufficient. This is the grant, the royal grant, which the Eternal God here seals, and delivers to true believers, as his act and deed. He gives himself to them, and empowers them to call him theirs. What God is in himself, he will be to them for their good. His wisdom is theirs, to counsel and direct them; his power is theirs, to protect and support them; his justice is theirs, to justify them; his holiness is theirs, to sanctify them; his goodness theirs, to love and supply them; his truth is the inviolable security of the promise; and his eternity the perpetuity of their happiness. He will be to them a Father, and they shall be his sons and daughters, dignified by the privileges of adoption, and distinguished by the Spirit of adoption. Their Maker is their Husband, and he has said, that he is married to them, and rejoices in them as the bridegroom in his bride. Isa. lxii. 4, 5. The Lord is their Shepherd, and the sheep of his pasture shall not want. He is the portion of their inheritance in the other world, as well as of their cup in this; he has prepared for them a city, and therefore is not ashamed to be called their God, Heb. xi. 16. compare Luke xx. 37.

(2.) We do in and by this ordinance seal to him, to be to him a people. We accept the relation by

our voluntary choice and consent, and bind our souls with a bond, that we will approve ourselves to him in the relation. We hereby resign, surrender, and give up our whole selves, body, soul, and spirit, to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, covenanting and promising that we will by his strength serve him faithfully, and walk closely with him in all manner of gospel obedience all our days. Claiming the blessings of the covenant, we put ourselves under the bonds of the covenant. *O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant;* wholly, and only, and for ever thine. And this is the meaning of this service.

CHAPTER III.

AN INVITATION TO THIS ORDINANCE.

PLENTIFUL and suitable provision is made in this ordinance, out of the treasures of the Redeemer's grace; and ministers, as servants, are sent to bid to the feast; to invite those whom the Master of the feast has designed for his guests, and to hasten those who are invited to this *banquet of wine*, alluding to (Esth. vi. 14.) Wisdom has sent forth her maidens on this errand, and they have words put into their mouths, (Luke xiv. 17.) *Come, for all things are now ready:* This is our message.

I. We are to tell you *all things are ready, now* ready; *He that hath an ear, let him hear* this. All things are now ready in the gospel feast, that are proper for, or will contribute to, the full satisfaction of an immortal soul, that knows its own nature and interest, and desires to be truly and eternally happy, in the love and favour of its Creator.

1. *All things are ready;* all things requisite to a noble feast. Let us a little improve the metaphor.

(1.) There is a house ready for the entertainment of the guests, the gospel church, Wisdom's house, which she has *built upon seven pillars,* Prov. ix. 1. God has set up his tabernacle among men, and the place of this tent is enlarged, and made capacious enough, so that, though the table has been replenished with guests, yet *there is room,* Luke xiv. 22.

(2.) There is a table ready spread in the word and ordinances, like the table in the temple on which the shew-bread was placed, a loaf for every tribe. The Scripture is written, the canon of it completed, and in it a full declaration made of God's good-will towards men; which he that runs may read.

(3.) There are lavers ready for us to wash in; as at the marriage feast in Cana, there were six water-pots set for purification, (John ii. 6.) lest the sense of pollutions contracted should deter us from the participation of these comforts. Behold, there is a fountain opened, (Zech. xiii. 1.) come and wash in it, that being purged from an evil conscience by the blood of Jesus, you may with humble confidence compass God's altar.

(4.) There are servants ready to attend you; and those are the ministers, whose work it is to direct you to the table, and to *give to every one their portion of meat in due season; rightly dividing the word of truth.* They are not masters of the feast, but only stewards, and *your servants for Christ's sake,* 2 Cor. iv. 5.

(5.) There is a deal of company already come; many have accepted the invitation, and have found a hearty welcome; why then should your place be empty? Let the communion of saints invite you into communion with Christ.

(6.) A blessing is ready to be craved. He is ready, that is, to bless the sacrifice, 1 Sam. ix. 13. The great High Priest of our profession, ever living to intercede for us, and attending continually to this very thing, is ready to command a blessing upon our spiritual food.

(7.) The Master of the feast is ready to bid you welcome; as ready as the father of the prodigal was to receive his repenting, returning son, whom he saw *when he was yet a great way off,* Luke xv. 20. God's ear is open to hear, his hand open to give, Isa. lxv. 24.

(8.) The provision is ready for your entertainment: *All things are ready.* [1.] For our justification. Divine justice is satisfied, an everlasting righteousness is brought in; an act of indemnity has passed the royal assent, and a pardoning office is erected, where all that can make it appear that they are interested in the general act, may sue out their particular charter of pardon. There is a plea ready, an advocate ready; *Behold, he is near that justifieth us,* Isa. l. 8. [2.] For our sanctification. There is a *fulness of grace* in Christ, from which we may *all receive.* The word of grace is ready as the means; the Spirit of grace is ready as the author; every thing ready for the mortifying of sin, the confirming of faith, and our furtherance in holiness. [3.] For our consolation. A well of living water is ready, if we can but see it; peace is left us for a legacy, which we may claim if we will; promises are given for our support, which, if we have not the benefit of, it is our own fault. There is something in the new covenant to obviate every grief, every challenge, every fear, if we will use it. [4.] For our salvation; ready to be revealed, 1 Pet. i. 5. Angels upon the wing are ready to convoy us; Jesus, standing at the Father's right hand, is ready to receive us; the many mansions are ready prepared for us. *All things are ready.*

2. All things are now ready, just now; for, *behold, now is the accepted time,* 2 Cor. vi. 2.

(1.) All things are now readier than they were under the law. Grace then lay more hid than it

does now, when life and immortality are brought to so clear a *light by the gospel.* Christ in a sacrament, is much readier than Christ in a sacrifice.

(2.) All things are now readier than they will be shortly if we trifle away the present season. Now the door of mercy stands open, and we are invited to come and enter; but it will shortly be shut. Now the golden sceptre is held out, and we are called to come and touch the top of it; but it will be otherwise, when the days of our probation are numbered and finished, and he that now says, *Come for a blessing,* will say, *Depart with a curse.*

II. We must call you to come: this is now the call, *Come, come.* The Spirit says, *Come;* and the bride says, *Come*; Rev. xxii. 17. Come to Christ in the first place, and then come to this ordinance. *All things are ready;* be not you unready.

This exhortation must be directed to three sorts of persons. 1. Those who are utterly unmeet for this ordinance, must be exhorted to qualify themselves, and then come. 2. Those who, through grace, are in some measure meet for this ordinance, must be exhorted speedily to enter themselves. 3. Those who have entered themselves, must be exhorted to be constant in their attendance upon it.

1. I must apply myself to those, who by their ignorance, profaneness, irreligion, or reigning worldliness, put a bar in their own way, and may not be admitted to this ordinance. If these lines should fall under the eye of any such, let them know that I have a message to them from God, and I must deliver it, *whether they will hear, or whether they forbear.*

Dost thou live a carnal wicked life, in the service of sin and Satan, without fear, and without God in the world? *Light is come into the world;* and dost thou *love darkness rather,* not knowing, nor desiring to know, the way of the Lord, and the judgment of thy God? Art thou a drunkard, a swearer, a sabbath-breaker? Art thou an adulterer, a fornicator, or unclean person? Art thou a liar, a deceiver, a railer, or a contentious person? Art thou a mere drudge to the world, or a slave to any base lust? Does thy own conscience tell thee, *Thou art the man;* or would it not tell thee so, if thou wouldst suffer it to deal faithfully with thee?

(1.) Know then, that thou hast no part nor lot in this matter. While thou continuest thus, thou art not an invited guest to this feast; the servants dare not bid thee welcome, for they know the Master will not, but will ask thee, *Friend, how camest thou in hither? What hast thou to do to take God's covenant,* and the seal of it, *into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction?* Read that Scripture, and hear God speaking to thee in it, Ps. l. 16, &c. *It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs.* Thou art forbidden to touch these sacred things with thine unhallowed hands; for what communion has Christ with Belial? If thou thrust thyself upon this ordinance, while thou continuest under such a character, instead of doing honour to the Lord Jesus, thou puttest a daring affront upon him, as if he were altogether such a one as thyself: instead of fetching in any true comfort to thy own soul, thou dost but aggravate thy guilt and condemnation; thy heart will be more hardened, thy conscience more seared, Satan's strong holds more fortified, and thou eatest and drinkest judgment to thyself, *not discerning the Lord's body,* not putting a difference between this bread and other bread, but *trampling under foot the blood of the covenant,* as a profane and common thing.

(2.) Know also, that thy condition is very miserable while thou debarrest thyself from this ordinance, and art, as polluted, put from this priesthood. How light soever thou mayst make of it, this is not of thy whoredoms, this is not of thy miseries, a small matter, that thou shuttest thyself out of covenant and communion with the God that made thee, and in effect disclaimest any interest in the Christ that bought thee, as if thou hadst taken the devil's words out of their mouths, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?* And if thou persist in it, so shall thy doom be; thou thyself hast decided it. If now it be as nothing to thee to be separated from the sheep of Christ, and excluded from their green pastures, yet it will be something shortly, when thou shalt accordingly have thy place among the goats, and thy lot with them for ever. Thou thinkest it no loss now to want the cup of blessing; because thou preferrest the cup of drunkenness before it: but what dost thou think of the cup of trembling, that will ere long be put into thy hand, if thou repent not? Thou hast no desire to the wine of the love of God, but choosest the puddle-water of sensual pleasures rather; but canst thou *drink of the wine of the wrath of God,* which shall be *poured out without mixture, in the presence of the Lamb?* Rev. xiv. 10. Thou thinkest thyself easy and happy, that thou art not under the bonds and checks of this ordinance; but dost not thou see thyself extremely miserable, whilst thou hast no right to the blessings and comforts of this ordinance? If there were not another life after this, thou mightest have some colour of blessing thyself thus in thy own wicked way, (and yet, if so, I should see no cause to envy thee,) but, wretched soul, *What wilt thou do in the day of visitation?* Thou that joinest thyself with the sinners in Zion, and choosest them for thy people, *Canst thou dwell with devouring fire? Canst thou inhabit everlasting burnings?* Isa. xxxiii. 14. May God, by his grace, open thine eyes, and give thee to see thy misery and danger before it be too late.

(3.) Yet know, that though thy condition is very sad, it is not desperate. Thou hast yet space given thee to repent, and grace offered thee: O refuse not that grace; slip not that space. Leave thy sins, and

turn to God in Christ; cast away from thee all thy transgressions; make thee a new heart; begin a new life: forsake the foolish and live: live to some purpose, and go in the way of understanding; and then, in Wisdom's name, I am to tell thee, that, notwithstanding all thy former follies, thou art welcome to her house, welcome to her table; freely welcome *to eat of her bread, and to drink of the wine which she hath mingled*, Prov. ix. 4—6. Now, at least, now, at last, *in this thy day, know the things that belong to thy peace.* Be wise for thyself, wise for thy own soul; and cheat not thyself into thy own ruin.

Poor sinner! I pity thee; I would gladly help thee. The Lord pity thee, and help thee! He will, if thou wilt pity thyself, and help thyself. Wilt thou be persuaded by one that wishes thee well, to exchange the service of sin, which is perfect slavery, for the service of God, which is perfect liberty? to exchange the base and sordid pleasures of a sensual life, which level thee with the beasts, for the pure and refined pleasures of a spiritual and divine life, which will raise thee to a communion with the holy angels? I am confident, thou wilt quickly find it a blessed change. *Awake, shake thyself from the dust, loose thyself from the bands of thy neck*, Isa. lii. 2. Give up thyself in sincerity to Jesus Christ, and then come and feast with him. Thou shalt then have in this ordinance the pledges of his favour, assurances of thy reconciliation to him, and acceptance with him: and all shall be well, for it shall end everlastingly well.

2. I must next apply myself to those, who having competent knowledge in the things of God, and making a justifiable profession of Christ's holy religion, cannot be denied admission to this ordinance, and yet deny themselves the benefit and comfort of it. Such are hereby exhorted, without further delay, solemnly to give up their names to the Lord Jesus, in and by this sacrament. Hear Hezekiah's summons to the passover, (2 Chron. xxx. 8.) *Yield yourselves unto the Lord; give the hand unto the Lord*, so the Hebrew phrase is; join yourselves to him in the bond of the covenant, and then exchange the ratifications; *enter into the sanctuary.* First, *Give your own selves unto the Lord*, and then confirm the surrender by the solemnity of this ordinance.

(1.) Let me address this exhortation to young people, who were in their infancy baptized into the Christian faith, and have been well educated in the knowledge of God, and of his ways, and are now grown up to years of discretion; are capable of understanding what they do, of discerning between their right hand and their left in spiritual things, and of choosing and refusing for themselves accordingly; and who have had some good impressions made upon their souls by divine things, and some good inclinations toward God, and Christ, and heaven: such are invited to the table of the Lord, and called upon to come; for *all things are now ready*, and it is not good to delay.

You that are young, will you now be prevailed with to be serious, and resolved for God? You now begin to act with reason, and to put away childish things; you are come to be capable of considering, and you are thinking how you must live in this world; O that I could prevail with you to think first how you may live for another world! I am not persuading you to come rashly and carelessly to the Lord's table, as when you were little children you went to church for fashion's sake, and because your parents took you with them: but I am persuading you now, in the days of your youth, from a deep conviction of your duty and interest, and a serious concern about your souls and eternity, intelligently, deliberately, and with a fixed resolution, to join yourselves unto the Lord in an everlasting covenant, and then to come and seal that covenant at his table. You are now come to the turning time of life, to those years when ordinary people fix for their whole lives: I beg of you, for Christ's sake, and for your own precious souls' sake, that now you will turn to God, and fix for him, and set your faces heavenwards.

Come, and let us reason together a little; and I beseech you to reason with yourselves.

[1.] Are you not by baptism given up unto the Lord? Are not the vows of God already upon you? Is not your baptism your honour? Is it not your comfort? It is so: but you are unworthy of that honour, unworthy of that comfort, if when you arrive to a capacity for it, you decline doing that for yourselves, which was done for you when you were baptized. How can you expect that your parents' dedication of you to God then, should avail you any thing, if you do not now make it your own act and deed? Might not your backwardness to confirm the covenant, by this solemn taking of it upon yourselves, be construed an implicit renunciation of it, and be adjudged a forfeiture of the benefit of it? I believe, that you would not for a world disclaim your baptism, nor disown the obligation of it: you will not, I am confident you will not, throw off your Christianity, nor join with those that say, *We have no part in David, no inheritance in the Son of David.* Come then, and ratify your baptism; either let those articles be cancelled, or, now you are of age, come and seal them yourselves. Either stand to the bargain, or say you will not: either be Christians complete, Christians by your own consent, or not Christians at all. The matter is plain: the bonds of both the sacraments are the same; you are under the bonds of the one, which I know you dare not renounce, therefore come under the bonds of the other. Consider; take advice; speak your minds.

[2.] How can you dispose of yourselves better now in the days of your youth, than to give up yourselves unto the Lord? These are your choosing days;

you are now choosing other settlements, in callings, relations, and places of abode; why should you not now choose this settlement in the service of God, which will make all your other settlements comfortable? Choose you therefore this day whom you will serve, God or the world, Christ or the flesh; and be persuaded to bring the matter to a good issue: determine the debate in that happy resolve which the people of Israel came to, when they said, *Nay, but we will serve the Lord*, Josh. xxiv. 21. Why should not he, who is the first and the best, have the first and the best of your days? which, I am sure, you cannot bestow better, and which it is both your duty and interest to bestow thus.

[3.] What will you get by delaying it? You intend, some time or other, solemnly to give up yourselves unto the Lord in this ordinance, and you hope then to receive the benefit and comfort of it; but the tempter tells you, it is all in good time; and you dismiss your convictions, as Felix did Paul, (Acts xxiv. 25.) with a promise, that *at a more convenient season* you *will send for* them. You are ready to say, as the people did, (Hag. i. 2.) *The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.* You think you must build your own first; and what comes of those delays? Satan, ere you are aware, gets advantage by them, and cozens you of all your time, by cozening you of the present time. Your hearts are in danger of being hardened; the Spirit of grace may hereby be provoked to withdraw, and strive no more; and what will become of you, if death surprise you before your great work be done?

[4.] What better provision can you make for a comfortable life in this world, than by doing this great work betimes? You are setting out in a world of temptations, more than you think of; and how can you better arm yourselves against them, than by coming up to that fixed resolution, which will silence the tempter, with, *Get thee behind me, Satan?* When Naomi saw that Ruth was stedfastly resolved, she left off speaking to her. The counsel of the ungodly will not be so apt to court you to the way of sinners, and the seat of the scornful, when you have vowed yourselves set out in the way of God, and seated already at the table of the Lord. You are launching forth into a stormy sea; and this will furnish you with a blast. Your way lies through a vale of tears, and therefore you have need to be well stocked with comforts: and where can you stock yourselves better, than in an ordinance, which seals all the promises of the new covenant, and conveys all the happiness included in them.

And how shall I gain this point with young people? Will they be persuaded betimes to resolve for God and heaven? *Remember thy Creator*, remember thy Redeemer, *in the days of thy youth;* and then it is to be hoped thou wilt not forget them, nor will they forget thee, when thou art old.

Let me address this exhortation to those, whose inclinations are good, and their conversation blameless; but their desires are weak, and their affections cool and indifferent, and therefore they keep off from this ordinance. This is the character of very many; who are honest, but they want zeal and resolution enough to bring them under this engagement. They can give no tolerable reason why they do not come to the sacrament. It may be they have bought a piece of ground or a yoke of oxen; their hands are full of the world, and they are too busy; they are unsettled, or not settled to their minds; and this makes them uneasy, and they hope that therefore they may be excused. But the true reason is, they are slothful and dilatory, and the things that remain are ready to die; they cannot find in their hearts to take pains, the pains they know they must take in a work of this nature; they are not willing to be bound to that strictness, care and watchfulness, which this sacrament will oblige them to; they will be as they are, and make no advances: they have *hid their hands in their bosom, and it grieves them to bring it to their mouth again;* that is, they will not be at the pains to feed themselves, Prov. xxvi. 15.

What shall we say to rouse these sluggards; persuade them to press forward in their profession, *forgetting the things that are behind*, and not resting in them? Hear, ye virgins, who slumber and sleep, and let your lamps lie by neglected; hear the cry, *Behold, the bridegroom cometh!* cometh in this ordinance, to espouse you to himself; stir up yourselves, and go ye forth to meet him. Hear, ye servants, ye slothful servants, your master's voice; *How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?* Is it not high time to awake out of sleep, and apply thyself more closely and vigorously to the business of a Christian? Is it not far in the day with thee, perhaps the sixth hour, or further on; dinner-time; and yet, hast thou no appetite to this spiritual feast, to which thou art invited? Thou hast lost a great deal of time already; should not thou now think of redeeming time for thy soul and eternity? And how can that be better done, than by improving such advantageous opportunities as sacraments are? Hear that call to careless and trifling professors, as if thou thyself wert called by name in it, (Eph. v. 14.) *Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

First, Consider what an affront you put upon the Lord Jesus, while you live in the neglect of this ordinance. You contemn his authority, who has given this command to all his disciples, (and among them you reckon yourselves,) *Do this in remembrance of me.* And is it nothing to live in the omission of a known duty, and in disobedience to an express precept? Is the law of Christ nothing with you? If you know to do good, and do it not, is it not sin? Is not this as much an ordinance of Christ, as the word

and prayer? You would not live without them; nor would you be yourselves, or suffer your children to be, without baptism; why then is this neglected? You arraign Christ's wisdom; he instituted this ordinance for your spiritual good, your strength and nourishment; and you think you need it not, you can do as well without it. This appointment you think might have been spared; that is, you think yourselves wiser than Christ. You likewise hereby put a great slight upon the grace and love of Christ, which have made such rich provision for you, and given you so kind an invitation to it.

This is excellently well urged in the public form of invitation to the holy communion, which warns those who are profligate to keep away, in these words: "If any of you be a blasphemer of God, an hinderer or slanderer of his word, an adulterer, or in malice or envy, or in any other grievous crime; repent you of your sins, or else come not to that holy table; lest after the taking of that holy sacrament, the devil enter into you, as he entered into Judas, and fill you full of all iniquities, and bring you to the destruction both of body and soul."

And the other exhortation stirreth up those who are negligent, in these words; "Ye know how grievous and unkind a thing it is, when a man hath prepared a rich feast, decked his table with all kind of provision, so that there lacketh nothing but the guests to sit down; and yet they who are called (without any cause) most unthankfully refuse to come: which of you, in such a case, would not be moved? Who would not think it a great injury, and wrong done unto him? Wherefore, most dearly beloved in Christ, take ye good heed lest ye, withdrawing yourselves from this holy supper, provoke God's indignation against you. It is an easy matter for a man to say, I will not communicate, because I am otherwise hindered with worldly business; but such excuses are not so easily accepted and allowed before God. If any man say, I am a grievous sinner, and therefore am afraid to come: wherefore then do ye not repent and amend? When God calleth you, are ye not ashamed to say ye will not come? When ye should return to God, will ye excuse yourselves, and say you are not ready? Consider earnestly with yourselves, how little such feigned excuses will avail before God. They that refused the feast in the gospel because they had bought a farm, or would try their yokes of oxen, or because they were married, were not excused, but counted unworthy of the heavenly feast."

Secondly, Consider what an injury you hereby do to your own souls. You know not what you lose while you live in the neglect of this ordinance. If you be deprived of opportunities for it, that is an affliction, but not a sin, and in such a case, while you lament the want of it, and keep up desires after it, and improve the other helps you have, you may expect that God will make up the want some other way; though we are tied to ordinances, God is not: but if you have opportunities for it and yet neglect it, and when it is to be administered, turn your backs upon it, you serve your souls so as you would not serve your bodies; for you deny them their necessary food, and the soul that is starved is as certainly murdered as the soul that is stabbed, and its blood shall be required at thy hands. No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, yet thou deniest thy own soul that which would nourish and cherish it, and thereby showest how little thou lovest it. If thou didst duly attend on this ordinance, and improve it aright, thou wouldst find it of unspeakable use to thee, for the strengthening of thy faith, the exciting of holy affections in thee, and thy furtherance in every good word and work. So that, to thy neglect of it thou hast reason to impute all thy weakness, and all the strength and prevalency of thy temptations, all the unsteadiness of thy resolutions, and all the unevenness of thy conversation. How can we expect the desired end, while we persist in the neglect of the appointed means?

Think not to say within yourselves, we are not clean, surely we are not clean, therefore we come not to the feast. If you are not, why are you not? Is there not a fountain opened? have you not been many a time called to wash you and make you clean? You are unready, and therefore you excuse yourselves from coming; but is not your unreadiness your sin? And will one sin justify you in another? Can a man's offence be his defence? You think you are not serious enough, nor devout enough, nor regular enough in your conversation, to come to the sacrament; and perhaps you are not, but why are ye not? What hinders you? Is any more required to fit you for the sacrament, than is necessary to fit you for heaven? And dare you live a day in that condition, in which, if you die, you will be rejected and excluded as unmeet for heaven? Be persuaded therefore to put on the wedding-garment, and then come to the wedding-feast. Instead of making your unreadiness an argument against coming to this ordinance, make the necessity of your coming to this ordinance an argument against your unreadiness. Say not, I am too light and airy, too much addicted to sports and pleasures, am linked too close in vain and carnal company, or plunged too deep in worldly care and business, and therefore I must be excused from attendance, for this is to make ill worse; but say rather, it is necessary that I come to the Lord's supper, and come in a right manner; my soul withers and languishes, dies and perishes, if I do not, and therefore I must break off this vain and sensual course of life, which unfits me for, and indisposes me to, that ordinance; therefore I must disentangle myself from that society, and disentangle

myself from that incumbrance, whatever it is, which cools pious affections, and quenches that coal. Shake off that, whatever it is, which comes between you and the comfort and benefit of this ordinance. Delay no longer in a matter of such vast moment, but speedily come to this resolution, (Ps. cxix. 115.) *Depart from me, ye evil doers,* and evil doings, *for I will keep the commandments of my God.*

Thirdly, Let me address this exhortation to those whose desires are strong toward the Lord, and toward the remembrance of his name in this ordinance; but they are timorous, and are kept from it by prevailing fears. This is the case of many, who, we hope, *fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servant;* but they *walk in darkness, and have no light,* (Isa. l. 10.) who follow Christ, but they follow him trembling. Ask them why they do not come to this sacrament, and they will tell you they dare not come, they are unworthy; they have no faith, no comfort in God, no hope of heaven; and therefore if they should come, they should *eat and drink judgment to themselves.* They find not in themselves that fixedness of thought, that flame of pious and devout affections, which they think should be; and because they cannot come as they should, they think it better to stay away. What is said for the conviction and terror of hypocrites and presumptuous sinners, notwithstanding our care to distinguish between the precious and the vile, they misapply to themselves; and so the *heart of the righteous is made sad,* which should not be made sad. We are commanded to *strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; to say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not,* Isa. xxxv. 3, 4. But wherewith shall we comfort such, whose souls many times refuse to be comforted? If we tell them of the infinite mercy and goodness of God, the merit and righteousness of Christ, the precious promise of the covenant, their jealous hearts reply, all this is nothing to them; the Lord they think has forsaken them, their God has forgotten them, and utterly separated them from his people: *As vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to those heavy hearts,* Prov. xxv. 20.

But O ye of little faith, who thus doubt, would you not be made whole? would not you be strengthened? Is it not a desirable thing to attain to such a peace and serenity of mind, that you may come with a humble, holy boldness to this precious ordinance?

For your help then, take these two cautions:

1. Judge not amiss concerning yourselves. As it is a damning mistake common among the children of men, to think their spiritual state and condition to be good, when it is very bad, for *there is that maketh himself rich, and yet hath nothing;* so it is a disquieting mistake, common among the children of God, to think their spiritual state and condition to be bad, when it is very good, for there is that *maketh himself poor, and yet hath great riches,* Prov. xiii. 7. But it is a mistake, which I hope by the grace of God may be rectified: and though a full assurance is rarely attained to, and we ought always to keep a godly jealousy over ourselves, and a holy fear, lest we seem to come short; yet such good hope through grace, as will enable us to rejoice in God, and go on cheerfully in our work and duty, is what we should aim at, and labour after, and which we ought not to deny ourselves the comfort of, when God by his grace hath given us cause for it. Whenever there is such a serious concern about the soul and another world as produces a holy fear, even that gives ground for a lively hope.

You think you have no grace, because you are not yet perfect; but, why should you look for that on earth, which is to be had in heaven only? A child will at length be a man, though as yet he *think as a child, and speak as a child.* Blessed Paul himself had not yet attained, nor was already perfect. Gold in the ore is truly valuable, though it be not yet refined from its dross. *Despise not the day of small things,* for God doth not, Zech. iv. 10. Deny not that power and grace which hath brought you out of the land of Egypt, though you be not yet come to Canaan.

You think you have no grace because you have not that sensible joy and comfort which you would have; but those are spiritually enlightened who see their own deformity, as well as those who see Christ's beauty. The child that cries, is as sure alive as the child that laughs. Complaints of spiritual burthens are the language of the new nature, as well as praises for spiritual blessings.

Drooping soul! thou art under grace, and not under the law, and therefore judge of thyself by the measure of grace, and not by that of the law. Thou hast to do with one that is willing to make the best of thee, and will accept the willingness of the spirit, and pardon the weakness of the flesh. Take thy work before thee therefore, and let not the penitent, humble sense of thy own follies and corruptions eclipse the evidence of God's graces in thee, nor let thy diffidence of thyself shake thy confidence in Christ. Thank God for what he has done for thee; let him have the praise of it, and then thou shalt have the joy of it. And this is certain, either thou hast an interest in Christ, or thou mayst have. If thou doubt therefore whether Christ be thine, put the matter out of doubt, by a present consent to him: I take Christ to be mine, wholly, only, and for ever mine; Christ upon his own terms, Christ upon any terms.

2. Judge not amiss concerning this ordinance. It was instituted for your comfort, let it not be a terror to you; it was instituted for your satisfaction, let it not be your amazement. Most of the messages from heaven which we meet with in Scripture, delivered

by angels, began with, *Fear not*, and particularly that to the woman who attended Christ's sepulchre, (Matt. xxviii. 5.) *Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus.* And do not ye seek him? Be not afraid then. Chide yourselves for, chide yourselves out of, these disquieting fears, which steal away your spear, and your cruse of water, (1 Sam. xxvi. 12.) and rob you both of your strength and of your comfort.

You say you are unworthy to come. So were all that ever came, not worthy to be called children, nor to eat of the children's bread. In yourselves there is no worthiness, but is there none in Christ? Is not he worthy? And is not he yours? Have you not chosen him. Let faith in his mediation silence all your fears, and dismiss their clamours with that, *But do thou answer, Lord, for me.*

You say you dare not come, lest you should eat and drink judgment to yourselves; but ordinarily, those that most fear that, are least in danger of it. That dreadful declaration was not intended to drive men from the sacrament, but to drive them from their sins. Can you not say, that through grace you hate sin, you strive against it, you earnestly desire to be delivered from it; then certainly your league with it is broken; though the Canaanites be in the land, you do not make marriages with them. Come, then, and seal the covenant with God, and you shall be so far from eating and drinking judgment to yourselves, that you shall eat and drink life and comfort to yourselves.

You dare not come to this sacrament; yet you dare pray, you dare hear the word: I know you dare not neglect either the one or the other. And what is this sacrament, but the doing the same thing by a visible sign, which is and ought to be done in effect by the word and prayer? Nor ought we to put such an amazing distance between this and other ordinances. If we pray in hypocrisy, our *prayers are an abomination;* if we hear the word and reject it, it is *a savour of death unto death:* shall we therefore not pray, nor hear? God forbid. Commanded duty must be done; appointed means must be used; that which unfits and hinders us must be removed, and we must in sincerity give up ourselves to serve God; do as well as we can, and be sorry we can do no better; and then, *having a High Priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities,* we may *come boldly to the throne of grace,* and to this table of grace.

You say that your faith is weak, your pious affections are cool and low, your resolutions unsteady, and therefore you keep away from this ordinance; that is as if a man should say, he is sick, and therefore he will take no physic; he is empty, and therefore he will take no food; he is faint, and therefore he will take no cordials. This ordinance was appointed chiefly for the relief of such as you are; for the strengthening of faith, the inflaming of holy love, and the confirming of good resolutions. In God's name therefore, use it for those purposes: pine not away in thy weakness, while God has ordained thee strength; perish not for hunger, while there is bread enough in thy Father's house, and to spare; die not for thirst, while there is a well of water by thee.

3. This chapter must conclude with an exhortation to those who have *given up their names to the Lord in this ordinance,* and sometimes sealed their covenant with God in it, but they come very seldom to it, and allow themselves in the neglect and omission of it. Frequent opportunities they have for it; stated meals provided for them; the table spread and furnished. Others come, and they are invited, but time after time they let it slip, and turn their backs upon it, framing to themselves some sorry excuse or other to shift it off.

Shall I desire such to consider seriously,

(1.) How powerful the engagements are which we lie under, to be frequent and constant in our attendance on the Lord in this ordinance. It is plainly intimated in the institution, that the solemnity is to be often repeated; for it is said, *Do this as often as ye drink it in remembrance of me.* Baptism is to be administered but once, because it is the door of admission, and we are but once to enter by that door; but the Lord's supper is the table in Christ's family, at which we are to *eat bread continually,* alluding to 2 Sam. ix. 13. The law of Moses prescribed how often the passover must be celebrated, under very severe penalties: but the gospel being a dispensation of greater love and liberty, only appoints us to observe its passover often, and then leaves it to our own ingenuity and pious affections, to fix the time, and consider how often. If a deliverance out of Egypt merited an annual commemoration, surely our redemption by Christ merits a more frequent one, especially since we need not to go up to Jerusalem to do it. If this *tree of life,* which *bears more than twelve manner of fruits, yieldeth her fruit to us every month,* (Rev. xxii. 2.) I know not why we should neglect it any month. Where there is the truth of grace, this ordinance ought to be improved, which, by virtue of the divine appointment, has a moral influence upon our growth in grace. The great Master of the family would have none of his children missing at meal-time.

While we are often sinning, we have need to be often receiving the seal of our pardon; because, though the sacrifice be perfect, and *able to perfect for ever them which are sanctified,* so that it needs never to be repeated, yet the application of it being perfect, *ad modum recipientis—as to the mode of reception,* has need to be often made afresh: the *worshippers, though once purged,* having still *conscience of sins* in this defective state, (Heb. x. 2.) they must often have recourse to the fountain opened for the purging of their consciences from the pollutions contracted daily by dead works, to serve the living God, Heb.

ix. 14. Even he who is washed thus needs to wash his feet, or he cannot be easy, John xiii. 10.

While we are often in temptation, we have need to be often renewing our covenants with God, and fetching strength from heaven for our spiritual conflicts. Frequent fresh recruits, and fresh supplies, are necessary for those that are so closely besieged, and so vigorously attacked, by a potent adversary. He improves all advantages against us; therefore it is our wisdom not to neglect any advantage against him, and particularly not this ordinance.

While we are often labouring under great coldness and deadness of affection toward divine things, we need often to use those means which are proper to kindle that holy fire and keep it burning. We find by sad experience, that our coal from the altar is soon quenched, our thoughts grow flat and low, and unconcerned about the other world, by being so much conversant with this; we have therefore need to be often celebrating the memorial of Christ's death and sufferings, than which nothing can be more affecting to a Christian, nor more proper to raise and refine the thoughts: it is a subject that more than once has made disciples' hearts burn within them, Luke xxiv. 32.

Much of our communion with God is kept up by the renewing of our covenant with him, and the frequent interchanging of solemn assurances. It is not superfluous, but highly serviceable both to our holiness and our comfort, often to present ourselves to God as living sacrifices alive from the dead. It is a token of Christ's favour to us, and must not be slighted, that he not only admits, but invites, us often to repeat this solemnity, and is ready again to seal to us, if we be but ready to seal to him. Jonathan therefore caused David to swear again, because he loved him, 1 Sam. xx. 17. And an honest mind will not startle at assurances. Fast bind, fast find.

(2.) Consider how poor the excuses are with which men commonly justify themselves in this neglect. They let slip many an opportunity of attending upon the Lord in this ordinance: why do they?

Perhaps they are so full of worldly business, that they have neither time nor a heart for that close application to the work of a sacrament which they know is requisite: the shop must be attended, accounts must be kept, debts owing them must be got in, and debts they owe must be paid: it may be, some affair of more than ordinary difficulty and importance is upon their hands, which they are in care about the issue of, and till that be over, they think it not amiss to withdraw from the Lord's supper. And is this thy excuse? Weigh it in the balances of the sanctuary then, and consider; is any business more necessary than thy doing of thy duty to God, and the working out of thy own salvation? Thou art careful and troubled about many things, but is not this the *one thing needful*, to which every thing else should be obliged to give way? Dost not thou think thy worldly business would prosper and succeed the better, for thy care about the main matter? If it were left at the bottom of the hill while thou comest hither to worship, mightest thou not return to it with greater hopes to speed in it? And dost thou not spare time from thy business for things of much less moment than this? Thou wilt find time, as busy as thou art, to eat and drink, and sleep, and converse with thy friends; and is not the nourishment of thy soul, is not repose in God, and communion with him, much more necessary? I dare say, thou wilt own it is.

If indeed thou canst not allow so much time for solemn secret worship in preparation for this ordinance, and reflection upon it, as others do, and as thou thyself sometimes hast done, and wouldst do, yet let not that keep thee from the ordinance; thy heart may be in heaven, when thy hands are about the world; and a serious Christian may, through God's assistance, do a great deal of work in a little time. If the hours that should be thus employed, be trifled away in that which is idle and impertinent, it is our sin; but if they be forced out of our hands by necessary and unavoidable avocations, it is but our affliction, and ought not to hinder us from the ordinance. The less time we have for preparation, the more close and intent we should be in the ordinance itself, and so make up the loss. A welcome guest never comes unseasonably to one that always keeps a good house.

But if indeed thy heart is so set upon the world, so filled with the cares of it, and so eager in the pursuits of it, that thou hast no mind to the comforts of this ordinance, no spirit nor life for the business of it, surely thou hast left thy first love, and thou hast most need of all to come to this ordinance for the recovery of the ground thou hast lost. Dost thou think that the inordinacy of thy affections to the world will be a passable excuse for the coldness of thy affection to the Lord Jesus? Make haste, and get this matter mended, and conclude that thy worldly business then becomes a snare to thee, and thy concern about it is excessive and inordinate, and an ill symptom, when it prevails to keep thee back from this ordinance.

Perhaps some unhappy quarrels with relations or neighbours, some vexatious law-suit they are engaged in, or some hot words that have past, are pleaded as an excuse for withdrawing from the communion. They are not in charity with others, or others are not in charity with them, and they have been told, (and it is undoubtedly true,) that it is better to stay away than come in malice; but then the malice is so far from being an excuse for the staying away, that, really, the staying away is an aggravation of the malice. The law in this case is very express, *If thy brother hath aught against thee*, that is, if thy conscience tell thee that thou art the party offending, do not therefore leave the altar, but

leave the gift before the altar, as a pawn for thy return, and *go first and be reconciled to thy brother*, by confessing thy fault, begging his pardon, and making satisfaction for the wrong done, *and then* be sure to *come and offer thy gift*, Matt. v. 24. But on the other hand, if ye have aught against him, and if thou be the party offended, then forgive. Lay aside all uncharitable thoughts, angry resentments, and desire of revenge, and be in readiness to confirm and evidence your love to those who have injured you; and then, if they will not be reconciled to you, yet, your being reconciled to them, is sufficient to remove that bar in your way to this ordinance. In short, strife and contention, as far as it is our fault, must be truly repented of, and the sincerity of our repentance evidenced by amendment of life, and then it needs not hinder us; as far as it is our cross, it must be patiently borne, and we must not be disturbed in our minds by it, and then it needs not hinder us. And that law-suit which cannot be carried on without malice and hatred of our brother, had better be let fall, whatever we lose. Law is costly indeed, when it is followed at the expense of love and charity.

But, *(Lastly,)* if the true reason of your absenting yourselves so often from the Lord's supper be, that you are not willing to take that pains with your own hearts, and to lay that restraint upon yourselves both before and after, which you know you must if you come; if indeed you are not willing to have your thoughts so closely fixed, your consciences so strictly examined, and your engagements against sin so strongly confirmed, as they will be by this ordinance; if this be your case, you have reason to fear that the things which remain are ready to die, and your works are not found filled up before God. It is a sad sign of spiritual decay, and it is time for thee to remember whence thou art fallen, and to repent, and do thy first works. Time was when thou hadst a dear love to this ordinance, when thou longedst for the returns of it, and it was to thee more than thy necessary food: such was the kindness of thy youth, such the love of thine espousals; but it is otherwise now. Do you now sit loose to it? Are you indifferent whether you enjoy the benefit of it or no? Can you contentedly live without it? You have reason to fear lest you are of those who are drawing back to perdition. Having *begun in the Spirit*, will you now *end in the flesh?* What iniquity have you found in this ordinance, that you have thus forsaken it? Has it been as a barren wilderness to you, or as waters that fail? If ever it were so, was it not your own fault? Return, therefore, ye backsliding children, be persuaded to return; return to God, return to your duty, to this duty; be close and constant to it as you were formerly, for, I dare say, *then it was better with you than now*, Hos. ii. 7.

Those who by the grace of God do still keep up a love for this ordinance, should contrive their affairs so, as (if possible) not to miss any of their stated opportunities for it. Thomas, by being once absent from a meeting of the disciples, lost all that joyful sight of Christ which the rest then had. It is good to have a *nail in God's holy place*, Ezra ix. 8. Blessed are they that dwell in his house; not those who only sojourn there as a wayfaring man, who turns aside to tarry but for a night, but those who take it for their home, their rest for ever.

Yet, if God by his providence prevent our enjoyment of an expected opportunity of this kind at any time, though we must lament it as an afflictive disappointment, and take that occasion to humble ourselves for our former unprofitableness, yet we may comfort ourselves with this, that though God has tied us to ordinances, he has not tied himself to them, but by his grace can make providences work instead of them, for the good of our souls. It is better to be like David, under a forced absence from God's altars, and have our hearts there, (Ps. lxxxiv. 1, 2.) than to be like Doeg, present, under a force detained before the Lord, (1 Sam. xxi. 7.) and the heart going after covetousness. It is better to be lamenting and longing in the want of ordinances, than loathing in the fulness of them.

CHAPTER IV.

HELPS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION BEFORE WE COME TO THIS ORDINANCE.

How earnest soever we are in pressing people to join themselves to the Lord in this ordinance, we would not have them to be *rash with their mouths*, nor *hasty to utter any thing before God*, Eccl. v. 2. It must be done, but it must be done with great caution and consideration. Bounds must be set about the mount on which God will descend, and we must address ourselves to solemn services with a solemn pause. It is not enough that we seek God in a due ordinance, but we must seek him in a due order, (1 Chron. xv. 13.) that is, we must *stir up ourselves to take hold on him*, Isa. lxiv. 7. *Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel*, Amos iv. 12. Those who labour under such an habitual indisposition to communion with God, and are liable to so many actual discomposures as we are conscious to ourselves of, have need to take pains with their hearts, and should, with a very serious thought and steady resolution, engage them to approach unto God.

Now the duty most expressly required in our preparation for the ordinance of the Lord's supper, is that of self-examination. The apostle, when he would rectify the abuses which had sullied the beauty of this sacrament in the church of Corinth, pre-

scribes this great duty as necessary to the due management of it, and preservative against sharing in the guilt of such corruptions; (1 Cor. xi. 28.) *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.* He who desires the Lord's supper (to allude to that of the apostle, 1 Tim. iii. 3.) desires a good work, but as it follows there, *v.* 10. *Let these also first be proved,* let them *prove their ownselves,* (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) and so let them come; so upon that condition, so with that preparation, (as Ps. xxvi. 6.) *I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I compass thine altar.* In this method we must proceed.

*Let a man examine himself—*δοκιμαζετο. The word signifies either to *prove* or to *approve;* and appoints such an approbation of ourselves, as is the result of a strict and close probation, and such a probation of ourselves, as issues in a comfortable approbation, according to the tenor of the new covenant. It is so to prove ourselves, as to approve ourselves to God in our integrity, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee;* so as to appeal to God's inquiry, *Examine me, O Lord, and prove me,* Ps. xxvi. 2.

To examine ourselves, is to discourse with our own hearts; it is to converse with ourselves: a very rational, needful, and improving piece of conversation. When we go about this work, we must retire from the world, sit alone and keep silence; we must retire into our own bosoms, and consider ourselves, reflect upon ourselves, inquire concerning ourselves, enter into a solemn conference with our own souls, and be anxious concerning their state. Those who are ignorant, and cannot do this, or careless and secure, and will not do it, are unmeet for this ordinance.

Shall I illustrate this by some similitudes?

1. We must examine ourselves as metal is examined by the touchstone, whether it be right or counterfeit. We have a show of religion, but are we what we seem to be? are we current coin, or only washed over, as *a potsherd covered with silver dross?* Prov. xxvi. 23. Hypocrites are reprobate silver, Jer. vi. 30. True Christians, when they are tried, come forth as gold, Job xxiii. 10. The word of God is the touchstone by which we must try ourselves. Can I through grace answer the characters which the Scripture gives of those whom Christ will own and save? It is true, that the best coin has an allay, which will be allowed for in this state of imperfection; but the question is, Is it sterling? Is it standard? Though I am conscious to myself there are remainders of a baser metal; yet, is love to God the predominant principle? are the interests of Christ the prevailing interests in my soul, above those of the world and the flesh? I bear God's image and superscription; is it of God's own stamping? Is it upon an honest and good heart? It is a matter of great consequence, and in which it is very common, but very dangerous, to be imposed upon, and therefore we have need to be jealous over ourselves. When we are bid to *try the spirits,* (1 John iv. 1.) it is supposed we must begin with our own, and try them first.

2. We must examine ourselves as a malefactor is examined by the magistrate, that we may find out what we have done amiss. We are all criminals, that is readily acknowledged by each of us, because it is owned to be the common character, *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* we are all prisoners to the divine justice, from the arrests of which we cannot escape, and to the processes of which we lie obnoxious: being thus in custody, that we may not be judged of the Lord, we are commanded to *judge ourselves,* 1 Cor. xi. 31. We must inquire into the particular crimes we have been guilty of, and their circumstances, that we may discover more sins, and more of the evil of them, than at first we were aware of. Dig into the wall, as Ezekiel did, (*ch.* viii. 8.) and see the secret abominations of your own hearts; look further, as he did, (*v.* 13, 15.) and you will see more and greater. The heart is deceitful, and has many devices, many evasions, to shift off convictions; we have therefore need to be very particular and strict in examining them, and to give them that charge which Joshua gave to Achan, when he had him under examination; (Josh. vii. 19.) *Give glory unto the God of Israel, and make confession unto him; tell me now what hast thou done, hide it not from me.*

3. We must examine ourselves as a copy is examined by the original, to find out the errata, that they may be corrected. As Christians we profess to be the epistles of Christ, (2 Cor. iii. 3.) to have his law and love transcribed into our hearts and lives; but we are concerned to inquire whether it be a true copy, by comparing ourselves with the gospel of Christ, whether our affections and conversation be conformable to it, and such as become it. How far do I agree with it, and where are the disagreements? What mistakes are there, what blots, and what omissions? That what has been amiss may be pardoned, and what is amiss may be rectified. In this examination, faith must read the original, and then let conscience read the copy; and be sure that it reads true, because there will shortly be a review.

4. We must examine ourselves as a candidate is examined that stands for preferment. Inquiry is made into his fitness for the preferment he stands for. We are candidates for heaven, the highest preferment, to be with our God king and priest. We stand for a place at the wedding-feast: have we on the wedding-garment? Are we made meet for the inheritance? What knowledge have we? What grace? Are we skilled in the mystery we make pro-

fession of? What improvement have we made in the school of Christ? What proficiency in divine learning? What testimonials have we to produce? Can we show the seal of the Spirit of promise? Have we a ticket? If not, we shall not be welcome.

5. We must examine ourselves as a wife is examined for the levying of a fine for the confirming of a covenant. It is a common usage of the law. A covenant is to be ratified between God and our souls in the Lord's supper: do we freely and cheerfully consent to that covenant; not merely through the constraint of natural conscience, but because it is a covenant highly reasonable in itself, and unspeakably advantageous to us? Am I willing to make this surrender of myself unto the Lord? Am I freely willing; not because I cannot help it, but because I cannot better dispose of myself? We must examine ourselves as Joshua examined the people, whether they would choose to serve the Lord or no? (Josh. xxiv. 15, &c.) and the product of the inquiry must be a fixed resolution, like theirs, *v.* 21. *Nay, but we will serve the Lord.*

6. We must examine ourselves as a wayfaring man is examined concerning his business. Our trifling hearts have need to be examined as vagrants, whence they come, whither they go, and what they would have. We are coming to a great ordinance, and are concerned to inquire what is our end in coming? What brings us hither? Is it only custom or company that draws us to this duty, or is it a spiritual appetite to the dainties of heaven? Our hearts must be catechized as Elijah was, (1 Kings xix. 9.) *What dost thou here, Elijah?* That we may give a good account to God of the sincerity of our intentions in our approach to him, we ought before we come, to call ourselves to an account concerning them.

More particularly, to examine ourselves, is to put serious questions to ourselves, and to our own hearts; and to prosecute them till a full and true answer be given to them. These six questions (among others) it is good for each of us to put to ourselves in our preparation to the Lord's supper, both at our first admission, and in our after-approaches to it. What am I? What have I done? What am I doing? What progress do I make? What do I want? And what shall I resolve to do?

I. Inquire, What am I? It needs no inquiry, but it calls for serious consideration; that I am a reasonable creature, lower than the angels, higher than the brutes, capable of knowing, serving, and glorifying God in this world, and of seeing and enjoying him in a better. I am made for my Creator, and am accountable to him: this I am; God grant that I may not have such a noble and excellent being in vain! But here this question has another meaning. All the children of men, by the fall of the first Adam, are become sinners; some of the children of men, by the grace of the second Adam, are become saints; some remain in a state of nature, others are brought into a state of grace; some are sanctified, others unsanctified: this is a distinction which divides all mankind, and which will last when all other divisions and subdivisions shall be no more; for according to this, will the everlasting state be determined. Now when I ask, What am I? the meaning is, which of these two do I belong to? Am I in the favour of God, or under his wrath and curse? Am I a servant of God, or a slave to the world and the flesh? Look forwards, and ask, whither am I going? to heaven or hell? If I should die this night, (and I am not sure to live till to-morrow,) whither would death bring me? where would death lodge me? in endless light or in utter darkness? Am I in the narrow way that leads to life, or in the broad way that leads to destruction? I am called a Christian, but am I a Christian indeed? have I a nature answerable to the name?

It highly concerns us all to be strict and impartial in this inquiry: what will it avail us to deceive ourselves? God cannot be imposed upon, though men may. It is undoubtedly true, if we be not saints on earth, we shall never be saints in heaven. It is not a small thing which I am now persuading thee to inquire about; no, it is thy life, thy precious life, the life of thy soul, thine eternal life, which depends upon it. Multitudes have been deceived in this matter, whose way seemed right, but the end of it proved the ways of death: and after they had long flattered themselves in their own eyes, they perished at last, with a lie in their right hand. We also are in danger of being deceived, and therefore have need to be jealous over ourselves with a godly jealousy; and being told that many who eat and drink in Christ's presence, will be disowned and rejected by him in the great day, we have each of us more reason to subject ourselves than the disciples had, and to ask, *Lord, is it I?*

But it especially concerns us to insist upon this inquiry, when we draw near to God in the Lord's supper. It is children's bread that is there prepared; am I a child? If not, I have no part nor lot in the matter. I am there to seal a covenant with God, but if I never made the covenant, never in sincerity consented to it, I shall put the seal to a blank, nay, to a curse.

Therefore that I may discover, in some measure, what my spiritual state is, let me seriously inquire,

1. What choice have I made? Have I chosen God's favour for my felicity and satisfaction, or the pleasures of sense, and the wealth of this world? Since I came to be capable of acting for myself, and discerning between my right-hand and my left, have I made religion my deliberate choice? Have I chosen God for my portion, Christ for my master, the Scripture for my rule, holiness for my way, and heaven for my home and everlasting rest? If not,

how can I expect to have what I never chose? If my covenant with the world and the flesh (which certainly amounts to a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell) be still in force, and never yet broken, never yet disannulled; what have I to do to take God's covenant, and the seal of it, into my mouth? But if I have refused Satan's offers of the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, and given the preference to the gospel offer of a kingdom in the other world, and the glory of that, I have reason to bless the Lord, who gave me that counsel, (Ps. xvi. 7.) and to hope, that he who has directed me to choose the way of truth, will enable me to stick to his testimonies, Ps. cxix. 30, 31.

2. What change have I experienced? When I ask, Am I a child of wrath, or a child of love? I must remember that I was by nature a child of wrath; now, can I witness to a change? though I cannot exactly tell the time, and manner, and steps of that change; yet *one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see,* John ix. 25. Though in many respects it is still bad with me, yet, thanks be to God, it is better with me than it has been. Time was when I minded nothing but sport and pleasure, or nothing but the business of this world; when I never seriously thought of God and Christ, and my soul, and another world; but now it is otherwise: now I see a reality in invisible things, I find an alteration in my care and concern; and now I ask more solicitously, *What shall I do to be saved?* than ever I asked, *What shall I eat, or what shall I drink, or wherewithal shall I be clothed?* Time was, when this vain and carnal heart of mine had no relish at all of holy ordinances, took no delight in them, called them a task and a weariness; but now it is otherwise: I love to be alone with God, and though I bring little to pass, yet I love to be doing in his service. If I have indeed experienced such a change as this, if this blessed turn be given to the bent of my soul, grace, free grace, must have the glory of it, and I may take the comfort of it. But if I have not found any such work wrought in my heart; if I am still what I was by nature, vain, and carnal, and careless; if Jordan run still in the old channel, and was never yet driven back before the ark of the covenant; I have reason to suspect the worst by myself. If all go one way, without struggle or opposition, it is to be feared it is not the right way.

3. What is the bent of my affections? The affections are the pulse of the soul: if we would know its state, we must observe how that pulse beats. How do I stand affected to sin? Do I dread it as most dangerous, loathe it as most odious, and complain of it as most grievous? Or do I make a light matter of it, as the madman who casts firebrands, arrows, and death, and says, Am not I in sport? Which lies heavier, the burthen of sin, or the burthen of affliction? and which am I most desirous to be eased of? What do I think of Christ? How do I stand affected to him? Do I love him and prize him, as *the fairest of ten thousand* in himself, and the fittest of twenty thousand for me? Or has he, in mine eyes, no form nor comeliness; and is he no more than another beloved? How do I stand affected to the word and ordinances? Are God's tabernacles amiable with me, or are they despicable? Am I in God's service as in my element, as one who calls it a delight? Or am I in it as under confinement, and as one that calls it a drudgery? How do I stand affected to good people? Do I love the image of Christ wherever I see it, though it be in rags, or though not in my own colour? Do I honour them that fear the Lord, and choose his people for my people in all conditions? or do I prefer the gaieties of the world before the beauties of holiness? How do I stand affected to this world? Is it under my feet, where it should be, or in my heart, where Christ should be? Do I value it, and love it, and seek it with a prevailing concern? or do I look upon it with a holy contempt and indifference? Which have the greater command over me, and which, in my account, have the most powerful and attractive charms, those riches, honours, and pleasures that are worldly, or those that are spiritual and divine?—How do I stand affected to the other world? Do I dread eternal misery in a world of spirits, more than the greatest temporal calamities here in this world of sense? Do I desire eternal happiness in a future state, more than the highest contentments and satisfactions this present state can pretend to? or are the things of the other world, though sure and near, looked upon as doubtful and distant, and consequently little? By a close prosecution of such inquiries as these, with a charge to conscience in God's name, to make a true answer to them, we may come to know ourselves.

2. What is the course and tenor of our conversations? The *tree is known by its fruits.* Do I work the works of the flesh, or bring forth the fruits of the Spirit? The apostle gives us instances of both, (Gal. v. 19, 23.) Be not deceived yourselves, neither let any man deceive you; *He that doth righteousness, is righteous,* (1 John iii. 7.) and the surest mark of uprightness, is, *keeping ourselves from our own iniquity,* 2 Sam. xxii. 24. Do I allow myself in any known sin, under the cloak of a visible profession? Dare I, upon any provocation, swear or curse, or profane God's holy name, and therein speak the language of his enemies? Dare I, upon any allurement, to please my appetite, or please my company, drink to excess, and sacrifice my reason, honour, and conscience, to that base and brutish lust? Dare I defile a living temple of the Holy Ghost by adultery, fornication, uncleanness, or any act of lasciviousness? Dare I tell a lie for my gain or reputation? Dare I go beyond or defraud my brother in any

matter; cheat those I deal with, or oppress those I have the advantage against? Dare I deny relief to the poor that really need it, when it is in the power of my hand to give it? Dare I bear malice to any, and study revenge? If so, I must know that these *are not the spots of God's children*, Deut. xxxii. 5. If this be the life I live, I am certainly a stranger to the life of God. But if, upon search, my own heart tells me, that I keep myself pure from these pollutions, and *herein exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence, towards God, and towards man*; if I have respect to all God's commandments, and make it my daily care in every thing to frame my life according to them, and to keep in the fear of God every day, and all the day long; and wherein I find I am defective, and come short of my duty, I repent of it, and am more watchful and diligent for the future; I have reason to hope, that though I have not yet attained, neither am already perfect, yet there is a good work begun in me, which shall be performed unto the day of Christ.

Thus we must examine our spiritual state; and that the trial may come to an issue, we must earnestly pray to God to discover us to ourselves, and must be willing to know the truth of our case; and the result must be this:

(1.) If we find cause to fear that our spiritual state is bad, and that we are unsanctified and unregenerate, we must give all diligence to get the matter mended. If our state be not good, yet, thanks be to God, it may be made good: *There is hope in Israel concerning this thing.* Rest not therefore in thy former faint purposes and feeble efforts; but consider more seriously than ever the concerns of thy soul; pray more earnestly than ever for the sanctifying grace of God; put forth thyself more vigorously than ever, to improve that grace; resolve more firmly than ever to live a holy life, and depend more closely than ever upon the merit and strength of Jesus Christ; and I hope thou wilt soon experience a blessed change.

(2.) If we find cause to hope that our spiritual state is good, we must take the comfort of it, and give God the praise; and not hearken to the tempter, when he would disturb our peace, and hinder our progress by calling it in question. Though we must always abase ourselves, and be jealous over ourselves; yet we must not derogate from the honour of God's grace, nor deny its works in us. God keep us all both from deceiving ourselves with groundless hopes, and from disquieting ourselves with groundless fears.

II. Inquire, What have I done? We come to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, to receive the remission of our sins, according to the tenor of the new covenant. Now one thing required of us, in order to peace and pardon, is, that we *confess our sins: if we* do that, *God is faithful and just to forgive them;* 1 John i. 9. but if we *cover them*, we cannot *prosper*, Prov. xxviii. 13. Not that we can by our confessions inform God of any thing he did not know before; as earthly princes are informed by the confession of criminals; but thus we must give glory to God, and take shame to ourselves, and strengthen our own guard against sin for the future. In the confession of sin, it is requisite that we be particular. The high priest, on the day of atonement, must confess over the scape-goat *all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, and all their sins*, Lev. xvi. 21. It is not enough to say as Saul, *I have sinned*, (1 Sam. xv. 30.) but we must say as David, *I have sinned, and done this evil*, Ps. li. 4. As Achan, *I have sinned, and thus and thus have I done*, Josh. vii. 20. A broken heart will hereby be more broken, and better prepared to be bound up: a burthened conscience will hereby be eased, as David's was, when he said, *I will confess*, Ps. xxxii. 3—5. Commonly, the more particular and free we are in confessing our sins to God, the more comfort we have in the sense of the pardon. Deceit lies in generals.

It is therefore necessary, in order to a particular confession of sin, that we *search and try our ways*, (Lam. iii. 40.) that we examine our consciences, look over their records, reflect upon the actions of our life past, and call seriously to mind wherein we have offended God in any thing. The putting of this question, is spoken of as the first step towards repentance, (Jer. viii. 6.) *No man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done?* For want of this inquiry duly made, when men are called to return, they baffle the call with that careless question, (Mal. iii. 7.) *Wherein shall we return?* Let us, therefore, set ourselves to look back, and remember our faults this day: it is better to be minded of them now, when the remembrance of them will open to us a door of hope, than be minded of them in hell, where, *son remember*, will aggravate an endless despair. We ought to be often calling ourselves to account; in the close of every day, of every week, the day's work, the week's work, should be reviewed. It is one of the richest of Pythagoras's golden verses, wherein, though a heathen, he advises his pupil, every night before he sleep, to go over the actions of the day, and revolve them three times in his mind, asking himself seriously these questions: Πη παρεβην; τι δρεξα; τι μοι δεον εκ ετελεσθαι:—*Wherein have I transgressed? What have I done? What duty has been omitted?* The oftener it is done, the easier it is done: even reckonings make long friends. But it is especially necessary that it be done before a sacrament. Former reflections made, ought then to be repeated, and with a particular exactness: we must consider what our ways have been since we were last renewing our covenants with God at his table, that we may be humble for

the follies we have returned to, since God spoke peace to us, and may be more particular and steady in our resolution for the future.

To give some assistance in this inquiry, I shall ask a few questions:

1. How have I employed my thoughts? Has God been in all my thoughts? It is well if he has been in any. When I awake, am I still with him? or am not I still with the world and the flesh? When I should have been contemplating the glory of God, the love of Christ, and the great things of the other world; has not my heart been, with the fool's eyes, in the ends of the earth, *following after lying vanities, and forsaking mine own mercies?* How seldom have I thought seriously, and with any fixedness, of spiritual and divine things! I set myself sometimes to meditate, but I soon break off abruptly; and this treacherous heart starts aside like a broken bow, and nothing that is good is brought to any head. But how have vain thoughts and wild thoughts dodged within me, gone out and come in with me, lain down and risen up with me, and crowded out good thoughts! Has not the *imagination of the thought of my heart* been *evil, only evil*, and that *continually?* Gen. viii. 21.

2. How have I governed my passions? Have they been kept under the dominion of religion and right reason? or have they not grown intemperate and headstrong, and transgressed due bounds? Have not provocations been too much resented, and made too deep an impression? Has not my heart many a time been hot within me, too hot, so that its heat has consumed the peace of my own mind, and the love I owe my brother? Has not anger rested in my bosom? Have not malice and uncharitableness, secret enmities and antipathies, been harboured there, where love and peace should have reigned and given law?

3. How have I preserved my purity? Have I possessed my vessel in sanctification and honour; or am I not conscious to myself of indulging the lust of uncleanness? If, by the grace of God, I have kept my body pure; yet, has not my spirit been defiled by impure thoughts and affections? I have made a covenant with my eyes, not to look and lust; but have I made good that covenant? have I, in no instance, transgressed the laws of chastity in my heart, and modesty in my behaviour? Let this inquiry be made with a strict guard upon the soul; lest that, which should not be named among Christians, be thought of without that just abhorrence and detestation which becomes saints.

4. How have I used my tongue? It was designed to be my glory; but has it not been my shame? Has not much corrupt communication proceeded out of my mouth, and little of that which is good, which might either manifest grace, or minister grace? have not I sometimes spoke unadvisedly, and said that in haste, which at leisure I could have wished unsaid? Have not I said that, by which God's great name has been dishonoured, or my brother's good name reproached, or my own exposed? If, for every idle word that I speak, I must give account to God; I had best call myself to account for them; and I shall find innumerable of these evils compassing me about.

5. How have I spent my time? So long as I have lived in the world, to what purpose have I lived? What improvement have I made of my days, for doing or getting good? It is certain that I have lost time; have I yet begun to redeem it, and to repair those losses? How many hours have I spent, that might have been spent much better! There is a duty which every day requires; but how little of it has been done in its day!

6. How have I managed my worldly calling? Have I therein abode with God? or have I not, in many instances of it, wandered from him? Have I been just and fair in all my dealings, and spoken the truth from my heart? or have I not sometimes dealt deceitfully in bargaining, and said that which bordered upon a lie? Has not fleshly wisdom governed me more, than that simplicity and godly sincerity which becomes an Israelite indeed? Have I no wealth gotten by vanity, no unjust gain, no blot of that kind cleaving to my hand?

7. How have I received my daily food? Have I never transgressed the law of temperance in meat and drink, and so made my table my snare? Have not God's good gifts been abused to luxury and sensuality; and the body, which, by the sober use of them should have been fitted, by the excessive use of them unfitted, to serve the soul in the service of God? Have not I *eaten to myself*, and *drank to myself*, (Zech. vii. 6.) when I should have eaten and drank *to the glory of God?*

8. How have I done the duty of my particular relations? the word of God has expressly taught me my duty as a husband, a wife, a parent, a child, a master, a servant; but have I not in many things failed of my duty? Have not I carried myself disrespectfully to my superiors, disdainfully to my inferiors, and disingenuously to my equals? Have I given to each that which is just and right, and rendered to all their dues? Have I been a comfort to my relations? or have not I caused grief?

9. How have I performed my secret worship? Have I been constant to it, morning and evening? or have I not sometimes omitted it, and put it by with some frivolous excuse? Have I been conscientious in it, and done it with an eye to God? or have I not kept it up merely as a custom, and suffered it to degenerate into a formality? Have I been lively and serious in secret prayer and reading? or have I not rested in the outside of the performance, without any close application and intention of mind in it?

10. How have I laid out what God has given me in the world? I am but a steward; have I been faithful? Have I honoured the Lord with my substance, and done good with it? or have I wasted and misapplied my Lord's goods? Has God had his due, my family and the poor their due, out of my estate? What should have been consecrated to piety and charity, has it not been either sinfully spared, or sinfully spent?

11. How have I improved the Lord's day, and the other helps I have had for my soul? I enjoy great plenty of the means of grace; have I grown in grace in the use of those means? or have I not received the grace of God therein in vain? Have I *called the sabbath a delight, holy of the Lord, and honourable?* or have I not snuffed at it, and said, *When will the sabbath be over?* How have I profited by sermons and sacraments, and the other advantages of solemn assemblies? Have I received and retained the good impressions of holy ordinances? or have I not lost them, and let them slip?

12. How have I borne my afflictions? When Providence has crossed me, and frowned upon me, what frame have I been in, repining or repenting? Have I submitted to the will of God in my afflictions, and patiently accepted the punishment of my iniquity? or have I not striven with my Maker, and quarrelled with his disposals? When my own foolishness has perverted my way, has not my heart fretted against the Lord? What good have I gotten to my soul by my afflictions? What inward gain by outward losses? Has my heart been more humbled and weaned from the world? or have I not been hardened under the rod, and trespassed yet more against the Lord?

Many more such queries might be adduced, but these may suffice for a specimen. Yet it will not suffice to put these questions to ourselves, but we must diligently observe what return conscience, upon an impartial search, makes to them. We must not do as Pilate did, when he asked our Saviour, *What is truth?* but would not stay for an answer, John xviii. 38. No; we must take pains to find out what hath been amiss, and herein must accomplish a diligent search.

(1.) As far as we find ourselves not guilty, we must own our obligations to the grace of God, and return thanks for that grace, and let the testimony of conscience for us be our rejoicing. *If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.*

(2.) As far as we find ourselves guilty, we must be humbled before God for it, mourn and be in bitterness at the remembrance of it, cry earnestly to God for the pardon of it, and be particular in our resolutions, by God's grace, to sin no more. Pray, as Job is taught, *That which I see not teach thou me;* and promise, as it follows there, *Wherein I have done iniquity, I will do no more*, Job xxxiv. 32.

III. Inquire, What am I doing? When we have considered what our way has been, it is time to consider what it is. *Ponder the path of thy feet*, Prov. iv. 26.

1. What am I doing in the general course of my conversation? Am I doing any thing for God, for my soul, for eternity, any thing for the service of my generation, or am I not standing all the day idle? It is the law of God's house, as well as of ours; *He that will not labour, let him not eat*, 2 Thess. iii. 10. If I find that, according as my capacity and opportunity is, through the grace of Christ, I am going on in the way of God's commandments, this ordinance will be comforting and quickening to me; but if I give way to spiritual sloth and slumber, and do not mind my business, let this shame me out of it, and humble me for it. How unworthy am I to eat my Master's bread, while I take no care to do my Master's work?

2. What am I doing in this approach to the ordinance of the Lord's supper? I know what is to be done; but am I doing it? Do I apply myself to it in sincerity, and with a single eye, in a right manner, and for right ends? Am I by repentance undoing that which I have done amiss? And am I, by renewing my covenants with God, doing that better, which I have formerly done well? Am I joining myself unto the Lord, with purpose of heart to cleave to him unto the end? It is the preparation for the passover: am I doing the work of that day in its day? Am I purging out the old leaven, *buying such things as I have need of against the feast, without money and without price?* Am I engaging my heart to approach unto God? or am I thinking of something else? Am I slothful in this business? or do I make a business of it?

Here it is good to examine, whether, beside the common and general intentions of this ordinance, there be not something particular, which I should more especially have in my eye in my preparation for it. Do I find my heart at this time more than usually broken for sin, and humbled at the remembrance of it? Let me then set in vigorously with those impressions, and drive that nail. Or is my heart in a special manner affected with the love of Christ, and enlarged in holy wonder, joy, and praise? Let its outgoings that way be quickened, and those thoughts imprinted deep and improved: so of the like.

IV. Inquire, *What progress do I make?* If upon examination there appear some evidences of the truth of grace, I must then examine my growth in grace; for grace, if it be true, will be growing: that *well of water* will be *springing up;* and *he that hath clean hands, will be stronger and stronger.* There is a spiritual death, or at least some prevailing spiritual disease, where there is not some improvement and progress towards perfection.

By what measures then may I try my growth in grace?

1. Do I find my practical judgment more settled and confirmed in its choice of holiness and heaven? if so, it is a sign I am getting forward. We cannot judge of ourselves by the pangs of affections, those may be more sensible and vehement at first, and their being less so afterwards, ought not to discourage us: the fire may not blaze so high as it did, and yet may burn better and stronger. But do I see more and more reason for my religion? am I more strongly convinced of its certainty and excellency, so as to be able better than at first to *give a reason of the hope that is in me?* My first love was able to call religion a comfortable service, was my after light better able to call it a reasonable service? I was extremely surprised when at first *I saw men as trees walking*, but am I now better satisfied, when I begin to see all things more clearly, Mark viii. 24, 25. Am I through God's grace better rooted, or am I through my own folly still as *a reed shaken with the wind.*

2. Do I find my corrupt appetites and passions more manageable? or, are they still as violent and headstrong as ever? Does the house of Saul grow weaker and weaker, and its struggles for the dominion less frequent and more feeble? If so, it is a good sign that the house of David grows stronger and stronger. Though these Canaanites are in the land, yet if they do not make head as they have done, but are under tribute, then the interests of Israel are gaining ground. Do I find that my desires toward those things that are pleasing to sense, are not so eager as they have been, but the body is kept under more, and brought into subjection to grace and wisdom, and is it not so hard a thing to me as it has been sometimes to deny myself? Do I find that my resentments of those things which are displeasing to the flesh, are not so deep and keen as they have been? Can I bear afflictions from a righteous God, and provocations from unrighteous men, with more patience, and better composure and command of myself, than I could have done? Am I not so peevish and fretful, and unable to bear an affront or disappointment, as sometimes I have been? If so, surely he who has begun the good work, is carrying it on: but if nothing be done toward the suppressing of these rebels, toward the weeding out of these roots of bitterness which spring up and trouble us, though we lament them, yet, we do not prevail against them, it is to be feared that we stand still or go back.

3. Do I find the duties of religion more easy and pleasant to me? or am I still as unskilful and unready in them as ever? Do I go dexterously about a duty, as one that understands it, and is used to it, as a man that is master of his trade goes on with the business of it? or do I go awkwardly about it, as one not versed in it? When God says, *Seek ye my face*, do I, like the child Samuel, run to Eli, and terminate my regards in the outside of the service, or do I, like the man David, cheerfully answer, *Thy face, Lord, will I seek*, and so *enter into that within the vail.* Though, on the one hand, there is not a greater support to hypocrisy than a formal and customary road of external performances; yet, on the other hand, there is not a surer evidence of sincerity and growth, than an ever constant, steady course of lively devotion, which by daily use becomes familiar and easy, and (by the new nature) natural to us. A growing Christian takes his work before him, and sings at it.

4. Do I find my heart more weaned from this present life, and more willing to exchange it for a better? or am I still loth to leave it? Are thoughts of death more pleasing to me than they have been, or are they still as terrible as ever? If through grace we are raised above the fear of death, by reason of which many weak and trembling Christians are *all their life-time subject to bondage*, and can truly say, *we desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better*, it is certain we are gaining ground, though we have not yet attained.

If upon search we find that we make no progress in grace and holiness, let the ordinance of the Lord's supper be empowered for the furtherance of our growth, and the removal of that, whatever it is, which hinders it. If we find we thrive, though but slowly, and though it is not so well with us as it should be, yet through grace it is better with us than it has been, and that we are not always babes, let us be encouraged to abound so much the more. Go and prosper, the Lord is with thee, while thou art with him.

V. Inquire, What do I want? A true sense of our spiritual necessities is required to qualify us for spiritual supplies. The hungry only are filled with good things. It concerns us therefore, when we come to an ordinance, which is a spiritual market, to consider what we have occasion for, that we may know what to lay hold on, and may have an answer to that question which will be put to us at the banquet of wine, *What is thy petition, and what is thy request?* Or that which Christ put to the blind men, Matt. xx. 32. *What will ye that I should do unto you?*

Grace and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, are inclusive of all the blessings we can desire, and have in them enough to supply all our needs: since, therefore, we must ask and receive, that our joy may be full, it concerns us to inquire what particular grace and comfort we need, that we may, by faith and desire, reach forth toward that in a special manner.

1. What grace do I most want? Wherein do I find myself most defective, weak, and exposed? What corruption do I find working most in me? the grace which is opposite to it, I most need. An

I apt to be proud or passionate? humility and meekness then are the graces I most want. Am I apt to be timorous and distrustful? faith and hope then are the graces I most want. What temptations am I most frequently assaulted with? which way does Satan get most advantage against me; by my constitution, calling, or company? there I most want help from heaven, and strength to double my guard. Am I in danger of being drawn by my outward circumstances to intemperance, or deceit, or oppression, or dissimulation? then sobriety, justice, and sincerity, are the graces I most want.——What is the nature of the duties I am most called out to, and employed in? Are they such as oblige me to stoop to that which is mean? then self-denial is the grace I most want. Are they such as oblige me to struggle with that which is difficult and discouraging? then courage and wisdom are the graces I most want. Whatever our wants are, there are promises in the new covenant adapted to them; which, in this ordinance, we must in a particular manner apply to ourselves, and claim the benefit of, and receive as sealed to us. If we cannot bethink ourselves of particular promises suited to our case, yet there is enough in the general ones: *I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes*, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. *I will put my law in your hearts*, (Heb. viii. 10.) *and my fear*, (Jer. xxxii. 40.) and many of the like. And we know who has said, *My grace is sufficient for thee*, 2 Cor. xii. 9.

2. What comfort do I most want? What is the burthen that lies most heavy? I must seek for support under that burthen. What is the grief that is most grieving? I must seek for a balance to that grief. The guilt of sin is often disquieting to me: O for the comfort of a sealed pardon! The power of corruption is very discouraging; O for the comfort of victorious grace! I am often tossed with doubts and fears about my spiritual state, as if the Lord had *utterly separated me from his people*, and I were *a dry tree*, Isa. lvi. 3. O for the comfort of clear and unclouded evidences! I am sometimes tempted to say, *The Lord hath forsaken me; my God hath forgotten me*, Isa xlix. 14. O that he would seal to my soul that precious promise, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*, Heb. xiii. 5. But my greatest trouble arises from the sense of my own weakness, and bent to backslide, and I am sometimes ready to make that desperate conclusion, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. O that I might have the comfort of that promise, (Jer. xxxii. 40.) *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* There is in the covenant of grace a salve for every sore, a remedy for every malady, comforts suited to every distress and sorrow; but, that we may have the benefit of them, it is requisite that we *know every one his own sore, and his own grief*, as it is expressed, 2 Chron. vi. 29. that we may spread it before the Lord, and may apply to ourselves that relief which is proper for it, and *from the fulness, which is in* Jesus Christ, *may receive, and grace for grace;* grace for all occasions, John i. 16.

Here it may be of use to take cognizance even of our outward condition, and inquire into the cares and burthens, the crosses and necessities of it; for even against these there is comfort provided in the new covenant, and administered in this ordinance. *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is:* when Christ was inviting his disciples to come and dine with him, he asked them first, *Children, have ye any meat?* John xxi. 5, 12. Christ's inquiry into our affairs directs us to make known before him in particular the trouble of them. Let every care be cast upon the Lord in this ordinance, lodged in his hands, and left with him, and let our own spirits be eased of it, by the application of that general word of comfort to this particular case, whatever it is, *He careth for you*, 1 Pet. v. 7. What is the concern I am most thoughtful about, relating to myself, my family, or friends? Let that way be committed to the Lord, and to his wise and gracious conduct and disposal, and then let my thoughts concerning it be established. What is the complaint I make most feelingly? Is it of a sickly body, disagreeable relations, a declining estate, the removal of those by death that were very dear? Whatever it is, spread it before the Lord, as Hezekiah did Rabshakeh's letter, (2 Kings xix. 14.) and allow no complaint that is not fit to be spread before him.

When God came to renew his covenant with Abraham, and to tell him that he was his shield and his exceeding great reward, Abraham presently puts in a remonstrance of his grievance, *Behold, to me thou hast given no seed*, Gen. xv. 1—3. Hannah did so when she came up to worship, 1 Sam. i. 11. And we also must bring with us such a particular sense of our afflictions, as will enable us to receive and apply the comforts here offered us, and no more. Holy David observed how his house was with God, and that it was not made to grow, when he was taking the comfort of this, that however it were, *God had made with him an everlasting covenant*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

VI. Inquire, *What shall I resolve to do?* This question is equivalent to that of Paul, (Acts ix. 6.) *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* We come to this ordinance solemnly to engage ourselves against all sin, and to all duty; and therefore it is good to consider what that sin is which we should particularly covenant against, and what that duty which we should most expressly oblige ourselves to. Though the general covenant suffice to bind conscience, yet, a particular article will be of use to remind conscience, and to make the general engagement the more effectual. It is good to be particular

in our pious resolutions, as well as in our penitent reflections.

For our assistance herein, let us inquire,

1. Wherein have we most missed it hitherto? Where we have found ourselves most assaulted by the subtilty of the tempter, and most exposed by our own weakness, there we should strengthen our defence, and double our guard. What is the sin that has most easily beset me, Heb. xii. 1. *ευπερεσατον αμαρτιαν—the well circumstanced sin?* that is it which I must more particularly resolve against in the strength of the grace of God. What is the duty I have most neglected, have been most backward to, and most careless in? to that I must most solemnly bind my soul with this bond.

2. Wherein we may have the best opportunity of glorifying God? What can I do in my place for the service of God's honour, and the interests of his kingdom among men? *The liberal deviseth liberal things,* and so the pious deviseth pious things, that he may both engage and excite himself to those liberal pious things in and by this ordinance. What is the talent I am intrusted with the improvement of? My Lord's goods I am made a steward of. What is it that is expected from one in my capacity? What fruit is looked for from me? That is it that I must especially have an eye to in my covenants with God; to that I must bind my soul, for that I must fetch in help from heaven, that having sworn, I may perform it.

CHAPTER V.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RENEWING OUR COVENANT WITH GOD IN OUR PREPARATION FOR THIS ORDINANCE.

It is the wonderful condescension of the God of heaven, that he has been pleased to deal with man in the way of a covenant; that, on the one hand, we might receive strong consolations from the promises of the covenant, which are very sweet and precious; and, on the other hand, might lie under strong obligations from the conditions of the covenant, which, on this account, have greater cogency in them than mere precepts, that we ourselves have consented to them, and that we have therein consulted our own interest and advantage.

The ordinance of the Lord's supper being a seal of the covenant, and the solemn exchanging of the ratifications of it, it is necessary to make the covenant before we pretend to seal it. In this order therefore we must proceed, first, give the hand to the Lord, and then enter into the sanctuary; first, in secret consent to the covenant, and then, solemnly testify that consent: this is like a contract before marriage. They who *ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward,* must *join themselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant,* Jer. l. 5. The covenant is mutual, and in vain do we expect the blessings of the covenant, if we be not truly willing to come under the bonds of the covenant. We must *enter into covenant with the Lord our God, and into his oath,* else he does not establish us this day for a *people unto himself,* (Deut. xxix. 12, 13.) we are not owned and accepted, as God's people, though we come before him as his people come, and sit before him as his people sit, if we do not in sincerity *avouch the Lord for our God,* Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. In our baptism this was done for us, in the Lord's supper we must do it for ourselves, else we do nothing.

Let us consider then in what method, and after what manner, we must manage this great transaction.

I. In what method we must renew our covenant with God in Christ, and by what steps we must proceed.

1. We must repent of our sins by which we have rendered ourselves unworthy to be taken into covenant with God. Those who would be exalted to this honour, must first humble themselves. God *layeth his beams in the waters,* Ps. civ. 3. The foundations of spiritual joy are laid in the waters of penitential tears. Therefore, this sealing ordinance sets that before us, which is proper to move our godly sorrow; in it we look on him whom we have pierced, and if we do not mourn, and be not in bitterness for him, surely our hearts are as hard as a stone, yea, harder than a piece of the nether mill-stone. Zech. xii. 10. Those who join themselves to the Lord, must go weeping to do it; so they did, Jer. l. 4, 5. That comfort is likely to last, which takes rise from deep humiliation, and contrition of soul for sin. Those only who *go forth weeping, bearing this precious seed,* shall *come again rejoicing* in God as theirs, and *bringing the sheaves* of covenant blessings and comforts *with them,* Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Let us therefore begin with this.

(1.) We have reason to bewail our natural estrangement from this covenant: when we come to be for God, we have reason to be affected with sorrow and shame, that ever we were for any other; that ever there should have been occasion for our reconciliation to God, which supposes that there had been a quarrel. Wretch that I am, ever to have been a stranger, an enemy, to the God who made me; a war with my Creator, and in league with the rebels against his crown and dignity. O the folly and wickedness and misery of my natural estate! My first father an Amorite, and my mother a Hittite, and myself a transgressor from the womb, alienated from the life of God, and cast out in my pollution. Nothing in me lovely, nothing amiable, but a great deal loathsome and abominable. Such as this was my nativity, my original, Ezek. xvi. 3.

(2.) We have reason to bewail our backwardness to come into this covenant. Well may we be ashamed to think how long God called, and we refused; how often he stretched forth his hand, before we regarded; how many offers of mercy we slighted, and how many kind invitations we stood out against; how long Christ stood at the door and knocked, before we opened to him; and how many frivolous excuses we made to put off this necessary work. What a fool I was to stand in my own light so long! How ungrateful to the God of love, who waited to be gracious! How justly might I have been for ever excluded this covenant, who so long neglected that great salvation! *Wherefore I abhor myself.*

(3.) We have reason to bewail the disagreeableness of our hearts and lives to the terms of this covenant, since first we professed our consent to it. In many instances we have dealt foolishly, it is well if we have not dealt falsely, in the covenant. In our baptism we are given up to Christ to be his, but we have lived as if we were our own; we then put on the Christian livery, but we have done little of the Christian's work; we were called by Christ's name to take away our reproach, but how little have we been under the conduct and government of the spirit of Christ! Since we became capable of acting for ourselves, perhaps we have oft renewed our covenant with God, at his table, and upon other occasions, but we have *despised the oath, in breaking the covenant, when lo, we had given the hand*, Ezek. xvii. 18. Our performances have not answered the engagements that we have solemnly laid ourselves under. Did we not say, and say it with the blood of Christ in our hands, that we would be the faithful servants of the God of heaven? We did, and yet, instead of serving God, we have served divers lusts and pleasures; we have made ourselves slaves to the flesh, and drudges to the world, and this has been our manner from our youth up. Did we not say, *We would not transgress*, (Jer. ii. 20.) we *would not offend any more?* Job xxxiv. 31. We did, and yet our transgressions are multiplied, and in many things we offend daily. Did we not say we would walk more closely with God, more circumspectly in our conversation, we would be better in our closets, better in our families, better in our callings, every way better? We did, and yet we are still vain, and careless, and unprofitable; all those good purposes have been to little purpose: this is a lamentation, and it should be for a lamentation. Let our hearts be truly broken for our former breach of covenant with God, and then the renewing of our covenant will be the recovery of our peace, and that which was broken shall be bound up, and made to rejoice.

2. We must renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, and every thing that stands in opposition to, or competition with, the God to whom we join ourselves by covenant. If we will indeed deal sincerely in our covenanting with God, and would be accepted of him therein, our *covenanting with death must be disannulled, and our agreement with hell must not stand*, Isa. xxviii. 18. And all these foolish sinful bargains, which were, indeed, null and void from the beginning, by which we had alienated ourselves from our rightful owner, and put ourselves in possession of the usurper, must be revoked and cancelled, and our consent to them drawn back with disdain and abhorrence. When we take an oath of allegiance to God in Christ, as our rightful King and Sovereign, we must therein abjure the tyranny of the rebellious and rival powers. *O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us*, while sin has reigned in our mortal bodies, in our immortal souls, and every lust has been a lord; but now we are weary of that heavy yoke, and through God's grace it shall be so no longer, for, henceforth, *by thee only will we make mention of thy name*, Isa. xxvi. 13.

The covenant we are to enter into is a marriage-covenant, *Thy Maker* is to be *thy husband*, (Isa. liv. 5.) and thou art to be betrothed to him, (Hos. ii. 19.) and it is the ancient and fundamental law of that covenant, that all other lovers be renounced, all other beloved ones forsaken; and the same is the law of this covenant; (Hos. iii. 3.) *Thou shalt not be for another man, so will I also be for thee.* Quitting all others, we must cleave to the Lord only; lovers and crowned heads will not endure rivals. On these terms, and no other, we may covenant with God, (1 Sam. vii. 3.) *If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods, and Ashtaroth*; else it is not a return to God.

(1.) We must renounce all subjection to Satan's rule and government. Satan's seat must be overturned in our hearts, and the Redeemer's throne set up there upon the ruins of it. We must disclaim the devil's power over us, cast off that iron yoke, and resolve to be deceived by him no more, and led captive by him at his will no more. We must quit the service of the citizen of that country, and feed his swine no longer, feed upon his husks no more, that we may return to our Father's house, where there is *bread enough and to spare.* We must renounce the treacherous conduct of the evil spirit, that we may put ourselves under the gracious guidance of the holy and good Spirit. All that turn to God, must turn from the power of Satan, (Acts xxvi. 18.) for *what communion hath Christ with Belial?* Our covenant with God engages us in a war with Satan; for the controversy between them is such, as will by no means allow us to stand neuter.

(2.) We must renounce all compliance with the wills and interests of the flesh. The body, though near and dear to the soul, yet must not be allowed to have dominion over it. The liberty, sovereignty, and honour of the immortal spirit, by which we are

allied to the upper world, that world of spirits, must be asserted, vindicated, and maintained against the usurpation and encroachments of the body, which is of the earth earthy, and by which we are allied to the beasts that perish. The elder too long has served the younger, the nobler has served the baser, it is time that the yoke should be broken from off its neck, and that part of man should rule under Christ, whose right it is. The servants on horseback must be dismounted, the lusts of the flesh denied, and its will no longer admitted to give law to the man; and the princes who have walked like servants upon the earth, must be raised from their debasement, and made to inherit the throne of glory: the dictates (I mean) of right reason, guided by revelation, and consulting the true interests of the better part, must have the commanding sway and empire in us, Eccl. x. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 8. We must never more make it our chief good to have the flesh pleased, and the desires of it gratified; nor ever make it our chief business to make provision for the flesh, that we may fulfil the lusts of it. Away with them, away with them; crucify them, crucify them; for like Barabbas, they are robbers, they are murderers, they are enemies to our peace; we will not have them to reign over us; no, no, we know them too well; we have no king but Jesus.

(3.) We must renounce all dependence upon this present world, and conformity to it. If we enter into a covenant which ensures a happiness in the other world, and therefore look with a holy concern, we must disclaim the expectations of happiness in this world, and therefore look upon this with a holy contempt. God and Mammon, God and gain, these are contrary the one to the other; so that if we will be found loving God, and cleaving to him, we must despise the world, and sit loose to it, Matt. vi. 24. We must so far renounce the way of the world, as not to govern ourselves by it, and take our principles and measures from it; for we must not be *conformed to this world*, (Rom. xii. 2.) not walk *according to the course* of it, Eph. ii. 2. We must so far renounce the men of the world, as not to incorporate ourselves with them, nor choose them for our people, because though we are in the world, we are not of the world, nor have we received the spirit of the world, but Christ has chosen and called us out of it, John xv. 19. We must so far renounce the wealth of the world, as not to portion ourselves out of it, nor lay up our treasure in it; nor to take up with the things of this world as our *good things*, (Luke xvi. 25.) as *our consolation*, (Luke vi. 24.) as *our reward*, (Matt. vi. 2.) as the *penny we agree for*, Matt. xx. 13. For in God's favour is our life, and not in the smiles of this world. The Lord make us cordial in thus renouncing these competitors, that we may be found sincere in covenanting with God in Christ.

3. We must receive the Lord Jesus Christ as he is offered to us in the gospel. In renewing our covenants with God, it is not enough to enter our dissent from the world and the flesh, and to shake off Satan's yoke, but we must enter our consent to Christ, and take upon us his yoke. In the everlasting gospel, both as it is written in the Scripture, and as it is sealed in this sacrament, salvation by Christ, that great salvation, is fairly tendered to us; to us who need it, and are undone for ever without it. We then come into covenant with God, when we accept of this salvation, with an entire complacency and confidence in those methods which infinite wisdom has taken of reconciling a guilty and obnoxious world to himself, by the mediation of his own Son, and a cheerful compliance with those methods for ourselves, and our own salvation. Lord, I take thee at thy word; be it unto thy servant according to that word, which is so *well ordered in all things, and so sure.*

We must accept the salvation in Christ's way, and upon his terms, else our acceptance is not accepted.

(1.) By a hearty consent to the grace of Christ, we must accept the salvation in his own way, in such a way, as for ever excludes boasting, humbles man to the dust, and will admit no flesh to glory in his presence: such a way, as (though it leave the blood of them that perish upon their own heads) lays all the crowns of them who are saved at the feet of free grace. This method we must approve of, and love this salvation, not going about to establish our own righteousness, as if by pleading not guilty, we could answer the demands of the covenant of innocency, and so be justified and saved by it; but *submitting to the righteousness of God*, by faith, Rom. iii. 22. All the concerns that lie between us and God, we must put into the hands of the Lord Jesus, as the great Mediator, the great Manager; we must be content to be nothing, that the Lord only may be exalted, and Christ may be *all in all.* God has declared more than once by a voice from heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* To consent to Christ's grace, and accept of salvation in his way, is to echo back to that solemn declaration, "This is my beloved Saviour, in whom I am well pleased." The Lord be well pleased with me in him, for out of him I can expect no favour.

(2.) By a hearty consent to the government of Christ, we must accept the salvation on his own terms. When we receive Christ, we must receive an entire Christ; for, *Is Christ divided?* A Christ to sanctify and rule us, as well as a Christ to justify and save us; for he is *a Priest upon his throne*, and the *counsel of peace is between them both*, Zech. vi. 13. What God has joined together, let not us think to put asunder. He saves his people from their sins, not in their sins; and is the Author of eternal re-

demption to those only that obey him. That very *grace of God which bringeth salvation, teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly* and fleshly *lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this world,* Tit. ii. 11, 12. Life and peace are to be had on these terms, and no other. And are we willing to come up to these terms? Will we receive Christ and his law, as well as Christ and his love? Christ and his cross as well as Christ and his crown? "Lord, I will;" (says the believing soul;) "Lord, I do;" *My Beloved is mine, and I am his,* to all the intents and purposes of the covenant.

4. We must resign and give up ourselves to God in Christ. God in the covenant makes over, not only his gifts and favours, but himself, to us, [*I will be to them a God,*] what he is in himself, he will be to us, a God all-sufficient; so we in the covenant must offer up not only our services, but ourselves, our own selves, our whole selves, *body, soul, and spirit,* to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the obligations of our baptism, as those who are bound to be to him a people. This surrender is to be solemnly made at the Lord's table, and sealed there; it must therefore be prepared and made ready before. Let us see to it, that it be carefully drawn up, without exception or limitation, and the heart examined whether a free and full consent be given to it. We must first *give our own selves unto the Lord,* (2 Cor. viii. 5.) and I know not how we can dispose of ourselves better. *By the mercies of God,* which are inviting, and very encouraging, we must be wrought upon to *present our bodies and souls* to God a *living sacrifice* of acknowledgment, not a dying sacrifice of atonement, which if it be *holy* shall be *acceptable,* and it is *our reasonable service,* Rom. xii. 1. Thus he who covenants with God, is directed to say, *I am the Lord's,* and for the greater solemnity of the transaction, to *subscribe with his hand to the Lord,* Isa. xliv. 5. Not that we do or can hereby transfer or convey to God any right to us which he had not before; he is our absolute Lord and Owner, and has an incontestable sovereignty over us, and property in us, as he is our Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, and Redeemer; but hereby we recognize and acknowledge his right to us. We are his already by obligation, more his than our own; but, that we may have the benefit and comfort of being so, we must be his by our own consent. More particularly,

(1.) To resign ourselves to God, is to dedicate and o devote ourselves to his praise. It is not enough o call ourselves by his name, and associate among hose who do so, to take away our reproach, but we nust consecrate ourselves to his name, as living emples. *Corban, It is a gift,* a gift to God; all I am, all I have, all I can do is so; it is a dedicated hing, which it is sacrilege to alienate. All the powers and faculties of our soul, all the parts and members of our bodies, we must, *as those that are alive from the dead,* freely yield unto God as *instruments of righteousness,* to be used and employed in his service for his glory, Rom. vi. 13. All our endowments, all our attainments, all those things which we call accomplishments, must be accounted as talents, which we must trade with for his honour. All being of him and from him, all must be to him and for him. Our tongues must not be our own, but his; in nothing to offend him, but to speak his praise, and plead his cause, as there is occasion. Our time not our own, but as a servant's time, to be spent according to our Master's directions, and some way or other to our Master's glory; every day being in this sense *our Lord's day.* Our estates not our own, to be spent or spared by the directions of our lusts, but to be used as God directs; God must be honoured with our substance, (Prov. iii. 9.) and *our merchandise and our hire must be holiness to the Lord,* Isa. xxiii. 18. Our interest not our own, with it to seek our own glory, but to be improved in seeking and serving God's glory: that is, God's glory must be fixed and aimed at as our highest and ultimate end, in all the care we take about our employments, and all the comfort we take in our enjoyments. *As good stewards of the manifold grace of God,* we must have this still in our eye, *That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ,* 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. By this pious intention common actions must be sanctified, and done after a godly sort, 3 John 6. Our giving up of ourselves to be to God a people, is thus explained, (Jer. xiii. 11.) it is *to be to him, for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory.*

(2.) To resign ourselves to God, is to be subject and submit ourselves to his power: to the sanctifying power of his Spirit, the commanding power of his law, and the disposing power of his providence. Such as this is the subjection we must consent to; and it has in it so much of privilege and advantage, as well as duty and service, that we have no reason to stumble at it.

[1.] We must submit ourselves to the sanctifying power of God's Spirit. We must lay our souls as soft wax under this seal, to receive the impressions of it; as white paper under this pen, that it may write the law there. Whereas we have resisted the Holy Ghost, quenched his motions, and striven against him when he has been striving with us, we must now yield ourselves to be led and influenced by him, with full purpose of heart in every thing to follow his conduct, and comply with him. When Christ in his gospel breathes on us, saying, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost,* (John xx. 22.) my heart must answer, "Lord, I receive him, I bid him welcome into my heart, though he come as a *Spirit of judgment,* and a *Spirit of burning,* as a *refiner's fire,* and *fuller's soap,* yet *blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* Let him come and mortify my

lusts and corruptions, I do not desire that any of them should be spared; let them die, let them die by the sword of the Spirit, Agag himself not excepted, though he comes delicately. Let every thought within, even the *inward thought*, (Ps. xlix. 11.) be *brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*, 2 Cor. x. 5. Let the blessed Spirit do his whole work in me, and fulfil it with an almighty power."

[2.] We must submit ourselves to the commanding power of God's law. The law, as it is in the hand of the Mediator, is God's instrument of government; if I yield myself to him as a subject, I must in every thing be observant of, and obedient to, that law; and now I covenant to be so, in all my ways to walk according to that rule. All my thoughts and affections, all my words and actions, shall be under the direction of the divine law, and subject to its check and restraint. God's judgments will I lay before me, and have respect to all his commandments; by them I will be always ruled, overruled. "Let the word of the Lord come," (as a good man once said,) "and if I had six hundred necks, I would bow them all to the authority of it." Whatever appears to me to be my duty, by the grace of God I will do it, how much soever it interfere with my secular interest; whatever appears to me to be a sin, by the grace of God I will avoid it, and refrain from it, how strong soever my corrupt inclination may be to it. *All that the Lord shall say to me, I will do, and will be obedient.*

[3.] We must submit ourselves to the disposing power of God's providence. This must be the rule of our patience and passive obedience, as the former of our practice and active obedience. All my affairs relating to this life, I cheerfully submit to the divine disposal; let them be directed and determined as Infinite Wisdom sees fit, and I will acquiesce. Let the Lord save my soul, and then, as to every thing else, let him do with me and mine as seemeth good unto him; I will never find fault with any thing that God does: *Not as I will, but as thou wilt.* I know I have no wisdom of my own; I am a fool, if I lean to my own understanding, and therefore I will have no will of my own: *Father, thy will be done.* The health of my body, the success of my calling, the prosperity of my estate, the agreeableness of my family, the continuance of my comforts, and the issue of any particular concern my heart is upon, I leave in the hands of my heavenly Father, who knows what is good for me, better than I do for myself. If in any of these I be crossed, by the grace of God I will submit, without murmuring or disputing: all is well that God does, and therefore welcome the will of God in every event. While he is mine, and I am his, nothing shall come amiss to me.

5. We must resolve to abide by it as long as we live, and to live up to it. In our covenanting with God, there must be not only a present consent, "Lord, I do take thee for mine, I do give up myself to thee to be thine;" but this must be ripened into a resolution for the future, *with purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord*, Acts xi. 23. We must lay hold on Wisdom, so as to retain her, (Prov. iii. 18.) and choose the way of truth, so as to stick to it, Ps. cxix. 30, 31. The nail in the holy place must be well clenched, that it may be *a nail in a sure place*, Isa. xxii. 23. Many a pang of good affections, and many a hopeful turn of good inclinations, come to nothing for want of resolution. It is said of Rehoboam, (2 Chron. xii. 14.) that *he did evil*, because *he prepared not*, or, *he fixed not his heart* (so the word is in the margin) *to seek the Lord.* The heart that is unfixed, is unprepared. Joshua took pains with the people, to bring them up to that noble resolution, (Josh. xxiv. 21.) *Nay, but we will serve the Lord;* and we should not be content, till we also are in like manner resolved, and firmly fixed for God and duty, for Christ and heaven. This is the *preparation of the gospel of peace*, wherewith our *feet must be shod*, Eph. vi. 15.

Let us inquire what that resolution is, which is an entire dependence upon the grace of Christ, to which we should come up in our covenanting with God.

(1.) We must come up to such a settled resolution, as does not reserve a power of revocation for ourselves. The covenant is in itself a perpetual covenant, and as such we must consent to it; not as servants hire themselves, by the year, or to be free at a quarter's warning; not as apprentices bind themselves, for seven years, to be discharged at the expiration of that term; but it must be a covenant for life, a covenant for eternity, a covenant never to be forgotten: and in this beyond even the marriage-covenant, for that is made with this proviso, "till death us do part;" but death itself must not part us and Christ. Our covenant must be made like that servant's who loved his master, and would not go out free; our ears must be nailed to God's door-post, and we must resolve to *serve him for ever*, Exod. xxi. 5, 6. A power of revocation reserved, is a defeasance of the covenant; it is no bargain if it be not for a perpetuity, and if we consent not to put it past recal.

Let not those who are young, and under tutors and governors, think to discharge themselves o these obligations, when they come to be of age, an to put them off with their childish things: no; yo must resolve to adhere to it, as Moses did, when yo come to years. Heb. xi. 24. As children are not to little, so grown people are not too big, to be reli gious. You must resolve to live under the bonds c this covenant, when you come to live of yourselve to be at your own disposal, and to launch out ever far into this world. Your greatest engagements i care and business, cannot disengage you from thes

Whatever state of life you are called to, you must resolve to take your religion with you into it.

Let not those who are in the midst of their days think it possible, or desirable, to outlive the binding force of this covenant. If now we should set out in the way we should go, it must be with a resolution, if we live to be old, how wise and honourable soever old age be, yet, then, we will *not depart from it*, (Prov. xxii. 6.) as knowing that the *hoary hairs are* only *a crown of glory, when they are found* (as having been long before fixed) *in the way of righteousness*, Prov. xvi. 31.

(2.) We must come up to such a strong resolution, as will not yield to the power of temptation from the enemy. When we engage ourselves for God, we engage ourselves against Satan, and must expect his utmost efforts to oppose us in our way, and to draw us out of it. Against these designs we must therefore arm ourselves, resolving to *stand in the evil day, and having done all*, in God's name, *to stand* our ground, (Eph. vi. 13.) saying to all that, which would either divert or deter us from prosecuting the choice we have made, as Ruth did to Naomi, when she was stedfastly resolved, (Ruth i. 16.) *Entreat me not to leave* Christ, *or to turn from following after him*; for, *whither he goes* I will follow him, though it be into banishment; *where he lodges*, I will lodge with him, though it be in a prison; for death itself shall never part us.

We must resolve, by God's grace, never to be so elevated or enamoured with the smiles of the world, as by them to be allured from the paths of serious godliness; for our religion will be both the safety and the honour of a prosperous condition, and will sanctify and sweeten all the comforts of it to us.

And we must in like manner resolve never to be so discouraged and disheartened by the frowns of the world, as by the force of them to be robbed of our joy in God, or by the fear of them to be driven from our duty to God. We must come to Christ, with a steady resolution to abide by him all weathers: *Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. None of these things move me.*

6. We must rely upon the righteousness and strength of our Lord Jesus Christ in all this. Christ is the Mediator of this peace, and the guarantee of it, the surety of this better covenant; that blessed days-man, who has laid his hand upon us both; who has so undertaken for God, that in him all God's promises to us are *Yea, and Amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20. and unless he undertake for us too, how can our promises to God have any strength or stability in them? When therefore we enter into covenant with God, our eye must be to Christ as the *Alpha* and *Omega* of that covenant. When God had *sworn by himself*, that *unto him every knee should bow, and every tongue should swear*, (Isa. xlv. 23.) immediately it follows, *v.* 24. *Surely shall one say*, every one that bows and swears to God, *In the Lord have I righteousness and strength*; in the Lord Jesus is all my sufficiency for the doing of this well. In making and renewing our covenant with God, we must take instructions from that of David, Ps. lxxi. 19. *I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.*

(1.) We must depend upon the strength of the Lord God for assistance, and for the working of all our works in us, and for us. In that strength we must go, go forth and go on, as those that know we can do nothing that is good of ourselves; our own hands are not sufficient for us; but we *can do all things through Christ strengthening us*, Phil. iv. 13. Our work then goes on, and then only, when we are *strengthened with all might by his Spirit.* This way we must look for spiritual strength, as Nehemiah did, (*ch.* vi. 9.) *Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.* On this strength we must stay ourselves; in this strength we must engage ourselves, and put forth ourselves, and with it we must encourage ourselves.

We cannot make this covenant, but in the strength of Christ, nor make it at all. Nature, corrupt nature, inclines to the world and the flesh, and cleaves to them: without the influences of special grace, we should never move towards God, much less resolve for him. We cannot do it well, but in Christ's strength, and in a dependence upon that. If, like Peter, we venture on our own sufficiency, and use those forms of speech which import a reliance on the divine grace, only as words of course, and do not by faith trust to that grace, and derive from it; we forfeit the aids of it; our covenant is rejected as presumptuous, and shall not avail us. Promises made in our own strength betray us, and do not help us; like the house built on the sand.

We cannot keep this covenant when it is made, but in the strength of Christ; for we stand no longer than he by his grace upholds us, we go no further than he by his grace, not only leads us, but carries us. His promises to us are our security, not ours to him: *from his fulness*, therefore, *we* must expect to *receive grace for grace*; for it is not in ourselves, nor is it to be had any where but in him. We then, that are principals in the bond, knowing ourselves insolvent, must put him in as surety for us. He is willing to stand; and without him, our bond will not be taken. We are too well known to be trusted; for *all men are liars*; and *the heart is deceitful above all things.* Go to Christ therefore with that address, (Ps. cxix. 122.) *Be surety for thy servant for good.* (Isa. xxxviii. 14.) *I am oppressed; undertake for me.*

(2.) We must depend upon the righteousness of Christ; make mention of that, even of that only, for acceptance with God in our covenanting with him. We have nothing in us, to recommend us to God's favour; no righteousness of our own, wherein

to appear before him: we have, by sin, not only forfeited all the blessings of the covenant, but incapacitated ourselves for admission into it. By sacrifice, therefore, by a sacrifice of atonement, sufficient to expiate our guilt, and satisfy the demands of injured justice, we must make a covenant with God. And there is none such but that *one offering*, by which Christ has *perfected for ever them which are sanctified.* That is the blood of the covenant, which must be sprinkled upon our consciences when we join ourselves to the Lord, (Exod. xxiv. 8.) that everlasting righteousness, which Messiah the Prince has brought in, must be the cover of our spiritual nakedness, our wedding-garment to adorn our nuptials, and the foundation on which we must build all our hopes to find favour in the sight of the Lord.

I shall not here draw up a form of covenanting with God; both because such may be found drawn up by far better hands than mine, as Mr. Baxter's, Mr. Allen's, and others; and, because a judicious Christian may, out of the foregoing heads, easily draw up one for himself.

II. After what manner we must renew our covenant with God, that we may therein please God, and experience the good effect of it in our own souls.

1. We must do it intelligently. Blind promises will produce lame performances, and can never be acceptable to the seeing God. Ignorance is not the mother of this devotion. Satan indeed puts out men's eyes, and so brings them into bondage to him, and leads them blindfold; for he is *a thief and a robber*, that *comes not in by the door, but climbeth up some other way;* and therefore to him we must not open. But the grace of God takes the regular way of dealing with reasonable creatures, opening the understanding first, and then bowing the will: this is *entering in by the door*, as *the Shepherd of the sheep* does, John x. 1, 2. In this method, therefore, we must see that the work be done. We must first acquaint ourselves with the tenor of the covenant, and then consent to the terms of it. Moses read the book of the covenant in the audience of the people, (Exod. xxiv. 7.) and then sprinkled upon them the blood of the covenant, *v.* 8. And we must take the same method; first peruse the articles, and then sign them. That faith which is without knowledge, is not the faith of God's elect.

2. We must do it considerately. We need not take time to consider whether we should do it or no, the matter is too plain to bear that debate; but we must seriously consider what we do, when we go about it. Let it be done with a solemn pause, such as Moses put Israel upon, when he said, (Deut. xxix. 10, 12.) *Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath.* Consider how weighty this transaction is, that it may be managed with due seriousness, and of what consequence it is that it be done well; for it is to be hoped, that if it be once well done, it is done for ever. We must sit down and count the cost; consider the restraints this covenant will put upon the flesh, the loss and expense we may sustain by our adherence to it, the hazards we run, and the difficulties we must reckon upon, if we will be faithful unto death; and in the view of these consent to the covenant; that hereafter, when tribulation and persecution arises because of the word, we may not say, "This was what we did not think of." Do it deliberately, therefore, and then it will not be easily undone. The rule in vowing is, *Be not rash with thy mouth, neither let thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God*, Eccl. v. 2. It is the character of the virtuous woman, that *she considers a field, and buys it.* And it has been thought a dictate of prudence, though it seem a paradox; "Take time, and you will have done the sooner." Many, that without consideration have put on a profession, when the wind has turned, have in like manner, without consideration, thrown it off again. "Light come, light go." Those, therefore, that herein would prove themselves honest, must prove themselves wise.

3. We must do it humbly. When we come to covenant with God, we must remember what we are, and who he is with whom we have to do, that the familiarity we are graciously admitted to, may not beget a contempt of God, or a conceit of ourselves; but rather, the more God is pleased to exalt us, and condescend to us, the more we must honour him, and abase ourselves. Abraham fell on his face, in a deep sense of his own unworthiness, when God said, *I will make my covenant between me and thee*, and began to talk with him concerning it; (Gen. xvii. 2, 3.) and afterwards, when he was admitted into an intimate communion with God, pursuant to that covenant, he drew near, as one that knew his distance, expressing himself with wonder at the favour done him, (Gen. xviii. 27.) *Behold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.* When the covenant of royalty was confirmed to David, and God regarded him according to the estate of a man of high degree, he sits down as one astonished at the honour conferred on him, and humbly expresses himself thus: *Who am I, O Lord God; and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* 1 Chron. xvii. 16, 17. Thus must we cast ourselves down at the footstool of God's throne, if we would be taken up into the embraces of his love. *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

4. We must do it cheerfully; for here, in a special manner, *God loves a cheerful giver*, and is pleased with that which is done, not of constraint, but willingly. In our covenanting with God, we must not be actuated by *a spirit of bondage and fear*, but by *a spirit of adoption, a spirit of power and love, and*

ound mind, Rom. viii. 15. 2 Tim. i. 7. We must oin ourselves to the Lord, not only because it is our luty, and that which we are bound to, but because t is our interest, and that by which we shall be unspeakable gainers: not with reluctance and regret, nd with a half-consent extorted from us; but with n entire satisfaction, and the full consent of a free spirit. Let it be a pleasure to us to think of our nterest in God as ours, and our engagement to him s his; a pleasure to us to think of the bonds of the ovenant, as well as of the blessings of the covenant. Much of our communion with God (which is so nuch the delight of all that are sanctified) is kept p by the frequent recognition of our covenant with im; which we should make, as those who like our hoice too well to change; and as the men of udah did, when *they sware unto the Lord with a oud voice, and with trumpets: and all Judah rejoiced at the oath; for they had sworn with all heir heart, and sought him with their whole desire,* Chron. xv. 14, 15. Christ's soldiers must be volunteers, not pressed men, and we must repeat our consent to him with such joy and triumph, as appears n that of the spouse, (Cant. v. 16.) *This is my beloved, and this is my friend.*

5. We must do it in sincerity. This is the chief hing required in every thing wherein we have to do vith God; *Behold, he desires truth in the inward arts.* When God took Abraham into covenant with imself, this was the charge he gave him, *Walk efore me, and be thou perfect,* that is, upright, for prightness is our gospel perfection. Writing the ovenant and subscribing it, signing and sealing it, nay be proper expressions of seriousness and resolution in the transaction, and of use to us in the eview; but if herein we *lie unto God with our outh,* and *flatter him with our tongue,* as Israel did, Ps. lxxviii. 36.) though we may put the cheat upon urselves and others, yet we cannot impose upon im; *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* If we only ive the hand unto the Lord, and do not give our earts to him, whatever our pretensions, professions, nd present feelings of devotion may be, we are but *s a sounding brass, and tinkling cymbal.* What will avail us to say, we covenant with God, if we still eep up our league with the world and the flesh, nd have a secret antipathy to serious godliness? issembled piety is no disguise before God, but is ated as double iniquity. It is certain, that thou ast no part nor lot in the matter (whatever thou nayst claim) if *thy heart be not right in the sight of God,* Acts viii. 21. I know no religion but sincerity: ur vows to God are nothing, if they be not bonds pon the soul.

CHAPTER VI.

HELPS FOR MEDITATION AND PRAYER IN OUR PREPARATION FOR THE ORDINANCE.

MEDITATION and prayer are the daily exercise and delight of a devout and pious soul. In meditation we converse with ourselves; in prayer we converse with God; and what converse can we desire more agreeable, and more advantageous? They who are frequent and serious in those holy duties at other times, will find them the easier and the sweeter on this occasion; the friends we are much with, we are most free with: but if at other times we be not so close and constant to them as we should be, we have the more need to take pains with our own hearts, that we may effectually engage them in these services, when we approach the ordinance of the Lord's supper.

Enter into thy closet, therefore, and shut the door against diversions from without: be not shy of being alone. The power of godliness withers and declines, if secret devotion be either neglected or negligently performed. Enter into thy heart also, and do what thou canst to shut the doors of that against distraction from within. Compose thyself for the business, and summon all that is within thee to attend on it; separate thyself from the world and the thoughts of it; leave all its cares at the bottom of the hill, as Abraham did his servants, when he was going up into the mount to worship God, (Gen. xxii. 5.) and then set thyself about thy work; gird up thy loins, and trim thy lamp. Up, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.

We must set ourselves to meditate on that which is most proper for the confirming of our faith, and the kindling of pious and devout affections in us. Good thoughts should be often in our minds, and welcome there; so should our souls often breathe towards God in pious ejaculations that are short and sudden: but as good prayers, so good thoughts, must sometimes be set and solemn. Morning and evening they must be so, on the Lord's day also, and before the Lord's supper.

Meditation is thought engaged, and thought inflamed.

1. It is thought engaged; in it the heart fastens upon, and fixes to, a select and certain subject, with an endeavour to dwell and enlarge upon it: not matters of doubtful disputation, or small concern, but those things which are of greatest certainty and moment. And since few of the ordinary sort of Christians can be supposed to have such a treasury of knowledge, such a fruitfulness of invention, and so great a compass and readiness of thought, as to be able to discourse with themselves for any time upon any one subject, so closely, methodically, and

pertinently as one would wish; it may be advisable either to fasten upon some portion of Scripture, and to read that over and over with a closeness of observation and application; or to recollect some profitable sermon lately heard, and think that over; or to make use of some books of pious meditations, or practical discourses, (which blessed be God we have great plenty and variety of in our own tongue,) and not only read them, but descant and enlarge upon them in our minds, still giving liberty to our own thoughts to expatiate, as they are able, but borrowing help from what we read, to reduce them when they wander, and to furnish them with matter when they are barren. In the choice of helps for this work, wisdom and experience are profitable to direct, and no rule can be given to fit all capacities and all cases: the end may be attained in different methods.

2. It is thought inflamed. To meditate, is not only to think seriously of divine things, but to think of them with concern and suitable affection. *While we are thus musing, the fire must burn,* Ps. xxxix. 3. When the *heart meditates terror,* (Isa. xxxiii. 18.) the terrors of the Lord, it must be with a holy fear. When we contemplate the beauty of the Lord, his bounty, and his benignity, which is better than life, we must do it with holy complacency, solacing ourselves in the Lord our God. The design of meditation is to improve our knowledge, and to affect ourselves with those things with which we have acquainted ourselves, that the impressions of them upon our souls may be deep and durable, and that by *beholding the glory of the Lord, we may be changed into the same image.*

Serious meditation before a sacrament, will be of great use to us, to make those things familiar to us, which in that ordinance we are to be conversant with: that good thoughts may not be to seek when we are there, it is our wisdom to prepare them, and lay them ready beforehand. Frequent acts confirm a habit; and pious dispositions are greatly helped by pious meditations. Christian graces will be the better exercised in the ordinance, when they are thus trained, disciplined, and drawn out in the preparation for it.

For our assistance herein, I shall mention some few of those things which may most properly be pitched upon for the subject of our meditations before a sacrament: I say, before a sacrament, because, though this be calculated here for the sacrament of the Lord's supper, yet it may equally serve us in our preparations for the other sacrament, both that we may profit by the public administration of it, and, especially, that we may, in an accceptable manner, present our children to it; for which service we have as much need carefully to prepare ourselves as for this. As we must in faith join ourselves to the Lord, so we must in faith dedicate those pieces of ourselves to him.

That our hearts then may be raised, and quickened, and prepared for communion with Christ at his table,

I. Let us set ourselves to think of the sinfulness and misery of man's fallen state. That we may be taught to value our recovery and restoration by the grace of the second Adam, let us take a full and distinct view of our ruin by the sin of the first Adam; come and see what desolations it has made on the earth, and how it has turned the world into a wilderness. *How is this gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!* What wretched work did sin make? What a black and horrid train of fatal consequences attended its entrance into the world!

Come, my soul, and see how the nature of man is corrupted and violated, and lamentably degenerated from its primitive purity and rectitude: God's image defaced and lost, and Satan's image stamped instead of it. The understanding blind, and unapt to admit the rays of divine light; the will stubborn, and unapt to comply with the dictates of the divine law; the affections carnal, and unapt to receive the impressions of the divine love. Come, my soul, and lament the change; thou thyself feelest from it, and sharest in the sad effects of it; for a nature thus tainted, thus depraved, I brought into the world with me, and carry about with me to this day sad remainders of its corruption. It was a nature by creation little lower than that of angels, but become by sin much baser than that of brutes. It was like the Nazarites, *purer than snow, whiter than milk, more ruddy than the rubies, and its polishing was of sapphires;* but now, *its visage is blacker than a coal,* Lam. iv. 7, 8. Never was beauty so deformed, never was strength so weakened, never was a healthful constitution so spoiled, never was honour so laid in the dust. *How is the faithful city become a harlot!* Man's nature was *planted a choice vine, wholly a right seed:* but alas, *it is become the degenerate plant of a strange vine,* Jer. ii. 21. I find in myself, by sad experience, I am naturally prone to that which is evil, and backward to that which is good. Foolishness is daily breaking out in my life, and by that I perceive it is bound up in my heart: for these things I blush, and am ashamed; for these things I tremble, and am afraid; *for these things I weep, mine eye, mine eye runs down with tears,* Lam. i. 16.

Come, my soul, and see how miserable fallen man is; see him excluded God's favour, expelled the garden of the Lord, and forbidden to meddle with the tree of life; see how odious he is become to God's holiness, and obnoxious to his justice, and by nature a child of wrath. See how calamitous the state of human life is; what troops of diseases, disasters, and deaths, in the most horrid and frightful shapes, man is compassed about with; Lord, *how are they increased that trouble him!* See him attacked on every side by the malignant powers of darkness that

seek to destroy; see him sentenced for sin to utter darkness, to the devouring fire, to the everlasting burning; *How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, son of the morning;* O what a gulph of misery is man sunk into by sin; separated from all good to all evil; and his condition in himself helpless and hopeless. A deplorable case! And it is my case by nature. I am of this guilty, exposed, condemned race; undone, undone for ever; as miserable as the curse of heaven and the flames of hell can make me, if infinite mercy do not interpose. And shall not this affect me? Shall not this afflict me? Shall not these thoughts beget in me a hatred of sin, that evil, that only evil? Shall I ever be reconciled to that which has done so much mischief? Shall I not be quickened hereby to fly to Christ, in whom alone help and salvation is to be had? Is this thy condition, O my soul, thine by nature, and is there a door of hope opened to thee by grace? *Up,* then, *get thee out of this* Sodom; *escape for thy life, look not behind thee, stay not in all the plain, escape to the mountain,* the mountain of holiness, *lest thou be consumed.*

II. Let us set ourselves to think of the glory of the divine attributes shining forth in the work of our redemption and salvation. Here is a bright and noble subject, the contemplation and wonder of angels and blessed spirits above, and which eternity itself will be short enough to be spent in the admiring view of.

Come then, O my soul, come and think of the kindness and love of God our Saviour, his good will to man which designed our redemption; the spring and first wheel of that work of wonder. Herein is love! Though God was happy from eternity before man had a being, and would have been happy to eternity, if man had never been, or had been miserable; though man's nature was mean and despicable; though his crimes were heinous and detestable; though by his disobedience he had forfeited the protection of a prince; though by his ingratitude he had forfeited the kindness of a friend; and, though by his perfidiousness he had forfeited the benefits of a covenant; yet the tender mercies of our God moved for his relief. Come and see a world of apostate angels passed by and left to perish; no Redeemer, no Saviour provided for them; but when men pitied and helped; though angels had been more honourable, and would have been more serviceable.

Come and think of God's patience and forbearance exercised toward man; *The long suffering of our Lord is salvation.* Think how much he bears, and how long, with the world, with me, though most provoking. This patience left room for the salvation, and gives hopes of it. If the Lord had been pleased to kill us, he would have done it before now. Come and think, especially, of the wisdom of God, which is so gloriously displayed in the contrivance of the work of our redemption: here is *the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world for our glory,* 1 Cor. ii. 7. Think of the measures God has taken, the means he has devised, that the banished might not be for ever expelled from him, 2 Sam. xiv. 14. Think with wonder how all the divine attributes are, by the method pitched upon, secured from damage and reproach, so that one is not glorified by the diminution of the lustre of another. When sin has brought things to that strait, that one would think either God's justice, truth, and holiness must be eclipsed and clouded, or man's happiness must be for ever lost, infinite wisdom finds out an expedient for the securing both of God's honour and of man's happiness: it is now no disparagement at all to God's justice to pardon sin, nor to his holiness to be reconciled to sinners; for by the death of Christ justice is satisfied, and by the Spirit of Christ sinners are sanctified. *Mercy and truth* here *meet together*; behold, *righteousness and peace kiss each other.* Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and wonder, O earth. And thou, my soul, thou that owest all thy joys and all thy hopes to this contrivance, despairing to find the bottom of this unfathomable fountain of life, sit down at the brink, and adore the depth; *O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* Rom. xi. 33.

III. Let us set ourselves to think of the person of our Redeemer, and his glorious undertaking of the work of our salvation. Come, my soul, and think of Christ, who thought of thee; think of him as the eternal Son of God, *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;* who lay in his bosom from eternity, and had an infinite joy and glory with him before the worlds were, and in whom dwells all the fulness of the godhead; the eternal Wisdom, the eternal Word that has life in himself, and is one with the Father, and who thought it no robbery to be equal with God. *He is thy Lord,* (O my soul,) and *worship thou him.*

Think of him as the Former of all things, without whom was not any thing made that was made. *Thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist,* Col. i. 16, 17. Let this engage my veneration for him, let this encourage my faith and hope in him: if I have my being from him, I must consecrate my being to him, and may expect my bliss in him.

Think of him as Emanuel, the Word incarnate, *God manifest in the flesh,* clothed with our nature, taking part of flesh and blood, that for us in our nature he might satisfy the justice of God whom we had offended, and break the power of Satan, by whom we were enslaved. Come, my soul, and with an eye of faith behold the beauties, the transcendent, unparalleled beauties of the Redeemer. See him *white and*

ruddy, fairer than the children of men, perfectly pure and spotless, wise and holy, kind and good; who has the infinite mercies of a God, and withal the experimental compassions of a man, who has been *touched with the feeling of our infirmities.* See him by faith, as John saw him in vision, Rev. i. 13, &c. See him and admire him, as one who in all things has the pre-eminence; none like him, nor any to be compared to him.

Think of him as undertaking our redemption, the redemption of the soul, which was so precious, that otherwise it must have ceased for ever. When the sealed book of God's counsels concerning man's redemption was produced, *none in heaven or earth was found worthy to open that book, or to look thereon,* Rev. v. 3, 4. When sacrifice and offering for sin would not do, and the blood of bulls and goats had been tried in vain, and found ineffectual, then said he, *Lo, I come; this ruin shall be under my hands,* alluding to Isa. iii. 6. Come, my soul, and see help laid upon one that is mighty; one chosen out of the people, and every way qualified for the undertaking; able to do the Redeemer's work, and fit to wear the Redeemer's crown. See how willingly he obliged himself to the service, how cheerfully he obliged himself to go through with it, and engaged his heart to approach unto God as our advocate. It is *the voice of thy beloved,* O my soul, *behold he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills,* making nothing of the difficulties that lay in his way. Behold thy King comes, thy Bridegroom comes, go forth my soul, go forth to meet him with thy joyful hosannahs, and bid him welcome; *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

IV. Let us set ourselves to think of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, the dishonours done to him, and the honours done to us, by it. Here is a wide field for our meditations to expatiate in, nor can we determine to know any thing before a sacrament more proper and profitable than *Jesus Christ, and him crucified; lifted up from the earth, and drawing all men unto him,* as the attractive loadstone of their hearts, and the common centre of their unity. Come then, and behold the Man; represent to thyself, (O my soul,) not to thy fancy, but to thy faith, *the Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world,* by the sacrifice of himself.

Come and look over the particulars of Christ's sufferings, all the humiliations and mortifications of his life; but especially the pains, agonies, and ignominies of his death. Review the story; thou wilt still find something in it surprising and very affecting. Take notice of all the circumstances of his passion, and say, *Never was sorrow like unto his sorrow.* Take notice especially of the disgrace and reproach done him in his sufferings, the shame he was industriously loaded with: this contributed greatly to the satisfaction made by his sufferings. God has been injured in his glory by sin; and no other way could he be injured: he, therefore, who undertook to make reparation for that injury, not only denied himself in, and divested himself of, the honours due to an incarnate Deity, but, though most innocent and most excellent, voluntarily submitted to the utmost disgraces that could be done to the worst of criminals. Thus he restored that which he took not away. See him, my soul, see him *enduring the cross and despising the shame.*

Come and see the purchases of the cross; the blood, there shed, is the ransom with which we are redeemed from hell, the price with which heaven is bought for us. See it a price of inestimable value: *the topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, nor shall it be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.* No, my soul, thou wast not redeemed with such corruptible things. The pardon of sin, the favour of God, the graces of the Spirit, the blessings of the covenant, and eternal life, could not be purchased with silver and gold, but are dearly bought and paid for with the precious blood of the Son of God. All the praise be to the glorious Purchaser!

Come and see the victories of the cross. See the Lord Jesus even a conqueror when he seemed a captive; spoiling principalities and powers, when he seemed totally defeated and routed by them. See Christ upon the cross breaking the serpent's head, disarming Satan, triumphing over death and the grave, *leading captivity captive,* and going forth in that chariot of war, *conquering and to conquer.*

Think, my soul, think what thou owest to the dying of the Lord Jesus: the privileges of thy way, and the glories of thy home; all thou hast, all thou hopest for that is valuable, they are all precious fruits, gathered from this tree of life. Christ's wounds are thy healing, his agonies thy repose, his conflicts thy conquests, his groans thy songs, his pains thy ease, his shame thy glory, his death thy life, his sufferings thy salvation.

V. Let us set ourselves to think of the present glories of the exalted Redeemer. When we meditate on the cross he bore, we must not forget the crown he wears, within the vail. Think, my soul, think where he is, at the right hand of the Father far above all principalities, and powers, and every name that is named; he is set down upon the throne of the Majesty in the highest heavens. Having obtained eternal redemption for us, he is entered with his own blood into the holy place. Think how he is attended there with an innumerable company of angels, who continually surround the throne of God and of the Lamb. Think of the songs there sung to his praise, the crowns there cast at his feet, and the name he there has above every name. Think especially what he is doing there. He always appears in the presence of God, as the great High Priest of

our profession, to intercede for all those that come to God by him, and he attends constantly to this very thing: there he is preparing a place for all his followers, and thence he will shortly come to receive them to himself, to behold his glory, and to share in it.

Dwell on these thoughts, O my soul, and say as they did who saw the glory of his transfiguration, *It is good to be here;* here let us *make tabernacles:* let these thoughts kindle in thee an earnest desire (shall I call it a holy curiosity) to see him as he is, face to face. His advancement is thy advantage: as the forerunner, he is for me entered: let the contemplation of the joy he is entered into, and the power he is there girded with, have such an influence upon me, that by faith I may be *raised up* likewise, and *made to sit together with him in heavenly places,* Eph. ii. 6.

VI. Let us set ourselves to think of the unsearchable riches of the new covenant made with us in Jesus Christ, and sealed to us in the sacrament. Peruse this covenant in the several dispensations of it, from the dawning of its day in the first promise, to that noon-day light, which life and immortality are brought to by the gospel. Read over the several articles of it, and observe how well ordered it is in all things; so well, that it could not be better. Review its promises, which are precious and many, very many, very precious, and sure to all the seed. Search into all the hidden wealth that is treasured up in them; dig into these mines; content not thyself with a transient view of these fountains of living water, but bring thy bucket, and draw with joy out of these wells of salvation. *Go walk about this Zion,* this city of God; *tell the towers, mark well the bulwarks, consider the palaces,* and say, *This God,* who is our God in covenant, *is ours for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death,* Ps. xlviii. 12—14.

Stir up thyself therefore, O my soul, to meditate on the privileges of a justified state; the liberties and immunities, the dignities and advantages, that are conveyed by the charter of pardon. O the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven! See him secured from the arrests of the law, the curse of God, the evil of affliction, the sting of death, and the damnation of hell. Read with pleasure the triumphs of blessed Paul, Rom. viii. 33, &c. Happy thou art, my soul, and all is well with thee, or shall be shortly, if thy sins be pardoned.

Meditate on the honours and comforts of a state of grace. If now I am a child of God, adopted and regenerated, and have received the Spirit of adoption, I have liberty of access to the throne of grace, I have a sanctified use of my creature-comforts, my fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ; *all is mine, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are mine,* 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22. I have meat to eat that the world knows not of, joy that a stranger intermeddles not with. Let the thoughts of these privileges work in thee, O my soul, a holy disdain of the pleasures of sense, and the profits of the world, whenever they come in competition with the gains of godliness, and the delights of the spiritual life: offer those to them that know no better.

VII. Let us set ourselves to think of the communion of saints. This contributes something to our comfort in communion with Christ, that through him *we have fellowship one with another,* (1 John i. 7.) so that *we being many, are one bread and one body;* for Christ died *to gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad,* John xi. 52. That all might be one in him, in whom we all meet, as many members in one head, so making one body; many branches in one root, so making one vine; and many stones in one foundation, so making one building.

Enlarge thy thoughts then, O my soul, and let it be a pleasure to thee to think of the relation thou standest in to the whole family, both in heaven and earth, which is named of Jesus Christ; to think that thou art come in faith, hope, and love, even to the *innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,* Heb. xii. 22, 23. Even these are thy brethren and fellow-servants. Rejoice in thy alliance to them, in their affection to thee, and in the prospect thou hast of being with them shortly, of being with them eternally. Here we sit down with a little handful of weak and imperfect saints, and those mixed with pretenders; but we hope shortly to have a place and a name in the general assembly of the first-born, and to *sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of our Father;* with all the saints, and none but saints, and saints made perfect; and so to be together for ever with the Lord.

Please thyself also, O my soul, with thinking of the spiritual communion thou hast in the acts of Christian piety, and in the exercise of Christian charity, with *all that in every place* on this earth *call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours,* 1 Cor. i. 2. Some good Christians there are who fall within the reach of our personal communion, to whom we give the right hand of fellowship. Others within the line of our acquaintance and correspondence, and many more, whom we know not, nor have heard of, never saw, nor are ever likely to see in this world; but all these our companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ: they and we are guided by the same rule, animated by the same spirit, conformed to the same image, interested in the same promises, and joined to the same great body: they and we meet daily at the same throne of grace, under the conduct of the same Spirit of adoption, which teaches us all to cry,

Abba, Father: and they and we hope to meet shortly at the same throne of glory under the conduct of the same Jesus, who will gather his elect from the four winds, and present them all together unto the Father. Christ hath prayed, that *all that believe on him may be one*, and therefore we are sure they are so, for the Father heard him always, John xvii. 20, 21. Let this subject yield us some delightful thoughts here in a scattered world, and a divided church.

VIII. Let us set ourselves to think of the happiness of heaven. A pleasant theme this is, very improvable, and pertinent enough to an ordinance which has so much of heaven in it. If indeed we have heaven in our eye as our home and rest, and our conversation there, we cannot but have it much upon our hearts. Have we good hope through grace of being shortly with Christ in the heavenly paradise, where there is *fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore*, where we shall see God's glory, and enjoy his love immediately, to our complete and everlasting satisfaction? Do we expect, that yet a little while and the veil shall be rent, the shadow of the evening shall be done away, and we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known? Are we in prospect of a crown of glory that fades not away, an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance?

Raise thy thoughts then, O my soul, to the joyful contemplation of the glory to be revealed. Arise then, and survey this land of promise, as Abraham, Gen. xiii. 14. Go with Moses to the top of Pisgah, and take a view of it by faith. Get a scripture map of that Canaan, and study it well. Think, my soul, what they see in that world, who always behold the face of the Father, and in it see all truth and brightness, and the perfection of beauty. Think what they have there who eat of the tree of life, and the hidden manna, whose faculties are enlarged to take in the full communications of divine love and grace, and who have *God himself with them as their God*, Rev. xxi. 3. Think what they are doing there, who dwell in God's house, and are still praising him, and rest not day nor night from doing it. Think of the good company that is there, thousands of thousands of blessed angels, and holy souls, with whom we shall have an intimate and undisturbed converse in perfect light and love.

Compare the present state thou art in, my soul, with that thou hopest for; and let it be a pleasure to thee to think that whatever is here, thy grief and burthen shall be there removed, and done away for ever. Satan's temptations shall there no more assault thee, thy own corruptions shall there no more insnare thee, the guilt of sin, and doubts about thy spiritual state, shall there no more terrify and perplex thee; no pain, nor sickness, nor sorrow, shall be an allay to the enjoyments of that world, as they are to those of this world. All tears shall there be wiped away, even those for sin.

On the other side, whatever is here thy delight and pleasure, shall there be perfected. The knowledge of God, joy in him, and communion with him, are here as it were thy running banquets, there they shall be thy continual feast. The work of grace begun in thee, is that which reconciles thee to thyself, and gives thee some pleasure now in thy reflections upon thyself. This work shall there be completed, and the finishing strokes given to it by the same skilful and happy hand that begun it.

Come now, my soul, and *neglect not the gift that is in thee*, but *meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them*, (1 Tim. iv. 14, 15.) εν τουτοις ισθι,—*be thou in them*, as in thy business, as in thy element.

Think of the things that are not seen, that are eternal; the things of the invisible and unchangeable world, till thou findest thyself so affected with them, as even to forget the things that are here below, that are here behind; and look upon them with a holy negligence, that thou mayst with greater diligence *reach toward the things that are before, and press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling*, Phil. iii. 13, 14.

We must not only meditate, but we must pray, and cry earnestly to God for assistance and acceptance in what we do. When the apostle had reckoned up all the parts of the Christian's armour, he concludes with this, *Praying always*, Eph. vi. 18. Prayer must gird on the whole armour of God; for without prayer all our endeavours are vain and ineffectual. Therefore in our preparations for the Lord's supper, time must be spent, and pains taken in prayer, for two reasons:

1. Because this is a proper means of quickening ourselves, and stirring up our graces. One duty of religion is of use to dispose and fit us for another; and the most solemn services ought to be approached gradually, and through the outer courts. In prayer the soul ascends to God, and converses with him, and thereby the mind is prepared to receive the visits of his grace, and habituated to holy exercises. Even the blessed Jesus prepared himself for the offering up of the great sacrifice by prayer, a long prayer in the house, (John xvii.) and strong cryings with tears in the garden. Three times Christ was spoken to while he was here upon earth, by voices from heaven, and they all three found him praying. That at his baptism, (Luke iii. 21.) *Jesus being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened.* That at his transfiguration, (Luke ix. 29.) *As he prayed the fashion of his countenance was altered.* And that a little before his passion, (John xii. 27, 28.) when he prayed, *Father, glorify thy name;* the voice came from heaven, *I have glorified it*, &c. Saul of Tarsus prays, and then sees a vision, (Acts ix. 11, 12.) and afterwards, Acts xxii. 17, 18. Cornelius had his vision when he was at prayer, (Acts x. 30.) and Peter his, *v.* 9, 10. All which

instances, and many the like, suggest to us, that communion with God in prayer prepares and disposes the mind for communion with him in other duties.

2. Because this is the appointed way of fetching in that mercy and grace which God has promised, and which we stand in need of. In God is our help, and from him is our fruit found; and he has promised to help us, to give us a *new heart*, to *put his Spirit within us*, and to *cause us to walk in his statutes*, (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) but it follows there, *v.* 37. *I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.* How can we expect the presence of God with us, if we do not invite him by prayer? or the power of God upon us, if we do not by prayer derive it from him? The greatest blessings are promised to the prayer of faith; but God will not give, if we will not ask: why should he?

But what must we pray for, when we draw near to God in this solemn ordinance? Solomon tells us, that both the *preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord*, Prov. xvi. 1. To him therefore we must apply ourselves for both. The whole word of God is of use to direct us in these prayers, and in it the blessed Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for as much as we know not what to pray for, in this or in any other case, as we ought.

(1.) We must pray that we may be prepared for the solemnity before it comes. Whatever is necessary to qualify us for communion with God in it, is spoken of in Scripture as God's gift; and whatever is the matter of God's promise, must be the matter of our prayers; for promises are given not only to be the ground of our hope, but also to be the guide of our desire in prayer. Is knowledge necessary? *Out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding*, (Prov. ii. 6.) and at Wisdom's gates we must wait for Wisdom's gifts, rejoicing herein, *That the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding*, 1 John v. 20. Is faith necessary? That is *not of ourselves, it is the gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8. Him therefore we must attend, who is both *the author and the finisher of our faith.* To him we must pray, *Lord, increase our faith: Lord, perfect what is lacking* in it: Lord, *fulfil the work of faith with power.* Is love necessary? It is the Holy Ghost that sheds abroad that love in our hearts, and circumcises our hearts to love the Lord our God. To that heavenly fire we must therefore go for this holy spark, and pray for the breath of the Almighty to blow it into a flame. Is repentance necessary? It is God who gives repentance, who takes away the stony heart, and gives a heart of flesh, and we beg of him to work that blessed change in us. *Behold the fire and the wood*, the ordinance instituted, and all needful provision made for our sacrifice: but *where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?* Where is the heart to be offered up to God? If God did not *provide himself a lamb*, the solemnity would fail, (Gen. xxii. 7, 8.) to him therefore we must go to buy such things as we have need of against the feast; that is, to beg them, for we *buy without money and without price;* and such buyers shall not be driven out of God's temple, nor slighted there, however they are looked on in men's markets.

(2.) Pray that our hearts may be enlarged in the duty. It is the gracious promise of God, that he will *open rivers in the wilderness and streams in the desert;* and the joint experience of all the saints, that *they looked unto him and were lightened.* Such outgoings of soul, therefore, toward God, as may receive the incomes of divine strength and comfort, we should earnestly desire and pray for. Pray that God would grace his own institutions with such manifest tokens of his presence, as those two disciples had, who reasoned thus for their own conviction that they had been with Jesus, *Did not our hearts burn within us?* Luke xxiv. 32. Pray that, by the grace of God, the business of the ordinance may be faithfully done; the work of the day, the sacrament day, in its day, *according as the duty of the day requires*, Ezra iii. 4. Pray that the ends of the ordinance may be sincerely aimed at, and happily attained, and the great intention of the institution of it answered, that you may not receive the grace of God therein in vain. O that my heart may be engaged to approach unto God! so engaged, as that nothing may prevail to disengage it! Come, blessed Spirit, and breathe upon these dry bones; move upon the waters of the ordinances, and produce a new creation. *Awake, O north wind, and come thou south, and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow forth;* and then *let my beloved come into his garden*, (his it is, and then it will be fit to be called his,) *and eat his pleasant fruits*, Cant. iv. 16.

(3.) Pray that we may be favourably accepted of God, both in the preparation and the performance. In vain do we worship if God do not accept us: the applause of men is but a poor reward (such as the hypocrites were content with, and put off with) if we come short of the favour of God. Herein therefore we should labour, this we should be ambitious of as our highest honour, the top of our preferment, *that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of the Lord*, 2 Cor. v. 9. About this therefore we should be very solicitous in our inquiries, *Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord*, so as to please him? For this we should be very importunate in our prayers, *O that I knew where I might find him!* Job xxiii. 3. O that I might be met at the table of the Lord with a blessing, and not with a breach! O that God would smile upon me there, and bid me welcome! O that the beloved of my soul would show me some token for good there, and say unto me, *I am thy salvation!* Son, daughter, *be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine.* O that it might be a com-

munion indeed between Christ and my soul! That which is in vogue with the most of men is, *Who will show us any good?* But when I am admitted to touch the top of the golden sceptre, this is my petition, this is my request, *Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and that shall put* true *gladness into my heart,* greater than *the joy of harvest.*

(4.) Pray that what is amiss may be pardoned in the blood of Christ. This prayer good Hezekiah has put into our mouths, (God put it into our hearts! 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19.) *The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart* in sincerity, *to seek the Lord God of his fathers,* and aims honestly, *though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.* We cannot but be conscious to ourselves, that in many things we come short of our duty, and wander from it. The rule is strict; it is fit it should be so; and yet no particular rule more strict than that general and fundamental law of God's kingdom, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind, and might.* But our own hearts know, and God, who is greater than our hearts, and knows all things, knows, that we do not come up to the rule, nor *continue in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* By our deficiencies we become obnoxious to the curse, and should perish by it, if we were under the law; but we are encouraged by a penitent believing prayer, to sue out our pardon, having an advocate with the Father.

Would we take with us words in these prayers? David's Psalms, and St. Paul's Epistles, will furnish us with great variety of acceptable words, words which the Holy Ghost teaches; and other helps of devotion, which, thanks be to God, we have plenty of, may be used to much advantage. And if in these prayers we stir up ourselves to take hold on God, our experience shall be added to that of thousands; that Jacob's God never said to Jacob's seed, *Seek ye me in vain.*

CHAPTER VII.

DIRECTIONS IN WHAT FRAME OF SPIRIT WE SHOULD COME TO, AND ATTEND UPON, THIS ORDINANCE.

To make up the wedding garment, which is proper for this wedding feast, it is requisite, not only that we have an habitual temper of mind agreeable to the gospel, but that we have such an actual disposition of spirit, as is consonant to the nature and intentions of the ordinance. It is an excellent rule in the scripture directory for religious worship, (Eccl. v. 1.) *Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God;* that is, *keep thy heart with all diligence,* (Prov. iv. 23.) look well to the motions of thy soul, and observe the steps it takes. When we are to see the goings of our God, our King in the sanctuary, (Ps. lxviii. 24.) it concerns us to see to our own goings. *Keep thy foot,* that is, do nothing rashly, but *when thou goest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee,* Prov. xxiii. 1. It was not enough for the priests under the law, that they were washed and dressed in their priestly garments, when they were first consecrated, but they must be carefully washed and dressed every time they went in to minister, else they went in at their peril. We are spiritual priests to our God, and must do the office of our priesthood with a due decorum, remembering that this is that which the Lord has said, (God by his grace speak it home to our hearts!) *I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me;* that is, I will be attended as a holy God, in a holy manner, *and* so *before all the people I will be glorified,* Lev. x. 3. We then sanctify God in holy duties, when we sanctify ourselves in our approaches to them; that is, when we separate ourselves from every thing that is common or unclean, from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, and consecrate ourselves to God's glory as our end, and to his service as our business. If we would have the ordinance sanctified to us for our comfort and benefit, we must thus sanctify ourselves for it. Joshua's command to the people, when they were to follow the ark of the covenant through Jordan, should be still sounding in our ears, the night before a sacrament, (Josh. iii. 5.) *Sanctify yourselves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.* When the God of glory admits such worms, such a generation of vipers as we are, into covenant and communion with himself; when he gives gifts, such gifts, even to the rebellious; when by the power of his grace he sanctifies the sinful, and comforts the sorrowful, and gives such holiness and joy as is life from the dead; surely then he does wonders among us. That we may see these wonders done, and share in the benefit of them, that we may experience them done in our souls, Jordan driven back at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, to open a passage for us into the heavenly Canaan, let us sanctify ourselves, and earnestly pray to God to sanctify us.

For our help therein, the following directions perhaps may be of some use.

I. Let us address ourselves to this service with a fixedness of thought. There is scarce any instance of the corruption of nature, and the moral impotency which by sin we are brought under, more complained of by serious Christians, than the vanity of the thoughts, and the difficulty of fixing them to that which is good. They are apt to wander after a thousand impertinencies; and it is no easy matter to gather them in, and keep them employed as they should be. We all find it so by sad experience. Vain

thoughts lodge within us, and are most a hinderance and disturbance to us, when good thoughts are invited into the soul, and should be entertained there. When, therefore, we apply ourselves to a religious service, which will find work for all our thoughts, and which present objects well worthy of our closest contemplation, we are concerned to take pains with ourselves to get our hearts engaged, and to *bring every thought into obedience* to the law of this solemnity.

This is a time to set aside the thoughts of every thing that is foreign and unseasonable, and all those foolish speculations which use to be the unprofitable amusements of our idle hours, and the sports and pastimes of our carnal minds: away with them all; clear the court of these vagrants, when the doors are to be opened for the King of glory to come in. Are they thoughts that pretend business, and are as buyers and sellers in the temple? Tell them you have other business to mind; bid them depart for this time, and at a more convenient season you will call for them. Do they pretend urgent business, as Nehemiah's enemies did, when they sought to give him a diversion? Give them the repulse that he gave, and like him, repeat it as oft as they repeated their solicitations, (Neh. vi. 2—4.) *I am doing a great work, why should the work cease, while I leave it, and come down to you?* Do they pretend friendship, and send in the name of thy mother and thy brethren standing without, to speak with thee? yet dismiss them as Christ did, by giving the preference to better friends: let not thoughts of those we love best, divert us from thinking of Christ, whom we know we must love better.

This is a time to summon the attendance of all the thoughts, and keep them close to the business we are going about. Suffer none to wander, none to trifle, for here is employment, good employment, for them all, and all little enough. Though a perfect fixation of thought, without any distraction during the solemnity, is what I believe none can attain to in this state of imperfection, yet it is what we should desire and aim at, and come as near to as we can. Let us charge our thoughts not to straggle, keep a watchful eye upon them, and call them back when they begin to rove. Keep them in full employment about that which is proper and pertinent, which will prevent their starting aside to that which is otherwise. Come, *bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar*, that it may not be to seek when it should be sacrificed, Ps. cxviii. 27. Be able to say, through grace, *O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed*, though unfixed at other times, yet fixed now. Look up to God for grace to establish the heart, and keep it steady: look with sorrow and shame upon its wanderings: shut the door against distractions: watch and pray against temptations; and when those birds of prey come down upon the sacrifices, do as Abraham did, (Gen. xv. 11.) *Drive them away.* And while you sincerely endeavour to keep your hearts fixed, be not discouraged; the vain thoughts that are disallowed, striven against, and repented of, though they are our hinderance, yet they shall not be our ruin.

II. Let us address ourselves to this service with an evenness and calmness of affection, free from the disorders and ruffles of passion. A sedate and quiet spirit, not tossed with the tempests of care and fear, but devolving care on God, and silencing fear by faith; not sinking under the load of temporal burthens, but supporting itself with the hopes of eternal joys, easy itself, because submissive to its God; this is a spirit fit to receive and return divine visits. They were still waters, on the face of which the Spirit moved to produce the world. *The Lord was not in the wind, was not in the earthquake.* The prince of the power of the air raises storms, for he loves to fish in troubled waters: but the Prince of peace stills storms, and quiets the winds and waves, for he casts his net into a calm sea. *The waters of Shiloah run softly*, and without noise, (Isa. viii. 6.) And that *river*, the *streams whereof make glad the city of our God*, is none of those, the *waters* whereof *roar and are troubled*, Ps. xlvi. 3, 4.

Let us therefore always study to be quiet, and however we are crossed and disappointed, let not our hearts be troubled, let them not be cast down and disquieted within us. Let us not create or aggravate our own vexations, nor be put into a disorder by any thing that occurs, but let the peace of God always rule in our hearts, and then that peace will keep them. They, whose natural temper is either fretful or fearful, have the more need to double their guard; and when any disturbance begins in the soul, should give diligence to suppress the tumult with all speed, lest the Holy Spirit be thereby provoked to withdraw, and then they will have but uncomfortable sacraments.

But especially let us compose ourselves, when we approach to the table of the Lord. Charge the peace then in the name of the King of kings; command silence, when you expect to hear the voice of joy and gladness: stop the mouth of clamours and noisy passions, banish tumultuous thoughts, suffer not those evil spirits to speak, but expel them, and let your souls return to God, and repose in him as their rest. Bring not unquiet distempered spirits to a transaction which requires the greatest calmness and serenity possible. Let all intemperate heats be cooled, and the thoughts of that which has made an uproar in the soul be banished, and let a strict charge be given to all about you, to all within you, *by the roes and hinds of the field*, those innocent pleasant creatures, that they *stir not up, nor awake your love*, nor give disturbance to your communion with him.

III. Let us address ourselves to it with a holy awe and reverence of the Divine Majesty. We ought to be in the fear of the Lord every day, and all the day long, for he is our strict observer wherever we are, and will be the Judge of persons and actions, by whose unerring sentence our eternal state will be decided; but in a special manner he is *greatly to be feared in the assemblies of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him*, Ps. lxxxix. 7. and the nearer we approach to him, the more reverent we should be. Angels who always behold God's face, see cause to cover their own. Even when we are admitted to sit down at God's table, we must remember that we are worshipping at his footstool, and, therefore, must lay ourselves very low before him, and *in his fear worship toward his holy temple*, Ps. v. 7. Let us not rush into the presence of God in a careless manner, as if he were a man like ourselves, nay, so as we would not approach a prince, or a great man, but observe a decorum, giving to him the glory due unto his name, and taking to ourselves the shame due to ours. If he be a Master, where is his fear? We do not worship God acceptably, if we do not worship him *with reverence and godly fear*, Heb. xii. 28.

1. We must worship him with reverence, as a glorious God, a God of infinite perfection, and almighty power, who *covers himself with light as with a garment*, and yet as to us *makes darkness his pavilion*. Dare we profane the temples of the Holy Ghost by outward indecencies of carriage and behaviour, the manifest indications of a vain regardless mind? Dare we allow of flat and common thoughts of that God who is over all, blessed for evermore? See him, (my soul,) see him by faith, upon a throne, high and lifted up, not only upon a throne of grace, which encourages thee to come with boldness, but upon a throne of glory, and a throne of government, which obliges thee to come with caution. Remember that *God is in heaven, and thou art upon earth, and therefore let thy words be few*, (Eccl. v. 2.) *Be still and know that he is God*, that he is great, and keep thy distance. Let an awful regard to the glories of the eternal God, and the exalted Redeemer, make thee humble and serious, very serious, very humble in thy approach to this ordinance, keep thee so during the solemnity.

2. We must also worship him with godly fear, as a holy God, a God whose name is Jealous, and who is a consuming fire, Heb. xii. 29. We have reason to fear before him, for we have offended him, and have made ourselves obnoxious to his wrath and curse, and, we are but upon our good behaviour as probationers for his favour. He is not a God that will be mocked, that will be trifled with. If we think to put a cheat upon him, we shall prove in the end to have put a most dangerous cheat upon our own souls. In this act of religion therefore, as well as in others, we must *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*.

IV. Let us come to this ordinance with a holy jealousy over ourselves, and a humble sense of our own unworthiness. We must sit before the Lord in such a frame as David composed himself into, when he said, *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my father's house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* 2 Sam. vii. 18. Nothing prepares the soul more for spiritual comforts than humility.

1. It may be, that we have reason to suspect ourselves, lest we come unworthily. Though we must not cherish such suspicions of our state, as will damp our joy in God, and discourage our hope in Christ, and fill us with amazement; nor such as will take off our chariot wheels, and keep us standing at a gaze, when we should be going forward; yet we must maintain such a jealousy of ourselves as will keep us humble, and take us off from all self-conceit, and self-confidence; such a jealousy of ourselves as will keep us watchful, and save us from sinking into carnal security. And now is a proper time to think how many there are who *eat bread* with Christ, and *yet lift up the heel against him*; the *hand of him that betrayeth him perhaps is with him upon the table*; which should put us upon asking, as the disciples did, just before the first sacrament, *Lord, is it I?* Matt. xxvi. 22. Many who eat and drink in Christ's presence, will be rejected and disowned by him in the great day. Have not I some reason to fear, lest that be my doom at last? to *fear lest a promise being left me of entering into rest*, I should *seem to come short?* to fear lest when the King comes in to see the guests, he find me without a wedding garment? Be not too confident, O my soul, lest thou deceive thyself; *be not high minded, but fear*.

2. However, it is certain, that we have reason to abase ourselves, for at the best, we are unworthy to come. If we are *less than the least of God's mercies*, how much less are we than the greatest, than this, which includes all? We are unworthy of the crumbs that fall from our Master's table, much more unworthy of the children's bread, and the dainties that are upon the table. Being invited, we may hope to be welcome; but, what is there in us that we should be invited. Men invite their friends and acquaintance to their tables, but we were naturally strangers and enemies in our mind by wicked works, and yet are we invited. Men invite such as they think will with their quality or merit grace their tables; but we are more likely to be a reproach to Christ's table, being *poor and maimed, halt and blind*, and yet are picked up out of *the high-ways and the hedges*, Luke xiv. 21. Men invite such as they are under obligations to, or have expectations from, but Christ is no way indebted to us, nor can he be benefited by us; our goodness extends not to him, and yet he invites us. We have much more reason than Mephibosheth had,

when he was made a constant guest at David's table, to bow ourselves and say, *What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?* 2 Sam. ix. 8. They who thus humble themselves shall be exalted.

V. Yet, let us come to this ordinance with a gracious confidence, as children to a father, to a father's table; not with any confidence in ourselves, but in Christ only. That slavish fear, which represents God as a hard Master, rigorous in his demands, and extreme to mark what we do amiss; which straitens our spirits, and subjects us to bondage and torment, must be put off and striven against, and we must *come boldly to the throne of grace*, to the table of grace, not as having any thing in ourselves to recommend us, but having a *High Priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities*, Heb. iv. 15, 16. As a presumptuous rudeness is a provocation to the Master of the feast, so a distrustful shyness is displeasing to him, which looks as if we questioned either the sincerity of the invitation, or the sufficiency of the provision.

This is the fault of many good Christians; they come to this sacrament rather like prisoners to the bar, than like friends and children to the table; they come trembling and astonished, and full of confusion. Their apprehensions of the grandeur of the ordinance, and the danger of coming unworthily, run into an extreme, and become a hinderance to the exercise of faith, hope, and love: this extreme we should carefully watch against; because it tends so much to God's dishonour, our own prejudice, and the discouragement of others. Let us remember we have to do with one who is willing to make the best of sincere desires, and serious endeavours, though in many things we be defective, and who deals with us in tender mercy, and not in strict justice; and who, though he be out of Christ a consuming fire, yet in Christ is a gracious Father: let us therefore *draw near with a true heart, and in full assurance of faith*, Heb. x. 22. It is related of Titus the emperor, that when a poor petitioner presented his address to him with a trembling hand, he was much displeased, and asked him, "Dost thou present thy petition to thy prince, as if thou wert giving meat to a lion?" Chide thyself for these amazing fears; *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?* If the Spirit undertake to work all my works in me, as the Son has undertaken to work all my works for me, both the one and the other shall be done effectually. Therefore *hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him.*

VI. Let us come to this ordinance with earnest desires toward God, and communion with him. It is a feast, a spiritual feast, and we must come to it with an appetite, a spiritual appetite; for the full soul loathes even the honey-comb, and slights the offer of it; but to the hungry soul, that is sensible of its own need, every bitter thing is sweet, even the bitterness of repentance, when it is in order to peace and pardon. Our desires toward the world and the flesh must be checked and moderated, and kept under the government of religion and right reason; for we have been too long spending our money for that which is not bread, and which is at the best unsatisfying; but our desires toward Christ must be quickened and stirred up. *As the hart*, the hunted hart, *panteth after* the refreshment of *the water-brook*, so earnestly must our *souls pant for the living God*, Ps. xlii. 1, 2. The invitation is given, and the promise made, to them only who hunger and thirst; they are called to *come to the waters*, (Isa. lv. 1.) to *come and drink*, (John vii. 37.) and it is promised to them, that *they shall be filled*; (Matt. v. 6.) it is very necessary therefore that we work upon our hearts the consideration of those things that are proper to kindle this holy fire, and to blow its sparks into a flame. We are best prepared to receive temporal mercies, when we are most indifferent to them, and content, if the will of God be so, to be without them. *Did I desire a son of my lord?* said the good Shunamite, 2 Kings iv. 28. Here the danger is of being too earnest in our desires, as Rachel, *Give me children, or else I die.* But we are best prepared to receive spiritual mercies, when we are most importunate for them: here the desires cannot be too vehement. In the former case strong desires evidence the prevalency of sense, but in this they evidence the power of faith, both realizing and valuing the blessings desired. The devout and pious soul thirsts for God, for the living God, as a thirsty land, Ps. cxliii. 6; lxiii. 1. It longs, yea even faints, for the courts of the Lord, and for communion with God in them, Ps. lxxxiv. 2. *It breaks for the longing it hath unto God's judgment at all times*, Ps. cxix. 20. Can our souls witness to such desires as these? O that I might have a more intimate acquaintance with God, and Christ, and divine things! O that I might have the tokens of God's favour, and fuller assurances of his distinguishing love in Jesus Christ! O that my covenant interest in him, and relation to him, might be cleared up to me, and that I might have more of the comfort of it! O that I might partake more of the divine grace, and by its effectual working on my soul, might be made more conformable to the divine will and likeness, more holy, humble, spiritual, heavenly, and more meet for the inheritance! O that I might have the earnest of the Spirit in my heart, sealing me to the day of redemption!

Thus the desire of our souls must be toward the Lord, and toward the remembrance of his name. In this imperfect state, where we are at home in the body, and absent from the Lord, our love to God acts more in holy desires than in holy delights. It is rather love in motion, like a bird upon the wing, than love at rest, like a bird upon the nest. All

those who have the Lord for their God, agree to desire nothing more than God, for they know they have enough in him; but still, yet they desire more and more of God, for till they come to heaven, they will never have enough of him. Come then, my soul, why art thou so cold in thy desires toward those things which are designed for thy peculiar satisfaction, distinct from the body? Why so eager for the meat that perishes, and so indifferent to that which endures to everlasting life? Hast thou no desire to that which is so necessary to thy support, and without which thou art undone? No desire to that which will contribute so much to thy comfort, and yield thee an inexpressible satisfaction? Provision is made in the Lord's supper of bread to strengthen thee, will not the sense of thy own weakness and emptiness make thee hunger after that? Canst thou be indifferent to that which is the staff of thy life? Provision is made of pleasant food, fat things full of marrow, and wines on the lees; art thou not desirous of dainties, such dainties? Was the tree of knowledge such a temptation, because it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, that our first parents would break through the hedge of a divine command, and venture all that was dear to them to come at it? And shall not the tree of life, which we are not only allowed, but commanded, to eat of, and the fruit of which will nourish us to life eternal, shall not that appear more pleasing in our eyes, and more to be desired? God, even thy own God, who has wherewithal to supply all thy need, and has promised to be to thee a God all-sufficient, a God that is enough, he has said, (Ps. lxxxi. 10.) *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.*——Thou art not straitened in him, be not straitened in thy own desires.

VII. Let us come to this ordinance with raised expectations. The same faith that enlarges the desire, and draws it out to a holy vehemence, should also elevate the hope, and ripen it to a holy confidence. When we come thirsting to these waters, we need not fear that they will prove like the brooks in summer, which disappoint the weary traveller, for *when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place*, Job vi. 17, &c. Such are all the broken cisterns of the creature, they perform not what they promise, or rather, what we foolishly promise to ourselves from them. No, but these are inexhaustible fountains of living water, in which there is enough for all, though ever so many, enough for each, though ever so needy, enough for me, though most unworthy.

Come, my soul, what dost thou look for at the table of the Lord? The maker of the feast is God himself, who does nothing little, nothing mean, but is *able to do exceeding abundantly, above what we are able to ask or think.* When he gives, he gives like himself, gives like a king, gives like a God, all things richly to enjoy, considering not what it becomes such ungrateful wretches as we are to receive, but what it becomes such a bountiful Benefactor as he is to give. A lively faith may expect that which is rich and great from him who is Possessor of heaven and earth, and all the wealth of both; and that which is kind and gracious from him, who is the *Father of mercies, and the God of all consolation.* A lively faith may expect all that is purchased by the blood of Christ, from a God who is righteous in all his ways, and all that is promised in the new covenant, from a God who cannot lie nor deceive.

The provision in this feast is Christ himself, and all his benefits, all we need to save us from being miserable, and all we can desire to make us happy; and glorious things, no doubt, may be expected from him, in whom it pleases the Father that *all fulness should dwell.* Let our expectations be built upon a right foundation; not any merit of our own, but God's mercy and Christ's mediation; and then build large, as large as the new covenant in its utmost extent; build high, as high as heaven in all its glory. Come, expecting to see that which is most illustrious, and to taste and receive that which is most precious; come, expecting that with which you will be abundantly satisfied.

Though what is prepared seems to a carnal eye poor and scanty, like the five loaves set before five thousand men, yet when Christ has the breaking of those loaves, they shall all eat and be filled. In this ordinance the oil is multiplied, the oil of gladness, it is multiplied in the pouring out, as the widow's oil, 2 Kings iv. 2, &c. Do as she did therefore, bring empty vessels, bring not a few, they shall be filled; the expectations of faith shall all be answered; the oil stays not (as there, *v.* 6.) while there is an empty vessel, waiting to be filled; give faith and hope their full compass, and thou wilt find (as that widow did, *v.* 7.) there is enough of this oil, this multiplied oil, this oil from the good olive, to pay the debt, and enough besides for thee and thine to live upon. As we often wrong ourselves by expecting too much from the world, which is vanity and vexation, so we often wrong ourselves, by expecting too little from God, whose mercy is upon us, according as we hope in him; and who in exerting his power, and conferring his gifts, still says, *According to your faith be it unto you.* The king of Israel lost his advantage against the Syrians, by smiting thrice, and then staying, when he should have smitten five or six times, 2 Kings xiii. 18, 19. And we do often in like manner prejudice ourselves, by the weakness of our faith; we receive little, because we expect little; and are like them among whom Christ could not do many mighty works, because of their unbelief, Mark vi. 5.

VIII. Let us come to this ordinance with rejoicing and thanksgiving. These two must go together, for whatever is the matter of our rejoicing, must be the

matter of our thanksgiving; holy joy is the heart of our thankful praise; and thankful praise is the language of holy joy; and both these are very seasonable, when we are coming to an ordinance, which is instituted both for the honour of the Redeemer, and for the comfort of the redeemed.

Besides the matter for joy and praise, which we are furnished with in our attendance on the ordinance, even our approach to it is such an honour, such a favour, as obliges us to *come before his presence with singing*, and even *to enter into his gates with thanksgiving*, Ps. c. 2, 4. With gladness and rejoicing shall the royal bride be brought, Ps. xlv. 15. Those who in their preparations for the ordinance have been sowing in tears, may not only come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them, but go with rejoicing to fetch their sheaves, to meet the ark, lifting up their heads with joy, knowing that their redemption, and the sealing of them to the day of redemption, draws on. Let those who are of a sorrowful spirit hearken to this; cheer up, and be comforted. *This day is holy unto the Lord your God, mourn not, nor weep*, Neh. viii. 9. It is *the day which the Lord hath made*, and we must *rejoice* and *be glad in it*, and *the joy of the Lord will be our strength*, and oil to our wheels. All things considered, thou hast a great deal more reason than Haman had, to go in merrily with the King to the banquet of wine, Esth. v. 4.

Two things may justly be the matter of our rejoicing and thanksgiving in our approach to this ordinance:

1. That God has put such a price as this into our hands to gain wisdom. That such an ordinance as this was instituted for our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace: that it is transmitted down to us, is administered among us, and we are invited to it. This is a token for good, which we have reason to rejoice in, and be very thankful for. That our lot is not cast either among those who are strangers to the gospel, and so have not this ordinance at all, or among those who are enemies to the gospel, and have it wretchedly corrupted, and turned into an idolatrous service; but that Wisdom's table is spread among us, and her voice heard in our streets, and we are called to her feasts; we have *a nail in God's holy place*, a settlement in his house, and stated opportunities of communion with him. If the Lord had been pleased to kill us, he would not have showed us such things as these. O what a privilege is it thus to eat and drink in Christ's presence! To sit down under his shadow, at his table, with his friends and favourites! That we who deserved to have been set with the dogs of his flock, should be set with the children of his family, and eat of the children's bread; nay, that we should be numbered among his priests, and eat of the dedicated things. *Bless the Lord, O my soul.*

2. That God has given us a heart to improve this price in our hands. We have reason to be thankful that he has not only invited us to this feast, which is a token of his good will toward us; but, that he has inclined us to accept the invitation, which is the effect of a good work upon us. Many who are called make light of it, and go their way to their farms and merchandise, and if we had been left to ourselves, we should have made the same foolish choice, and in the greatness of our folly should have gone astray, and wandered endlessly. It was free grace that made us willing in the day of power, and graciously compelled us to come in to the gospel feast; it was distinguishing grace that revealed to us babes, the things which were hidden from the wise and prudent. Let that grace have the glory, and let us have the joy of this blessed work.

IX. Let us come to this ordinance in charity with all men, and with a sincere affection to all good Christians. It is a love feast, and if we do not come in love, we come without the wedding garment, and forfeit the comforts of the feast. This is to be seriously thought of, when we bring our gift to the altar, as we hope for acceptance there.

When we come to this sacrament, we must bring with us, ill will to none, good will to all, but especially *to them who are of the household of faith.*

1. We must bear ill will to none, no, not to those who have been most injurious and provoking to us: though they have affronted us ever so much in our honour, wronged us in our interest, and set themselves to vilify us, and do us mischief, yet we must not hate them, nor entertain any malice toward them; we must not be desirous or studious of revenge, nor seek their hurt in any respect, but must from our hearts forgive them, as we ourselves are, and hope to be, forgiven of God. We must see to it, that there be not the least degree of enmity to any person in the world lodged in our breast, but carefully purge out that old leaven; not only lay aside the thoughts of it for the present, but wholly pluck up and cast out that root of bitterness, which bears gall and wormwood. Pure hands must in this ordinance, as well as in prayer, be *lifted up, without wrath and doubting*, 1 Tim. ii. 8. How can we expect that God should be reconciled to us, if we bring not with us a disposition to be reconciled to our brethren? for our trespasses against God are unspeakably greater than the worst of our brethren's trespasses against us. O that each would apply this caution to themselves! You have a neighbour, that upon some disgust conceived you cannot find in your hearts to speak to, nor to speak well of; some one that you have entertained a prejudice against, and would willingly do an ill turn to, if it lay in your power; some one, whom, it may be, you are ready to say, that you cannot endure the sight of: and dare you retain such a spirit when you come to this ordinance? Can you conceal it from God? or

do you think that you can justify it at his bar, and make it out that you do well to be angry? Let the fear of God's wrath, and the hope of Christ's love, reduce you to a better temper; and when you celebrate the memorial of the dying of the Lord Jesus, be sure you remember this, that he is our peace, and that he died to slay all enmities.

2. We must bear good will to all, with a particular affection to all good Christians. Christian charity not only forbids that which is any way injurious, but it requires that which is kind and friendly.

The desire of our hearts must be toward the welfare of all. If we be indeed solicitous about the salvation of our own souls, we cannot but have a tender concern for the souls of others, and be hearty well-wishers to their salvation likewise: *for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved,* 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4. True grace hates monopolies. We must thus love those whose wickedness we are bound to hate; and earnestly desire their happiness, even while we industriously decline their fellowship.

But the delight of our souls must be in the saints that are on earth, those excellent ones; as David's was, Ps. xvi. 3. They are precious in God's sight, and honourable, and they should be so in ours; they have *fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,* and therefore, by a sincere and affectionate love to them, we also should have fellowship with them. Our hearts will be comforted when they are *knit together in love,* Col. ii. 2. This love must not be confined to those of our own communion, our own way and denomination; then we love them for our own sakes, because they credit us, not for Christ's sake, because they honour him: but since God is no respecter of persons, we must not be such. *In every nation, he that fears God and works righteousness is accepted of him,* and should be so of us, Acts x. 34, 35. Doubtless there may be a diversity of apprehensions in the less weighty matters of the law, such as the distinction of meats and days, and a diversity of practice accordingly, and yet a sincerity of mutual love, according to the law of Christ. Those who think it is not possible, should be content to speak for themselves only, and must believe there are those who have much satisfaction in being able to say, that they love the image of Christ wherever they see it, and highly value a good man, though not in every thing of their mind. He who cast out devils in Christ's name, must be dear to us, though he follows not us, Mark ix. 38. The differences that are among Christians, though fomented by the malice of Satan for the ruin of love, are permitted by the wisdom of God for the trial of love, that they who are perfect therein may be made manifest. Herein a Christian commends his love, when he loves those who differ from him, and joins in affection to those with whom he cannot concur in opinion. This is thankworthy: *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink;* they who have tasted of the bread of life, and the water of life, know it is not, but it is *righteousness and peace,* and *joy in the Holy Ghost;* he, therefore, who in these things serves Christ, is acceptable to God, and, therefore, though he esteem not our days, though he relish not our meats, he should be acceptable and dear to us.

Let us then in our approach to this sacrament, stir up ourselves to holy love, love without dissimulation; let us bear those on our hearts, whom the great High-Priest of our profession bears on his; and as we are *taught of God to love one another, let us increase therein more and more,* 1 Thess. iv. 9, 10. Christ's having loved us, is a good reason why we should love him; Christ's having loved our brethren also is a good reason why we should love them. Behold, how good and how pleasant a thing it is for Christians to be kindly affectioned one toward another, of one heart, and of one soul; there the Lord commands the blessing, and gives earnest of the joys of that world, where love is perfected, and reigns eternally.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE AFFECTING SIGHTS THAT ARE TO BE SEEN BY FAITH IN THIS ORDINANCE.

CARE being taken, by the grace of God, to compose ourselves into a serious frame of spirit, agreeable to the ordinance, we must next apply ourselves to that which is the proper business of it, that we may do the work of the day in its day, of the hour in its hour. And the first thing to be done, is to contemplate that which is represented to us, and set before us there. This David aimed at, when he coveted to *dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life,* that he might *behold the beauty of the Lord,* (Ps. xxvii. 4.) might *see his power and his glory,* Ps. lxiii. 2. To the natural man, who receives not the things of the Spirit of God, there appears in it nothing surprising, nothing affecting, no form nor comeliness; but to that faith which is the substance and evidence of things not seen, there appears a great sight, which, like Moses, (Exod. iii. 3.) it will with a holy reverence turn aside now to see. As therefore, in our preparation for this ordinance, we should pray with David, *Open thou mine eye, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law* and gospel; so we should with Abraham, (Gen. xiii. 14.) *Lift up our eyes now and look.*

When the Lamb that had been slain had taken the book, and was going to open the seals, St. John, who had the honour to be a witness in vision of the solemnity, was loudly called by one of the four living creatures to come and see, Rev. vi. 1, 3, 5, 7. The same is the call given to us, when in this sacrament

there is a door opened in heaven, and we are bidden to *come up hither*, Rev. iv. 1.

I. In general, we are here called to see the Lamb that had been slain opening the seals. This is the general idea we are to have of the ordinance. We would have thought ourselves highly favoured indeed, and beloved disciples, if we had seen it in vision as John did; behold, we are all invited to see it in a sacramental representation.

1. In this ordinance is showed us the Lamb as it had been slain. John the Baptist pointed to him as *The Lamb of God*, and called upon his followers to *behold him*, John i. 29. a Lamb designed for sacrifice, in order to the taking away of the sins of the world, a harmless spotless Lamb; but John the divine goes further, and sees him a *Lamb slain*, now sacrificed for us, in the outer courts; and not only so, but appearing *in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and of the elders*, as if he were newly slain, bleeding afresh, and yet alive, and *lives for evermore*, (Rev. v. 6; i. 18.) constantly presenting this sacrifice within the vail. The blood of the Lamb always flowing, that it may still be sprinkled on our consciences, to purify and pacify them, and may still speak in heaven for us, in that prevailing intercession which the Lord Jesus ever lives to make there in the virtue of his satisfaction.

In this ordinance the Lord's death is showed forth, it is showed forth to us, that it may be showed forth by us. Jesus Christ is here *evidently set forth crucified among us*, (Gal. iii. 1.) that we may all *with open face behold, as in a glass, the glory of God* in the face of Christ. Thus as Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, in the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, and the application of his merits to the saints who lived then; so, he will be the Lamb slain to the end of the world, in the word and sacraments of the New Testament, and the application of his merits to the saints that are now, and shall be in every age. Still he is seen as a Lamb that had been slain, for this sacrifice does not, like the Old-Testament sacrifices, decay and wax old.

This is the sight, the great sight, we are here to see; the bush burning, and yet not consumed, for the Lord is in it, his people's God and Saviour. The wounds of this Lamb are here open before us: come see in Christ's hands the very print of the nails, see in his side the very marks of the spear. Behold him in his agony, sweating as if it had been great drops of blood falling to the ground; then accommodating himself to the work he had undertaken; couching between two burthens, and bowing his shoulder to bear them. Behold him in his bonds, when *the breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits*, and he was bound that we might go out free. Behold him at the bar, prosecuted and condemned as a criminal, because he was made sin for us, and had undertaken to answer for our misdemeanors. Behold him upon the cross, enduring the pain, and despising the shame of the accursed tree. Here is his body broken, his blood shed, his soul poured out unto death; all his sufferings, with all their aggravations, are here in such a manner as the Divine Wisdom saw fit, by an instituted ordinance, represented to us, and set before us.

2. In this ordinance is showed us the Lamb that was slain, opening the seals of the everlasting gospel; not only discovering to us the glories of the divine light, but dispensing to us the graces of the divine love: opening the seals of the fountain of life, which had been long as a spring shut up, and rolling away the stone, that thence we may *draw water with joy:* opening the seals of the book of life, that things hidden from ages and generations might be manifested unto us, and we might know the *things which are freely given us of God:* opening the seals of God's treasures, the unsearchable riches of Christ, which would have been sealed up for ever from us, if he had not found out a way to supply and enrich us out of them: opening the seals of heaven-gates, which had been shut and sealed against us, and consecrating for us a new and living way into the holiest, by his own blood. This is a glorious sight, and that which cannot but raise our expectations of something further. This is the principal sight given us in this ordinance; but when we view this accurately, we shall find there is that in it, *which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard.*

II. In particular, we are here called to see many other things, which we may infer from this general representation of the sufferings of Christ. It is a very fruitful subject, and that which will lead us to the consideration of divers things very profitable. When we come to this sacrament, we should ask ourselves the question which Christ put to those who had been John's hearers; *What went ye out for to see?* What do we come to the Lord's table to see? We come to see that, which, if God gives us the eye of faith to discern, it will be very affecting. Let this voice therefore be still sounding in our ears, *Come and see.*

1. Come and see the evil of sin. This we are concerned to see, that we may be truly humbled for our sins past, and may be firmly engaged by resolution and holy watchfulness against sin for the future. It was *for our transgressions* that Christ was thus *wounded, for our iniquities* that *he was bruised: know therefore*, O my soul, *and see, that it is an evil thing, and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts*, Jer. ii. 19. That was a great provocation to God, which nothing would atone for but such a sacrifice; a dangerous disease to us, which nothing would heal but such a medicine: *This is thy wicked-*

ness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart, Jer. iv. 18.

(1.) Here sin appears sin, and, by the cross of Christ, as well as by the command of God, it becomes exceeding sinful, Rom. vii. 13. The malignity of its nature was very great, and more than we can conceive or express; for it had made such a breach between God and man, as none less than he who was both God and man could repair; none less than he durst undertake to be made sin for us, to become surety for that debt, and intercessor for such offenders. It was *impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin;* the stain was too deep, to be washed out so; sacrifice and offering God did not desire, would not accept, as sufficient to purge us from it: no; the Son of God himself must come to *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, or it will for ever separate between God and us.

(2.) Here sin appears death, and, in the cross of Christ, shows itself exceeding hurtful. Behold, my soul, and see what mischief sin makes, by observing how dear it cost the Redeemer when he undertook to satisfy for it, how he sweat and groaned, bled and died, when *the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all!* Look on sin through this glass, and it will appear in its true colour, black and bloody; nothing can be more so. The fatal consequences of sin are seen more in the sufferings of Christ, than in all the calamities that it has brought upon the world of mankind. O what a painful, what a shameful, thing is sin, which put our Lord Jesus to so much pain, to so much shame, when *he bore our sins in his own body upon the tree!*

See this, my soul, with application. It was thy sin, thy own iniquity, that lay so heavy upon the Lord Jesus, when he cried out, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* It was thy pride and passion, thy worldliness and uncleanness, the carnal mind in thee, which is enmity against God, that crowned him with thorns, and nailed him to the cross, and laid him for a time under the sense of God's withdrawings from him. Is this so? And shall I ever again make a mock at sin? ever again make a light matter of that, which Christ made so great a matter of? God forbid! *Is it a small thing to weary men;* but have I, by my sins, *wearied my God also?* Isa. vii. 13. *Have I made him* thus *to serve*, thus to *suffer by my sins?* Isa. xliii. 24. And shall I ever be reconciled to sin again? or shall I ever think a favourable thought of it any more? No; by the grace of God, I never will. The carnal pleasure and worldly profit that sin can promise me, will never balance the pain and shame that it put my Redeemer to.

Meditate revenge, my soul, a holy revenge, such a revenge as will be no breach of the law of charity; such a revenge as is one of the fruits of godly sorrow, 2 Cor. vii. 11. If sin was the death of Christ, why should not I be the death of sin? When David lamented Saul and Jonathan, who were slain by the archers of the Philistines, (1 Sam. xxxi. 3.) it is said, (2 Sam. i. 18.) he taught the children of Judah the use of the bow, that they might revenge the death of their princes upon their enemies. Let us thence receive instruction. Did sin, did my sin, crucify Christ? And shall not I crucify it? If it be asked, *Why, what evil has it done?* Say, It cost the blood of the Son of God to expiate it; and therefore cry out so much the more, *Crucify it, crucify it.* And thus all *who are Christ's have*, in some measure, *crucified the flesh*, Gal. v. 24. As Christ died for sin, so must we die to sin.

2. Come and see the justice of God. Many ways the great Judge of the world has made it to appear that he hates sin; and both by the judgments of his mouth in the written word, and the judgments of his hand in the course of his providence, he has *revealed his wrath from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.* It is true, that he is gracious and merciful; but is it true, that *God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth?* Nah. i. 2. God, even our God, is a consuming fire, and will reckon for the violation of his laws, and the injuries done to his crown and dignity. The tenor of the Scripture, from the 2nd of Genesis to the last of the Revelation, proves this: *The soul that sinneth shall die.* In many remarkable punishments of sin, even in this life, it is written as with a sun-beam, so that he that runs may read, that *the Lord is righteous*, 2 Chron. xii. 6.

But never did the justice of God appear so conspicuous, so illustrious, as in the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, set before us in this ordinance. Here his *righteousness is like the great mountains*, though *his judgments are a great deep*, Ps. xxxvi. 6. Come and see the holy God showing his displeasure against sin in the death of Christ, more than in the ruin of angels, the drowning of the old world, the burning of Sodom, the destruction of Jerusalem; nay, more than in the torments of hell, all things considered.

(1.) God manifested his justice, in demanding such a satisfaction for sin as Christ was to make by the blood of his cross. Hereby he made it to appear how great the provocation was which was done him by the sin of man, that not only such an excellent person must be chosen to intercede for us, but his sufferings and death must be insisted on to atone for us. Sin being committed against an Infinite Majesty, seems by this to have in it a kind of infinite malignity, that the remission of it could not be procured, but by a satisfaction of infinite value. If mere mercy had pardoned sin, without any provision made to answer the demands of injured justice, God had declared his goodness; but when Jesus Christ is set forth to be a propitiation for sin, and God has been pleased to put himself to so vast an expense,

for the saving of the honour of his government, in the forgiveness of sins, this declares his righteousness, it declares, I say, at this time his righteousness. See what an emphasis the apostle lays upon this, Rom. iii. 25, 26.

Sin had wronged God in his honour, for he cannot otherwise be wronged by any of his creatures; in breaking the law we dishonour God; we sin and come short of his glory. For this wrong satisfaction must be made; that which offers itself is the eternal ruin of the sinner; *currat lex—let the sentence of the law be executed*, and thereby God may get him honour upon us, in lieu of that he should have had from us, Exod. xiv. 17. But can no expedient be found out to satisfy God, and yet save the sinner? Is it not possible to offer an equivalent? *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall we give our first-born for our transgression, the fruit of our body for the sin of our soul?* No, these are not tantamount: no submissions, sorrows, supplications, services, or sufferings of ours, can be looked upon as a valuable consideration for the righteous God to proceed upon, in forgiving such injuries, and restoring such criminals to his favour. The best we do is imperfect; the utmost we can do is already owing: here therefore the Lord Jesus interposes, undertakes to make a full reparation of the injury done to God's glory by sin; clothes himself with our nature, and becomes surety for us, as Paul for Onesimus; if they have wronged thee, or owe thee ought, put that on my account, I have written it with my own hand, with my own blood I will repay it. He was made *sin for us*, (2 Cor. v. 21.) a *curse for us*, (Gal. iii. 13.) an *offering for our sin*, (Isa. liii. 10.) he *bore our sins in his own body on the tree*, (1 Pet. ii. 24.) and thus the justice of God was not only satisfied, but greatly glorified. Come and see how bright it shines here.

(2.) God manifested his justice in dealing as he did with him, who undertook to make satisfaction. Having laid upon him the iniquity of us all, he laid it home to him, for *it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief*, Isa. liii. 10. He was not only despised and rejected of men, who knew him not, but he was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. The ancient way in which God testified his acceptance of sacrifices, was by consuming them with fire from heaven, (Lev. ix. 24. 2 Chron. vii. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 38.) The wrath of God which the offerers deserved should have fallen upon them, fell upon the offering; and so the destruction of the sacrifice was the escape of the sinner. Christ becoming a sacrifice for us, the fire of God's wrath descended upon him, which troubled his soul, put him into an agony, and made him cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Come, then, and *behold the goodness and severity of God*, Rom. xi. 22. Christ being made sin for us, God did not spare him, Rom. viii. 32. By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, he was delivered to them, who with wicked hands crucified and slew him: *Awake, O sword*, the sword of divine justice, furnished and bathed in heaven; awake *against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow*, says the *Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd*, Zech. xiii. 7.

Let us look on the sufferings of Christ, and say, as he himself has taught us, (Luke xxiii. 31.) *If this be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?* What was done to him, shows what should have been done to us if Christ had not interposed, and what will be done to us if we reject him. If this were done to one who had but sin imputed to him, who, as he had no corruptions of his own for Satan's temptations to fasten upon, so he had no guilt of his own for God's wrath to fasten upon, who was as a green tree, not apt to take fire; what shall be done to those who have sin inherent in them, which makes them as a dry tree, combustible, and proper fuel for the fire of God's wrath? If this were done to one who had done so much good, what shall be done to us who have done so little? If the Lord Jesus himself was put into an agony by the things which were done to him, was sorrowful, and very heavy, can our hearts endure, or can our hands be strong, when God shall deal with us? Ezek. xxii. 14. *Who would set the briars and thorns against him in battle?* From the sufferings of Christ we may easily infer what a *fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. x. 31.

3. Come and see the love of Christ. This is that which with a peculiar regard we are to observe and contemplate in this ordinance; where we see Christ and him crucified, we cannot but see the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. When Christ did but drop a tear over the grave of Lazarus, the Jews said, *See how he loved him*, John xi. 36. Much more reason have we to say, when we commemorate the shedding of his blood for us, "See how he loved us." *Greater love hath no man than this, to lay down his life for his friend.* Thus Christ has loved us; nay, he laid down his life for us when we were enemies, (John xv. 13. Rom. v. 8.) herein is love without precedent, love without parallel. Come and see the wonders of his love.

(1.) It was free love. Christ gave himself for us; and what is more free than a gift? It was free, for it was unasked; nothing cried for this mercy, but our own misery: when no eye pitied us, of his own good will he relieved us; said to us, when we were in our sins, live; yea, he said to us, live. That was a time of love indeed. It was free, for it was unmerited; there was nothing in us desirable, nothing promising; the relation we stood in to God as creatures, did but aggravate our rebellion, and make us the more obnoxious. As he could not obtain any advantage by our happiness, so he could not sustain

any damage by our misery: if there were no profit in our blood, (which is pleaded, Ps. xxx. 9.) yet for certain there would have been no loss by it. No, but the reasons of his love were fetched from within him, as God's love of Israel was, (Deut. vii. 7, 8.) he loved them, because he would love them.——It was free, for it was unforced; he willingly offered himself. Here am I, send me. This sacrifice was bound *to the horns of the altar*, only with the *cords of his love*.

(2.) It was distinguishing love. It was good will to fallen man, and not to fallen angels. He did not lay hold on a world of sinking angels; as their tree fell, so it lies, and so it is like to lie for ever; but *on the seed of Abraham he taketh hold*, Heb. ii. 16. The nature of angels was more excellent than that of man, their place in the creation higher, their capacity for honouring God greater, and yet they were passed by. Man who sinned was pitied and helped, while angels who sinned were not so much as spared. The deplorable state of devils serve as a foil to set off the blessed state of the ransomed of the Lord.

(3.) It was condescending love. Never did love humble itself and stoop so low as the love of Christ did. It was great condescension, that he should fix his love upon creatures so mean, *Man that is a worm, the son of man that is a worm*, so near a-kin to the brutal part of the creation, especially since the fall, that one would think he should rather be the scorn than the love of the spiritual and purely intellectual world; yet this is the creature that is chosen to be the darling of heaven, and in whom Wisdom's delights are, Prov. viii. 31. But especially that, in prosecution of this love, he should humble himself as he did. Humble himself to the earth in his incarnation; humble himself on the earth in the meanness of his life; humble himself into the earth, when he went to the grave, the place where mankind appears under the greatest mortification and disgrace.

(4.) It was expensive love. His washing the feet of his disciples is spoken of as an act of love to them, (John xiii. 1.) and that was condescending love, but not costly like this. He loved us, and bought us, and paid dear for us, that we might be unto him a purchased people, 1 Pet. ii. 9. Because he loved Israel, he gave men for them, and people for their life, even Egypt for their ransom, (Isa. xliii. 3, 4.) but because he loved us, he gave himself for us, even his own blood for the ransom of our souls.

(5.) It was strong love, strong as death, and which many waters could not quench, Cant. viii. 6, 7. This was the greatness of his strength, in which the Redeemer travelled, who was mighty to save; Isa. lxi. 1. It was strong to break through great difficulties, and trample upon the discouragements that lay in his way: when he had this baptism to be baptized with, this baptism of blood, it was love that said, *How am I straitened till it be accomplished?* Luke xii. 50. It was love that said, *With desire I have desired to eat this passover*, which he knew was to be his last. It was the strength of his love that reconciled him to the bitter cup, which was put into his hand, and made him wave his petition, that it might pass from him, which, for ought we know, if he had insisted upon, it had been granted, and the work undone.

(6.) It was an everlasting love, Jer. xxxi. 3. It was from everlasting in the counsels of it, and will be to everlasting in the consequences of it; not like our love, which comes up in a night, and perishes in a night. He loved to the end, and went on with his undertaking till he said, *It is finished.* Never was there such a constant lover as the blessed Jesus, whose gifts and callings are without repentance.

4. Come and see the conquest of Satan: and this is a very pleasing sight to all those who through grace are turned from the power of Satan unto God, as it was to the Israelites, when they had newly shaken off the Egyptian yoke, to see their task-masters and pursuers dead upon the sea-shore, Exod. xiv. 30. Come and see our Joshua discomfiting the Amalekites, our David with a sling and a stone vanquishing that proud Goliah, who not only himself basely deserted, but then boldly defied, the armies of the living God. Come and see, not Michael and his angels, but Michael himself, Michael our prince, who trod the wine-press alone, entering the lists with the dragon and his angels, and giving them an effectual overthrow: the seed of the woman, though bruised in the heel, yet breaking the serpent's head, according to that ancient promise made unto the fathers, Gen. iii. 15. Come and see the great Redeemer, not only making peace with earth, but making war with hell; dispossessing the strong man armed, *spoiling principalities and powers, making a show of them openly*, and *triumphing over them in his cross*, Col. ii. 15.

Come and see Christ triumphing over Satan at his death. Though the war was in heaven, (Rev. xii. 7.) yet some fruits of the victory even then appeared on earth. Though when Christ was in the extremity of his sufferings, there was a darkness over all the land, which gave the powers of darkness all the advantage they could wish for, yet he beat the enemy upon his own ground. Satan (some think) terrified Christ into his agony, but then he kept possession of his own soul, and steadily adhered to his Father's will, and to his own undertaking: so he baffled Satan. Satan put it in the heart of Judas to betray him; but in the immediate ruin of Judas, who presently went and hanged himself, Christ triumphed over Satan, and made a show of him openly. Satan tempted Peter to deny Christ, *desiring to have him, that he might sift him as wheat*; but by the speedy repentance of Peter, who, upon a look from Christ, went out and wept bitterly, Christ triumphed over

Satan, and baffled him in his designs. Satan was ready to swallow up the thief upon the cross, but Christ rescued him from the gates of hell, and raised him to the glories of heaven, and thereby spoiled Satan, who was as a lion disappointed of his prey.

Come and see Christ triumphing over Satan by his death; the true Samson, who did more toward the ruin of the Philistines dying than living; see Judg. xvi. 23, 30. Having by his life and doctrine destroyed the works of the devil, at length by his death he destroyed the devil himself, who had the power of death, Heb. ii. 14. In him was fulfilled the blessing of God, (Gen. xlix. 19.) *A troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last;* and through him who loved us, *we are conquerors*, yea, *more than conquerors.*

(1.) Christ by dying made atonement for sin, and so conquered Satan. By the merit of his death, he satisfied God's justice for the sins of all that should believe in him; and if the judge remit the sentence, the executioner has nothing to do with the prisoner. We are ready to fall under the curse, to be made an Anathema, that is, to be delivered unto Satan: Christ said, *Upon me be the curse;* this *blotted out the handwriting that was against us, took it out of the way, nailed it to the cross;* and so Satan is spoiled. *Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died*, Rom. viii. 33, 34. When God forgives the iniquity of his people, he brings back their captivity, Ps. lxxxv. 1, 2. If we shall not come into condemnation, we are saved from coming unto execution.

(2.) Christ by dying sealed the gospel of grace, and purchased the Spirit of grace, and so conquered Satan. The Spirit acting by the gospel as the instrument, and the gospel animated by the Spirit as the principal, are become *mighty to the pulling down of Satan's strong-holds.* Thus the foundation is laid for a believer's victory over the temptations and terrors of the wicked one. Christ's victory over Satan is our victory, and we overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, Rev. xii. 11. Thus *kings of armies did flee apace*, and even *they that tarried at home*, and did themselves contribute nothing to the victory, yet *divide the spoil*, Ps. lxviii. 12. Christ having thus trodden Satan under our feet, he calls to us as Joshua to the captains of Israel, (Josh. x. 24.) *Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you*, for he is a conquered enemy.

5. Come and see the worth of souls. We judge of the value of a thing by the price which a wise man who understands it gives for it. He who made souls, and had reason to know them, provided for their redemption, not *corruptible things, as silver and gold, but the precious blood of his own son;* see 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. It was not a purchase made hastily, for it was the contrivance of infinite wisdom from eternity; it was not made for necessity, for he neither needed us, nor could be benefited by us; but thus he was pleased to teach us what account we should make of our souls, and their salvation and happiness. The incarnation of Christ put a great honour upon the human nature; never was it so dignified as when it was taken into union with the divine nature in the person of Immanuel, but the death and sufferings of Christ add much more to its value, for he laid down his own life to be the ransom of ours, when nothing else was sufficient to answer the price. Lord, what is man, that he should be thus visited, thus regarded! that the Son of God should not only dwell among us, but die for us!

(1.) Now let us see this, and learn how to put a value upon our own souls, not so as to advance our conceits of ourselves, (nothing can be more humbling and abasing, than to see our own lives sold by our own folly, and redeemed by the merit of another,) but so as to increase our concern for ourselves, and our own spiritual interests. Shall the souls, the precious souls which Christ put such a value upon, and paid such a price for, debase and undervalue themselves so far as to become slaves to Satan, and drudges to the world and the flesh? We are bought with a price, and therefore we not only injure the purchaser's right to us, if we alienate ourselves to another, but we reproach his wisdom in paying such a price, if we alienate ourselves for a thing of nought. It is the apostle's argument against uncleanness, (1 Cor. vi. 20.) and against making ourselves the servants of men, 1 Cor. vii. 23. Christ having purchased our souls at such a rate, we disparage them if we stake them to the trifles of the world, or pawn them for the base and sordid pleasures of sin. Shall that birthright be sold for a mess of pottage, which Christ bought with his own blood? No; while we live let our souls be our darlings, (as they are called, Ps. xxii. 20. and xxxv. 17.) for his sake, to whom they were so dear. If Christ did and suffered so much to save our souls, let us not hazard the losing of them, though it be to gain the whole world, Matt. xvi. 26.

(2.) Let us see this, and learn how to put a value upon the souls of others. This forbids us to do any thing that may turn to the prejudice of the souls of others, by drawing them to sin, or discouraging them in that which is good. The apostle lays a great stress upon this argument, against the abuse of our Christian liberty, to the offence of others, (Rom. xiv. 15.) *Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died;* and again he urges it on the same occasion, 1 Cor. viii. 11. Shall not we deny ourselves and our own satisfaction, rather than occasion guilt or grief to them for whom Christ humbled himself, even to the death of the cross? Shall we slight those whom Christ put such a value upon? Shall we set those with the dogs of our flock, whom

Christ purchased with his own blood, among the lambs of his flock? God forbid!

This also commands us to do all we can for the spiritual welfare and salvation of the souls of others: did Christ think them worth his blood, and shall not we think them worth our care and pains? Shall not we willingly do our utmost to save a soul from death, and thereby hide a multitude of sins, when Christ did so much and suffered so much to make it feasible? Shall not we pour out our prayers for them, for whom Christ poured out his soul unto death? And bear them upon our hearts, whom Christ laid so near his? Blessed Paul, in consideration hereof, not only made himself the servant of all, to please them for their edification, but was willing to be offered upon the sacrifice and service of their faith; (Phil. ii. 17.) and so to fill up what was behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, Col. i. 24.

And if we be at any time called upon, even to lay down our lives for the brethren, we must remember that in that, as well as in washing their feet, Christ has left us an example, 1 John iii. 16.

6. Come and see the purchase of the blessings of the new covenant. The blood of Christ was not only the ransom of our forfeited lives, and the redemption of our souls from everlasting misery, but it was the valuable consideration, upon which the grant of eternal life and happiness is grounded. Christ's death is our life; that is, it is not only our salvation from death, but it is the fountain of all our joys, and the foundation of all our hopes. All the comforts we have in possession, and all we have in prospect, all the privileges of our way, and all those of our home, are the blessed fruits of that accursed tree on which our Redeemer died.

(1.) See the blood of Christ, the spring whence all the blessings of the covenant flow. That is the price of all our pardons, *we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins*, Eph. i. 7. Without the shedding of blood, that blood, that precious blood, there had been no remission. That is the purchase of the divine favour, which is our life; we are made accepted only in the Beloved, Eph. i. 6. *Peace is made*, a covenant of peace settled, peace secured to all the sons of peace, by the blood of his cross, and not otherwise, Col. i. 20. That is the price paid for the purchased possession, that they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance, Heb. ix. 15. Christ *was made a curse for us*, not only to *redeem us from the curse of the law*, but that we through him might inherit the blessing, Gal. iii. 13, 14. Thus, *out of the eater comes forth meat, and out of the strong sweetness.* Behold, he shows us a mystery.

(2.) See the blood of Christ, the stream in which all the blessings of the covenant flow to us. The blood of Christ, as it is exhibited to us in this ordinance, is the vehicle, the channel, of conveyance, by which all graces and comforts descend from heaven to earth. *This cup is the new testament in the blood of Christ*, and so it becomes a cup of blessing, a cup of consolation, a cup of salvation: all the hidden manna comes to us in this dew. It is the blood of Christ, speaking for us, that pacifies an offended God: it is the blood of Christ sprinkled on us, that purifies a defiled conscience. As it was the blood of Jesus that consecrated for us the new and living way, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers, so it is by that blood that we have *boldness to enter into the holiest*, Heb. x. 19, 20.

Come and see how much we owe to the death of Christ, the rich purchases he made for us that he might cause us to inherit substance, and might fill our treasures. Let this increase our esteem of the love of Christ, which was not only so very expensive to himself, but so very advantageous to us: let this also enhance the value of covenant blessings in our eyes. The blessings of this life we owe to the bounty of God's providence; but spiritual blessings in heavenly things we owe to the blood of his Son: let these, therefore, be to us more precious than rubies; let these always have the preference. Let us be willing to part with any thing, rather than hazard the favour of God, the comforts of the Spirit, and eternal life, remembering what these cost. Let us never make light of Wisdom's preparations, when we see at what rate they were bought in. To them who believe they are precious, for they know they were purchased with the precious blood of Christ, which we undervalue as a common thing, if we prefer farms and merchandise before heaven, and the present earnests of it.

CHAPTER IX.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE PRECIOUS BENEFITS WHICH ARE TO BE RECEIVED BY FAITH IN THIS ORDINANCE.

In the Lord's supper we are not only to show the Lord's death, and see what is to be seen in it, as many who, when he was upon the cross, stood afar off beholding; no, we must there be more than spectators, we must *eat of the sacrifice*, and so *partake of the altar*, 1 Cor. ix. 13. The bread which came down from heaven was not designed merely for shew-bread, bread to be looked upon; but for household-bread, bread to be fed upon: bread to strengthen our hearts, and wine to make them glad; and Wisdom's invitation is, *Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled.* Christ's feeding great multitudes miraculously, more than once, when he was here upon earth, was (as his other miracles) significant of the spiritual provision

he makes in the everlasting gospel, for the support and satisfaction of those that leave all to follow him; if we do not all eat, and be not all filled, abundantly satisfied with the goodness of his house, it is our own fault. Let us not then straiten and starve ourselves, for the Master of the feast has not stinted us: he has not only invited us, and made provision for our entertainment, but he calls to us, as one who bids us heartily welcome, *Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.*

All people are for what they can get: here is something to be got in this ordinance, if it be rightly improved, which will turn to our account infinitely more than the merchandise of silver, or the gain of fine gold. Christ and his benefits are here not only set before us, but offered to us; not only offered to us, but settled upon us, under certain provisos and limitations; so that a believer who sincerely consents to the covenant, receives some of the present benefit of it in and by this ordinance, both in the comfortable experience of communion with God, in grace, and the comfortable expectation of the vision and fruition of God, in glory.

Gospel ordinances in general (and this in particular, which is the seal of gospel promises) are *wells of salvation*, out of which we may draw water with joy; *breasts of consolation*, from which we may suck and be satisfied; *golden pipes*, through which the oil of grace is derived from the good olive, to keep our lamps burning. We receive the grace of God herein in vain, if we take not what is here tendered, gospel blessings upon gospel terms. We are here to receive Christ Jesus the Lord, and since with him God freely gives us all things, (Rom. viii. 32.) we must with him by faith take what he gives; all spiritual blessings in heavenly things by Christ Jesus.

I. Here we may receive the pardon and forgiveness of our sins. This is that great blessing of the new covenant which makes way for all other blessings, *(removendo prohibens—removing the hinderance,)* by taking down that wall of partition which separated between us and God, and hinders good things from us. It is the matter of that promise, which comes in as a reason for all the rest, I will do so and so for them, *for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness*, Heb. viii. 12.—This is that great blessing which Christ died to purchase for us; his blood was shed for many, for the remission of sins; and perhaps he intimated this to be, in a special manner, designed by him in his sufferings, when the first word we find recorded, that he spoke after he was nailed to the cross, was, *Father, forgive them*, (Luke xxiii. 34.) which seems to look not only to those that had an immediate hand in his death, but to those that are remotely accessary to it, as all sinners are, though they know not what they do.

The everlasting gospel is an act of indemnity; an act of oblivion we may call it, for it is promised that *our sins and iniquities he will remember no more.* It is proclaimed to the rebels, that if they will lay down their arms, acknowledge their offence, return to their allegiance, approve themselves good subjects for the future, and make the merits of him whom the Father has appointed to be the Mediator, their plea in suing out their pardon, the offended Prince will be reconciled to them, their attainder shall be reversed, and they shall not only be restored to all the privileges of subjects, but advanced to the honours and advantages of favourites. Now it concerns us all to be able to make it out, that we are entitled to the benefit of this act, that we are qualified according to the tenor of it, for the favour intended by it; and if we be so indeed, in the Lord's supper we receive that pardon to us in particular, which in the gospel is proclaimed to all in general. We do here receive the atonement, as the expression is, Rom. v. 11. God has received it for the securing of his honour, and we receive it for the securing of our happiness, and comfort; we claim the benefit of it, and desire to be justified and accepted of God for the sake of it.

This sacrament should therefore be received with a heart thus lifting up itself to God: "Lord, I am a sinner, a great sinner; I have done very foolishly; I have forfeited thy favour, incurred thy displeasure, and deserve to be for ever abandoned from thee. But Christ has died, yea, rather, is risen again, has finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness; he gave his life a ransom for many, and if for many, why not for me? In him a free and full remission is promised to all penitent and obedient believers; by him all who believe are justified, and to them there is no condemnation. Thou, even thou, art he that blottest out their transgressions for thine own sake, and art gracious and merciful, nay, thou art faithful and just to forgive them their sins. Lord, I repent, I believe, and take the benefit of those promises, those exceeding great and precious promises, which are to my soul as life from the dead. I fly to this city of refuge, I take hold of the horns of this altar: here I humbly receive the forgiveness of my sins, through Jesus Christ, the great propitiation, to whom I entirely owe it, and to whom I acknowledge myself infinitely indebted for it, and under the highest obligations imaginable to love him, and to live to him. He is the Lord our righteousness, so I accept him; let him be made a God to me in righteousness, and I have enough, I am happy for ever."

Every time we come to the Lord's supper, we come to receive the remission of sins, that is,

1. A renewed pardon of daily trespasses. In many things we offend daily, and even he who is washed, who is in a justified state, needs to wash his feet,

John xiii. 10. And blessed be God there is a fountain opened for us to wash in, and encouragement given to pray for daily pardon as duly as we do for daily bread. We have to do with a God who multiplies to pardon. "Lord, the guilt of such a sin lies upon me like a heavy burthen; I have lamented it, confessed it, renewed my covenant against it, and now in this ordinance I receive the forgiveness of that sin, and hear it said to my soul, *The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die.* Many a fault I have been overtaken in since I was last with the Lord at his table, and having repented of them, I desire to apply the blood of Christ to my soul in a particular manner, for the forgiveness of them."

2. A confirmed pardon of all trespasses. I come here to receive further assurance of the forgiveness of my sins, and further comfort arising from those assurances. I come to hear again that voice of joy and gladness, which has made many a broken bone to rejoice, *Son, daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.* I come for the father's kiss to a returning prodigal, which seals his pardon so, as to silence his doubts and fears. When God would by his prophets speak comfortably to Sion, this he says, *Thy warfare is accomplished, thine iniquity is pardoned,* Isa. xl. 2. And *the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick,* that is, he shall see no cause to complain of any outward calamity, if his iniquity be forgiven, Isa. xxxiii. 24. O that I might here have the white stone of absolution, (Rev. ii. 17.) and my pardon written more legibly! O that Christ would say to me, as he did to that woman, to whom much was already forgiven, (Luke vii. 48.) *Thy sins are forgiven.* This is that I come to receive, O let me not go away without it!

II. Here we may receive the adoption of sons. The covenant of grace not only frees us from the doom of criminals, but advances us to the dignity of children: Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, in order to this, that *we might receive the adoption of sons,* Gal. iv. 5. The children's bread given us in this ordinance, is as it were livery and seisin, to assure us of our adoption upon the terms of the gospel, that if we will take God in Christ to be to us a Father, to rule and dispose of us, and to be feared and honoured by us, he will take us to be his sons and daughters; *Behold what manner of love is this! Be astonished, O heavens, and wonder, O earth!* Never was there such compassionate, such condescending love! God here seals us the grant both of the privileges of adoption, and the Spirit of adoption.

1. Here is a grant of the privileges of adoption sealed to us. Here we are called the children of God, and he calls himself our Father, and encourages us to call him so. *Seemeth it to you a light thing* (said David, 1 Sam. xvii. 23.) *to be a king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?* And shall it not seem to us a great thing, an honour infinitely above all those which the world can pretend to confer, for us (who are worms of the earth, and a generation of vipers, children of disobedience and wrath by nature) to be the adopted children of the King of kings? *This honour have all the saints.* Nor is it an empty title that is here granted us, but real advantages of unspeakable value.

The eternal God here says it, and seals it to every true believer, *Fear not,* I will be *a Father to thee,* an ever-loving, ever-living Father; leave it to me to provide for thee, on me let all thy burthens be cast, with me let all thy cares be left, and to me let all thy requests be made known. *The young lions shall lack and suffer hunger,* but thou shalt want nothing that is good for thee, nothing that is fit for thee. My wisdom shall be thy guide, my power thy support, and underneath thee the everlasting arms. As the tender father pities his children, so will I pity thee, and spare thee as a man spares his son that serves him. Thou shalt have my blessing and love, the smiles of my face and the kisses of my mouth, and in the arms of my grace will I carry thee to glory, as the nursing father does the sucking child. Does any thing grieve thee? Whither shouldst thou go with thy complaint but to thy Father, saying to him as that child, (2 Kings iv. 19.) *My head, my head;* and thou shalt find, that as one whom his mother comforts, so will the Lord thy God comfort thee. Does any thing terrify thee? *Be not afraid, for I am thy God; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.* Art thou in debt? Consult me, and *I will instruct thee in the way that thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye.* Acknowledge me, and I will direct thy steps. Dost thou offend? Is there foolishness bound up in thy heart? Thou mayst expect fatherly correction, *I will chastise thee with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the sons of men,* but my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from thee; thine afflictions shall not only consist with, but flow from, covenant love; and but for a season, when need is, shalt thou be in heaviness.

I will be a Father to thee, and, son, thou shalt be ever with me, and all that I have is thine, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are thine, as far as is necessary to thy happiness, nor shall any thing be ever able to separate thee from my love. I will be a Father to thee, and then Christ shall be thy elder brother, the prophet, priest, and king of the family, as the first-born among many brethren. Angels shall be thy guard, with the greatest care and tenderness shall they bear thee in their arms, as ministering spirits charged to attend the heirs of salvation. Providence shall be thy protector, and the disposer of all thy affairs for the

best; so that whatever happens, thou mayst be sure it will be made to work for thy good, though as yet thou canst not see how or which way. The assurances of thy Father's love to thee in his promises, and communion with him in his ordinances, shall be thy daily bread, thy continual feast, the manna that shall be rained upon thee, the water out of the rock that shall follow thee in this wilderness, till thou come to Canaan.

Now art thou a child of God; but it does not yet appear what thou shalt be. When thou wast predestinated to the adoption of a son, thou wast designed for the inheritance of a son: if a child, then an heir. Thy present maintenance shall be honourable and comfortable, and such as is fit for thee in thy minority, while thou art under tutors and governors; but what is now laid out upon thee, is nothing in comparison with what is laid up for thee; an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away.—If God be thy Father, not less than a crown, a kingdom, shall be thy portion, and heaven thy home, where thou shalt be for ever with him: in thy Father's house there are many mansions, and one for thee, if thou be his dutiful child. *It is thy Father's good pleasure to give thee a kingdom.*

2. Here is a grant of the Spirit of adoption sealed to us. As the giving of Christ for us was the great promise of the Old Testament, which was fulfilled in the fulness of time, so the giving of the Spirit to us is the great promise of the New Testament, and a promise that is sure to all the seed; this promise of the Father, which we have heard of Christ, we in this ordinance wait for, Acts i. 4. And it follows upon the former, for wherever God gives the privileges of children, he will give the nature and disposition of children: regeneration always attends adoption; *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts*, Gal. iv. 6. Great encouragement we have to ask this gift, from the relation of a father, wherein God stands toward us: if earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, such as are needful and proper for them, much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him, Luke xi. 13. He will give the Spirit to teach his children, and as their tutor, *to lead them into all truth;* to govern his children, and as the best of guardians, to dispose their affections, while providence disposes their affairs for the best. He will give his Spirit to renew and sanctify them, and to make them meet for their Father's service in this world, and their Father's kingdom in a better world; to be the guide of their way, and the witness of their adoption, and to seal them to the day of redemption.

An earnest of this grant of the Spirit to all believers in this ordinance Christ gave, when in the first visit he made to his disciples after his resurrection, having showed them his hands and his side, his pierced hands, his pierced side, (which in effect he does to us in this sacrament,) he breathed on them, and said unto them, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*, John xx. 22. What he says to them, he says to all his disciples, making them an offer of this inestimable gift, and bestowing it effectually on all believers, who are all *sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise*, Eph. i. 13. *Receive ye the Holy Ghost* then, in the receiving of this bread and wine; the graces of the Spirit, as bread to strengthen the heart; his comforts, as wine to make it glad. Be willing and desirous to receive the Holy Ghost, let the soul and all its powers be put under his operations and influences: *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors*, and then this *King of glory shall come in*, to all that invite him, and will bid him welcome.

But will God in very deed thus dwell with men, with such men upon the earth? And shall they become temples of the Holy Ghost? Shall he come upon them? Shall the power of the Highest overshadow them? Shall Christ be formed in me a holy thing? Say then, (my soul,) say as the blessed virgin did, Here I am, *be it unto me according to thy word.* I acknowledge myself unworthy the being of a man, having so often acted more like a brute; much more unworthy the dignity of a son: I have been an undutiful, rebellious prodigal, I deserve to be turned out of doors, abandoned and disinherited, and forbidden my Father's house and table; but who shall set bounds to infinite mercy, and to the compassions of the Everlasting Father? If notwithstanding this he will yet again take me into his family, and clothe me with the best robe, though it is too great a favour for me to receive, who am a child of disobedience, yet it is not too great for him to give, who is the Father of mercies. To thee, therefore, O God, I give up myself; and I will *from this time cry unto thee, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth*, Jer. iii. 4. Though I deserve not to be owned as a hired servant, I desire and hope to be owned as an adopted son. Be it unto thy servant according to the promise.

III. Here we may receive peace and satisfaction in our minds. This is one of those precious legacies Christ has left to all his followers, and it is here in this ordinance paid, or secured to be paid, to all those that are ready and willing to receive it; (John xiv. 27.) *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you*, such a peace as the world can neither give nor take away. This is the repose of the soul in God; our reconciliation to ourselves, arising from the sense of our reconciliation to God; the conscience being purged from dead works, which not only defile, but disturb and disquiet us. When the Spirit is poured out from on high, then the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever, Isa. xxxii. 15, 17. The guilt of

sin lays the foundation of trouble and uneasiness; where that is removed by pardoning mercy, there is ground for peace; but there must be a further act of the divine grace to put us in the actual possession of that peace: when he who alone can open the ear to comfort, as well as discipline, makes us to hear joy and gladness, then the storm ceases, and there is a calm. The mind that was disturbed with the dread of God's wrath, is quieted with the tokens of his favour and love.

This we should have in our eye at the Lord's table; here I am, waiting to hear what God the Lord will speak, and hoping that he who speaks peace to his people, and to his saints, will speak that peace to me, who make it the top of my ambition to answer the character, and have the lot, of his people and saints. This peace we may here expect to receive for two reasons:

1. Because this ordinance is a seal of the promise of peace; in it God assures us, that his thoughts towards us are thoughts of peace, (Jer. xxix. 11.) and then ours toward ourselves may be so; we are here among his people, whom he has promised to *bless with peace*, (Ps. xxvi. 11.) and we may apply that promise to ourselves, plead it, and humbly claim the benefit of it. This is that rest of the soul which our Master has promised to all those that come to him, and take his yoke upon them, (Matt. xi. 28, 29.) and this promise, among the rest, is here ratified, as *Yea* and *Amen* in Christ. The covenant of grace is a covenant of peace, in the blessed soil of which *light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart*, Ps. xcvii. 11. And this covenant of peace is that which eternal truth has said shall never be removed, but shall stand firm as a rock, when the *everlasting mountains shall melt* like wax, and the *perpetual hills shall bow*. Has God so far consulted my present repose, as well as my future bliss, that he has provided not only for the satisfaction of his own justice, but for the satisfaction of my conscience; and shall I indulge my own disturbance, and refuse to be comforted? No, welcome the promised peace, the calm so long wished for, the desired haven of a troubled spirit tossed with tempests; come, my soul, and take possession of this Canaan, by faith enter into this rest, and let not thy own unbelief exclude thee, Heb. iv. 3, 6. If the God of peace himself speak peace, though with a still small voice, let that silence the most noisy and clamorous objections of doubts and fears; and if he give quietness, let not them make trouble, Job xxxiv. 29.

2. Because this ordinance is an instituted means of obtaining the peace promised. As the sacrifice was ordained to make atonement for the soul, so the feast upon the sacrifice was intended for the satisfaction of the soul concerning the atonement made, to remove that fear and terror which arose from the consciousness of guilt: this ordinance is a feast appointed for that purpose. God does here not only assure us of the truth of his promise to us, but gives us an opportunity of solemnizing our engagements to him, and sealing ourselves to be his; which is appointed, not to satisfy him, (he that knows all things, knows if we love him,) but to satisfy ourselves, that thus taking hold of the hope set before us, we may have strong consolation. The blood of Christ is in this ordinance sprinkled upon the conscience, to pacify that, having been already sprinkled upon the mercy seat, to make atonement there, so making the comers thereunto perfect, Heb. ix. 13, 14.

When our Lord Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, the first word he said to them, was, *Peace be unto you*, Luke xxiv. 36. And he says the same to us in this ordinance; peace be to this house, peace to this heart. But the disciples of Christ (like those, there) are apt to be terrified and affrighted, supposing that they see a spirit, or apparition, (*v.* 37.) fearing that it is all but a delusion, it is too good news to be true; what have they to do with peace, (think they,) while their corruptions, follies and infirmities are so many? But Christ by this sacrament checks those fears, as there, *v.* 38, 39. *Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet.* There is that in the marks of the nails which is sufficient to stop the mouth of unbelief, and to heal the wounds of a broken and contrite spirit: there is merit enough in Christ, though in us there is nothing but meanness and unworthiness. Such considerations this ordinance offers, as have often been found effectual, by the grace of God, to *create the fruit of the lips, peace*, and to *restore comfort to the mourners*, Isa. lvii. 18, 19. In it Christ says again, *Peace be unto you*, as he did, John xx. 11. and sometimes a mighty power has gone along with that word to lay a storm, as did with that, Mark iv. 39. *Peace, be still;* so that the soul so calmed, so quieted, has gone away, and said with wonder, *What manner of man is this? for even the winds and the seas obey him.*

IV. Here we may receive supplies of grace. Jesus Christ is, in this ordinance, made of God to all believers, not only righteousness, but sanctification; so we must receive him, and having received him so, we must walk in him. It is certain we have as much need of the influences of the Spirit to furnish us for our duties, as we have of the merit of Christ to atone for our sins, and as much need of divine grace to carry on the good work as to begin it. We are in ourselves not only ungodly, but without strength, impotent in that which is good, and inclined to that which is evil, (Rom. v. 6.) and in the Lord alone have we both righteousness and strength, Isa. xlv. 24. If therefore we have it in him, hither we must come to have it from him, for gospel ordinances (and this particularly) are the means of grace, and the ordinary vehicle in which grace is conveyed

to the souls of believers. Though God is not tied to them, we are, and must attend them with an expectation to receive grace from God by them, and an entire submission of soul to the operation and conduct of that grace. This ordinance is as the pool of Bethesda, which our weak and impotent souls must lie down by, waiting for the moving of the waters, as those who know there is a healing virtue in them, which we may experience benefit by as well as others. Here therefore we must set ourselves, expecting and desiring the effectual working of God's grace in us, attending at Wisdom's gates for Wisdom's gifts, and endeavouring to improve the ordinance to this end.

From the fulness that is in Jesus Christ, in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, we are here waiting to receive grace for grace, (John i. 16.) that is, *abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness*, Rom. xv. 17. Where there is true grace, there is need of more, for they are sanctified but in part; and there is a desire of more, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, pressing toward perfection; and there is a promise of more, for *to him that hath shall be given;* and *he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger*. Therefore, in a sense of our own necessities, and a dependence upon God's promises, we must by faith receive and apply to ourselves the grace offered us. What things soever we desire, according to the will of God, if we believe that we receive them, our Saviour has told us, we shall have them, Mark xi. 24. *According to thy faith be it unto thee.*

Reach forth a hand of faith therefore, and receive the promised grace, both for the confirming of gracious habits, and for the quickening of gracious acts.

1. Let us here receive grace for the confirming of gracious habits, that they may be the more deeply rooted. We are conscious to ourselves of great weakness in grace: it is like a grain of mustard seed, as a bruised reed, and smoking flax. We are weak in knowledge, and apt to mistake; weak in our affections, and apt to cool; weak in our resolutions, and apt to waver; *How weak is my heart!* But here is bread that strengthens man's heart; signifying that grace of God which confirms the principles, and invigorates the powers, of the spiritual and divine life in the souls of the faithful. Come, my soul, come, eat of this bread, and it shall strengthen thee, though perhaps thou mayst not be immediately sensible of this strength received; the improvement of habits is not suddenly discerned; yet, through this grace, thou shalt find hereafter, that thy path has been like the shining light, which shineth more and more.

We find there is much lacking in our faith, in our love and every grace; here, therefore, we must desire, and hope, and prepare to receive from Christ such gifts of the Holy Ghost as will be mighty through God to increase our faith; that its discoveries of divine things may be more clear and distinct, and its assurances of the truth of them more certain and confident; that its consent to the covenant may be more free and resolved, and its complacency in the covenant more sweet and delightful. And that which thus increases our faith will be effectual to inflame our love, and make that strong as death in its desires toward God, and resolutions for him. We must here wait to be strengthened with all might, by his Spirit in the inner man, unto all patience in suffering for him, and diligence in doing for him, and both with joyfulness, Col. i. 11. We here put ourselves under the happy influence of that exceeding great and glorious power, which works mightily in them who believe, Eph. i. 19.

2. Let us here receive grace for the quickening of gracious acts, that they may be more strongly exerted: we come to this throne of grace, this mercy-seat, this table of our God, that here we may not only obtain mercy and pardon, but may find *grace to help in every time of need*, (Heb. iv. 16.) grace to excite us to, direct us in, and thoroughly furnish us for, every good word and work, according as the duty of every day requires. It was a very encouraging word which Christ said to Paul, when he prayed for the removal of that messenger of Satan which was sent to buffet him, (2 Cor. xii. 9.) *My grace is sufficient for thee;* and all true believers may take the comfort of it; what was said to him is said to all, whatever the exigence of the case is; they who commit themselves to the grace of God with a sincere resolution in every thing to submit to the conduct and government of that grace, shall be enabled to do all things through Christ strengthening them.

Let a lively faith here descend to particulars, and receive this grace with application to the various occurrences of the Christian life. When I go about any duty of solemn worship, I find I am not sufficient of myself for it, not so much as to think one good thought of myself, much less such a chain of good thoughts as is necessary to an acceptable prayer, to the profitable reading and hearing of the word, and the right sanctification of the Lord's day; but all our sufficiency for these services is of God, and of his grace. That grace I here receive according to the promise, and will always go forth, and go on, in the strength of it.

When an opportunity offers itself for doing good to others; to their bodies, by relieving their necessities, or contributing any way to their comfort and support; or to their souls, by seasonable advice, instruction, reproof, or other good discourse; we must depend on this grace, for ability to do it prudently, faithfully, and successfully, and so as to be accepted of God in it. I find I want wisdom for these and such like services, and for the ordering of all my

affairs, and whither shall I go for it but to wisdom's feasts, whose preparations are not only good for food, and pleasant to the eye, but greatly to be desired to make one wise: here, therefore, I receive Christ Jesus the Lord, as made of God unto me wisdom, wisdom dwelling with prudence, wisdom to understand my way, that wisdom which in every doubtful case is profitable to direct. Having many a time prayed Solomon's prayer, for *a wise and understanding heart*, I here receive the sealed grant in answer to it, *wisdom and knowledge are given thee*, so much as shall be sufficient for thee in thy place and station, to guide thee in glorifying God, so that thou mayst not come short of enjoying him.

When we are assaulted with temptations to sin, we find how weak and ineffectual our resistance has often been; here, therefore, we receive grace to fortify us against all those assaults, that we may not be foiled and overcome by them. All that in this sacrament list themselves under the banner of the Captain of our salvation, and engage themselves (as his faithful soldiers) in a holy war against the world, the flesh, and the devil, may here be furnished with the whole armour of God, and that power of his might, (as it is called, Eph. vi. 10.) wherewith they shall be able to stand and withstand in the evil day, Eph. vi. 10, &c. I now receive from God and his grace, strength against such a sin that has often prevailed over me, such a temptation that has often been too hard for me; "Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands." Through God I shall do valiantly.

When we are burthened with affliction, we find it hard to bear up; we faint in the day of adversity, which is a sign our strength is small; we grieve too much, and are full of fears in a day of trouble, our hearts many a time are ready to fail us; hither therefore we come to receive grace sufficient for our support under the calamities of this present time, (that whatever we lose, we may not lose our comfort, and whatever we suffer, we may not sink,) grace to enable us, whatever happens, to keep possession of our own souls, by keeping up our hope and joy in God, that when flesh and heart fail, we may find God the strength of our hearts; and if he be so, *as our day is, so shall our strength be*, Deut. xxxiii. 25. Such assurances are here given to all believers, (of God's presence with them in all their afflictions, and of the concurrence of all for their good,) that being thus encouraged, they have all the reason in the world to say, "Welcome the will of God; nothing can come amiss."

We know not how we may be called on to bear our testimony to the truths and ways of God in suffering for righteousness' sake; we are bid to count upon them, and to prepare for them. We must in this ordinance faithfully promise that (however we may be tried) we will never forsake Christ, nor turn from following after him; though we should die with him, yet will we not deny him: but we have no reason to confide in any strength of our own, for the making good of this promise, nor can we pretend to such a degree of resolution, steadiness, and presence of mind, as will enable us to encounter the difficulties we may meet with. Peter, when he shamed himself, warned us to take heed lest we fall, when we think we stand: here, therefore, we must receive strength for such trials; that we may overcome them by the blood of the Lamb, and by not loving our lives unto the death; and that the prospect of none of these things may move us.

3. How near our great change may be we cannot tell, perhaps nearer than we imagine; we are not sure that we shall live to see another opportunity of this kind; but this we are sure of, that it is a serious thing to die, it is a work we never did, and when we come to do it, we shall need a strength we never had. In this sacrament therefore, from the death of Christ, we must fetch in grace to prepare us for death, and to carry us safely and comfortably through that dark and dismal valley. I depend not only upon the providence of God, to order the circumstances of my removal hence for the best to me, but upon the grace of God, to take out the sting of death, and then to reconcile me to the stroke of death, and to enable me to meet death's harbinger, and bear its agonies not only with the constancy and patience that becomes a wise man, but with the hope and joy that becomes a good Christian.

V. Here we may receive the earnests of eternal bliss and joy. Heaven is the crown and centre of all the promises, and the perfection of all the good contained in them, all the blessings of the new covenant have a tendency to this, and are in order to this. Are we predestinated? It is to the inheritance of sons: called? It is to his kingdom and glory: sanctified? It is that we may be made meet for the inheritance, and wrought to the self-same thing. This, therefore, we should have in our eye, in our covenant and communion with God, that eternal life which God who cannot lie promises. We must receive the Spirit in his graces and comforts, as the *earnest of our inheritance*, Eph. i. 14. 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5. They who deal with God must deal upon trust for a happiness in reversion, a recompence of reward to come; must forsake a world in sight and present, for a world out of sight and future. All believers consent to this, they lay up their treasure in heaven, and hope for what they see not. This they depend upon, and in prospect of it they are willing to labour, and suffer, to deny themselves, and take up their cross, knowing that heaven will make amends for all; though they may be losers for Christ, they shall not be losers by him in the end: this is the bargain. In the Lord's supper

Christ gives us earnest upon this bargain, and what we receive there we receive as earnest. An earnest not only confirms the bargain, and secures the performance of it, but is itself part of payment, though but a small part in comparison with the full sum.

We here receive the earnest of our inheritance, that is,

1. We receive the assurances of it; the royal grant of it is here sealed and delivered by the King of kings, *teste me ipso—being myself witness.* God says to me as he did to Abraham, (Gen. xiii. 14.) *Lift up thine eyes now, and look from the place where thou art.* Take a view of the heavenly Canaan, that land which eternally flows with better things than milk and honey, Immanuel's land; open the eye of faith, and behold the pleasures and glories of that world, as they are described in Scripture, such as *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard;* and know of a surety, that *all the land which thou seest,* and that which is infinitely more and better than thou canst conceive, *to thee will I give it,* to thee for ever. *Fear not, little flock,* fear not, ye little ones of the flock, *it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* Follow Christ and serve him, and you shall be for ever with him: continue with him now in his temptations, and you shall shortly share with him in his glories: only be faithful unto death, and the crown of life is as sure to you as if it were already upon your heads. Here is livery and seisin upon the deed: take this and eat it, take this and drink it; in token of this, *I will be to thee a God,* (that is, a perfect and everlasting happiness,) such as shall answer the vast extent and compass of that great word, Heb. xi. 16.

Come now, my soul, and accept the security offered; the inheritance offered is unspeakably rich, and invaluable; the losses and sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with it. The title is good; it is a purchased possession; he that grants it has power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life, John xvii. 2. The assurances are unquestionably valid (not only the word and oath, but the writing and seal of the eternal God) in the scriptures and sacraments. Here is that, my soul, which thou mayst venture thyself upon, and venture thine all for. Do it then, do it with a holy boldness. Lay hold on eternal life, lay fast hold on it, and keep thy hold. Look up, my soul, look as high as heaven, the highest heavens. Look forward, my soul, look as far forward as eternity, and let eternal life, eternal joy, eternal glory, be thy aim in thy religion, and resolve to take up with nothing short of these. God has been *willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel,* and, therefore, has thus confirmed it, so as to leave no room for doubting, that by all these *immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us,* Heb. vi. 17, 18. Take him at his word then, and build thy hope upon it: be not faithless, but believing; be not careless, but industrious. Here is a happiness worth striving for: run with patience the race that is set before thee, with this prize in thy eye.

2. We receive the foretastes of it. We have in this ordinance not only a ratification of the promise of the heavenly Canaan, but a pattern or specimen given us of the fruits of that land, like the bunch of grapes which was brought from the valley of Eshcol to the Israelites in the wilderness; a view given us of that land of promise, like that which Moses had of the land of Canaan from the top of Pisgah: as the law was a type and figure of the Messiah's kingdom on earth, so the gospel is of his kingdom in heaven; both are shadows of good things to come, (Heb. x. 1.) like the map of a rich and large country in a sheet of paper. Our future happiness is in this sacrament not only sealed to us, but showed to us, and we here taste something of the pleasures of that better country. In this ordinance we have a sight of Christ, he is evidently set before us; and what is heaven, but to see him as he is, and to be for ever beholding his glory? We are here receiving the pledges and tokens of Christ's love to us, and returning the protestations and expressions of our love to him; and what is heaven, but an eternal interchanging of love between a holy God and holy souls? We are here praising and blessing the Redeemer, celebrating his honour, and giving him the glory of his achievements; and what is that but the work of heaven? It is what the inhabitants of that world are doing now, and what we hope to be doing with them to eternity. We are here in spiritual communion with all the saints, coming in faith, hope, and love to the general assembly and *church of the first-born;* and what is heaven but that in perfection? In a word, heaven is a feast, and so is this; only this is a running banquet, that an everlasting feast.

Come (my soul) and see a door here opened in heaven; look in at that door now, by which thou hopest to enter shortly. Let this ordinance do something of the work of heaven upon thee, God having provided in it something of the pleasure of heaven for thee. Heaven will for ever part between thee and sin; let this ordinance, therefore, set thee at a greater distance from it. Heaven will fill thee with the love of God; in this ordinance, therefore, let that love be shed abroad in thy heart. In heaven thou shalt enter into the joy of thy Lord; let that joy now enter into thee, and be thy strength and thy song. Heaven will be perfect holiness; let this ordinance make thee more holy, and more conformable to the image of the Holy Jesus. Heaven will be everlasting rest; here, therefore, return

to God as thy rest, O my soul, and repose thyself in him. Let every sacrament be to thee a heaven upon earth, and each of these days of the Son of man, as one of the days of heaven.

CHAPTER X

HELPS FOR THE EXCITING THOSE PIOUS AND DEVOUT AFFECTIONS WHICH SHOULD BE WORKING IN US WHILE WE ATTEND THIS ORDINANCE.

WONDERFUL sights are here to be seen, where the Lord's death is showed forth; precious benefits are here to be had, where the covenant of grace is sealed; the transaction is very solemn, very serious, nothing more so on this side death: but what impressions must be made hereby upon our souls? How must we stand affected while this is doing? Is this service only a show at which we may be unconcerned spectators? Or is it a market-place, in which we may stand all the day idle? No, by no means: here is work to be done, heart-work, such as requires a very close application of mind, and a great liveliness and vigour of spirit, and in which all that is within us should be employed, and all little enough. Here is that to be done which calls for fixed thoughts and warm affections, which needs them, and well deserves them. What sensible movings of affection we should aim at, is not easy to direct; tempers vary. Some are soon moved, and much moved with every thing that affects them; from such it may be expected that their passions, which are strong at other times, should not be weak at this ordinance. And yet, no doubt, there are others whose natural temper is happily more calm and sedate, who are not conscious to themselves of such stirrings of affection as some experience at that ordinance, and yet have as comfortable communion with God, as good evidence of the truth, and growth of grace, and as much real benefit by the ordinance, as those who think themselves even transported by it. The deepest rivers are scarce perceived to move, and make the least noise. On the other hand, there may be much heat where there is little light, and strong passions where there are very weak resolutions; like the waters of the land-flood, which make a great show, but are shallow and soon gone. We must not, therefore, build a good opinion of our spiritual state upon the vehemence of our affection. A romance may represent a tragical story so pathetically, as to make a great impression upon the minds of some, who yet know the whole matter to be both feigned and foreign: *bodily exercise*, if that be all, *profits little*. And on the other hand, there may be a true and strong faith in forming the judgment, bowing the will, commanding the affections, and purifying the heart and life, where yet there are not any transports or pathetical expressions. There may be true joy, where yet the mouth is not filled with laughter, nor the tongue with singing; and true sorrow, where yet the eye does not run down with tears. They whose hearts are firmly fixed for God, may take the comfort of it, though they do not find their heart sensibly flowing out towards him.

And yet in this sacrament, where it is designed that the eye should affect the heart, we must not rest in the bare contemplation of what is here set before us, but the consideration thereof must make an impression on our spirits, which should be turned as clay to this seal. If what is here done do not affect us for the present, it will not be likely to influence us afterwards; for we retain the remembrance of things better by our affections than by our notions: *I shall never forget thy precepts, when by them thou hast quickened me.* Here therefore let us stir up the gift that is in us, endeavouring to affect ourselves with the great things of God and our souls; and let us pray to God to affect us with them by his Spirit and grace, and to testify his acceptance of the sacrifice of a devoted heart, which we are here to offer, by kindling it with the holy fire from heaven: *Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, and blow upon my garden.* Come, thou blessed Spirit, and move upon these waters, these dead waters, to set them a moving in rivers of living water; come and breathe on these dry bones, that they may live. O that I might now be in the mount with God! That I might be so taken up with the things of the Spirit and the other world, that, for the time, I may even forget that I am yet in the body, and in this world! O that I might now be soaring upward, upward toward God, pressing forward, forward toward heaven, as one not slothful in this business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, for here it is no time to trifle!

Let us then see in some particulars how we should be affected when we are attending on the Lord in this solemnity, and in what channels these waters of the sanctuary should run, that we may take our work before us, and apply our minds to the consideration of those things that are proper to excite those affections.

I. Here we must be sorrowing for sin after a godly sort, and blushing before God at the thought of it. Penitential grief and shame are not at all unsuitable to this ordinance, though it is intended for our joy and honour, but excellent preparatives for the benefit and comfort of it. Here we should be, like Ephraim, bemoaning ourselves; like Job, abhorring ourselves, renewing those sorrowful reflections we made upon our own follies, when we were preparing for this service, and keeping the fountains of repentance still open, still flowing. Our sorrow for sin needs not hinder our joy in God, and therefore our joy in God must not forbid our sorrow for sin.

1. Our near approach to God in this ordinance, should excite and increase our holy shame and sorrow. When we see what an honour we are advanced to, what a favour we are admitted to, it is seasonable to reflect upon our own unworthiness by reason of the guilt of sin, and our own unfitness by reason of the power of sin, to draw near to God. A man's deformity and defilement is never such a mortification to him, as when he comes into the presence of those who are comely, clean, and fashionable; and when we are conscious to ourselves that we have dealt basely and disingenuously with one we were under the highest obligation to love and honour, an interview with the person so offended cannot but renew our grief.

I am here drawing nigh to God, not only treading his courts with Christians at large, by sitting down at his table with select disciples; but when I consider how pure and holy he is, and how vile and sinful I am, *I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face before him; to me belongs shame and confusion of face; I have* many a time *heard of God by the hearing of the ear*, but now I am taken to sit down with him at his table, *mine eye sees him*, sees the King in his beauty, wherefore *I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* What a fool, what a wretch, have I been, to offend a God, who appears so holy in the eyes of all that draw nigh unto him, and so great to all them that are about him. *Woe is me, for I am undone*, lost and undone for ever, if there were not a Mediator between me and God, *because I am a man of unclean lips*, and an unclean heart: now I perceive it, and my own degeneracy and danger by reason of it, *for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*, Isa. vi. 5. I have reason to be ashamed to see one I am so unlike to, and afraid to see one I am so obnoxious to. The higher we are advanced by the free grace of God, the more reason we shall see to abase ourselves, and cry, *God be merciful to us sinners.*

2. A sight of Christ crucified should increase and excite our penitential shame and sorrow, and that evangelical repentance in which there is an eye to the cross of Christ. It is prophesied, nay, it is promised, as a blessed effect of the pouring out of the Spirit in gospel times upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that they shall *look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn*, Zech. xii. 10. Here we see Christ pierced for our sins, nay, pierced by our sins; our sins were the cause of his death, and the grief of his heart. The Jews and Romans crucified Christ, but as David killed Uriah with his letter, and Ahab killed Naboth with his seal, so the hand-writing that was against us for our sins, nailed Christ to the cross, and so he nailed it to the cross. We had eaten the sour grapes, and his teeth were set an edge. Can we see him thus suffering for us, and not we suffer with him? Was he in such pain for our sins, and shall not we be in pain for them? Was his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and shall not ours be exceeding sorrowful, when that is the way to life? Come, my soul, see by faith the holy Jesus made sin for thee, the glory of heaven made a reproach of men for thee; his Father's joy made a man of sorrow for thy transgressions. See thy sins burthening him when he sweat, spitting upon him and buffeting him, and putting him to open shame, crowning him with thorns, piercing his hands and his side; and let this melt and break this hard and rocky heart of thine, and dissolve it into tears of godly sorrow. Look on Christ dying, and weep not for him, (though they who have any thing of ingenuousness and good nature, will see reason enough to weep for an innocent sufferer,) but weep for thyself, and thy own sins; for them be in bitterness, as one that is in bitterness for an only son.

Add to this, that our sins have not only pierced him, as they were the cause of his death, but as they have been the reproach of his holy name, and the grief of his Holy Spirit. Thus we have crucified him afresh, by doing that which he has often declared to be a vexation and dishonour to him, as far as the joys and glories of his present state can admit. The consideration of this should greatly humble us: nothing goes nearer to the quick with a true penitent, nor touches him in a more tender part, than this, (Ezek. vi. 9.) *They shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me.* A strange expression, that the great God should reckon himself broken by the sins of his people! No wonder it follows, *They should loathe themselves for the evils which they had committed.* Can we look upon an humbled broken Christ with an unhumbled unbroken heart? Do our sins grieve him, and shall they not grieve us? Come, my soul, and sit down by the cross of Christ as a true mourner; let it make thee weep to see him weep, and bleed to see him bleed. That heart is frozen hard indeed, which these considerations will not thaw.

3. The gracious offer here made us of peace and pardon, should excite and increase our godly sorrow and shame. This is a gospel motive, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;* that is, the promise of pardon upon repentance is published and sealed, and whoever will, may come and take the benefit of it. The terrors of the law are of use to startle us, and put us into a horror for sin, as those that are afraid of God; but the grace of the gospel contributes more to an ingenuous repentance, and makes us more ashamed of ourselves. This rends the heart, to consider God so gracious and merciful, so slow to anger, and ready to forgive, Joel ii. 13. Let this loving-kindness melt thee, O my soul, and make thee to relent more tenderly than ever. Wretch

that I have been, to spit in the face, and spurn at the bowels, of such mercy and love by my wilful sin! to despise the riches of gospel grace! *I am ashamed, yea, even confounded*, because I do *bear the reproach of my youth*. Does God meet me thus with tenders of reconciliation? Does the party offended make the first motion of agreement? Shall such an undutiful, disobedient, prodigal son as I have been, be embraced, kissed, and clothed with the best robe? This kindness overcomes me; now it cuts me to the heart, and humbles me to the dust, to think of my former rebellions; they never appeared so heinous, so vile as they do now I see them pardoned. The more certain I am that I shall not be ruined by them, the more reason I see to be humbled for them. When God promised to establish his covenant with repenting Israel, he adds, *That thou mayst remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of the shame, when I am pacified towards thee*, Ezek. xvi. 62, 63. To see God provoked, causes a holy trembling; but to see him pacified, causes a holy blushing. The day of atonement, when the sins of Israel were to be sent into a land of forgetfulness, must be a day to *afflict the soul*, Lev. xvi. 29. The blood of Christ will be the more healing and comforting to the soul, for its bleeding afresh thus upon every remembrance of sin.

II. Here we must be confiding in Christ Jesus, and relying on him alone for life and salvation. When we mourn for sin, blessed be God, we do not sorrow as those who have no hope: true penitents are perplexed, but not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed: faith in Christ turns even their sorrows into joys, gives them their vineyards from thence, and even the *valley of Achor* (of *trouble* for sin) *for a door of hope*, Hos. ii. 15. We have not only an all-sufficient happiness to hope for, but an all-sufficient Saviour to hope in: here, therefore, let us exercise and encourage that hope, let us trust in the name of the Lord Jesus, and stay ourselves upon him; come up out of this wilderness, leaning upon our beloved, Cant. viii. 5. Come, my soul, weary as thou art, and rest in Christ; cast thy burthen upon him, and he shall sustain thee; commit thy way to him, and thy thoughts shall certainly be established; commit thyself to him, and it shall be well with thee, he will keep through his own name that which thou committest to him. Commit thyself to him, as the scholar commits himself to his teacher to be instructed, with a resolution to take his word for the truth of what he teaches; *(oportet discentem credere—it is commendable in a learner to give credit;)* as the patient commits himself to his physician to be cured, with a resolution to take whatever he prescribes, and punctually to observe his orders; as the client commits himself to his counsel to draw his plea, and to bring him off when he is judged, with a resolution to do all such things as he shall advise; as the traveller commits himself to his guide, to be directed in his way, with a resolution to follow his conduct: as the orphan commits himself to his guardian, to be governed and disposed of at his discretion, with a resolution to comply with him: thus must we commit ourselves to Christ.

1. We must confide in his power, trusting in him as one who can help and save us. (1.) He has an incontestable authority, is a Saviour by office, sanctified and sealed, and sent into the world for this purpose: help is laid upon him. We may well offer to trust him with our part of this great concern, which is the securing of our happiness, for God trusted him with his part of it, the securing of his honour, and declared himself well pleased in him, Matt. iii. 17. (2.) He has likewise an unquestionable ability to save to the uttermost. He is mighty to save, and every way qualified for the undertaking; he is skilful, for treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him; he is solvent, for there is in him an inexhaustible fulness of merit and grace, sufficient to bear all our burthens, and supply all our need. We must commit ourselves, and the greatest affairs of our salvation, unto him, with a full assurance that he is able to keep what we commit to him against that day, that great day, which will try the foundation of every man's work, 2 Tim. i. 12.

2. We must confide in his promise, trusting in him as one who will certainly help and save us on the terms proposed; we may take his word for it, and this is the word which he has spoken, *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out*, (John vi. 37.) ε μη, a double negative, *I will not, no, I will not*. He is engaged for us in the covenant of redemption, and engaged to us in the covenant of grace, and in both he is the Amen, the Faithful Witness. On this, therefore, we must rely, the word on which he has caused us to hope; God hath spoken in his holiness, that he will accept us in the Beloved, and in that *I will rejoice, I will divide Sichem, Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine*, (Ps. lx. 6, 7.) pardon is mine, and peace mine, and Christ mine, and heaven mine, for *faithful is he that hath promised, who also will do it.*

Come then, my soul, come thou and all thy concerns, into this ark, and there thou shalt be safe when the deluge comes. Flee to this city of refuge, and in it thou shalt be secured from the avenger of blood. Quit all other shelters, for every thing but Christ is a refuge of lies, which the hail will sweep away. There is not salvation in any other but in him; trust him for it therefore, and depend upon him only. Reach hither thy finger, and in this ordinance behold his hands; reach hither thy hand, thrust it into his side, and say, as Thomas did, *My Lord, and my God.* Here I cast anchor, here I rest my soul, *it is Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again*, and is and will be, the *author of eternal salvation to all them*

that obey him. To him I entirely give up myself, to be ruled and taught and saved by him, and in him I have a full satisfaction. I will draw near to God for mercy and grace, in a dependence upon him as my righteousness; I will go forth, and go on in the way of my duty, in a dependence upon him as my strength; I will shortly venture in the invisible, unchangeable world, in a dependence upon him as the Captain of my salvation, who is able to bring many sons to glory, and as willing as he is able. *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.*

Having thus committed thyself (my soul) to the Lord Jesus, comfort thyself in him, please thyself with the thoughts of having disposed of thyself so well, and of having lodged the great concern of thy salvation in so good a hand; now *return to thy rest, O my soul,* and be easy. Every good Christian may by faith triumph as the prophet does, pointing at Christ, (Isa. l. 7, 8.) *The Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint,* in a holy defiance of Satan, and all the powers of darkness, *and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me?* Take the Bible, turn to the 8th of the Romans, and read from *v.* 31. to the end of the chapter: if ever blessed Paul rode in a triumphal chariot on this side heaven, it was when he wrote these lines, *What shall we say then to these things? &c.* Apply those comforts to thyself, O my soul. Thou hast said of the Lord, he is my Lord; rejoice in him then, and be exceeding glad. Thy Redeemer is mighty, and he *rides upon the heavens for thy help, and in his excellency on the sky,* Deut. xxxiii. 26. Do thou then *ride upon the high places of the earth, and suck honey out of this rock, and oil out of this flinty rock,* Deut. xxxii. 13. Isa. lviii. 14. Having made sure of thy interest in Christ, live in a continual dependence upon him; and being satisfied of his love, be satisfied with it: thou hast enough, and needest no more.

III. Here we must be delighting in God, and solacing ourselves in his favour. If we had not a Christ to hope in, being guilty and corrupt, we could not have a God to rejoice in; but having an advocate with the Father, so good a plea as Christ dying, and so good a pleader as Christ interceding, we may not only come boldly to the throne of grace, but may sit down under the shadow of it with delight, and behold the beauty of the Lord. That God who is love, and the God of love, here shows us his marvellous loving-kindness; causes his goodness to pass before us; proclaims his name gracious and merciful; here he gives us his love, and thereby invites us to give him ours. It is a love-feast, the love of Christ is here commemorated, the love of God is here offered; and the frame of our spirits is disagreeable, and a jar in the harmony, if our hearts be not here going out in love to God, the chief good, and our felicity. They who come hither with holy desires, must refresh themselves here with holy delights. If we must rejoice in the Lord always, much more now, for a feast was made for laughter, and so was this for spiritual joy. If ever Wisdom's ways be ways of pleasantness, surely they must be so when we come to eat of her bread, and to drink of the wine which she hath mingled.

Put thyself then (my soul) into a pleasant frame; let the joy of the Lord be thy strength, and let this ordinance put a new song into thy mouth. Come and hear the voice of joy and gladness.

1. Let it be a pleasure to thee to think that there is a God, and that he is such a one as he has revealed himself to be. The being and attributes of God are a terror to those who are unjustified and unsanctified; nothing can be more so: they are willing to believe there is no God, or that he is altogether such a one as themselves, because they heartily wish there were none, or one that they could be at peace with, and yet continue their league with sin: but to those who through grace partake of a divine nature themselves, nothing is more agreeable, nothing more acceptable, than the thoughts of God's nature and infinite perfections. Delight thyself therefore in thinking that there is an infinite and eternal Spirit, who is self-existent and self-sufficient, the best of beings, and the first of causes, the highest of powers, and the richest and kindest of friends and benefactors; the fountain of being, and fountain of bliss; the *Father of lights,* and *Father of mercies.* Love to think of him whom thou canst not see, and yet canst not but know; who is not far from thee, and yet between thee and him there is an infinite, awful distance. Let these thoughts be thy nourishment and refreshment.

2. Let it be a pleasure to thee to think of the obligation thou liest under to this God as thy Creator. He that is the Former of my body, and the Father of my spirit, *in whom I live, and move, and have my being,* is upon that account my rightful owner, whose I am; and my sovereign ruler, who I am bound to serve. Because he made me, and not I myself, therefore I am not my own, but his, Ps. c. 3. Please thyself (my soul) with this thought, that thou art not thy own, but his that made thee; not left to thy own will, but bound up to his; not made for thyself, but designed to be to him for a name and a praise. Noble powers are then intended for a noble purpose.——Delight thyself in him as the felicity and end of thy being, who is the fountain and cause of it. Were I to choose, I would not be my own master, my own carver, my own centre: no, I would not, it is better as it is. I love to think of the eternal God, as the just director of all my actions, to whom I am accountable, and the wise disposer of all my affairs, to whom I must submit. I love to think of him as my chief good, who

having made me, is alone able to make me happy; and as my highest end, *of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things*, Rom. xi. 36.

3. Let it be a pleasure to thee to think of the covenant relations in which this God stands to thee in Jesus Christ. This is, especially, to be our delight in this sealing ordinance. Though the sacrament directs us immediately to Christ, yet through him it leads us to the Father. He died, *the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* To God therefore we must go, as our end and rest, by Christ as our way; to God as a Father, by Christ as Mediator. Come then, my soul, and see with joy and the highest satisfaction, the God who made thee, entering into covenant with thee, and engaging to make thee happy. Hear him saying to thee, my soul, *I am thy salvation;* thy shield, and not only thy bountiful rewarder, but thy exceeding great reward; I am, and will be, to thee a God all-sufficient, a God that is enough. *Fear thou not, for I am with thee*, wherever thou art; *be not dismayed, for I am thy God;* whatever thou wantest, whatever thou losest, call me God, even thy own God: when thou art weak, *I will strengthen thee, yea*, when thou art helpless, *I will help thee, yea*, when thou art ready to sink, *I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness*, Isa. xli. 10. The God that cannot lie has said it, and here seals it to thee, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* Let this be to thee, my soul, the voice of joy and gladness, making even broken bones to rejoice. Encourage thyself in the Lord thy God. He is thy Shepherd, thou shalt not want any thing that is good for thee, Ps. xxiii. 1, &c. *Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name*, (Isa. liv. 5.) and *as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee*, Isa. lxii. 5. He shall *rest in his love to thee*, Zeph. iii. 17. Rest then in thy love to him, and rejoice in him always. The Lord is thy lawgiver, thy King who will save thee, Isa. xxxiii. 22. Swear allegiance to him then with gladness and loud hosannas; *Let* Israel *rejoice in him that made him*, that new-made him; *Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King*, Ps. cxlix. 2. What wouldst thou more? *This God is thy God for ever and ever.*

Stir up thyself (my soul) to take the comfort which is here offered thee: let this strengthen the weak hands, let it confirm the feeble knees. If God be indeed the health of thy countenance, and thy God, *Why art thou cast down? why art thou disquieted?* Die not for thirst when there is such a fountain of living waters near thee, but draw water with joy out of these wells of salvation. Shiver not for cold when there is such a reviving quickening heat in these promises, but say with pleasure, *Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire*, Isa. xliv. 16. Faint not for hunger now thou art at a feast of fat things, but be abundantly satisfied with the goodness of God's house, Ps. xxvi. 8; lxv. 4. The God whose wrath and frowns thou hast incurred, here favours thee, and smiles on thee; let this therefore give thee a joy greater than the joy of harvest, and far surpassing what they have who divide the spoil. Though thou canst not reach to holy raptures, yet compose thyself to a holy rest; delight thyself always in the Lord, especially at this ordinance; and by thus taking the comfort of what thou hast received, thou qualifiest thyself to receive more, for then *he shall give thee the desire of thy heart*, Ps. xxxvii. 4. The way to have thy heart's desire, is to make God thy heart's desire. Triumph in his love, and thy interest in him. His benignity is better than life; let it be to thee sweeter than life itself. *Behold*, God is my Saviour, *God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid;* for *the Lord Jehovah is my strength, and* therefore *my song;* the *strength of my heart*, and *my portion for ever*, Isa. xii. 2. Ps. lxxiii. 26. When thou comest to the altar of God, call him, *God thy exceeding joy*, (Ps. xliii. 5.) *thy God thy glory*, Isa. lx. 19.

IV. Here we must be admiring the mysteries and miracles of redeeming love. They that worshipped the beast, are said to wonder after him, (Rev. xiii. 3.) so must they that worship the Lamb, for he has done marvellous things. We have reason to say, that we were fearfully and wonderfully made, but, without doubt, we were more fearfully and wonderfully redeemed. We were made with a word, but we were bought with a price. Stand still then and see the salvation of the Lord, see it with admiration. Affect thyself (my soul) with a pleasing wonder, while thou art seeing this great sight. The everlasting gospel is here magnified and made honourable, let it be so in thy eyes; call it *The glorious gospel of the blessed God.* Let us take a view of some of the *marvellous things* which are done in the work of our redemption.

1. The contrivance of the salvation is marvellous. It would have for ever puzzled the wisdom of angels and men to have found out such a method of salvation as might effectually satisfy God's justice, and yet secure man's happiness; save the life of the law-breaker, and yet maintain the honour of the law-maker. This is that mystery which the angels desire to look into, and which the most piercing eye of those inquisitive spirits that see by the light of the upper world, will not be able to eternity to discern the bottom of. O the depth of this hidden wisdom!

2. The purposes of God's love concerning it from eternity are marvellous. Be astonished, O my soul, at this, that the God who was infinitely happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of himself and his own perfections, should yet think thoughts of love toward a remnant of mankind, and toward thee among the rest, and design such favours for them, such favours for thee, before the worlds were.

How precious should these thoughts be unto us! for how great is the sum of them! Ps. cxxxix. 17.

3. The choice of the person who should undertake it is marvellous; the Son of his love, that in parting with him for us, he might commend his love; the eternal Wisdom, the eternal Word, that he might effectually accomplish this great design, and might not fail, nor be discouraged. A person every way fit, both to do the Redeemer's work, and to wear the Redeemer's crown. It is spoken of as an admirable invention, (Job xxxiii. 24.) *I have found a ransom:* and (Ps. lxxxix. 19, 20.) *I have found David my servant.* On earth there is not his like, nor in heaven either.

4. The Redeemer's consent to the undertaking is marvellous. Considering his own dignity and self-sufficiency, our unworthiness and obnoxiousness, the difficulty of the service, and the ill requitals he foresaw from an ungrateful world, we have reason to admire that he should be so free, so forward to it, and should say, *Lo I come: here am I, send me.* Never was there such a miracle of love and pity; verily it passeth knowledge.

5. The carrying on of his undertaking in his humiliation is marvellous. His name was Wonderful, Isa. ix. 6. His appearance in the world from first to last was a continual series of wonders; without controversy, great was this mystery of godliness. The bringing of the First-begotten into the world, was attended with the adorations of wondering angels, Heb. i. 6. His doctrine and miracles, while he was in the world, were admirable; they that heard the one, and saw the other, were beyond measure astonished.

But his going out of the world was the greatest wonder of all; it made the earth to shake, the rocks to rend, and the sun to cover his face. Never was there such a martyr, never such a sacrifice, never such a paradox of love as that was. *God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of Christ;* which is so much *the wisdom of God and the power of God.*

6. The honours of his exalted state are marvellous. He who was for a little while lower than the angels, a worm and no man, is now the Lord of angels. One in our nature is advanced to the highest honours, invested with the highest powers; having an incontestable authority to execute judgment, even for this reason, because he is the Son of man; not only though he is so, but because he is so. *This is the Lord's doing, and it is,* and should be, *marvellous in our eyes.*

7. The covenant of grace made with us in him is marvellous. The terms of the covenant are wonderful, reasonable and easy; the treasures of the covenant are wonderful, rich and valuable. The covenant itself is well ordered in all things, and sure; admirably well, both for the glory of God, and the comfort of all believers. God in it *sheweth us his marvellous loving-kindness,* (Ps. xvii. 7.) and we answer not the design of the discovery, if we do not admire it. Other things, the more they are known, the less they are wondered at; but the riches of redeeming love appear more admirable to those who are best acquainted with them.

V. Here we must be caring what we shall render to him who hath thus loved us. This wonderful love is love to us, and not only gives the greatest encouragements to us to come to God for mercy and peace, but lays the strongest engagements upon us to walk with God in duty and obedience. We are bound in conscience, bound in honour, bound in gratitude, to love him, and live to him, who loved us, and died for us. This concern should much affect us, and lie very near our hearts, how we may answer the intentions of this love.

1. We should be affected with a jealous fear, lest we prove ungrateful, and, like Hezekiah, *render not again according to the benefit done unto us,* 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. We cannot but know something by sad experience of the treachery and deceitfulness of our own hearts, and how apt they are to start aside like a broken bow; and therefore we have no reason to presume upon our own strength and sufficiency. We are told of many who eat and drink in Christ's presence, and yet are found at last unfaithful to him: and what if I should prove one of those? This thought is not suggested here to amuse any that tremble at God's word, or to weaken the hands, and sadden the hearts, of those who are truly willing, though very weak; but to awaken those who slumber, and humble those who are wise in their own conceit. Distrust thyself, O my soul, that thou mayst trust in Christ only: fear thine own strength, that thou mayst hope in his. He who has done these great things for thee, must be applied to, and depended on, to work those great things in thee, which are required of thee. Go forth, therefore, and go on in his strength. If the same that grants us these favours, give us not wherewithal to make suitable returns for them, we shall perish for ever in our ingratitude.

2. We should be filled with serious desires to know and do our duty, in return for that great love wherewith we are loved. The affections of a grateful mind are very proper to be working in us at this ordinance. Does not even nature teach us to be grateful to our friends and benefactors? Let us be so to Christ then, the best of friends and kindest of benefactors. Come, my soul, here I see how much I am indebted, and how I owe my life, and joy, and hope, and all to the blessed Jesus; and is it not time to ask, with holy David, (Ps. cxvi. 12.) *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?* Shall I not take the cup of salvation, as he does there, (*v.* 13.) with this thought, *What shall I render?* Let David's answer to that question, which we find in that Psalm, be mine.

(1.) *I love the Lord, v.* 1. Love is the loadstone of love; even the publicans love those that love them; "*Lord, thou hast loved me with an everlasting love*, from everlasting in the counsels of it, to everlasting in the consequences of it, and shall not my heart with this loving-kindness be drawn to thee? Jer. xxxi. 3. Lord, I love thee; the world and the flesh shall never have my love more; I have loved them too much, I have loved them too long; the best affections of my soul shall now be consecrated to thee, O God, thee, O blessed Jesus! *Whom have I in heaven but thee? Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* It is my sorrow and shame that I am so weak and defective in my love to thee. What a wretched heart have I, that I can think, and speak, and hear, and see, so much of thy love to me, and be so little affected with it! So low in my thoughts of thee, so cool in my desires toward thee, so unsteady in my resolutions for thee! Lord, pity me; Lord, help me; for yet I love thee, I love to love thee; I earnestly desire to love thee better, and long to be there where love shall be made perfect."

(2.) *I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, v.* 17. As love is the heart of praise, so praise is the language of love. What shall I render? I must render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due: the tribute of praise to God, to whom it is due. We do not accommodate ourselves to this thanksgiving feast, if we do not attend it with hearts enlarged in thanksgiving; this cup of salvation must be a cup of blessing; in it we must bless God, because in it God blesses us. Thankful acknowledgments of God's favours to us, are but poor returns for rich receivings, yet they are such as God will accept, if they come from an upright heart. *Bless the Lord*, therefore, *O my soul, and let all that is within me bless his holy name.* Speak well of him who has done well for thee. Thank him for all his gifts both of nature and grace, especially for Jesus Christ, the spring of all. *As long as I live I will bless the Lord, yea, I will praise my God while I have my being;* for he is the God of my life, and the author of my well-being; and when I have no life, no being on earth, I hope to have a better life, a better being, in a better world, and to be doing this work for ever in a better manner.

(3.) *O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, v.* 16. I acknowledge myself already bound to be so, and further oblige myself by solemn promise to approve myself so. *What shall I render?* Lord, I render myself to thee, my whole self, body, soul, and spirit; not in compliment, but in truth and sincerity. I own myself thy servant, to obey thy commands, to be at thy disposal, and to be serviceable to thy honour and interest. It will be my credit and ease, my safety and happiness, to be under thy government: make me as one of thy hired servants.

(4.) *I will call upon the name of the Lord, v.* 13. This is the immediate answer to that question, *What shall I render?* And it is a surprising answer. It is uncommon among men, to make petitions for further favours our return for former favours; yet such a return as this, the God who delights to hear prayers will be well pleased with. Is God my Father? I will apply myself to him as his child, and call him, *Abba, Father.* Have I an Advocate with the Father? Then I will come boldly to the throne of grace. Are there such exceeding great and precious promises made me, and sealed to me? Then I will never lose the benefit of them for want of putting them in suit. As I will love God the better, so I will love prayer the better as long as I live; and having given myself unto God, I will give myself unto prayer, (as David did, Ps. cix. 4.) till I come to the world of everlasting praise.

(5.) *Return unto thy rest, O my soul, v.* 7. The God who has pleasure in the prosperity of his servants, would have them easy to themselves, and that they can never be, but by reposing in him; this therefore we must render: it is work that is its own wages; honour God by resting in him, please him by being well pleased in him. Having received so much from him, let us own that we have enough in him, and that we can go no whither but to him with any hopes of satisfaction. Lord, whither shall we go? He has the words of eternal life.

(6.) *I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living, v.* 9. A holy life, though it cannot profit God, yet it glorifies him, and therefore it is insisted upon as a necessary return for the favours we have received from God. While I am here in this land of the living, I will walk by faith, having my eyes ever toward the Lord, to see him as he reveals himself, hoping that shortly, in that land which is truly the land of the living above, I shall walk by sight, having my eye ever upon the Lord, to see him as he is. God has here sealed to me, to be to me a God all-sufficient; here therefore I seal to him, according to the tenor of the covenant, that, his grace enabling me, I will walk before him, and will be upright, Gen. xvii. 1.

(7.) *I will pay my vows unto the Lord, v.* 14, 18. Those who receive the blessings of the covenant, must be willing not only to come, but always to abide, under the bonds of the covenant. Here we must make vows, and then go away and make them good. More of this in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

DIRECTIONS CONCERNING THE SOLEMN VOWS WE ARE TO MAKE TO GOD IN THIS ORDINANCE.

A RELIGIOUS vow is a bond upon the soul; so it is described, Numb. xxx. 2. where he that voweth a vow unto the Lord, is said thereby to *bind his soul with a bond.* It is a solemn promise, by which we voluntarily oblige ourselves to God and duty, as a willing people in the day of his power, Ps. cx. 3. The cords of a man, and bands of love, wherewith God draws us, and holds us to himself, calls upon us by our own act and deed to bind ourselves, and these vows also are cords of a man, for they are highly reasonable, and bands of love, for to the renewed soul they are an easy yoke, and a light burthen.

From all the other parts of our work at the Lord's table, we may infer, that this is one part of it; we must there make solemn vows to God, that we will diligently and faithfully serve him.

1. We are here to renew our repentance for sin, and it becomes penitents to make vows. When we profess ourselves sorry for what we have done amiss, it is very natural and necessary to add, that we will not offend any more, as we have done: *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more,* Job xxxiv. 31, 32. We mock God when we say, "We repent that we have done foolishly," if we do not at the same time resolve that we will never return again to folly, Ps. lxxxv. 8. Times of affliction are proper times to make vows, and what is repentance but a self-affliction? Trouble for sin was not the least of that trouble which David was in when his lips uttered those vows, which he speaks so feelingly of, Ps. lxvi. 13, 14. Probably it was under this penitential affliction that he sware unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob, that he would find a place for the ark, Ps. cxxxii. 1, 2. Vows against sin resulting from sorrow for sin, shall not be rejected, as extorted by the rack, but graciously accepted, as the genuine language of a broken heart, and fruits meet for repentance.

2. We are here to ask and receive mercy from God, and it becomes petitioners to make vows. When Jacob found himself in special need of God's gracious presence, he vowed a vow, and set up a stone for a memorial of it, (Gen. xxviii. 20.) and Hannah, when she prayed for a particular mercy, vowed a vow, that the comfort she prayed for should be consecrated to God. Great and precious things we are here waiting to receive from God, and therefore though we cannot offer any thing as a valuable consideration for his favours, yet it behoves us to promise such suitable returns as we are capable of making. When God encourages us to seek to him for grace, we must engage ourselves not to receive his grace in vain, but to improve and employ for him what we have from him.

3. We are here to give God thanks for his favours to us. Now it becomes us in our thanksgivings to make vows, and to offer to God not only the calves of our lips, but the works of our hands. Jonah's mariners, when they offered sacrifice of praise to the Lord, for a calm after a storm, as an appendix to that sacrifice made vows, Jonah i. 16. The most acceptable vows are those which take rise from gratitude, and which are drawn from us by the mercies of God. Here I see what great things God has done for my soul, and what greater things he designs for me; shall I not therefore freely bind myself to that which he has by such endearing ties bound me to?

4. We are here to join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant; and it is requisite that our general covenant be explained and confirmed by particular vows. When we present ourselves to God as a living sacrifice, with these cords we must bind that sacrifice to the horns of the altar; and while we experience in ourselves such a bent to backslide, we shall find all the arts of obligation little enough to be used with our own souls. As it is not enough to confess sin in the gross, saying, *I have sinned;* but we must enter into the detail of our transgressions, saying with David, *I have done this evil;* so it is not enough in our covenanting with God, that we engage ourselves in the general to be his, but we must descend to particulars in our covenants, as God does in his commands, that thereby we may the more effectually both bind ourselves to duty, and remind ourselves of duty. If the people must distinctly say *Amen* to every curse pronounced on mount Ebal, (Deut. xxvii. 15.) much more to every precept delivered on mount Horeb.

Come then, my soul, thou hast now thy hand upon the book to be sworn; thou art lifting up thy hand to the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth; think what thou art doing, and adjust the particulars, that this may not become a rash oath, inconsiderately taken. God is here confirming his promise to us by an oath, to show the immutability of his counsels of love to us, Heb. vi. 17, 18. Here, therefore, we must confirm our promise to him by an oath, to walk in God's law, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our God, Neh. x. 29. Some of the oriental writers tell us, that the most solemn oath which the patriarchs before the flood used, was, "By the blood of Abel;" and we are sure that the blood of Jesus is infinitely more sacred, and speaks much greater, and much better, things than that of Abel. Let us therefore testify our value for that blood, and secure to ourselves the blessings purchased by it, by our sincere and faithful dealing with God in that covenant which this is the blood of.

The command of the Eternal God is, that we *cease*

to do evil, and *learn to do well*; that *we put off the old man*, and *put on the new*: and our vows to God must accordingly be against all sin, and to all duty. And under each of these heads we must be particular, according as the case is.

I. We must here, by a solemn vow, bind ourselves out from all sin; so as not only to break our league with it, but to enter into league against it. The putting away of the strange wives in Ezra's time, was not the work of one day or two, (Ezra x. 13.) but a work of time; and therefore Ezra when he had the people under convictions, and saw them weeping sore for their sin in marrying them, very prudently bound them by a solemn covenant, that they would put them away, *v.* 3. If ever we conceive an aversion to sin, surely it is at the table of the Lord; and, therefore, we should improve that opportunity to invigorate our resolutions against it, that the remembrance of those resolutions may quicken our resistance of it, when the sensible impressions we are under from it are become less lively. Thus, we must, by a solemn vow, cast away from us all our transgressions, saying with Ephraim, *What have I to do any more with idols?* Hos. xiv. 8.

1. We must solemnly vow, that we will not indulge or allow ourselves in any sin: though sin may remain, it shall not reign; though those Canaanites be in the land, yet we will not be tributaries to them. However it may usurp and oppress as a tyrant, it shall never be owned as a rightful prince, nor have a peaceable and undisturbed dominion. I may be, in some particular instances, through the surprise of temptations, led into captivity by it; but I am fully resolved, in the strength of Christ, that I will never join in affinity with it, will never espouse its cause, never plead for it, nor strike in with its interests.

Bind thyself with this bond, O my soul, that though, through the remainders of corruption, thou canst not say, *Thou hast no sin*, yet, through the beginnings of grace, thou wilt be able to say, *Thou lovest none*. That thou wilt give no countenance or connivance to any sin; no, not to secret sins, which, though they shame thee not before men, yet shame thee before God and thy own conscience; no, not to heart-sins, those first-born of corrupt nature, the beginning of its strength. Vain thoughts may intrude, and force a lodging in me; but I will never invite them, never bid them welcome, nor court their stay. Corrupt affections may disturb me; but they shall never have the quiet and peaceable possession of me. No; whatever wars against my soul, by the grace of God, I will war against it, hoping in due time to get the dominion, and have its yoke broken from off my neck, when judgment shall be brought forth unto victory, and grace perfected in glory.

2. We must solemnly vow, that we will never yield to any gross sin, such as lying, injustice, uncleanness, drunkenness, profanation of God's name, and such like, which are not the spots of God's children. Though all the high places be not taken away, yet there shall be no remains of Baal, or of Baal's priests and altars, in my soul. However my own heart may be spotted by sins of infirmity, and may need to be daily washed, yet, by the grace of God, I will never spot my profession, nor stain the credit of that by open and scandalous sin. I have no reason to be ashamed of the gospel, and therefore it shall be my constant endeavour, not to be in any thing a shame to the gospel. It is an honour to me; I will never be a dishonour to it: I will never do any thing, by the grace of God I will not, which may give just occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme that worthy name by which I am called. So shall it appear that I am upright, if I be innocent from these great transgressions, and truly penitent for all my transgressions, Ps. xix. 13.

3. We must solemnly vow, that with a particular care we will keep ourselves from our own iniquity. That sin which, in our penitent reflections, our own consciences did most charge us with, and reproach us for; that sin we must, in a special manner, renew our resolutions against. Was it pride? Was it passion? Was it distrust of God, or love of the world? Was it an unclean fancy, or an idle tongue? Whatever it was, let the spiritual forces be mustered, and drawn out against it. The instructions which Samuel gave to Israel, when they were lamenting after the Lord, are observable to this purpose; (1 Sam. vii. 3.) *If ye do return to the Lord with all your hearts*, and would be accepted of him therein, *then put away the strange gods, and Ashtaroth.* Was not Ashtaroth one of the strange gods or goddesses? Yes; but that is particularly mentioned, because, it had been a beloved idol, dearer than the rest; that especially must be put away. Thus in our covenanting with God, we must engage against all sin, but in particular against that which, by reason of the temper of our minds, the constitution of our bodies, or the circumstances of our outward affairs, does most easily beset us, and we are most prone to.

Know thou thy own self, O my soul? If thou dost, thou knowest thy own sickness, and thy own sore; that is, thy own iniquity. Bring that hither, and slay it: let not thy eye spare, neither do thou pity it: hide it not, excuse it not; ask not for leave to reserve it, as Naaman did for his house of Rimmon: though it have been to thee as a right eye, as a right hand, as thy guide, and thy acquaintance: it has been a false guide, an ill acquaintance; pluck it out, cut it off, and cast it from thee. Now come, and fortify thy resolutions in the strength of Christ against that; double thy guard against that; fetch in help from heaven against

that; be vigorous in thy resistance of that; and how many soever its advantages are against thee, yet despair not of victory at last.

4. We must solemnly vow, that we will abstain from all appearance of evil; not only from that which is manifestly sin, and which carries the evidences of its own malignity written in its forehead, but from that which looks like sin, and borders upon it. Wisdom is here profitable to direct, so as that we may not, on the one hand, indulge a scrupulous conscience, and yet, on the other hand, may preserve a tender conscience. Far be it from us to make that to be sin, which God has not made so; and yet, in doubtful cases, it must be our care and covenant to keep the safer side, and to be cautious of that which looks suspicious: *He that walks uprightly, walks surely.* That which we have found to be either a snare to us, and an occasion of sin, or a blemish to us, and an occasion of scandal, or a terror to us in the reflection, and an occasion of grief and fear, it may do well expressly to resolve against, though we be not very sure that it is in itself sinful, nor dare censure it as evil in others; provided this vow be made with such limitations, that it may not afterwards prove an entanglement to us, when either by the improvement of our knowledge, or the change of our circumstances, it ceases to have in it an appearance of evil.

And art thou willing, my soul, to come under this bond? Wilt thou put far from thee the accursed thing? Wilt thou, in this ordinance, make a covenant with thy eyes, and oblige them not to look on the wine when it is red, not to look on a woman to lust after her? Wilt thou shun sin as the plague, and engage thyself, not only never to embrace that adulteress, but never to come nigh the door of her house? Prov. v. 8. Thy vow being like that of the Nazarite, not to drink of this intoxicating wine; let it be then like his, not to eat any thing that comes of the vine, *from the kernel to the husk*, Numb. vi. 3, 4. Abandon sin, and all its appurtenances; cast out Tobiah, and all his stuff: resolve to deny thyself in that which is most desirable, rather than give Satan any advantage; to abridge thyself even in that which is lawful, rather than come within the confines of sin, or bring thyself into danger of that which is unlawful. *Happy is the man that feareth always.*

5. We must solemnly vow, that we will have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, neither be partakers of other men's sins, Eph. v. 11. 1 Tim. v. 22. We live in a corrupt and degenerate age, wherein iniquity greatly abounds: our business, indeed, is not to judge others; to their own master they stand or fall; but our care must be to preserve ourselves, and the purity and peace of our own minds. Our covenant therefore must be, that we will never *walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners*, Ps. i. 1. When David engaged himself to keep the commandments of his God, pursuant to that engagement, he said to evil-doers, *depart from me*, (Ps. cxix. 115.) and St. Peter reminded his new converts of the necessity of this care, (Acts ii. 40.) *Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*

Let the psalmist's vow be mine, then, (Ps. xxvi. 5.) having hated the congregation of evil-doers, (such as drunkards, swearers, filthy-talkers, and scoffers at godliness,) *I will not sit with the wicked.* Though I cannot avoid being sometimes in the sight and hearing of such, yet I will never take those for my chosen companions and bosom friends in this world, with whom I should dread to have my portion in the other world. Religion in rags shall be always valued by me, and profaneness in robes despised. Having chosen God for my God, his people shall always be my people; *Lord, gather not my soul with sinners.* If thou art in good earnest for heaven, resolve to swim against the stream, and thou wilt find, that sober singularity is an excellent guard to serious piety. On all that glory let there be this defence.

II. We must here by a solemn vow bind ourselves up to all duty. It is not enough that we depart from evil, but we must do good: it is not enough that we separate ourselves from the service of sin, and shake off Satan's iron yoke, but we must devote ourselves to the service of Christ, and put our necks under the sweet and easy yoke of God's commandments, with a solemn promise faithfully to draw in that yoke all our days. We need not bind ourselves to more than we are already bound to by the divine law, either expressly or by consequence, either as primary duties, or secondary, in order to them. We are not called to lay upon ourselves any other burthen than necessary things; and they are not heavy burthens, nor grievous to be borne; but we must bind ourselves faster, and by additional ties, to that which we are already bound to.

1. We must, by a solemn vow, oblige ourselves to all the duties of religion in general. Jacob's vow must be ours, (Gen. xxviii. 21.) *Then the Lord shall be my God:* having avouched him for mine, I will fear him, and love him, delight in him, and depend upon him, worship him, and glorify him as my Lord and my God. Having owned him as mine, I will ever eye him as mine, and walk in his name, Micah iv. 5. David's vow must be ours, that we will *keep God's righteous judgments*, (Ps. cxix. 106.) that we will keep in them, as our way; keep to them, as our rule; that we will keep them as the apple of our eye, keep them always unto the end.

In the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ, we must here solemnly promise and vow,

(1.) That we will make religion our business. It is our great business in this world, to serve the honour of him that made us, and secure the happiness

we were made for: this we must mind as our business, and not (as most do) make a by-business of it. Religion must be our calling, the calling we resolve to live in, and hope to live by: in the services of it, we must be constant and diligent, and as in our element. Other things must give way to it, and be made (as much as may be) serviceable to it.—And this must be our covenant with God here, that however we have trifled hitherto, henceforward we will mind religion, as *The one thing needful*, and not be slothful in the business of it, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. And art thou willing, my soul, thus to devote thyself entirely to the service of thy God? Shall that engage thy cares, fill thy thoughts, command thy time, and give law to the whole man? Let this matter be settled then in this day's vows, and resolve to live and die by it.

(2.) That we will make conscience of inside godliness. Having in our covenant given God our hearts, which is what he demands, we must resolve to employ them for him; for, without doubt, he is a Jew, he is a Christian, that is one inwardly; *and that is circumcision*, that is baptism, that is true and pure religion, which is of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, Rom. ii. 29. That we are really, what we are inwardly; and they only are the true worshippers, who worship God in the spirit: this is the power of godliness, without which the *form* is but a carcass, but a shadow. *The King's daughter is all glorious within.* This therefore we must resolve, in the strength of the grace of God, that we will keep our hearts with all diligence; keep them fixed, fixed upon God; that the desire of our souls shall be ever toward God; that our hearts shall be lifted up to God in every prayer, and their doors and gates thrown open to admit his word; and that our constant care shall be about the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible; so approving ourselves to God in our integrity, in every thing we do in religion.

(3.) That we will live a life in communion with God. Without controversy, great is this mystery of godliness. If there be a heaven upon earth, certainly this is it, by faith to set the Lord always before us, having an eye to him with suitable affections, as the first cause and last end of all things that concern us. And so, having communion with him in providences as well as ordinances, when we receive the common comforts of every day from his hand with love and thankfulness, and bear the common crosses and disappointments of every day, as ordered by his will, with patience and submission; when we commit every day's care to him, and manage every day's business and converse for him; having a constant habitual regard to God in the settled principles of the divine life, and frequent actual outgoings of soul toward him in pious ejaculations, the genuine expressions of devout affections; then we live a life of communion with God. Did we know by experience what it is to live such a life as this, we would not exchange the pleasures of it for the peculiar treasures of kings and provinces.

Engage thyself then, my soul, elevate thyself to this spiritual and divine life, that every day may thus be with thee a communion-day, and thy constant fellowship may be with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ by the Spirit. Let me resolve henceforward to live (more than hitherto I have done) a life of complacency in God, in his beauty, bounty, and benignity; a life of dependence upon God, upon his power, providence, and promise; a life of devotedness to God, to the command of his word, the conduct of his Spirit, and the disposal of his Providence; and thus to walk with God in all holy conversation.

(4.) That we will keep heaven in our eye, and take up with nothing short of it. We are made for another world, and we must resolve to set our hearts upon that world, and have it always in our eye; seeking the things that are above, and slighting things below, in comparison with them; as those who are born from heaven, and bound to heaven. Bind thyself, my soul, with this bond, that *forgetting the things which are behind*, as one that hath *not yet attained, neither is already perfect*, thou wilt *reach forth to those things that are before; pressing forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling*, Phil. iii. 13, 14. "My treasure is in heaven; my head, and hope, and home are there; I shall never be well till I am there: there, therefore, shall my heart be; and to that recompence of reward I will ever have respect; with an eye to that joy and glory set before me in the other world, I will, by the grace of God, patiently run the race of godliness set before me in this world," Heb. xii. 1, 2.

2. We must, by a solemn vow, bind ourselves to some duties of religion in particular. As it is good to engage ourselves by covenant against particular sins, that by the help of resolution our resistance of them may be invigorated; so it is good to engage ourselves to particular duties, that thereby we may be quickened closely and diligently to apply ourselves to them, and may see our work before us.

(1.) We should particularly bind ourselves to those duties, which our own consciences have charged us with the neglect of. We have known that good which our own hearts tell us we have not done: we find upon reflection, it may be, that we have not been constant in our secret devotion, that we have not done that good in our families which we should have done; we have been barren in good discourse, careless of our duty to the souls of others, backward to the works of charity, unfurnished for, and indisposed to, religious exercises: in these or other things wherein we are conscious to ourselves that we have been defective, we must covenant for the

future to be more circumspect and industrious, that our works may be found filled up before God. When the Jews in Nehemiah's time made a sure covenant, wrote it, and sealed to it, they inserted particular articles relating to those branches of God's service which had been neglected, and made ordinances for themselves, according to the ordinances that God had given them, (Neh. x. 32.) so should we do, as an evidence of the sincerity of our repentance for our former omissions, both of duty, and in duty: that work of our Lord wherein we have been most wanting, in that we must covenant to abound most, that thereby we may redeem the time.

(2.) We should particularly bind ourselves to those duties which we have found by experience to contribute most to the support and advancement of the life and power of godliness in our hearts. They who have carefully observed themselves, perhaps, can tell what those religious exercises are, which they have found to be most serviceable to the prosperity of their souls, and by which they have reaped most spiritual benefit and advantage. Have our hearts been most enlarged in secret devotion? Has God sometimes met us in our closets with special comforts, and the unusual manifestations of himself to our souls? Let us thence take an indication and covenant to be more and longer alone in secret communion with God. Have public ordinances been to us as green pastures, and have we sat down by them with delight? Let us resolve to be so much the more diligent in our attendance on them, and wait more closely at those gates where we have so often been abundantly satisfied. Though one duty must never be allowed to intrench upon another, yet those duties which we have found to be the most effectual means of increasing our acquaintance with God, confirming our faith in Christ, and furthering us in our way to heaven, we should, with a peculiar care, engage ourselves to.

Though God has strictly commanded us the great and necessary acts of religious worship, yet, for the trial of our holy ingenuity and zeal, he has left it to us to determine many of the circumstances, that even instituted sacrifices may be in some respects free-will offerings. He has commanded us to pray, and read the Scriptures, but has not told us just how often and how long we must pray and read; here, therefore, it is proper to bind ourselves to that which will best answer the intention of the command in general, best agree with the circumstances we are in, and best advance the interest of our souls: in which we must take heed, on the one hand, that we indulge not spiritual sloth, by contenting ourselves with the least proportions of time that may be, much less by confining ourselves to them; and, on the other hand, that we make not religious exercises a task and burthen to ourselves, by binding ourselves to that at all times, which in an extraordinary fervour of devotion is easy and little enough. In making resolutions of this kind, we ought to be cautious, and not hasty to utter any thing before God, that we may not afterward say before the angel, *It was an error*, Eccl. v. 2, 6. Though such is the decay of Christian zeal in the age we live in, that few need this caution, yet it must be inserted, because it is a snare to a man to devour that which is holy, and after vows to make inquiry.

(3.) We should particularly bind ourselves to those duties, by which we have opportunity of glorifying God, adorning our profession, and doing good in our places. We are not born for ourselves, nor bought for ourselves; we were born for God, and bought for Christ; and both as men, and as Christians, we are members one of another, and ought to sit down and consider how we may trade with the talent we are intrusted with, though it be but one, to the glory of our Creator, the honour of our Redeemer, and the good of our brethren. The liberal and pious devise liberal things, and pious things, and bind themselves to them. Think then, my soul, not only what must I do, but what may I do, for God, who has done such great things for me? How may I be serviceable to the interests of God's kingdom among men? What can I do to promote the strength and beauty of the church, and the welfare of precious souls? And, if we have thought of any thing of this kind that falls within the sphere of our activity, (though but a low and narrow sphere,) it may do well, when we find ourselves in a good frame at the table of the Lord, by a solemn vow, with due caution, to bind ourselves to it, that we may not leave room for a treacherous heart to start back. Thus Jacob, for the perpetuating of the memory of God's favour to him, made it a part of his vow, (Gen. xxviii. 22.) *This stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house.* Thus Hannah vowed; that if God would give her a son, she would give him to the Lord, 1 Sam. i. 11. It is one of the rules prescribed, concerning cost or pains bestowed for pious and charitable uses, (2 Cor. ix. 7.) *Every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give;* so let him do. Now, lest that purpose should fail and come to nothing, it is good, when the matter of it is well digested, to bring it to a head in a solemn promise, that the tempter seeing us stedfastly resolved, may cease soliciting us to alter our purpose.

(4.) We should particularly bind ourselves to the duties of our respective callings and relations. Much Christian obedience lies in these instances; and in them we are specially called to serve God and our generation, and should therefore bind ourselves to do so.

They who are in places of public trust and power, should here bind themselves by a solemn vow to be faithful to the trust reposed in them, and to use their power for the public good. They who rule over men,

must here covenant that they will be just, ruling in the fear of God. Their oaths must here be ratified, and David's promise must be theirs, (Ps. lxxv. 2.) *When I shall receive the congregation, I will judge uprightly.* This ought to be seriously considered by all those who receive this holy sacrament at their admission into the magistracy. When publicans and soldiers submitted to the baptism of John, and thereby bound themselves to live a holy life; they asked and received of John instructions, how to discharge the duty of their respective employments, Luke iii. 12—14. For when we vow to keep God's commandments, though we must have a universal respect to them all, yet we must have a special regard to those precepts which relate to the calling wherein we are called, whatever it is.

The stewards of the mysteries of God, when they administer this ordinance to others, receive it themselves, as an obligation upon them to stir up the gift that is in them, that they may make full proof of their ministry. Their ordination-vows are repeated and confirmed in every sacrament; and they are again sworn to be true to Christ and souls. He who ministers about holy things, must here bind himself to *wait on his ministering; he that teacheth, on teaching; and he that exhorteth, on exhortation,* Rom. xii. 7, 8.

Governors of families must here oblige themselves as David did, to walk before their houses in a perfect way, with a perfect heart; and must affix this seal to Joshua's resolution, that whatever others do, *They and their house will serve the Lord,* Ps. ci. 2. Josh xxiv. 15. Here they must consecrate to God a church in their house, and bind themselves to set up, and always to keep up, both an altar and a throne for God in their habitation, that they may approve themselves the spiritual seed of faithful Abraham, who was famous for family-religion. It is with this intent, I suppose, that the Rubric of the public establishment declares it convenient, "That new-married persons should receive the holy communion at the time of their marriage, or at the first opportunity after their marriage;" that being engaged to each other in a new relation, they may solemnly engage themselves to discharge the duties of that relation in the fear of God.

And inferiors must here oblige themselves to do the duty they owe their superiors; children to be dutiful to their parents, servants to be obedient to their masters; yea, all of us to be subject one to another. They who are under the yoke, (as the apostle speaks, 1 Tim. vi. 1.) may here make the yoke they are under easy to them, by constraining themselves to draw in it, from a principle of duty to God, and gratitude to Christ, which will both sanctify and sweeten the hardest services and submissions.

Whatever our employments are, and our dealings with men, we must here promise and vow, that we will be strictly just and honest in them; that whatever temptations we may be under to the contrary at any time, we will make conscience of rendering to all their due, and of speaking the truth from the heart; that we will walk uprightly, and work righteousness, despise the gain of oppression, and shake our hands from holding of bribes; knowing that they who do so shall *dwell on high, their place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks, bread shall be given them, and their water shall be sure,* Isa. xxxiii. 15, 16. We find it upon record, to the honour of Christ's holy religion, when it was first planted in the world, that Pliny, a heathen magistrate, and a persecutor of Christianity, giving an account to the Emperor Trajan of what he had discovered concerning the Christians, (in an epistle yet extant,) acknowledges, that in their religious assemblies they bound themselves by a sacrament, (it is the very word he uses,) *Non in scelus aliquod, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent; ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent.* That is, they bound themselves *not to do any ill thing, that they would not rob or steal, or commit adultery; that they would never be false to any trust reposed in them, never deny any thing that was put into their hands to keep,* and the like. The same is still the true intent and meaning of this service; it is the bond of a covenant added to the bond of command, that *we do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.*

Come then, my soul, come under these bonds; come willingly and cheerfully under them. He that bears an honest mind, does not startle at assurances. Be not afraid to promise that which thou art already bound to do; for these vows will rather facilitate thy duty, than add to the difficulty of it; the faster thou findest thyself fixed to that which is good, the less there will be of uneasy hesitation and wavering concerning it, and the less danger of being tempted from it.

Only remember, that all these vows must be made with an entire dependence on the strength and grace of Jesus Christ, to enable us to make them good. We have a great deal of reason to distrust ourselves, so weak and treacherous are our hearts. Peter betrayed himself by confiding in himself, when he said, *Though I should die with thee, yet I will not deny thee.* But we have encouragement enough to trust in Christ. In his name, therefore, let us make our vows, in his grace let us be strong; surely in the Lord alone have we righteousness and strength. He is the surety of the covenant for both parties: into his custody, therefore, and under the protection of his grace, let us put our souls, and we shall find he is able to keep what we commit to him.

CHAPTER XII.

DIRECTIONS CONCERNING THE FRAME OF OUR SPIRITS, WHEN WE COME AWAY FROM THIS ORDINANCE.

THEY who have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, at the table of the Lord, whose hearts are enlarged to send forth the workings of pious and devout affections toward God, and to take in the communications of divine light, life, and love, from him, cannot but say, as Peter did upon the holy mount, *Lord, it is good for us to be here;* here *let us make tabernacles.* They sit down under the refreshing shadow of this ordinance with delight, and its fruit is sweet unto their taste: here they could dwell all the days of their life, beholding the beauty of the Lord, and inquiring in his temple. But it is not a continual feast. We must come down from this mountain; these sweet and precious minutes are soon numbered and finished; supper is ended, thanks are returned, the guests are dismissed with a blessing, the hymn is sung, and we go out to the mount of Olives. Even in this Jerusalem, the city of our solemnities, we have not a continuing city. Jacob has an opportunity of wrestling with the angel for a while, but he must let him go, for the day breaks, and he has a family to look after, a journey to prosecute, and the affairs thereof call for his attendance, Gen. xxxii. 26. We must not be always at the Lord's table; the high priest himself must not be always within the veil, he must go out again to the people when his service is performed. Now it ought to be as much our care to return in a right manner from the ordinance, as to approach in a right manner to the ordinance. That caution is here needful, (2 John 8.) *Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought—which we have gained*—so some read it. Have we in this ordinance wrought any thing, or gained any thing that is good? We are concerned to see to it, that we do not undo what we have wrought, and let slip what we have gained. When the solemnity is done, our work is not done; still we must be pressing forward in our duty. This, perhaps, is the mystery of that law in Ezekiel's temple-service, (Ezek. xlvi. 9.) that they should not return from worshipping before the Lord in the solemn feasts through the same gate by which they entered in, but by that over against it. Forgetting those things which are behind, still we must reach forth to those things which are before.

Let us inquire, then, what is to be done at our coming away from the ordinance, for the preserving and improving the impressions of it.

I. We should come from this ordinance admiring the condescension of the divine grace to us. Great are the honours which have here been done us, and the favours which here we have been admitted to: the God who made us has taken us into covenant and communion with himself; the King of kings has entertained us at his table, and there we have been feasted with the dainties of heaven, abundantly satisfied with the goodness of his house; exceeding great and precious promises have here been sealed to us, and earnests given us of the eternal inheritance: now, if we know ourselves, this cannot but be the matter of our wonder, our joyful and yet awful wonder.

1. Considering our meanness by nature, we have reason to wonder that the great God should thus advance us: higher than heaven is above the earth, is God above us. Between heaven and earth there is, though a vast, yet only a finite, distance, but between God and man there is an infinite disproportion. *What is man, (man that is a worm, and the son of man that is a worm,)* that he should be thus visited and regarded, thus dignified and preferred? That favour done to Israel sounds great, (Ps. lxxviii. 25.) *Man did eat angels' food;* but here man is feasted with that which was never angels' food, the flesh and blood of the Son of man, which gives life to the world. Solomon himself stood amazed at God's condescending to take possession of that magnificent temple he had built, (2 Chron. vi. 18.) *But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth?* And, which is more, shall men on the earth dwell in God, and make the *Most High their habitation?* If great men look with respect upon those who are much their inferiors, it is because they expect to receive honour and advantage by them; but *can a man be profitable unto God?* No, he cannot: our goodness extendeth not unto him; he was from eternity happy without us, and would have been so to eternity, if we had never been, or had been miserable; but we are undone, undone for ever, if his goodness extend not to us: he needs not our services, but we need his favours. Men adopt others because they are childless, but God adopts us purely because we are fatherless. It was no excellency in us that recommended us to his love, but poverty and misery made us the proper objects of his pity.

Come then, my soul, and compose thyself as King David did, when, having received a gracious message from heaven, assuring him of God's kind intentions to him and his family, he went in, and with a great fixedness of mind sat before the Lord; and say as he said, *Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* That I should be so kindly invited to the table of the Lord, and so splendidly treated there? That one so mean and worthless as I am, the poorest dunghill-worm that ever called God Father, should be placed among the children, and fed with the children's bread; and yet, as if this were a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God, thou hast spoken also concerning thy servant for a great while to come, even as far as

eternity itself reaches; and thus thou hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, though I am nothing, yea, less than nothing, and vanity. *And is this the manner of men, O Lord God?* Could men expect to be thus favoured? No, but thou givest to men not according to their poverty, but according to thy riches in glory. Do great men use to condescend thus? No, it is usual with them to show their dignity, and to oblige their inferiors to keep their distance: but we have to do with one that is God, and not man, whose thoughts of love are as much above ours, as his thoughts of wisdom are; and therefore, as it follows there, *What can David say more unto thee?* What account can I give of this unaccountable favour? It is *for thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart*, for the performance of thy purposes and promises, that *thou hast done all these great things*, to *make thy servant know them*, 2 Sam. vii. 18, 21. 1 Chron. xvii. 16, &c.

2. Considering our vileness by sin, we have yet more reason to wonder that the holy God should thus favour us. We are not only worms of the earth, below his cognizance, but a generation of vipers, obnoxious to his curse; not only unworthy of his love and favour, but worthy of his wrath and displeasure: how is it then that we are brought so near unto him, who deserved to have been sentenced to an eternal separation from him? He has said, *The foolish shall not stand in his sight*, Ps. v. 5. Foolish we know we are, and yet we are called to sit at his table, being through Christ reconciled to him, and brought into covenant with him. Justice might have set us as criminals at his bar, but, behold, mercy sets us as children at his board; and it is a miracle of mercy, mercy that is the wonder of angels, and will be the eternal transport of glorified saints. See how much we owe to the Redeemer, by whom we have access into this grace.

Let me, therefore, set myself, and stir up myself, to admire it. I have much more reason to say than Mephibosheth had, when David took him to eat bread at his table continually, (2 Sam. ix. 8.) *What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?* I am less than the least of God's mercies, and yet he has not withheld the greatest from me; I have forfeited the comforts of my own table, and yet I am feasted with the comforts of the Lord's table; I deserve to have had the cup of the Lord's indignation put into my hand, and to have drank the dregs of it, but, behold, I have been treated with the cup of salvation. Were ever traitors made favourites? such traitors made such favourites? Who can sufficiently admire the love of the Redeemer, who received gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious also upon their return to their allegiance, that the Lord God might dwell among them? Ps. lxviii. 18. And have I shared in these gifts notwithstanding my rebellions? This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous. Whence is this to me, that, not the mother of my Lord, but my Lord himself, should come to me? that he should thus regard me, thus distinguish me with his favours? *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to me, and not unto the world?*

II. We should come from this ordinance lamenting our own manifold defects and infirmities in our attendance upon God in it. When we look back upon the solemnity, we find, that as we cannot speak well enough of God and his grace, so we cannot speak ill enough of ourselves, and of the folly and treachery of our own hearts. Now, conscience, thou art charged in God's name to do thy office, and to accomplish a diligent search: review the workings of thy soul in this ordinance distinctly and impartially.

1. If upon search thou findest cause to suspect that all has been done in hypocrisy, then set thy soul a trembling, for its condition is sad, and highly dangerous. If I have been here pretending to join myself in a covenant with God, while I continue in league with the world and the flesh; pretending to receive the pardon of my sins, when I never repented of them, nor designed to forsake them; I have but deceived myself, and have reason to fear that I shall perish at last with a lie in my right hand. While this conviction is fresh and sensible, let care be taken to mend the matter, and, blessed be God, it may be mended. Have I reason to fear that my heart is not right in the sight of God, and that, therefore, I have no part or lot in the matter, but am in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity? I must then take the advice which St. Peter gave to Simon Magus, when he perceived that to be his condition, after he had received the sacrament of baptism, (Acts viii. 21—23.) *Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.* Let that be done with a double care after the ordinance, which should have been done before.

2. But if upon search thou findest that here has been, through grace, truth in the inward part; yet, set thy soul a blushing, for it has not been cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. *When we would do good, evil is present with us:* our wine is mixed with water, and our gold with dross; and who is there that doeth good, and sinneth not, even in his doing good? We find, by sad experience, that the sons of God never come together, but Satan comes among them, and stands at their right hand to resist them; and that wherever we go, we carry about with us the remainders of corruption, a body of death, which inclines us to that which is evil, and indisposes us to that which is good. If *the spirit be willing*, yet, alas, *the flesh is weak*, and *we cannot do the things that we would.*

O what reason have I to be ashamed of myself, and blush to lift up my face before God, when I review the frame of my heart during my attendance on this ordinance! How short have I come of doing my duty, according as the work of the day required! My thoughts should have been fixed; and the subjects presented to them to fix upon, were curious enough to engage them, and copious enough to employ them; and yet they went with the fool's eyes unto the ends of the earth, and wandered after a thousand impertinences. A little thing served to give them a diversion from the contemplation of the great things set before me. My affections should have been raised and elevated, but they were low and flat, and little moved: if sometimes they seemed to soar upward, yet they soon sunk down again, and the things which remained were ready to die. My desires were cold and indifferent, my faith weak and inactive; nor were there any workings of soul in me proportionable to the weightiness of the transaction. Through my own dulness, and deadness, and inadvertency, I lost a deal of time out of a little, and slipt much of that which might have been done and got there, if I had been close and diligent.

This thought forbids us to entertain a good conceit of ourselves and our own performances, or to build any confidence upon our own merit. While we are conscious to ourselves of so much infirmity cleaving to our best services, we must acknowledge that boasting is for ever excluded: we have nothing to glory of before God; nor can we challenge a reward as of debt, but must ascribe all to free grace. What good there is in us, is all of God, and he must have the honour of it: but there is also much amiss, which is all of ourselves, and we must take the shame of it, lamenting those sad effects of the remainder of sin in us, which we feel to our loss when we draw nigh to God in holy ordinances.

This thought obliges us, likewise, to rely on Christ alone for acceptance with God in all our religious duties. He is that great and gracious High Priest, *who bears the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow in their holy gifts*, that notwithstanding that iniquity, when it is repented of, the gifts *may be accepted before the Lord*, Exod. xxviii. 38. Of his righteousness, therefore, we must make mention, even of his only; for, the most spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God only through him, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

III. We should come from this ordinance rejoicing in Jesus Christ, and in that great love wherewith he has loved us. From this feast we should go to our tents, as the people went from Solomon's feast of dedication, *joyful and glad in heart for all the goodness that the Lord had done by David his servant, for Israel his people*, 1 Kings viii. 66. They that went forth weeping, must *come back rejoicing*, as they have cause, if they bring their sheaves with them, Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Has God here lifted up the light of his countenance upon us? That should put gladness into our hearts, Ps. iv. 6, 7. Have we here lifted up our souls to God, and joined ourselves to him in an everlasting covenant? We have reason, with the baptized eunuch, to go on our way rejoicing, Acts viii. 39. The day of our espousals should be the day of the gladness of our hearts, Cant. iii. 11. This cup of blessing was designed to be a cup of consolation, and its wine ordained to make glad man's heart, to make glad the heart of the new man. Having, therefore, drank of this cup, let our souls make their boast in the Lord, and sing in his ways, and call him their exceeding joy.

Let this holy joy give check to carnal mirth; for having seen so much reason to rejoice in Christ Jesus, we deceive ourselves, if we rejoice in a thing of nought: we are not forbidden to rejoice, but our joy must be turned into the right channel, and our mirth sanctified, which will suppress and silence the laughter that is mad. The frothiness of a vain mind must be cured by a religious cheerfulness, as well as by a religious seriousness.

Let it give check also to the sorrow of the world, and that inordinate grief for outward crosses, which sinks the spirits, dries the bones, and works death. Why art thou cast down, and why disquieted, for a light affliction, which is but for a moment, when even that is so far from doing thee any real prejudice, that it works for thee a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory? Learn, my soul, to sit down upon the ruins of all thy creature-comforts, by a withered fig-tree, a fruitless vine, and a blasted crop, and even then to sing to the praise and glory of God, as the God of thy salvation. When thou art full, enjoy God in all; when thou art empty, enjoy all in God.

Let this holy joy express itself in praises to God, and encouragements to ourselves.

1. Let it express itself in the thankful acknowledgment of the favours we have received from God. As spiritual joy must be the heart and soul of divine praise, so divine praise must be the breath and speech of spiritual joy. Whatever makes us joyful must make us thankful. Do we come from this ordinance easy, pleasant, and greatly refreshed with the goodness of God's house? Let the high praises of God then be in our mouths, and in our hearts. This is a proper time for us to be engaged with great fixedness, and enlarged with great fluency, in his service. If we must give thanks for the mercies we receive at our own table, which relate only to a perishing body, and a dying life, much more ought we to give thanks for the mercies we receive at God's table, which relate to an immortal soul, and eternal life. *When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God, for the good land which he hath given thee*, Deut. viii. 10. Bless him for a

Canaan on earth, a land of light, a valley of vision, in which God is known, and his name great; and for the comfortable lot thou hast in that land, a name among God's people, and a nail in his holy place, a portion in Immanuel's land. Bless him for a Canaan in heaven, which he has given thee the promise and prospect of, that land flowing with milk and honey: rejoice in hope of that, and sing in hope.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let *all that is within thee,* all thy thoughts, and all thy powers, be employed in blessing his holy name; and all little enough. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, good to all, good to Israel, good to me. *I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, &c.* Isa. lxiii. 7. Give glory to the exalted Redeemer, and mention to his praise the great things he has done for us. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to take the book, and open the seals; worthy to wear the crown, and sway the sceptre, for ever worthy to receive blessing, and honour, and glory, and power; worthy to be adored, by the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; worthy to be attended with the constant praises of the universal church; worthy of the innermost and uppermost place of my heart; of the best affections I can consecrate to his praise, and the best services I can do to his name: for he was slain, and has redeemed us to God, by his blood, and has made us to our God kings and priests. He has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; a note of praise, which the angels themselves cannot sing, though they have many a song that we are strangers to. He loved me, and gave himself for me, to satisfy for my sin, and to obtain eternal redemption for me. Blessed, and for ever blessed, be the great and holy name of the Lord Jesus; that name which is as ointment poured forth; that name which is above every name; which is worthy of, and yet exalted far above, all blessing and praise.

And whenever we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, let it always be done to the glory of God the Father, Phil. ii. 11. His kindness and love to man, was the original spring and first wheel in the work of our redemption: it was he that gave his only-begotten Son, delivered him up for us all, and who was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. Glory therefore, eternal glory be unto God in the highest, for in Christ there is on earth peace, and good-will toward men. God has in Christ glorified himself; we must therefore in Christ glorify him, and make all our joys and praises to centre in him. In the day of our rejoicing this must be the burthen of all our songs, *Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.* Thanks be unto God for this unspeakable gift, the foundation of all other gifts.

2. Let this holy joy speak encouragement to ourselves, cheerfully to proceed in our Christian course. The comfort we have had in our covenant-relation to God, and interest in Christ, should put a sweetness into all our enjoyments, and sanctify them to us: we must see the love of God in them, and taste that he is gracious, and this must make them comforts indeed to us. See the curse removed from them, see a blessing going along with them, and then *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works,* Eccl. ix. 7. Have we good ground to hope, that through grace our works are accepted of God? If we sincerely aim at God's acceptance, make that our end, and labour for it with an eye to Christ as Mediator, we may hope that our persons and performances are accepted. If we accept God's works, accept the disposals of his providence, and the offers of his grace, with a humble acquiescence in both, that will be a good evidence that he accepts our works. And if so, we have reason to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Eat thy bread with joy, for it is thy Father's gift, the bread wherewith the Lord thy God feeds thee in this wilderness, through which he is leading thee to the land of promise. Drink thy wine with a merry heart, remembering Christ's love more than wine. What thou hast, though mean and scanty, thou hast it with the blessing of God, which will make the little thou hast *better than the riches of many wicked,* Ps. xxxvii. 16.

Rejoice in the Lord now, O my soul, rejoice in him always: having kept this feast with gladness, (as Hezekiah and his people did, 2 Chron. xxx. 23.) carry with thee some of the comforts of God's table to thy own, and there eat thy meat with gladness, as those primitive Christians did, Acts ii. 46. Live a life of holy cheerfulness, and the joy of the Lord will be thy strength.

IV. We should come from this ordinance much quickened to every good work. Seeing ourselves compassed about here with so great a cloud of witnesses, bound by so many engagements, invited by so many encouragements, and obliged to God and godliness by so many ties of duty, interest, and gratitude, let us *lay aside every weight, and the sin that most easily besets us,* whatever it is, especially the evil heart of unbelief which is our great hinderance, and *let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus,* Heb. xii. 1, 2. Let the covenants we have here renewed, and the comforts we have here received, make us more ready to every good duty, and more lively in it; more active and zealous for the glory of God, the service of our generation, and the welfare and prosperity of our own souls. From what we have seen and done here, we may fetch powerful considerations to shame us out of our slothfulness and backwardness to that which is good, and to stir us up to the utmost diligence in our Master's work.

When Jacob had received a gracious visit from

God, and had made a solemn vow to him, (Gen. xxviii. 12, 20.) it follows, (*ch.* xxix. 1.) *Then Jacob went on his way.* The original phrase is observable, *Then Jacob lift up his feet.* After that comfortable night he had at Bethel, knowing himself to be in the way of his duty, he proceeded with a great deal of cheerfulness: that strengthened the weak hands, and confirmed the feeble knees. Thus should our communion with God in the Lord's supper enlarge our hearts to run the way of God's commandments: after such an ordinance, we should lift up our feet in the way of God; that is, (as it is said of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xvii. 6.) we should *lift up our hearts* in those ways; abiding, and *abounding, in the works of the Lord.*

Rouse up thyself now, my soul, from thy spiritual slumber; up, and be doing, for the Lord is with thee. Awake, awake, put on thy strength, put forth thy strength, that thou mayst push on thy holy war, thy holy work, with vigour; shake thyself from the dust, to which thou hast too much cleaved; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, with which thou hast been too much clogged, Isa. lii. 1, 2. Meditate more fixedly, pray more earnestly, resist sin more resolutely, keep sabbaths more cheerfully, do good more readily. Thou hast *heard the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry-trees,* plain indications of the presence of God with thee, therefore now *thou shalt bestir thyself,* 2 Sam. v. 24. Let the comforts of this ordinance employ thy wings, that thou mayst soar upward, upward toward God; let them oil thy wheels, that thou mayst press forward, forward toward heaven: let God's gifts to thee stir up his gifts in thee.

V. We should come from this ordinance with a watchful fear of Satan's wiles, and a firm resolution to stand our ground against them. Whatever comfort and enlargement we have had in this ordinance, still we must remember that we are but girding on the harness, and, therefore, we have no reason to boast, or be secure, as though we had put it off. When we return to the world again, we must remember that we go among snares, and must provide accordingly: it is our wisdom so to do.

1. Let us therefore fear. He who travels with a rich treasure about him, is in most danger of being set upon, and is most afraid of being robbed. The ship that is richly laden is the pirate's prize. If we come away from the Lord's table replenished with the goodness of God's house, and the riches of the covenant, we must expect the assaults of our spiritual enemies, and not be secure. A strong guard was constantly kept upon the temple, and there needs one upon the living temples. The mystical song represents the bed which is Solomon's, thus surrounded by valiant men, of the valiant of Israel, because of fear in the night, Cant. iii. 7, 8. The Holy Ghost this signifying, that believers in this world are in a military state, and the followers of Christ must be his soldiers. They that work the good work of faith, must fight the good fight of faith.

We must always stand upon our guard, for the good man of the house knows not at what hour the thief will come; but this we know, that immediately after our Saviour was baptized, and owned by a voice from heaven, he was led into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil, (Matt. iv. 1.) and that immediately after he had administered the Lord's supper to his disciples, he told them plainly, *Satan hath desired to have you,* (*εξητησατο υμας—he hath challenged you,*) *that he may sift you as wheat,* (Luke xxii. 31.) and what he said to them then, he says to all, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation,* Matt. xxvi. 41. We must then double our guard against temptations to rash anger, and study to be more than ordinarily meek and quiet, lest by the tumults and transports of passion, the Holy Spirit be grieved and provoked to withdraw. If we have in this ordinance received Christ Jesus the Lord, let a strict charge be given, like that of the spouse, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that nothing be said, nothing done, to stir up or awake our Love until he please, Cant. ii. 7. Peace being spoken, peace made, let us be afraid of every thing that may give a disturbance to it. We should also watch against the inroads of worldly cares and fears, lest they make a descent upon us after a sacrament, and spoil us of the comforts we have there received.

But with a particular care we must watch against the workings of spiritual pride after a sacrament. When our Lord Jesus first instituted this ordinance, and made his disciples partakers of it, they were so elevated with the honour of it, that not content to be all thus great, a contest immediately arose among them, which of them should be greatest, Luke xxii. 24. And when St. Paul had been in the third heavens, he was in danger of being *exalted above measure with the abundance of the revelations,* 2 Cor. xii. 7. We therefore have cause to fear, lest this dead fly spoil all our precious ointment; and to keep a very strict and jealous eye upon our own hearts, that they be not *lifted up with pride, lest we fall into the condemnation of the devil,* 1 Tim. iii. 6. Let us dread the first risings of self-conceit, and suppress them; for *what have we that we have not received? And if we have received it, why then do we boast?* 1 Cor. iv. 7.

2. Let us therefore fix; and let our hearts be established with the grace here received. What we have done in this ordinance, we must go away firmly resolved to abide by all our days. I am now fixed, immovably fixed, for Christ and holiness, against sin and Satan. The matter is settled, never to be called in question again: *I will serve the Lord.* The bargain is struck; the knot is tied; the debate is come up to a final resolve; and here I fix, as one

stedfastly resolved with purpose of heart to cleave to the Lord. No room is left to parley with a temptation: I am a Christian, a confirmed Christian, and, by the grace of God, a Christian I will live and die; and, therefore, *Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence to me.* My resolutions, in which before I wavered and was unsteady, are now come to a head, and are as a nail in a sure place. I am now at a point; *I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back,* (Judg. xi. 35.) and therefore, by the grace of God, I am determined to go forward, and not so much as look back, or wish for a discharge from those engagements. *I have chosen the way of truth,* and therefore, in thy strength, Lord, *I will stick to thy testimonies,* Ps. cxix. 30, 31. Now my foot stands in an even place, well shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. I am now like a strong man refreshed with wine, resolved to resist the devil, that he may flee from me, and never to yield to him.

VI. We should come from this ordinance praying, lifting up our hearts to God in ejaculatory prayers, and retiring as soon as may be for solemn prayer. Not only before, and in, the duty, but after, if we have occasion to offer up our desires to God, and fetch in strength and grace from him.

Two things we should be humbly earnest with God in prayer for, after this solemnity; and we are furnished from the mouth of holy David with very emphatical and expressive petitions for them both: we may, therefore, take with us those words, in addressing God.

1. We must pray, that God will fulfil to us those promises, which he was graciously pleased to seal to us in this ordinance. David's prayer for this is, (1 Chron. xvii. 23.) *Now, Lord, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever; and do as thou hast said.* God's promises in the word are designed to be our pleas in prayer; and we receive the grace of God in them in vain, if we do not make that use of them, and sue out the benefits conveyed and secured by them. These are talents to be traded with, and improved as the guide of our desires, and the ground of our faith in prayer; and we must not hide them in a napkin. Having here taken hold of the covenant, thus we must take hold on God for covenant mercies: *Lord, remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope,* Ps. cxix. 49. Thou hast not only given me the word to hope in, but the heart to hope in it. It is a hope of thy own raising; and thou wilt not destroy, by a disappointment, the work of thy own hands.

Come, therefore, O my soul! come, *order thy cause before him, and fill thy mouth with arguments.* Lord, is not this the word which thou hast spoken? "Sin shall not have dominion over you: The God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet: There shall no temptation take you, but such as is common to men; and the faithful God will never suffer you to be tempted above what you are able." Lord, be it unto thy servant according to these words! Is not this the word which thou hast spoken; "That all things shall work for good to them that love thee; that thou wilt be to them a God all-sufficient, their shield, and their exceeding great reward; that thou wilt give them grace and glory, and withhold no good thing from them; that thou wilt never fail them nor forsake them?" Now, Lord, let those words which thou hast spoken concerning thy servant (and many other the like) be established for ever, and do as thou hast said, for they are the words upon which thou hast caused me to hope.

2. We must pray, that he will enable us to fulfil those promises which we have made to him in this ordinance. David's prayer for this is, (1 Chron. xxix. 18.) *O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the hearts of thy people, and prepare* (or confirm) *their hearts unto thee.* Have there been some good affections, good desires, and good resolutions in the imagination of the thoughts of our hearts at this ordinance, some good impressions made upon us, and some good expressions drawn from us by it? We cannot but be sensible how apt we are to lose the good we have wrought; and therefore it is our wisdom, by prayer, to commit the keeping of it to God, and earnestly to beg of him effectual grace, thoroughly to furnish us for every good word and work, and thoroughly to fortify us against every evil word and work. We made our promises in the strength of the grace of God; that strength we must therefore pray for, that we may be able to make good our promises. Lord, maintain thy own interest in my soul; let thy name be ever hallowed there; *thy kingdom come,* and *thy will be done in* my heart, *as it is* done *in heaven.*

When we come away from this ordinance, we return to a cooling, tempting, distracting world; as when Moses came down from the mount, where he had been with God, he found the camp of Israel dancing about the golden calf, to his great disturbance, Exod. xxxii. 19. In the midst of such sorrows and such snares as we are compassed about with here; we shall find it no easy matter to preserve the peace and grace which we hope we have obtained at the Lord's table: we must, therefore, put ourselves under the divine protection. Methinks it was with an affecting air of tenderness, that Christ said concerning his disciples, when he was leaving them, (John xvii. 11.) *Now I am no more in the world;* the days of my temptation are at an end; but these are in the world, they have their trial yet before them: what then shall I do for them? *Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me.* That prayer of his was both the great example and

the great encouragement of our prayers. Now, at the close of a sacrament, it is seasonable thus to address ourselves to God: "I have not yet put off this body; I am not yet got clear of this world: yet I am a traveller exposed to thieves; yet, I am a soldier, exposed to enemies: Holy Father, keep through thy own name the graces and comforts thou hast given me; for they are thine. My own hands are not sufficient for me; O let thy grace be so, to preserve me to thy heavenly kingdom."

Immediately after the first administration of the Lord's supper, our Saviour, when he had told Peter of Satan's design upon him, added this comfortable word, (Luke xxii. 32.) *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not;* and that is it that we must pray for, that this faith, which we think is so strong in the day of its advantage, may not prove weak in the day of its trial: for, as they who would have the benefit of the Spirit's operation must strive for themselves, so, they who would have the benefit of the Son's intercession must pray for themselves.

VII. We should come from this ordinance with a charitable disposition. Anciently the Christians had their Αγαπαι, their *love-feasts*, or *feasts of charity*, annexed to the Eucharist; but what needed that, while the Eucharist is itself a love-feast, and a feast of charity? And surely that heart must be strangely hardened and soured, that can go from under the softening sweetening powers of this ordinance in an uncharitable frame.

The fervent charity, which now we should have among ourselves, must be a loving, giving, and forgiving charity. Thus it must have its perfect work.

1. We must come from this ordinance with a disposition to love our fellow-Christians. Here we see how dear they were to Christ, for he purchased them with his own blood; and thence we may infer, how dear they ought to be to us, and how near they should lie to our hearts. Shall I look strangely upon them who have acquaintance with Christ; or be indifferent toward them whom he was so much concerned for? No: we that are many, being one bread and one body, and having been all made to drink into one spirit, my heart shall be more closely knit than ever to all the members of that one body, who are quickened and actuated by that one spirit. I have here beheld the beauty of the Lord, and, therefore, must love his image wherever I see it on his sanctified ones. I have here joined myself to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, and thereby have joined myself in relation, and consequently in affection, to all those who are in the bond of the same covenant. I have here bound myself to keep Christ's commandments; and this is his commandment, that we *love one another;* and that *brotherly love continue.*

Those from whom we differ in the less weighty matters of the law, though we agree in the great things of God, we should now think of with particular thoughts of love and kindness, because from them our minds are most in temptation to be alienated: and those to whom we have given the right hand of fellowship, in this and in other ordinances, we should likewise be mindful of with particular endearments; because of the particular relation we stand in to them, as our more intimate companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. Yea, after such an ordinance as this, our catholic charity must be more warm and affectionate, more active, strong, and stedfast, and more victorious over the difficulties and oppositions it meets with; and, as the apostle speaks, (1 Thess. iii. 12.) we should *increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men,* and in all the fruits and instances of love.

2. We must come from this ordinance, with a disposition to give to the poor and necessitous, according as our ability and opportunity is. It is the laudable custom of the churches of Christ, to close the administration of this ordinance with a collection for the poor; to which we ought to contribute our share, not grudgingly, or of necessity, but with a single eye, and a willing mind, that our alms may be sanctified and accepted of God. And not only to this, but to all other acts of charity, we must be more forward and free after a sacrament. Though our Saviour lived upon alms himself, yet out of the little he had he gave alms to the poor, particularly at the feast of the passover, (John xiii. 29.) to set us an example. Days of rejoicing and thanksgiving (and such our sacrament days are) used to be thus solemnized: for when we eat the fat and drink the sweet ourselves, we must send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared, (Neh. viii. 10.) that when our souls are blessing God, the loins of the poor may bless us. If our hearts have here been opened to Christ, we must evidence that they are so, by our being open-handed to poor Christians: for, since our goodness cannot extend to him, it is his will that it should extend to them, Ps. xiv. 2, 3. If we have here in sincerity given ourselves to God, we have with ourselves devoted all we have to his service and honour, to be employed and laid out for him; and thus we must testify that we have heartily consented to that branch of the surrender. *As we have opportunity,* we must *do good to all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith;* remembering that we are but *stewards of the manifold grace of God.* If our prayers have here come up for a memorial before God, as Cornelius, our alms, like his, must accompany them, Acts x. 4. We have here seen how much we owe to God's pity and bounty toward us; having therefore obtained mercy, we ought to show mercy, knowing the *grace of the Lord Jesus, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich,* 2 Cor. viii. 9. Read Isa. lviii. 7—11.

3. We must come from this ordinance with a disposition to forgive those who have been provoking and injurious to us. Our approach to the sacrament made it necessary for us to forgive; but our attendance on it should make it even natural to us to forgive, and our experience there of God's mercy and grace to us, should conquer all the difficulty and reluctance which we are conscious to ourselves of therein, and make it as easy to forgive our enemies, as it is to forgive ourselves, when at any time we happen to have had a quarrel with ourselves.

That which makes it hard to forgive, and puts an edge upon our resentments, is, the magnifying of the affronts we have received, and the losses we have sustained. Now, in this ordinance, we have had honours put upon us sufficient to balance all those affronts, and benefits bestowed on us sufficient to countervail all those losses; so that we may well afford to forgive and forget both. With ourselves, we have offered up to God our names, estates, and all our interests; in compliance therefore with the will of God, (that God who bid Shimei curse David, and who took away from Job that which the Sabeans and Chaldeans robbed him of,) we must not only bear with patience the damage we sustain in those concerns, but must be charitably affected toward those who have been the instruments of that damage, knowing that men are God's hand, Ps. xvii. 14. and to his hand we must always submit.

But the great argument for the forgiving of injuries, when we come from the table of the Lord, is taken from the pardon God has in Christ there sealed to us. The jubilee trumpet which proclaimed releases, sounded at the close of the day of atonement. Is God reconciled to us? Let us then be more firmly than ever reconciled to our brethren. Let the death of Christ, which we have here commemorated, not only slay all enmities, but take down all partition-walls; not only forbid revenge, but remove strangeness; and let all our feuds and quarrels be buried in his grave. Has our Master forgiven us that great debt, (and a very great debt it was,) and ought not we then to have compassion on our fellow-servants? Matt. xviii. 32, 33. Let us, therefore, who have in this ordinance put on the Lord Jesus Christ; put on, as becomes the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies and kindness, inclining us to forgive; humbleness of mind, and meekness, enabling us to conquer that pride and passion which object against our forgiving; that if any man have a quarrel against any, it may be passed by, as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us, Col. iii. 12, 13.

VIII. We should come from this ordinance longing for heaven. Every good Christian lives in the belief of the life everlasting, which God (that cannot lie) has promised; *looking for that blessed hope.* And doubtless, much of the power of godliness consists in the joyful expectation of the glory to be revealed. But though we should look upon ourselves as heathens, if we did not believe it, and as desperate, if we had not some hopes of it; yet we have all reason to lament it, as not only our infelicity, but our iniquity, that our desires toward it are so weak and feeble. We are too apt to take up our rest here, and wish we might live always on this earth; and we need something, to make us hunger and thirst after that perfect righteousness, that crown of righteousness, with which only we shall be filled. For this good end, the Lord's supper is very improvable, to hasten us toward the land of promise, and carry our souls in earnest breathings after the felicities of our future state.

1. The complaints we find cause to exhibit at this ordinance, should make us long for heaven; for whatever is defective and uneasy here, we shall be for ever freed from when we come to heaven. When here we set ourselves to contemplate the beauty of God, and the love of Christ, we find ourselves in a cloud, we see but through a glass darkly; let us therefore long to be there, where the veil shall be rent, the glasses we now make use of laid aside, and we shall not only see face to face, but (which will yield us more satisfaction) we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. When here we would soar upward upon the wings of love, we find ourselves clogged and pinioned; this immortal spirit is caged in a house of clay, and does but flutter at the best: let us, therefore, long to be there, where we shall be perfectly delivered from all the incumbrances of a body of flesh, and all the entanglements of a world of sense; and love, in its highest elevations, and utmost enlargements, shall survive both faith and hope. When here we would fix for God, and join ourselves closely to him, we find ourselves apt to wander, apt to waver; and should therefore long to be there, where our love to God will be no longer love in motion, constant motion, as it is here, but love at rest, an everlasting rest. Here we complain, that through the infirmity of the flesh we are soon weary of well-doing; and if the spirit be willing, yet the flesh is weak, and cannot keep pace with it: but there we shall run, and not be weary, we shall walk, and not faint; and shall not rest, because we shall not need to rest day or night, from praising God. O when shall I come to that world, where there is neither sin, nor sorrow, nor snare; and *to the spirits of just men made perfect* there, who *are as the angels of God in heaven.*

2. The comforts which, through grace, we experience in this ordinance, should make us long for heaven. The foretastes of those divine joys should whet our appetites after the full fruition of them. The bunch of grapes that meets us in the wilderness, should make us long to be in Canaan, that

land of overflowing plenty, where we shall *wash our garments in this wine, and our clothes in the blood of this grape*, Gen. xlix. 11. Rev. vii. 14. If communion with God in grace here, affords us such a satisfaction as far surpasses all the delights of the sons of men, what will the fulness of joy be in God's presence, and those pleasures for evermore? If the shadows of good things to come be so refreshing, what will the substance be, and the good things themselves? If God's tabernacles be so amiable, what will his temple be? If a day in his courts, an hour at his table, be so pleasant, what then will an eternity within the veil be? If I find myself so enriched with the earnests of the purchased possessions, what then will the possession itself be? If the joy of my Lord, as I am here capable of receiving it, and as it is mixed with so much allay in this imperfect state, be so comfortable, what will it be when I shall enter into that joy, and bathe myself eternally in the spring-head of those rivers of pleasure?

Pant then, my soul, pant after those fountains of living water, out of which all these sweet streams arise; that boundless, bottomless ocean of delights, into which they all run! Rest not content with any of the contentments here below; no, not with those in holy ordinances, which are, of all others, the best we meet with in this wilderness; but long for the enjoyments above, in the vision of God. It is good to be here; but it is better to be there; far better to depart, and to be with Christ. While thou art groaning under the burthens of this present state, groan after the glorious liberties of the children of God, in the future state. Thirst for God, for the living God: *O when shall I come and appear before God!* That the day may break, and the shadows flee away, *Make haste, my Beloved; and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.*

CHAPTER XIII.

AN EXHORTATION TO ORDER THE CONVERSATION ARIGHT AFTER THIS ORDINANCE.

We will now suppose the new moon to be gone, the sabbath to be past, and the solemnities of the sacrament-day to be over; and is our work now done? No; now the most needful and difficult part of our work begins, which is, to maintain such a constant watch over ourselves, that we may, in the whole course of our conversation, exemplify the blessed fruits and effects of our communion with God in this ordinance. When we come down from this mount, we must, (as Moses did,) bring the tables of the testimony with us in our hands, that we may in all things have respect to God's commandments, and frame our lives according to them. Then we truly get good by this ordinance, when we are made better by it, and use it daily as a bridle of restraint, to keep us in from all manner of sin, and a spur of constraint, to put us on to all manner of duty.

I shall endeavour, I. to give some general rules for the right ordering of the conversation, after we have been at the Lord's supper: and then, II. I shall mention some particulars, wherein we must study to conform ourselves to the intention of that ordinance, and abide under the influence of it.

I. The Lord's supper was instituted, not only for the solemnizing of the memorial of Christ's death at certain times, but for the preserving the remembrance of it in our mind at all times, as a powerful argument against every thing that is evil, and a prevailing inducement to every thing that is good. In this sense, we must bear about with us continually the dying of the Lord Jesus, so as that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal bodies, 2 Cor. iv. 10. It was instituted not only for the sealing of the covenant, that it may be ratified; but for the imprinting of it upon our minds, that we may be ever mindful of the covenant, and live under the commanding power of it.

We must see to it, that there be an agreement between our performances at the Lord's table and at other times; that we be uniform in our religion, and not guilty of a self-contradiction. What will it profit us, if we pull down with one hand, what we build up with the other; and undo in our lives, what we have done in our devotions? That we may not do so, let us be guided by these rules.

1. Our conversation must be such, as that we may adorn the profession which in the Lord's supper we have made. We have, in that ordinance, solemnly owned ourselves the disciples and followers of the Lord Jesus; we have done ourselves the honour to subscribe ourselves his humble servants, and he has done us the honour to admit us into his family; and now we are concerned to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, that our relation to Christ being so much an honour to us, we may never be a dishonour to it. We are said to be taken into covenant with God for this very end, that we may be unto him *for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory*, (Jer. xiii. 11.) that we may be witnesses for him, and for the honour of his name among men.

We must, therefore, be very cautious that we never say or do any thing to the reproach of the gospel and Christ's holy religion, or which may give any occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. If those who profess to be devout toward God, be unjust and dishonest toward men, this casts reproach upon devotion, as if that would consist with and countenance immorality. If those who call them-

selves Christians walk as other Gentiles walk, and do Satan's drudgery in Christ's livery, Christianity suffers by it, and religion is *wounded in the house of her friends:* injuries are done it, which cannot be repaired; and those will have a great deal to answer for another day, for whose sakes the name of God, and his doctrine, are thus evil spoken of. By our coming to the Lord's supper, we distinguish ourselves from those, whose profession of Christianity, by their being baptized in infancy, seems to be more their chance than their choice; and by a voluntary act of our own, we surname ourselves by the name of Israel. Now, if after we have so distinguished ourselves, and so raised the expectations of our neighbours from us, we do that which is unbecoming the character we wear; if we be vain, carnal, and intemperate; if we be false and unfair, cruel and unmerciful; *what will the Egyptians say?* They will say, commend us to the children of this world, if these be the children of God; for what do they more than others? Men's prejudices against religion are hereby confirmed, advantage is given to Satan's devices, and the generation of the righteous is condemned for the sake of those who are spots in their feasts of charity. Let us therefore always be jealous for the reputation of our profession, and afraid of doing what may in the least be a blemish to it: and the greater profession we make, the more tender let us be of it, because we have the more eyes upon us, that watch for our halting. When we do good, we must remember the apostle's caution, *Let not your good be evil spoken of*, Rom. xiv. 16.

We must also be very studious to do that which will redound to the credit of our profession. It is not enough that we be not a scandal to religion; but we must strive to be an ornament to it, by excelling in virtue, and being forward to every good work. Our light must shine, as the face of Moses did when he came down from the mount; that is, our good works must be such, that they who see them may give religion their good word, and thereby glorify our Father who is in heaven, Matt. v. 16. Our conversation must be as becomes the gospel of Jesus Christ, that they who will not be won by the word, may be won by it to say, *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. If there be any virtue, if there be any praise*, more amiable and lovely than other, let us *think on these things*, Phil. iv. 8. Are we children? Let us walk as obedient children, well taught, and well managed. Are we soldiers? Let us approve ourselves good soldiers, well trained, and well disciplined; so we shall do honour to him who has called us. If God's Israel carefully keep and do his statutes, it will be said of them to their honour among the nations, *Surely they are a wise and understanding people*, Deut. iv. 6. And this will redound to the honour of Christ; for thus Wisdom is justified of her children.

2. Our conversation must be such, that we may fulfil the engagements which at the Lord's supper we have laid ourselves under. Having at God's altar sworn that we will keep his righteous judgments, we must conscientiously perform it in all the evidences of a holy, righteous, and sober conversation. The vows we have made (express or implicit) must be carefully made good, by a constant watchfulness against all sin, and a constant diligence in all duty; because, *Better it is not to vow, than to vow and not to pay*, Eccles. v. 4, 5.

When we are at any time tempted to sin, or in danger of being surprised into any ill thing, let this be our reply to the tempter, and with this let us quench his fiery darts; *Thy vows are upon me, O God.* Did I not say, *I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue?* I did say so; and therefore *I will keep my mouth as with a bridle*, Ps. xxxix. 1. Did I not make a covenant with my eyes? I did: that therefore shall be to me a covering of the eyes, that they may never be either the inlets or the outlets of sin. Did I not say, *I will not transgress?* Jer. ii. 20. I did say so; and therefore, by the grace of God, I will *abstain from all appearance of evil*, and *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.* An honest man is as good as his word.

When we begin to grow slothful and careless in our duty, backward and slighting in it, let this stir up the gift that is in us, and quicken us to every good word and work. *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord;* thou hast said it with the blood of Christ in thy hand. *He is thy Lord* then, *and worship thou him*, Ps. xvi. 2. and xlv. 11. When a lion in the way, a lion in the streets, deters us from any duty, and we cannot plough by reason of cold, nor sow or reap for fear of winds and clouds, let this help our difficulty, with a steady resolution; it is what I have promised, and I must perform it; I will not, I dare not, be false to God, and my covenants with him; *I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and* (without incurring the guilt of perjury) *I cannot go back.*

3. Our conversation must be such, as that we may make some grateful returns for the favours which we have here received. The law of gratitude is one of the laws of nature; for the ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; and some have thought, that all our gospel-duties may very fitly be comprised in that of gratitude to our Redeemer. In the Lord's supper we see what Christ has done for us, and we receive what he bestows, and in consideration of both, we must set ourselves not only to love and praise him, but to walk before him in the land of the living; that though we cannot return him any equivalent for his kindness, yet by complying with his will, and consulting his honour, we may show that we bear a grateful mind, and

would render again according to the benefit done unto us.

By wilful sin after a sacrament, we load ourselves with the guilt not only of treachery, but of base ingratitude. It was a great aggravation of Solomon's apostasy, *that he turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice*, 1 Kings xi. 9. More than twice, yea, many a time, God hath appeared not only for us in his providences, but to us in his ordinances, manifesting himself in a distinguishing way to us, and not unto the world. Now if we carry ourselves strangely to him who has been such a friend to us, if we affront him, who has so favoured us, and rebel against him, who has not only spared but ransomed us, we deserve to be stigmatized with a mark of everlasting infamy, as the most ungrateful wretches that ever God's earth bore, or his sun shone upon. Foolish people and unwise we are, thus to requite the Lord. Let us, therefore, thus reason with ourselves, when at any time we are tempted to sin: After he has given us such a deliverance as this, shall we again break his commandments? Shall we spit in the face, and spurn at the bowels, of such loving kindness? After we have eaten bread with Christ, shall we go and lift up the heel against him? No, God forbid, we will not continue in sin after grace has thus abounded, Rom. vi. 1, 2.

By an exact and exemplary conversation we show ourselves sensible of the mighty obligations we lie under to love him, and live to him, who loved us, and died for us: we should, therefore, from a principle of gratitude, always abound in the work of the Lord, and lay out ourselves with zeal and cheerfulness in his service, thinking nothing too much to do, too hard to suffer, or too dear to part with, for him who has done, and suffered, and parted with so much for us. Let the love of Christ constrain us.

4. Our conversation must be such, that we may preserve the comforts which in the Lord's supper we have tasted. Have we been satisfied with the goodness of God's house? Let us not receive the grace of God therein in vain, by the forfeiture or neglect of those satisfactions. *Fear the Lord and his goodness*, (Hos. iii. 5.) that is, fear lest you sin against that goodness, and so sin it away. Have we received Christ Jesus the Lord? Let us hold fast what we have received, that no man take our crown, and the comfort of it. Has God here spoken peace to us? Let us then never return to folly, lest we break in upon the peace that God has spoken: it is a jewel too precious to be pawned, as it is by the covetous for the wealth of this world, and by the voluptuous for the pleasures of the flesh. Have we tasted that the Lord is gracious? Let us not put our mouths out of taste to those spiritual and divine pleasures, by any carnal delights or gratifications. Has God made us to hear joy and gladness? Let us not set ourselves out of the hearing of that joyful sound, by listening to the voice of Satan's charms, charm he never so wisely.

If we walk loosely and carelessly after a sacrament, we provoke God to hide his face from us, to take from us the cup of consolation, and to put into our hands, instead of it, the cup of trembling; we cloud our evidences, shake our hopes, wither our comforts, and undo what we have been doing at this ordinance. That caution, therefore, which the apostle gives to the elect lady and her children, should ever be sounding in our ears, (2 John 8.) *Look to yourselves, that we lose not the things which we have wrought*; or as the margin reads it, *the things which we have gained*. Let us not, by our own folly and neglect, let slip the benefit of what we have done and of what we have got at the table of the Lord.

Especially, we should take heed lest Satan get an advantage against us, and improve that to our prejudice, which we do not take due care to improve, as we ought, to our benefit. *After the sop, Satan entered into Judas*, John xiii. 27. If the comforts which we think we have received in this ordinance, do not make us more watchful, it is well if they do not make us more secure. If they be not a savour of life unto life, by deterring us from sin, there is danger, lest they prove a savour of death unto death, by hardening us in sin. It was one of the most impudent words which that adulterous woman spoke (and she spoke a great many) when she allured the young man into her snares, (Prov. vii. 14, 15.) *I have peace-offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows, therefore came I forth to meet thee.* I have been confessed, and been absolved, and therefore can the better afford to begin upon a new score: I know the worst of it, it is but being confessed and absolved again. But shall we continue in sin, because grace has abounded, and that grace may abound? God forbid: far be it, far be it from us ever to entertain such a thought. Shall we suck poison out of the balm of Gilead, and split our souls upon the rock of salvation? *Is Christ the minister of sin?* Shall the artifices of our spiritual enemies turn this table into a snare, and that on it which should be for our welfare into a trap? Those are but pretended comforts in Christ, that are thus made real supports in sin. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* Hell will be hell indeed to those who thus trample under foot the blood of the covenant, as an unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of grace. Their case is desperate indeed, who are imboldened in sin by their approaches to God.

5. Our conversation must be such, that we may evidence the communion we have had with God in Christ, at the Lord's table. It is not enough to say, that we have fellowship with him; the vilest hypocrites pretend to that honour, but by walking in

darkness they disprove their pretensions, and give themselves the lie, 1 John i. 6. We must therefore show that we have fellowship with him, by walking in the light, *v.* 7. and as he also walked, 1 John ii. 6. By keeping up communion with God in providences, having our eyes ever toward him, and acknowledging him in all our ways, receiving all our comforts as the gifts of his bounty, and bearing all our afflictions as his fatherly chastisements, we evidence that we have had communion with him in ordinances. They who converse much with scholars, evidence it by the tongue of the learned; as one may likewise discover by the politeness and refinedness of a man's air and mien, that his conversation has lain much with persons of quality. Thus they who have communion with the holy God, should make it to appear in all holy conversation, not suffering any corrupt communication to proceed out of their mouth, but abounding in that which is good, and to the use of edifying, that by our speech and behaviour it may appear what country we belong to.

When Peter and John acquitted themselves before the council with such a degree of conduct and assurance, as one could not have expected from unlearned and ignorant men, not acquainted with courts, or camps, or academies, it is said, that they who marvelled at it, *took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus*, Acts iv. 13. And from those who had been with Jesus, who had followed him, sat at his feet, and eaten bread with him, very great things might be expected. In this ordinance we have been seeing his beauty, and tasting his sweetness, and now we should live so, that all who converse with us may discern it, and by our holy, heavenly converse, *may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.*

II. Let us mention some particulars wherein we ought in a special manner to approve ourselves well after this solemnity, that *as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord*, we may *so walk in him*, Col. ii. 6.

After we have been admitted into communion with God, and have renewed our covenants with him at his table, it behoves us to be careful in these six things:

1. We must see to it, that we be sincerely devout and pious. It is not enough that we live soberly and righteously, but we must live godly, in this present world, and our sacramental engagements should stir us up to abound therein more and more. After an interview with our friends, by which mutual acquaintance is improved, and mutual affections confirmed, we are more constant and endearing in our correspondence with each other; so we should be with God, after this ordinance, more frequent in holy ejaculations and breathings of soul toward God, intermixed even with common business and conversation; more abundant in reading, meditation, and solemn prayer; more diligent in our attendance on public ordinances; more fixed and enlarged in closet devotions, and more lively and affectionate in our family worship. Those religious exercises wherein we have formerly been remiss and careless, easily persuaded to put them by, or put them off, we should now be more constant to, and more careful in; more close in our application to them, and more serious in our performance of them.

If we have indeed found that it is good for us to draw near to God, we will endeavour to keep near him, so near him, as upon every occasion to speak to him, and to hear from him. If this sacrament has been our delight, the word will be our delight, and we shall daily converse with it; prayer will be our delight, and we shall give ourselves to it, and continue instant in it. They who have been feasted upon the sacrifice of atonement, ought to abound in sacrifices of acknowledgment, the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and a broken heart, which are acceptable to God through Christ Jesus; and having in our flock a male, we must offer that, and not a corrupt thing.

It is the shame of many who are called Christians, and have a name and a place in God's family, that they are as backward and indifferent to holy duties, as if they were afraid of doing too much good for God and their own souls, and as if their chief care were to know just how much will serve to bring them to heaven, that they may do no more. They can be content to go a mile, but they are not willing to go twain. And does it become those on whom God has sown so plentifully, to make their returns so sparingly? Ought we not rather to inquire what free-will offerings we may bring to God's altar? and how we may do more in religion than we have used to do? They who have found what a good table God keeps, and how welcome they have been to it, should desire to dwell in his house all the days of their life; and blessed are they that do so, *they will be still praising him*, Ps. xxvii. 4; lxxxiv. 4.

2. We must see to it that we be conscientiously just and honest. We not only contradict our profession, and give ourselves the lie, but we reproach the religion we profess, and give it the lie, if after we have been at this sacrament, we deceive or defraud our brother in any matter; for this is that which the Lord our God requires of us, that we do justly, that is, that we never do wrong to any, in their body, goods, or good name, and that we ever study to render to all their due, according to the relation we stand in, and the obligation we lie under, to them. *That*, therefore, *which is altogether just (justice, justice*, as the word is,) *thou shalt follow*, Deut. xvi. 20. There are many who make no great pretensions to religion, and yet natural conscience, sense of honour and a regard to the common good, keep them strictly just in all their dealings, and they would scorn to do a base and dishonest thing; and shall not the

bonds of this ordinance added to those inducements, restrain us from every thing that has but the appearance of fraud and injustice? A Christian! a communicant! and yet a cheat! yet a man not to be trusted, not to be dealt with but standing on one's guard! How can those be reconciled? Will that man be true to his God, whom he has not seen, that is false to his brother, whom he has seen? Shall he be intrusted with *the true riches*, who is *not faithful in the unrighteous mammon?* Luke xvi. 11.

Let the remembrance of our sacramental vows be always fresh in our minds, to give a check to those secret covetings which are the springs of all fraudulent practices. I have disclaimed the world for a portion, shall I then, for the compassing of a little of its forbidden gain, wrong my brother, whom I ought to do good to; wrong my profession, which I ought to adorn; and wrong my own conscience, which I ought to keep void of offence? God forbid. I have likewise renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, and promised not to walk in craftiness. By the grace of God I will therefore ever have *my conversation in the world in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom*, 2 Cor. i. 12; iv. 2. They who are so well skilled in the arts of deceit, as to save themselves from the scandal of it, and to be able to say with Ephraim, though he had the balances of deceit in his hand, *In all my labours they shall find no iniquity in me, that were sin*, (Hos. xii. 7, 8.) yet cannot thereby save themselves from the guilt of it, and the ruin that attends it; for doubtless *the Lord is the avenger of all such*, 1 Thess. iv. 6. Those who cheat their neighbours, cannot cheat their God, but will prove in the end to have cheated themselves into everlasting misery; *and what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?*

3. We must see to it, that we be religiously meek and peaceable. We must not only come from this ordinance in a calm and quiet frame, but we must always keep ourselves in such a frame. By the meekness and gentleness of Christ (which the apostle mentions as a most powerful charm, 2 Cor. x. 1.) let us be wrought upon to be always meek and gentle, as those who have learned of him. The storms of passion that are here appeased, must never be suffered to make head again, nor must the enmities that are here slain, ever be revived. Having eaten of this gospel passover, we must all our life long keep the feast, without the leaven of malice and wickedness, 1 Cor. v. 8. Having been feasted at Wisdom's table, we must always abide under the conduct and influence of that wisdom which is *first pure, and then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated*, Jam. iii. 17. God was greatly displeased with those who, after they had released their bond-servants according to the law, recalled their release, and brought them into subjection again, Jer. xxxiv. 11, 17. And so will he be with those who seem to set aside their quarrels when they come to the sacrament, but as soon as the fervour of their devotion is over, the heat of their passion returns, and they resume their quarrels, and revive all their angry resentments; thereby making it to appear that they did never truly forgive, and, therefore, never were forgiven of God. *Factum non dicitur quod non perseverat—The reality of the act is only proved by persevering in it.*

Let those who have had communion with God in this ordinance, be able to appeal to their relations and domestics, and all they converse with, concerning this; and to vouch them for witnesses, that they have mastered their passions, and are grown more mild and quiet in their families than sometimes they have been, and that even when they are most provoked, they know both how to hear reason, and how to speak it. Whatever others do, let us never give occasion to the enemies of the Lord to say, that the seriousness of religion makes men sour and morose, and that zeal in devotion disposes the mind to peevishness and passion: but let us evidence the contrary, that the grace of God does indeed make men good-natured, and that the pleasures of serious godliness make men truly cheerful and easy to all about them. Having been here sealed to the day of redemption, let us not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, that blessed dove; and that we may not, *let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from* us, *with all malice*, as it follows there, Eph. iv. 30, 31.

4. We must see to it that we be strictly sober and chaste. Gluttony and drunkenness, and fleshly lusts, are as great a reproach as can be to those who profess relation to Christ, and the expectation of eternal life. It becomes those who have been feasted at the table of the Lord, and have there tasted the pleasures of the spiritual and divine life, to be dead to all the delights of sense, and to make it appear that they are so, by a holy indifference to them. Let not the flesh be indulged to the prejudice of the spirit, nor provision made for the fulfilling the lusts thereof. Have we been entertained with the dainties of heaven? Let us not be desirous of the dainties of sense, nor solicitous to have the appetite gratified, and all our enjoyments to the highest degree pleasing. When our Lord had instituted his supper, and given this cup of blessing to his disciples, he added, (Matt. xxvi. 29.) *I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine;* now welcome the bitter cup, the vinegar and the gall: teaching us after a sacrament to sit more loose than before to bodily delights, and to be better reconciled to hardships and disappointments in them. It was the sin and shame of the Israelites in the wilderness, that while they were fed with manna, angels' food, they lusted, saying, *Who will give us flesh to eat?* And they sin after the similitude of that transgression, who, when they

have eaten of the bread of life, and drank of the water of life, yet continue to be as curious and careful about their meat and drink, as if they knew no better things, and had their happiness bound up in them; as if the *kingdom of God* were in this sense *meat and drink*, and a Turkish Paradise were their heaven. Surely, they who are of this spirit serve not our Lord Christ, but their own bellies.

But if they thus shame themselves who indulge the flesh, though their reason remains with them, what shall we think of those, who, by their intemperance, put themselves quite out of the possession of their own souls, disfit themselves for the service of God, and level themselves with the beasts? A Christian! a communicant! and yet a tippler, a drunkard, a companion with those who run to this excess of riot! This, this is the sin that has been the scandal and ruin of many, who, having begun in the spirit, have thus ended in the flesh; this is that which has quenched the Spirit, hardened the heart, besotted the head, debauched the conscience, withered the profession, and so has slain its thousands, and its ten thousands. Against this sin, therefore, the Lord's prophets must cry aloud, and not spare: of the danger of this the watchmen are concerned to give warning: and dare those who partake of the cup of the Lord, drink of the cup of devils? 1 Cor. x. 21. Can there be so much concord between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial? No, there cannot, these are contrary the one to the other. If men's communicating will not break them off from their drunkenness, their drunkenness must break them off from communicating; for these are spots in our feasts of charity, and if God be true, drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Let me, therefore, with all earnestness, as one that desires to obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful, warn all who profess religion, and relation to Christ, to stand upon their guard against this snare, which has been fatal to multitudes. As you tender the favour of God, the comforts of the Spirit, the credit of your profession, and the welfare of your own souls here and hereafter, take heed of being entangled in any temptations to this sin. Shun the society of those evil-doers: abstain from all the appearances of this sin: watch and be sober: he who *loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood*, has *made us unto our God kings and priests*, Rev. i. 5, 6. Are we priests? This was the law of the priesthood, and it was a law made upon the occasion of the death of Nadab and Abihu, who probably had erred through wine, (Lev. x. 9.) *Do not drink wine nor strong drink when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation.* Are we kings? *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine—lest they drink and forget the law*, Prov. xxxi. 4, 5. It is not for Christians to drink to excess, and to allow themselves in those riotings and revellings, which even the sober heathen condemned and abhorred.

Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness, are likewise lusts of the flesh, and defiling to the soul, which therefore all those must carefully avoid, who profess to be led by the Spirit; they are abominable things, which the Lord hates, and which we also must hate. Are not our bodies temples of the Holy Ghost? Dare we then defile them? Are they not members of Christ? And shall we make them the members of a harlot? Let those who eat of the holy things, be holy both in body and spirit, and *possess their vessel in sanctification and honour, and not in the lusts of uncleanness.* Let those eyes never be guilty of a wanton look, that have here seen Christ evidently set forth crucified among us: let no lewd, corrupt communication proceed out of that mouth into which God's covenant has been taken: let no unclean, lascivious thoughts be ever harboured in that heart which the holy Jesus vouchsafes to dwell in. Let those who have eaten of Wisdom's bread, and drank of the wine that she has mingled, never hearken to the invitations of the foolish woman, who courts the unwary to stolen waters, and bread eaten in secret, under pretence that they are sweet and pleasant; for the *dead are there*, and *the guests are in the depths of hell*, Prov. ix. 17, 18.

5. We must see to it that we are abundantly charitable and beneficent. It is not enough that we do no hurt, but if we would order our conversation aright; we must, as we have opportunity, do good to all men, as becomes those to whom God in Christ is good, and does good, and who profess themselves the disciples and followers of him, who went about doing good. Shall we be selfish, and seek our own things only, who have here seen how Christ humbled and emptied himself for us? Shall we be sparing of our pains for our brethren's good, who have here seen Christ among us as one that serveth, as one that suffereth, and as one that came *not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many?* Shall we be shy of speaking to, of speaking for, our poor brethren, who have here seen our Lord Jesus not ashamed to own us and intercede for us, notwithstanding our poverty and meanness? Shall we be strait-handed in distributing to the necessities of the saints, who have here found Christ so liberal and open-handed in imparting to us, not only the gospel of God, but even his own soul. After we have been at this ordinance, we should show how much we are affected with our receiving there, by being ready and forward to every good work: because *our goodness extendeth not to God*, it ought to extend *to the saints that are in the earth*, Psal. xvi. 2, 3. Thus we must be *followers of God as dear children*; we must *walk in love, as* here we see Christ *hath loved us, and gave himself for us*, Eph. v. 1, 2.

6. We must see to it, that we be more taken off

from this world, and more taken up with another world. A Christian then lives like himself, when he lives above the things that are seen, which are temporal, and looks upon them with a holy contempt; and keeps his eye fixed upon the things that are not seen, which are eternal, looking upon them with a holy concern. We are not called out of the world, but we are not of it; we belong to another world, and are designed for it; we must therefore seek the things that are above, and not set our affections on things beneath.

The thoughts of Christ crucified should wean us from this world, and make us out of love with it: the world knew him not, but hated him; the princes of this world crucified him, but he overcame the world; and we also, by faith in him, may obtain a victory over it, such a victory over it, that we may not be entangled by its snares, encumbered with its cares, or disquieted by its sorrows. By frequent meditation on the cross of Christ, the world will be crucified to us, and we to the world, (Gal. vi. 14.) that is, the world and we should grow very indifferent one to another, and no love shall be lost between us.

The thoughts of Christ glorified, should raise our hearts to that blessed place *where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*, (Col. iii. 1.) and *from whence we look for the Saviour*, Phil. iii. 20. When we commemorate Christ's entrance within the veil, as our forerunner, and have good hopes of following him shortly; when we think of his being in paradise, and of our being with him; how should our affections be carried out toward that joy of our Lord! How studious should we be to do the work of heaven, conform to the laws of heaven, and converse (as much as may be) with the glorious society there! Having received the adoption of sons, we should improve our acquaintance with, and raise our expectations of, the inheritance of sons.

CHAPTER XIV.

SOME WORDS OF COMFORT, WHICH THIS ORDINANCE SPEAKS TO SERIOUS CHRISTIANS.

The Lord's supper was intended for the comfort of good people, not only while they are actually attending on God in it, but even after; not only that their joy may be full, but that this joy may remain in them, John xv. 11. It is a feast which was made for laughter; not that of a fool, which terminates in a sigh, and the end of it is heaviness, but that of the truly wise man, who has learned to rejoice evermore, yea, to rejoice in the Lord always: not that of the hypocrite, whose triumphing is short, and his joy but for a moment, (Job xx. 5.) but that of a sincere Christian, whom God *causes always to triumph in Christ*, 2 Cor. ii. 14. The water that Christ here gives, is designed to be a well of water, living water, sending forth streams that make glad the city of our God. The feast, if it be not our own fault, will be to us a continual feast, and a breast of consolation, from which we may daily suck and be satisfied.

1. It is the will of God that his people should be a comforted people. The most evangelical part of the prophecy of Isaiah begins with this, (ch. xl. 1.) *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God:* he takes pleasure in their prosperity, he delights to see them cheerful, and to hear them sing at their work, and sing in his ways. Religion was never designed to make people melancholy; Wisdom's adversaries do her wrong, if they paint her in mourning, and Wisdom's children do not do her right, if they give the occasion to do so; for though they are, like St. Paul, as sorrowful, yet they should be, like him, always rejoicing, because though they seem (perhaps) to have nothing, yet really they possess all things, 2 Cor. vi. 10. So good a Master do we serve, that he has been pleased to twist interests with us, and so to compound his glory and our comfort, that in seeking the one we seek the other also. He has made that to be our duty, which is indeed our greatest privilege, and that is, to delight ourselves alway in the Lord, and to live a life of complacency in him. And it is the New-Testament character of a Christian indeed, that *he rejoiceth in Christ Jesus*, Phil. iii. 3.

2. Good Christians have (of all people) most reason to rejoice, and be comforted. As for those who are at a distance from God, and out of covenant with him, they have reason to be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: *Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy as other people, for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God*, Hos. ix. 1. To them who eat of the forbidden tree of knowledge, this tree of life also is forbidden; but those who devote themselves to God, have all the reason in the world to delight themselves in God. They who ask the way to Sion, with their faces thitherward, though they go weeping to seek the Lord their God, (Jer. l. 4, 5.) yet they shall go on rejoicing, when they have found him; for they cannot but find the way pleasantness, and the paths of it peace. Have not they reason to smile, on whom God smiles? If God has put grace into the heart, has he not put gladness there, and a new song into the mouth? Is Christ proclaimed King in the soul? And ought it not to be done with acclamations of joy? Is the atonement received, and the true treasure found? And shall we not rejoice with joy unspeakable? Have we good hope (through grace) of entering shortly into the joy of our Lord? And have not we cause now to rejoice in hope of it?

3. Yet those who have so much reason to rejoice, are often cast down, and in sorrow, and not altogether without cause. This state of probation and preparation is a mixed state, and it is proper enough it should be so, for the trial and exercise of various

graces, and that God's power may have the praise of keeping the balance even. In those whose hearts are visited by the Day-spring from on high, the light is neither clear nor dark, it is neither day nor night, Zech. xiv. 6, 7. They have their comforts, which they would not exchange for the peculiar treasure of kings and princes; but withal they have their crosses, under which they groan, being burthened. They have their hopes, which are as an anchor to the soul, both sure and stedfast, entering into that within the veil; but withal they have their fears, for their warfare is not yet accomplished, they have not yet attained, neither are already perfect. They have their joys, such as the world can neither give nor take away; joys that a stranger does not intermeddle with; but withal they have their griefs, their way to Canaan lies through a wilderness, and their way to Jerusalem through the valley of Baca: their Master was himself *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*, and they are to be his followers. While we are here, we must not think it strange, if for a season, when need is, we are in heaviness; we cannot expect to reap in joy hereafter, unless we sow in tears. We must not, therefore, think that either the present happiness of the saints, which in this world they are to expect, or their present holiness, which in this world they are to endeavour after, consists in such delights and joys, as leave us room for any mourning and sense of trouble: no, there is sorrow that is a godly sorrow; a jealousy of ourselves, that is a godly jealousy: it is only a perfect love that casts out all fear and all grief, which we are not to expect in this imperfect state. All tears shall not be wiped away from our eyes, nor shall sorrows and sighing quite flee away, till we come to heaven: while we are here, we are in a vale of tears, and must conform to the temper of the climate; we are at sea, and must expect to be tossed with tempests; we are in the camp, and must expect to be alarmed: while without are fightings, no wonder that within are fears.

4. Our Lord Jesus has, therefore, provided such comfort for the relief of his people (in their present sorrowful state) as may serve to balance their griefs, and keep them from being pressed above measure; and he has instituted holy ordinances (and especially this of the Lord's supper) for the application of those comforts to them, that they may never fear, may never be sorry, as those that have no hope, or no joy. The covenant of grace (as it is ministered in the everlasting gospel) has in it a salve for every sore, a remedy for every malady; so that they who have an interest in that covenant, and know it, may triumph with blessed Paul, (2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.) Though *we are troubled on every side, yet* we are *not distressed; perplexed* sometimes, *but* (thanks be to God) *not in despair; persecuted* by men, *but not forsaken* of God; *cast down* and drooping, *but not destroyed and lost*. This is that which bears them up under all their burthens, comforts them in all their griefs, and enables them to rejoice in tribulation. God is theirs, and they are his, and he has *made with them an everlasting covenant, well ordered in all things, and sure*; and this is *all* their *salvation* and *all* their *desire*, however it be, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

The word of God is written to them for this end, *That* their *joy may be full*, (1 John i. 4.) and that, *through patience and comfort of the Scriptures*, they *may have hope*, Rom. xv. 4. Precious promises are there treasured up, to be the foundations of their faith and hope, and consequently the fountains of their joy. Songs of thanksgiving are there drawn up for them, to refresh themselves with in their weary pilgrimage, and to have recourse to, for the silencing of their complaints. Ministers are appointed to be the helpers of their joy, (2 Cor. i. 24.) and to speak comfort to such as mourn in Zion. The sabbath is the day which the Lord has made for this very end, that they may rejoice and be glad in it. Prayer is appointed for the ease of troubled spirits, that in it they may pour out their complaints before God, and fetch in comfort from him; *Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full*. This sacrament was ordained for the comfort of good Christians, for the confirmation of their faith, in order to the preservation and increase of their joy; and they ought to improve it, both for the strengthening of the habit of holy cheerfulness, and their actual encouragement against the several particular grievances of this present time. And there is no complaint which a good Christian has cause to make at any time, which he may not qualify, and keep from growing clamorous, by comforts drawn from what he has seen and tasted, what he has done and received at the Lord's table. Let us therefore be daily drawing water out of these wells of salvation, and when our souls are cast down and disquieted within us, let us fetch arguments from our communion with God in this ordinance, both in chiding them for their despondency, and encouraging them to hope and rejoice in God. What is it that grieves and oppresses us? Why is our countenance sad, and why go we mourning all the day long? Whatever the occasion of the heaviness is, let it be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and I dare say there is that comfort to be fetched from this ordinance, which is sufficient to be set in the scale against it, and outweigh it. Let us mention some of the most common causes of our trouble, and try what relief we may from hence be furnished with.

I. Are we disquieted and discouraged by the remembrance of our former sins and provocations? There is that here which will help to quiet and encourage us in reference to this. Conscience sometimes calls to mind the sins of the unconverted state, and charges them home upon the soul, especially if

they were heinous and scandalous; it repeats the reproach of the youth; reminds us of old quarrels, and aggravates them; rakes in the old wounds, and makes them bleed afresh; and hence the disconsolate soul is ready to draw such hard conclusions as these: "Surely it is impossible that so great a sinner as I have been, should be pardoned and accepted; that such a prodigal should be welcomed home, and such a publican ever find mercy! Can I expect to share in that grace which I so long slighted and sinned against? or to be taken into that covenant which I have so often cast away the cords of? Will the holy God take one into the embraces of his love, who has been so vile and sinful, and fitter to be made a monument of his wrath? Can there be any hope for me? or if there be some hope, yet, can there be any joy? If I may (through a miracle of mercy) escape hell at last, which I have deserved a thousand times, yet ought I not to weep my eyes out, and to *go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul?* Isa. xxxviii. 15. Ought I not to *go down to the grave mourning?* Gen. xxxvii. 35. Should not my soul now refuse to be comforted, which so long refused to be convinced?"

These are black and sad thoughts, and enough to sink the spirit, if we had not met with that at the Lord's table, which gives a sufficient answer to all these challenges. We have been great sinners, but there we have seen the great Redeemer, able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him; and have there called him by that name of his, which is as ointment poured forth, *The Lord our Righteousness.* Our sins have reached to the heavens, but there we have seen God's mercy in Christ reaching beyond the heavens. We have been wretchedly defiled in our own ways, but there we have seen not only a laver but a fountain opened for the house of David to wash in, and have been assured that the *blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin,* even that which (for the heinousness of its nature, and the multitude of its aggravations) has been as scarlet and crimson, Isa. i. 18. That article of the covenant, which is so expressive of a general pardon, has been sealed to me, upon gospel terms, Heb. viii. 12. *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more;* and this I rely upon. Great sinners have obtained mercy; and why may not I?

And though an humble remembrance of sin will be of use to us all our days, yet such a disquieting remembrance of it, as hinders our faith in Christ, and our joy in God, is by no means good; even sorrow for sin may exceed due bounds, and penitents may be swallowed up with over-much sorrow, 2 Cor. ii. 7. The covenant of grace speaks not only pardon, but peace to all believers; and not only sets the broken bones, but makes them to rejoice, Ps. li. 8. When it says, *Thy sins be forgiven thee,* it says also, *Son,* Daughter, *be of good cheer,* Matt. ix. 2. It is the duty of those who have received the atonement, to take the comfort of it, and to joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. v. 11. Acts of self-denial and mortification are means and evidences of our sanctification, and such as we ought to abound in; but they are not the ground of our justification. It is Christ's blood that makes the satisfaction, not our tears. Therefore we must not so remember former sins, as to put away present comforts. A life of repentance will very well consist with a life of holy cheerfulness.

II. Are we disquieted and discouraged by the sense of our sins of daily infirmity? There is that here which will be a relief against this grievance also. I have not only former guilt to reflect upon, contracted in the days of my ignorance and unbelief; but alas, I am still sinning, sinning daily! God knows, and my own heart knows, that in many things I do offend: I come short of the rule, and short of the glory of God every day. Vain thoughts lodge with me; idle words proceed from me. If I would count either the one or the other, they are more in number than the sand. When I think of the strictness and extent of the divine law, and compare my own heart and life with it, I find that innumerable evils compass me about. Neglects of duty are many, and negligences in duty are more. Who can tell how often he offends? If the righteous God should enter into judgment with me, and be extreme to mark what I do amiss, I were not able to answer him for one of a thousand. It might have been expected, that when the God of mercy had, upon my repentance, forgiven the rebellions of my sinful state, taken me into his family, and made me as one of his hired servants, nay, as one of his adopted children, that I should have been a dutiful child, and a diligent servant; but, alas, I have been slothful and trifling, and in many instances undutiful; I am very defective in my duty, both to my Master, and to my fellow-servants, and in many things transgress daily. *For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runs down with tears.*

But there is that in this ordinance which may keep us from sinking under this burthen, though we have cause enough to complain of it. It is true, I am sinning daily; and it is my sorrow and shame that I am so; but the memorial of that great sacrifice which Jesus Christ offered once for all upon the cross, is therefore continually to be celebrated on earth, because the merit of it is continually pleaded in heaven, where Christ ever lives to make intercession in the virtue of his satisfaction. Having therefore celebrated the memorial of it at the table of the Lord, here in the outer court, I ought to take the comfort of the continual efficacy of it within the veil, and its prevalency for the benefit of all believers. The water out of the rock, the rock smitten, follows

God's Israel through this wilderness; in the precious streams of which, they that are washed are welcome to wash their feet from the pollutions they contract in their daily walk through this defiling world; and the best have need of this washing, John xiii. 10. That needful word of caution, *That we sin not*, is immediately followed with this word of comfort, but *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father;* one to speak for us, and to plead our cause: and he has a good plea to put in on our behalf, for *he is the propitiation for our sins*, 1 John ii. 1, 2.

Add to this, that the covenant of grace, which is sealed to us in this ordinance, is so well ordered in all things, and so sure, that every transgression in the covenant does not presently throw us out of the covenant. We do not stand upon the same terms that Adam in innocency did, to whom the least failure was fatal: no; to us God has *proclaimed his name gracious and merciful, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.* If we mourn for our sins of daily infirmity, are ashamed of them, and humble ourselves for them; if we strive, and watch, and pray against them, we may be sure they shall not be laid unto our charge, but in Christ Jesus they shall be forgiven to us; for we are under grace, and not under the law. The God we are in covenant with, is a God of pardon, (Neh. ix. 17.) with him there is forgiveness, Ps. cxxx. 4. We are instructed to pray for daily pardon, as duly as we pray for daily bread; and encouraged to come boldly to the throne of grace for mercy: so that, though there be a remembrance of sins made every day, yet, thanks be to God, there may be a remembrance made of the sacrifice for sin, by which an everlasting righteousness was brought in.

III. Are we disquieted and discouraged by the sad remainders of indwelling corruption? We may hence derive support under this burthen. All that are enlightened from on high, lament the original sin that dwells in them, as much as the actual transgressions that are committed by them; not only that they are defective in doing their duty, but that they labour under a natural weakness and inability for it; not only that they are often overtaken in a fault, but that they have a natural proneness and inclination to that which is evil. It was the bitter complaint of blessed Paul himself; *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. vii. 24. and it is the complaint of all that are spiritually alive, while they are here in this imperfect state.

The most intelligent find themselves in the dark, and apt to mistake; the most contemplative find themselves unfixed, and apt to wander; the most active for God, find themselves dull, and apt to tire: when the spirit through grace is willing, yet the flesh is weak; and when we would do good, evil is present with us. Corrupt appetites and passions often get head, and betray us into many indecencies. This makes the heart sad, and the hands feeble; and by reason of these remaining corruptions, many a good Christian loses the comfort of his graces. These Canaanites in the land are as thorns in the eyes, and goads in the side, of many an Israelite.

But be not cast down, my soul; the covenant which was sealed to thee at the table of the Lord, was a covenant of grace, which accepts sincerity as gospel perfection; not a covenant of innocency, which accepts of nothing less than a sinless, spotless purity. Were not these complaints poured out before the Lord? and did he not say, *My grace is sufficient for thee?* And what canst thou desire more? 2 Cor. xii. 9. Were not orders given at the banquet of wine, for the crucifying of the adversary and enemy, this wicked Haman; so that though it be not yet dead, it is a body of death, and ere long it shall be put off for ever? Was it not there said to thee, was it not sealed, That *sin shall not have dominion over thee;* but *the God of peace shall bruise Satan under thy feet shortly?* so that, though he may for a while disturb thy peace, and his troops may foil thee; yet, like God in Jacob's blessing, thou shalt overcome at the last, Gen. xlix. 18. The bruised reed shall not be broken, nor the smoking flax quenched; but judgment shall in due time be brought forth unto victory; grace shall get the upper hand of corruption, and be a conqueror, yea more than a conqueror, through him that loved us! Come then, come set thy feet upon the necks of these kings, and rejoice in hope of a complete victory at last. These lusts which war against thee, make war with the Lamb too, and oppose his interests; but for certain the Lamb shall overcome them; *for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful*, Rev. xvii. 14. Thou hast seen on how firm a rock the kingdom of God within thee is built, and mayst be sure that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Christ has given thee a banner to be displayed because of the truth, and through him thou shalt do valiantly, for he it is that shall tread down thy enemies, Ps. lx. 4, 12.

Go on, my soul, go on to fight the Lord's battles, by a vigorous resistance of sin and Satan; maintain a constant guard upon all the motions of thy spiritual enemies; hold up the shield of faith, and draw the sword of the Spirit, against all their assaults. Suppress the first risings of corruption; make no provision for it; resolve not to yield to it; *walk in the Spirit*, that thou mayst *not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.* Never make league with these Canaanites; but vex these Midianites, and smite them; mortify this body of death, and all its members; strengthen such principles, and dwell upon such considerations, as are proper for the weakening of the power of sinful lusts. And then be of good comfort, this house of

Saul shall grow weaker and weaker, and the house of David stronger and stronger. Thou hast seen, my soul, thou hast tasted the bread and wine which the Lord Jesus, that blessed Melchisedeck, has provided for the support and refreshment of all the followers of faithful Abraham, when they return weary (and wounded perhaps) from their spiritual conflicts. Make use of this provision then; feast upon it daily, and go on in the strength of it. Thank God (as St. Paul did in the midst of these complaints) for Jesus Christ; who has not only prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, but is now, like Moses, interceding on the top of the hill, while thou art, like Joshua, fighting with these Amalekites in the valley. Be faithful, therefore, to the death, and thou shalt shortly have a place in that New Jerusalem, into which no unclean thing shall enter. Now thou groanest, being burthened; but in heaven there shall be none of these complaints, nor any cause for them.

IV. Does the trouble arise from prevailing doubts and fears about thy spiritual state? We may draw that from this ordinance, which will help us to silence those fears, and solve those doubts, and to clear it up to us, that God in Christ is ours, and we are his; and that all shall be well shortly. Many good Christians, though they are so far willing to hope the best concerning themselves, as not to decline coming to the Lord's table, and there perhaps they meet with some satisfaction; yet, afterwards the tide of their comforts ebbs, a sadness seizes their spirits, the peace they have had they suspect to have been a delusion, and are ready to give up all for gone. Unbelief makes hard conclusions, clouds the evidences, shakes the hopes, withers the joys; suggests that it is as good to give off all pious pursuits, as thus to keep them up in vain; as good to make a captain, and return into Egypt, as to perish in this wilderness; for this is not the way to Canaan. And thus many are kept from entering into the present sabbatism, or rest, which is intended for the people of God in this life, by unbelief, Heb. iv. 9, 11.

But, *O thou of little faith! wherefore dost thou doubt?* Come, call to remembrance the former days, the former sacrament days, and the sweet communion thou hadst with God in them; days never to be forgotten. Thou doubtest whether God loves thee; and thou art ready to say as they did, (Mal. i. 2.) *Wherein hath he loved me!* But dost thou not remember the love tokens he gave thee at his table, when he embraced thee in the arms of his grace, kissed thee with the kisses of his mouth, and his banner over thee was love. Thou doubtest whether thou be a child of God, and a chosen vessel or no, and art sometimes tempted to say, Surely *the Lord hath utterly separated me from his people, and I am a dry tree*, Isa. lvi. 3. How should he *set me among the children, and give me a pleasant land?* Jer. iii. 19. But, dost thou not remember the children's bread thou hast been fed with at thy Father's table, and the Spirit of adoption there sent forth into thy heart, teaching thee to cry, *Abba, Father?* Thou calledst thyself a prodigal, and no more worthy to be accounted a son, because thou didst bear the reproach of thy youth, which made thee ashamed, yea, even confounded; but, did not God at the same time call thee, as he did penitent Ephraim, a *dear son*, a *pleasant child?* Were not his bowels troubled for thee? and did he not say, *I will surely have mercy on thee?* Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Did not thy Father meet thee with tender compassions? Did he not call for the best robe, and put it on thee? Did he not invite thee to the fatted calf, and, which was best of all, gave thee a kiss, which sealed thy pardon? And wilt thou now call that point in question, which was then so well settled? Is God *a man, that he should lie, or the son of man, that he should repent?* No, he is God, and no man. Thou doubtest whether Christ be thine or no; whether thou hast any interest in his mediation or intercession; whether he died for thee or no: but didst thou not at his table accept of him to be thine, and consent to him upon his own terms? Didst thou not say to him, with thy finger in the print of the nails, *My Lord, and my God?* And did he not answer thee with good words, and comfortable words, saying unto thee, *I am thy salvation?* Hast thou revoked the bargain? or dost thou fear that he will revoke it? Was it not an everlasting covenant, never to be forgotten? *Why art thou troubled?* And why do thoughts arise in thy heart? Was not Christ present with thee, and did he not show himself well affected to thee, when at his table he said to thee, *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself*, Luke xxiv. 38, 39.—Thou doubtest whether thou hast any grace or no, any love to God, any faith, any repentance; but hast thou forgotten God's workings on thy heart, and the workings of thy heart toward God at his table? *Did not thy heart burn within thee*, when thy dear Redeemer *talked with thee there?* Didst thou not sit down under his shadow with delight, and say, *It is good to be here?* Didst thou not desire a sign of the Lord, a token for good? Didst thou not say, *Do not deceive me?* and was there not a token for good showed thee? Was not thy heart melted for sin? Was it not drawn out toward God? Did it not appear that God was with thee of a truth? Wherefore, then, dost thou doubt of that which thou hadst then such comfortable evidences of? *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?* Why dost thou entertain such hard thoughts of God and thy own state? *Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, even the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?* Isa. xl. 27, 28.

And why art thou fearful and faint-hearted? Why dost thou look forward with terror and trembling, while thou hast so much reason to look forward with hope and rejoicing? Alas, (says the troubled spirit,) God has cast me off out of his sight, and I fear will cast off for ever, and will be favourable no more; I shall *no more see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living!* My comforts are removed, and all my pleasant things are laid waste! My *bones are dried, my hope is lost, and I am cut off for my part*, Ezek. xxxvii. 11. But hearken to this, thou who thus fearest continually every day; dost thou not remember the encouragements Christ gave thee at his table to hope in him, and to expect all good from him? Does he not say, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee?* and didst thou not promise that thou wouldst never leave nor forsake him? Nay, did he not promise to put his fear into thy heart, that thou mightst not depart from him? He did: and is not he faithful that hath called thee? faithful that hath promised, who also will do it? Thou art afraid that some time or other Satan will be too hard for thee, and thou shalt one day perish by his hand: but hast thou not had that precious promise sealed to thee, that *the faithful God will never suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able, but will with the temptation make a way for thee to escape?* 1 Cor. x. 13. His providence shall proportion the trial to the strength; or (which comes all to one) his grace shall proportion the strength to the trial. Thou art afraid that after all thou shalt come short; that by reason of the violence of the storm, the treachery of the sea, and, especially, thy own weakness and unskilfulness, thou shalt never be able to weather the point, and get safe into the harbour at last: but shall I ask thee, thou that followest Christ thus trembling, *Dost thou not know whom thou hast believed?* Is thy salvation intrusted with thyself, and lodged in thy own hands? No, it is not; if it were, thou wouldst have reason to fear the loss of it: but has not God committed it, and hast not thou committed it, to the Lord Jesus? and *is not he able to keep that which is committed to him against that day*, that great day, when it shall be called for? Is not that a divine power, which keeps thee, a divine promise, which secures thee? Be not fearful, then, *be not faithless, but believing.*

V. Are we disquieted and discouraged by the troubles and calamities of this life? From our communion with God in the ordinance of the Lord's supper, we may fetch comfort and support under all the afflictions of this present time, whatever they be. Our Master instituted this sacrament in the night wherein he was betrayed; and soon after he put off the body, and pleasantly said, *Now I am no more in the world:* but when we have received this sacrament, we find ourselves still in a world which is vexation of spirit; the soul still in a house of clay, liable to many shocks; and so close is the union between the soul and the body, that what touches the bone and the flesh, cannot but affect the spirit at second-hand. We are born, and born again, to troubles; besides that, we are exposed with others to the common calamities of human life, and the persecutions which all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must count upon. We are under the discipline of sons, and must look for chastisement. Afflictions are not only consistent with the love of God, but they flow from it; *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.* They are not only reconcilable with the covenant, but a branch of it:—*I will chasten their transgressions with the rod, and their sin with stripes*, is an article of the agreement with David and his seed, with this comfortable clause added; *Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him:—My covenant will I not break*, Ps. lxxxix. 32, 33.

There is no disputing against sense: Christianity was not designed to make men stocks and stones, and stoics under their calamities. *No affliction for the present is joyous but grievous:* hence the best men, as they have their share of trouble, so they cannot but have the sense of it: that is allowed them, they groan, being burthened. But this sense of trouble is apt to exceed due bounds: it is hard to grieve, and not to over-grieve; to lay to heart an affliction, and not to lay it too near the heart. When grief, or any outward trouble, overwhelms our spirits, imbitters our comforts, hinders our joy in God, stops the mouth of praise, takes off our chariot wheels, and makes us drive heavily in our way to heaven; then it is excessive and inordinate, and turns into sin to us. When sorrow fills the heart, and plays the tyrant there; when it makes us fretful and impatient, and breaks forth into quarrels with God and his providence, and robs us of the enjoyment of ourselves, our friends, and our God; it is an enemy that we are concerned to take up arms against.

And from our sacramental covenants and comforts we may fetch plenty of arguments against the unreasonable insinuations of inordinate grief. Did I not see at the table of the Lord, a lively representation of the sufferings of Christ, the variety and extremity of his sufferings? Did I not see his tears, his sweats, his agonies, his stripes, the pain and shame he underwent? And is *the servant better than his master, and the disciple than his Lord?* Did Christ go by the cross to the crown, and shall a Christian expect to go any other way? The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings, and have not we much more need of them, for the perfecting of what is lacking in us? Is not this one part of our conformity to the image of Christ, that as he was *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs*, so we should, that he might be *the first-born*

among many brethren? A sight of Christ's afflictions should reconcile us to our own; especially if we consider, not only what he suffered, but how he suffered, and with what an invincible patience and cheerful submission to his Father's will, *leaving us an example*, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Have we so often celebrated the memorial of Christ's sufferings, and have we not yet learned of him to say, *The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* Though it be a bitter cup, *Father, not my will, but thy will be done.* Have we not yet learned of him, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, to be dumb, and not to open our mouths against any thing that God does to forgive our enemies, and pray for our persecutors, and cheerfully to commit ourselves to him that judgeth righteously? Let the same mind be in us, which here we have seen to be in Christ Jesus.

Yet this is not all: in the Lord's supper we give up ourselves, and all we have, unto the Lord, with a promise to acquiesce in all the disposals of his providence, concerning us and ours; let us not, therefore, by our discontent and uneasiness, revoke the surrender which we then made, or go counter to it. We there said it, and sealed it, that we would be the Lord's, and may he not do what he will with his own, especially when it is so by his own consent? God there said it, and sealed it to us, that he would be to us *a Father;* and can we take any thing amiss from a Father, such a Father, who never chastens us but for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness? Inviolable assurances were there given to us, that all things should work together for our present good, and for our future glory; that as afflictions abound, consolations shall so much the more abound; and some experience we there had of the sweetness and power of those consolations, which we ought to treasure up, that we may have them ready for our supports in the evil day. Can we forget how sweet God's smiles were which there we saw? how reviving his comforts were which there we tasted? And are not those sufficient to countervail the loss of the world's flattering smiles, and the comforts we have in the creature? It is generally supposed, that the comfortable sermon which Christ preached to his disciples on that text, *Let not your hearts be troubled*, (John xiv.) immediately followed the administration of the Lord's supper; for it is the will of Christ, that those whom he has raised up to sit with him by faith in heavenly places, should not be cast down and disquieted for any cross or disappointment in earthly things.

Art thou sick, languishing, perhaps, under some wasting distemper, which consumes thy strength and beauty like a moth? Or chastened it may be with pain upon thy bed, and the multitude of thy bones with strong pain? Or labouring under the infirmities and decays of old age? Take comfort then from thy communion with the Lord at his table. Didst thou not see there how Christ himself bore our sicknesses, and carried our sorrows, when he bore our sins in his own body upon the tree, and so took away the sting of them, extracted out of them the wormwood and the gall, which he himself drank in a bitter cup, and infused into them the comforts of his love, which he has given us to drink of? Didst not thou there receive a sealed pardon? Did not God, in love to thy soul, cast all thy sins behind thy back, and tell thee so? Thou hast then no reason to complain of bodily distempers: (Isa. xxxiii. 24,) *The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick:* How so? How can one that is sick, avoid saying, I am sick? Why, it follows, *The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.* And sickness is nothing, or next to nothing, to those who know their sins are pardoned. When thou didst present thy body to God in that ordinance a living sacrifice, and didst engage that it should be for the Lord, was it not graciously added—*and the Lord for thy body*, 1 Cor. vi. 13. And if the Lord be for thy body, he will strengthen thee upon the bed of languishing; and though he may not presently help thee off it, yet he will sit by thee, and (which speaks the wonderful condescension of divine goodness) *he will make all thy bed in thy sickness*, Ps. xli. 3. And that bed cannot but be made easy, which he has the making of.

Art thou poor, crossed in thy affairs, disappointed in lawful and hopeful designs, clogged with cares, and perhaps reduced to straits? Let the spiritual riches secured to thee in that sealing ordinance, be a balance to the affliction of outward poverty. The God of truth has said, and thou mayst rely upon it, that those who fear him, and seek him, *shall not want any good thing;* not any thing that infinite wisdom sees really good for them. *Trust in the Lord*, therefore, *and do good* with the little thou hast, *so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed*, Ps. xxxvii. 3. It is not promised that thou shalt be feasted with varieties and dainties; those who are feasted at God's table need not complain, though they be not feasted at their own; but thou shalt be fed, fed with food convenient for thee. Some good Christians, who have been in a very poor condition, have said, that they have made many a meal upon the promises, when they wanted bread: *Verily thou shalt be fed; pascere fide*, so the learned Junius reads it, *be fed by faith;* and compares it with Hab. ii. 4. *The just shall live by his faith;* and good living, good feeding it is. *Though the fig-tree do not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vine*, yet, while thou hast in the Lord's supper seen the rose of Sharon blossoming, and tasted the fruit of the true vine, thou hast reason enough, however it be, to *rejoice in the Lord*, and *to joy in the God of thy salvation*, Hab. iii. 17, 18.

Are thy relations a grief to thee? Do those afflict thee of whom thou saidst, *These same shall comfort*

me? Suppose thy yoke-fellow unsuitable, children undutiful, parents unkind, friends ungrateful, neighbours injurious, yet the comfort of our relation to God may suffice to make up the loss of comfort in any relation on earth. If man be false, yet God is faithful: if man be harsh, yet God is gracious. Though the waters of our rivers may be muddied, or turned into blood, yet the fountain of life runs always clear, and its stream as pure as crystal, Rev. xxii. 1. It was upon the supposition of family disappointments, that David, in his last words, took comfort from the covenant of grace made with him, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Are those who are dear to thee removed from thee by death? It is fit that which is so sown should be watered; but sacrament comforts will keep us from sorrowing, *as those that have no hope*, for them *that sleep in Jesus*. We have lost the satisfaction we used to have in them, but is not God better to us than ten sons, far better than ten thousand such relations could have been? And yet they are not lost, they are only gone before, and death itself cannot wholly cut us off from communion with them, for *we are come to the spirits of just men made perfect*, and hope to be with them shortly, Heb. xii. 23.

Are the calamities of the church and of the nation our affliction? It is fit they should be so, for we have eaten and drank into the great body, and as living members must feel from its grievances; but in the Lord's supper we have seen what provision the grace of God has made for his household, and thence may infer the protection under which the providence of God will always keep it safe. The promises that are sealed to us, are sure to all the seed, and the covenant of grace is the rock on which the church is built so firm, that *the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. The Lord* (we see) *hath founded Sion, and the poor of his people shall trust to that.* Let us at this ordinance learn this new song, and sing it often, *Hallelujah, The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.*

VI. Are the fears of death a trouble and terror to us? We may fetch from the Lord's supper that which will enable us, through grace, to triumph over these fears. This is a fear which is often found to have torment, and by reason of it many weak Christians have been all their life-time subject to bondage, Heb. ii. 15. It is likewise a fear which often brings a snare, exposes us to many temptations, and gives Satan advantage against us. There are many, who (we hope) through grace are saved from the second death, and yet are afraid of the first death; being more solicitous than they need to be about a dying life, and more timorous than they need to be of a living death, a death that is their way to life.

But the arrests of death, and its harbingers, would not be at all dreadful, if we did but know how to make a due improvement of the comforts we were made partakers of at the table of the Lord. We there saw Christ dying; dying so great a death, a death in pomp, armed and attended with all its terrors; dying in pain, in shame, in darkness, in agonies; and yet the Son of God, and the heir of all things. This takes off the reproach of death; so that now we need not be ashamed to die: if Christ humbled himself, and became obedient to death, why should not we? It likewise takes off the terror of death, so that now we need not be afraid to die. When we walk through that dark and dismal valley, we have no reason to fear any evil; while the great Shepherd of the sheep is not only gone before us, but goes along with us, his rod and his staff they comfort us, Ps. xxiii. 4. He is our leader; and we do not approve ourselves his good soldiers, if we be not willing to follow him whithersoever he goes. He went through death to the joy set before him; and we cannot expect to follow him to that joy, but in that way. Through this Jordan we must enter Canaan.

The death of Christ has broken the power of death, and taken from it all the armour wherein it trusted; so that now let it do its worst, it cannot do a good Christian any real prejudice, for it cannot separate him from the love of God. Surely the bitterness of death is now past, by Christ's tasting it, Heb. ii. 9. The sharpness of death Christ has overcome, by submitting to it, and so has opened the kingdom of heaven to believers. The *sucking child may* now *play upon* this *hole of the asp*, and *the weaned child may put his hand in* this *cockatrice den:* for death itself shall not hurt or destroy, in all God's holy mountain.

Nay, the death of Christ has quite altered the property of death. It not only ceases to be an enemy, but it is become a friend: the covenant of grace, sealed to us in the Lord's supper, assures us of the unspeakable kindness that even death itself shall do us. *All things are yours;—and death,* among the rest, 1 Cor. iii. 22. As the death of Christ was the purchase of our happiness, so our own death is the passage to our happiness; it discharges us from our prison, and conveys us to our palace. The promise of eternal life sealed to us, and the earnests of that life communicated to us in this ordinance, enable us to look with comfort on the other side death; and then we need not look with terror on this side it.

Art thou afraid to give up thy soul? Thou hast already given it up to God in Christ, to be sanctified; and, therefore, mayst then with a holy cheerfulness give it up to God in Christ, to be saved. The dying Jesus, by committing his spirit into the hands of his Father, has imboldened all his followers in a dying hour to do the same. Why should that soul be afraid to go out of the body, and quit this world of sense, which is through grace allied to, and by faith acquainted with, the blessed world of

spirits, and is sure of a guard of angels ready to convey it to that world, and a faithful friend ready to receive it into that world.

Art thou afraid to put off thy body? The covenant sealed to thee at the Lord's table, is a covenant with thy dust, and gives commandment concerning thy bones. Fear not the return of thy earth to its earth; it is in order to its being refined, and in due time restored to its soul, a glorious and incorruptible body. Spiritual blessings are, perhaps for this reason, in the sacraments represented and applied by outward and sensible signs, in the participation of which the body is concerned; that we might thereby be confirmed in our believing hope of the glory prepared and reserved for these bodies of ours, these vile bodies; which, even while they lie in the grave, still remain united to Christ, and when they shall be raised out of the grave, shall be made like unto his glorious body.

Let the sinners in Sion be afraid to die. Let fearfulness surprise the hypocrites, when their souls shall be required of them: let their hearts meditate terror, and their faces gather blackness, who, having lived a carnal, worldly, sensual life, have no interest in Christ and the promises; for they shall call in vain to rocks and mountains to shelter them from the wrath of the Lamb. But let them who have joined themselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, and have obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful to that covenant, lift up their heads with joy, for their redemption draws nigh: death will shortly rend the interposing veil of sense and time, will shortly scatter all the dark and threatening clouds which here hang over our heads, and will open to us a bright and glorious scene in that blessed world of light, life, and love; where we shall enjoy the substance of those things, which at the Lord's table we are refreshed with the shadows of, and the full vintage of those joys, which here we have the first fruits of.

Learn then, my soul, learn thou to triumph over death and the grave: *O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?* Having laid up thy treasure within the veil, and remitted thy best effects and best affections thither, and having received the earnest of the purchased possession, be still looking, still longing, for that blessed hope. Fear not death, for it cannot hurt thee, but desire it rather, for it will greatly befriend thee. When the *earthly house of this tabernacle* shall *be dissolved*, thou shalt remove to *the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* Wish then, wish daily, for the coming of thy Lord, for he shall appear to thy joy. *The vision is for an appointed time, and at the end it shall speak, and shall not lie.* Look through the windows of this house of clay, like the mother of Sisera, when she waited for her son's triumphs, and cry through the lattice, *Why is his chariot so long in coming, why tarry the wheels of his chariot?* Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

DIRECTIONS

FOR

DAILY COMMUNION WITH GOD,

IN THREE DISCOURSES,

SHOWING HOW TO BEGIN, HOW TO SPEND, AND HOW TO CLOSE EVERY DAY WITH GOD.

To the Reader.

The two first of these discourses were preached (that is, the substance of them) at the morning lecture at Bednal-Green, the former, Aug. 13, the other, Aug. 21, 1712. The latter of them I was much importuned to publish by many who heard it; which I then had no thoughts at all of doing, because in divers practical treatises we have excellent directions given, of the same nature and tendency, by better hands than mine. But upon second thoughts I considered, that both those sermons of beginning and spending the day with God, put together, might perhaps be of some use to those into whose hands those larger treatises do not fall. And the truth is, the subject of them is of such a nature, that if they may be of any use, they may be of general and lasting use; whereupon I entertained the thought of writing them over, with very large additions throughout, as God should enable me, for the press. Communicating this thought to some of my friends, they very much encouraged me to proceed in it, but advised me to add a third discourse of closing the day with God, which I thereupon took for my subject at an evening lecture, September 3, and have likewise much enlarged and altered that. And so this came to be what it is.

I am not without hopes, that something may hereby be contributed among plain people, by the blessing of God upon the endeavour, and the working of his grace with it, to the promoting of serious godliness, which is the thing I aim at, and yet I confess that I should not have published it, had I not designed it for a present to my dearly beloved friends in the country, whom I have lately been rent from.

And to them, with the most tender affection, and most sincere respects, I dedicate it, as a testimony of my abiding concern for their spiritual welfare; hoping and praying, that their conversation may be in every thing as becomes the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see them, or else be absent, I may hear comfortably of their affairs, that they stand fast in one spirit with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel. I am,

Their cordial and affectionate
Well-wisher,

Sept. 8, 1712. Matt. Henry.

THE FIRST DISCOURSE,

SHOWING HOW TO BEGIN EVERY DAY WITH GOD.

Psalm v. 3.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

You would think it a rude question, if I should ask you, and yet I must entreat you seriously to ask yourselves, what brings you hither so early this morning? and what is your business here? Whenever we are attending on God in holy ordinances, (nay, wherever we are,) we should be able to give a good answer to the question which God put to the prophet, *What dost thou here, Elijah?* As when we return from holy ordinances, we should be able to give a good answer to the question which Christ put to those who attended on John Baptist's ministry, *What went ye out into the wilderness to see?*

It is surprising to see so many assembled together here; surely the fields are white unto the harvest; and I am willing to hope, it is not merely for a walk this pleasant morning, that you are come hither; or for curiosity, because the morning-lecture was never here before; that it is not for company, or to meet your friends here; but that you are come with a pious design to give glory to God, and to receive grace from him, and in both to keep up your communion with him. And if you ask us, who are mi-

nisters, what our business is, we hope we can truly say, it is (as God shall enable us) to assist and further you herein. *Comest thou peaceably?* said the elders of Bethlehem to Samuel; and so perhaps you will say to us: to which we answer, as the prophet did, *Peaceably;* we come to sacrifice unto the Lord, and invite you to the sacrifice.

While the lecture continues with you, you have an opportunity of more than doubling your morning devotions. Besides your worshipping of God in secret, and in your families, which this must not supersede, or justle out, you here call upon God's name in the solemn assembly; and it is as much your business in all such exercises to pray a prayer together, as it is to hear a sermon; and it is said, the original of the morning exercise was a meeting for prayer, at the time when the nation was groaning under the dreadful, desolating judgment of a civil war. You have also an opportunity of conversing with the word of God; you have *precept upon precept,* and *line upon line:* O that as the opportunity awakens you morning by morning, (so as the prophet speaks,) your *ears* may be *wakened to hear as the learned,* Isa. l. 4.

But this is not all: we desire that such impressions may be made upon you by this cluster of opportunities, as you may always abide under the influence of; that this morning-lecture may leave you better disposed to morning-worship ever after; that these frequent acts of devotion may so confirm the habit of it, so that henceforward your daily worship may become more easy, and if I may so say, in a manner natural to you.

For your help herein, I would recommend to you holy David's example in the text, who having resolved in general, (*v.* 2.) that he would abound in the duty of prayer, and abide by it, *Unto thee will I pray,* here fixes one proper time for it, and that is the morning: *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning.* Not in the morning only; David solemnly addressed himself to the duty of prayer three times a day, as Daniel did; *Morning, and evening, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud,* Ps. lv. 17. nay, he does not think that enough, but *Seven times a day will I praise thee,* Ps. cxix. 164. But particularly in the morning.

Doct. It is our wisdom and duty, to begin every day with God.

Let us observe in the text,

I. The good work itself that we are to do. God must hear our voice, we must direct our prayer to him, and we must look up.

II. The special time appointed and observed for the doing of this good work; and that is in the morning, and again, in the morning, that is, every morning, as duly as the morning comes.

I. The good work which by the example of David we are here taught to do, is, in one word, to pray; a duty dictated by the light and law of nature, which plainly and loudly speaks, *Should not a people seek unto their God?* but which the gospel of Christ gives us much better instructions in, and encouragements to, than any that nature furnishes us with; for it tells us what we must pray for, in whose name we must pray, and by whose assistance, and invites us to come boldly to the throne of grace, and to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. This work we are to do, not in the morning only, but at other times, at all times. We read of preaching the word out of season, but we do not read of praying out of season, for that is never out of season: the throne of grace is always open, and humble supplicants are always welcome, and cannot come unseasonably.

But let us see how David here expresses his pious resolutions to abide by this duty.

1. *My voice shalt thou hear.* Two ways David may here be understood: either,

(1.) As promising himself a gracious acceptance with God, *Thou shalt,* that is, thou wilt, hear my voice, when in the morning I direct my prayer to thee; so it is the language of his faith, grounded upon God's promise, that his ear shall be always open to his people's cry. He had prayed, *v.* 1. *Give ear to my words, O Lord;* and, *v.* 2. *Hearken unto the voice of my cry;* and here he receives an answer to that prayer, *Thou wilt hear,* I doubt not but thou wilt; and though I have not presently a grant of the thing I prayed for, yet I am sure my prayer is heard, is accepted, and comes up for a memorial, as the prayer of Cornelius did; it is put upon the file, and shall not be forgotten. If we look inward, and can say by experience, that God has prepared our heart, we may look upright, may look forward, and say with confidence, that he will cause his ear to hear.

We may be sure of this, and we must pray in the assurance of it, in a full assurance of this faith, that wherever God finds a praying heart, he will be found a prayer-hearing God: though the voice of prayer be a low voice, a weak voice, yet, if it come from an upright heart, it is a voice that God will hear, that he will hear with pleasure, it is his delight, and that he will return a gracious answer to; he has heard thy prayers, he has seen thy tears. When therefore we stand praying, this ground we must stand upon, this principle we must stand to, nothing doubting, nothing wavering, that whatever we ask of God as a Father, in the name of Jesus Christ the Mediator, according to the will of God revealed in the Scripture, it shall be granted us either in kind or kindness; so the promise is, (John xvi. 23.) and the truth of it is sealed to by the concurring experience of the saints in all ages, ever since man began to call upon the name of the Lord, that Jacob's God never yet said to Jacob's seed, *Seek ye me in vain,* and he will not begin now. When we come to God by prayer, if we come aright we may be

confident of this, that notwithstanding the distance between heaven and earth, and our great unworthiness to have any notice taken of us, or any favour showed us, yet God does hear our voice, and will not turn away our prayer, or his mercy. Or,

(2.) It is rather to be taken, as David's promising God a constant attendance on him, in the way he has appointed. *My voice shalt thou hear*, that is, I will speak to thee: because thou hast inclined thy ear unto me many a time, therefore I have taken up a resolution to call upon thee at all times, even to the end of my time; not a day shall pass, but thou shalt hear from me. Not that the voice is the thing that God regards, as they seemed to think, who in prayer made their voice to be heard on high, (Isa. lviii. 4.) Hannah prayed and prevailed, when her voice was not heard; but it is the voice of the heart that is here meant: God said to Moses, *Wherefore criest thou unto me?* when we do not find that he said one word, Exod. xiv. 15. Praying is lifting up the soul to God, and pouring out the heart before him; yet, as far as the expressing of the devout affections of the heart by words may be of use to fix the thoughts, and to excite and quicken the desires, it is good to draw near to God, not only with a pure heart, but with an humble voice: so must we *render the calves of our lips.*

However, God understands the language of the heart, and that is the language in which we must speak to God. David prays here, *v.* 1. not only *give ear to my words*, but *consider my meditation;* and Ps. xix. 14. *Let the words of my mouth*, proceeding from *the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight.*

This therefore we have to do in every prayer, we must speak to God, we must write to him; we say we hear from a friend whom we receive a letter from; we must see to it that God hears from us daily.

1. He expects and requires it. Though he has no need of us or our services, nor can be benefited by them, yet he has obliged us to offer the sacrifice of prayer and praise to him continually.

(1.) Thus he will keep up his authority over us, and keep us continually in mind of our subjection to him, which we are apt to forget. He requires that by prayer we solemnly pay our homage to him, and give honour to his name, that by this act and deed of our own, thus frequently repeated, we may strengthen the obligations we lie under to observe his statutes, and keep his laws, and be more and more sensible of the weight of them. *He is thy Lord and worship thou him*, that by frequent humble adorations of his perfections, thou mayst make a constant humble compliance with his will the more easy to thee. By doing obeisance we are learning obedience.

(2.) Thus he will testify his love and compassion towards us. It would have been an abundant evidence of his concern for us, and his goodness to us, if he had only said, "Let me hear from you as often as there is occasion; call upon me in the time of trouble or want, and that is enough:" but to show his complacency in us, as a father does his affection to his child when he is sending him abroad, he gives us this charge, "Let me hear from you every day, by every post, though you have no particular business;" which shows, that the prayer of the upright is his delight; it is music in his ears. Christ says to his dove, *Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely*, Cant. ii. 14. And it is to the spouse, the church, that Christ speaks in the close of that song of songs, *O thou that dwellest in the gardens*, (in the original it is feminine,) *the companions hearken to thy voice, cause me to hear it.* What a shame is this to us, that God is more willing to be prayed to, and more ready to hear prayer, than we are to pray?

2. We have something to say to God every day. Many are not sensible of this, and it is their sin and misery: they live without God in the world; they think they can live without him, are not sensible of their dependence upon him, and their obligations to him, and, therefore, for their parts they have nothing to say to him; he never hears from them, no more than the father did from his prodigal son, when he was upon the ramble, from one week's end to another. They ask scornfully, *What can the Almighty do for them?* And then no marvel if they ask next, *What profit shall we have if we pray unto him?* And the result is, they say to the Almighty, *Depart from us*, and so shall their doom be. But I hope better things of you, my brethren, and that you are not of those who cast off fear, and restrain prayer before God. You are all ready to own that there is a great deal that the Almighty can do for you, and that there is profit in praying to him; and therefore resolve to draw nigh to God, that he may draw nigh to you.

We have something to say to God daily:

(1.) As to a friend we love, and have freedom with. Such a friend we cannot go by without calling on, and never want something to say to, though we have no particular business with him; to such a friend we unbosom ourselves, we profess our love and esteem, and with pleasure communicate our thoughts. Abraham is called the *friend of God*, and this honour have all the saints: *I have not called you servants*, (says Christ,) *but friends; his secret is with the righteous.* We are invited to acquaint ourselves with him, and to walk with him, as one friend walks with another; the fellowship of believers is said to be *with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ;* and have we nothing to say to him then?

Is it not errand enough to the throne of his grace, to admire his infinite perfections, which we can never fully comprehend, and yet never sufficiently contemplate, and take complacency in? to please ourselves in beholding the beauty of the Lord, and giving

him the glory due to his name? Have we not a great deal to say to him in acknowledgment of his condescending grace and favour to us, in manifesting himself to us and not to the world? and in profession of our affection and submission to him? *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.*

God has something to say to us as a friend every day, by the written word, in which we must hear his voice, by his providences, and by our own consciences: and he hearkens and hears whether we have any thing to say to him by way of reply, and we are very unfriendly if we have not. When he says to us, *Seek ye my face*, should not our hearts answer as to one we love, *Thy face Lord will we seek?* When he says to us, "Return, ye backsliding children," should not we readily reply, "Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God?" If he speak to us by way of conviction and reproof, ought not we to return an answer by way of confession and submission? If he speak to us by way of comfort, ought not we to reply in praise? If you love God, you cannot be to seek for something to say to him, something for your hearts to pour out before him, which his grace has already put there.

(2.) As to a master we serve, and have business with. Think how numerous and important the concerns are that lie between us and God, and you will readily acknowledge that you have a great deal to say to him. We have a constant dependence upon him, all our expectation is from him; we have constant dealings with him, he is the God with whom we have to do, Heb. iv. 13.

Do we not know that our happiness is bound up in his favour; it is life, the life of our souls; it is better than life, than the life of our bodies: and have we not business with God to seek his favour, to entreat it with our whole hearts, to beg as for our lives that he would lift up the light of his countenance upon us, and to plead Christ's righteousness, as that only through which we can hope to obtain God's loving-kindness?

Do we not know that we have offended God, that by sin we have made ourselves obnoxious to his wrath and curse, and that we are daily contracting guilt? And have we not then business enough with him to confess our fault and folly, to ask for pardon in the blood of Christ, and in him who is our peace to make our peace with God, and renew our covenants with him, in his own strength, to go and sin no more?

Do we not know that we have daily work to do for God, and our own souls, the work of the day that is to be done in its day? And have we not then business with God, to beg of him to show us what he would have us to do, to direct us in it, and strengthen us for it? To seek to him for assistance and acceptance, that he will work in us both to will and to do that which is good, and then countenance and own his own work? Such business as this the servant has with his master.

Do we not know that we are continually in danger? Our bodies are so, and their lives and comforts; we are continually surrounded with diseases and deaths, whose arrows fly at midnight, and at noonday; and have we not then business with God, going out and coming in, lying down, and rising up, to put ourselves under the protection of his providence, to be the charge of his holy angels? Our souls much more are so, and their lives and comforts; it is those our adversary the devil, a strong and subtle adversary, wars against, and seeks to devour; and have we not then business with God to put ourselves under the protection of his grace, and clad ourselves with his armour, that we may be able to stand against the wiles and violences of Satan; so as we may neither be surprised into sin by a sudden temptation, nor overpowered by a strong one?

Do we not know that we are dying daily, that death is working in us, and hastening towards us, and that death fetches us to judgment, and judgment fixes us in our everlasting state? And have we not then something to say to God in preparation of what is before us? Shall we not say, Lord, make us to know our end? Lord, teach us to number our days? Have we not business with God, to judge ourselves that we may not be judged, and to see that our matters be right and good?

Do we not know that we are members of that body whereof Christ is the head? and are we not concerned to approve ourselves living members? Have we not then business with God upon the public account, to make intercession for his church? Have we nothing to say for Zion? nothing in behalf of Jerusalem's ruined walls? nothing for the peace and welfare of the land of our nativity? Are we not of the family, or but babes in it, that we concern not ourselves in the concerns of it?

Have we no relations, no friends, who are dear to us, whose joys and griefs we share in? and have we nothing to say to God for them? no complaints to make, no requests to make known? Are none of them sick or in distress? none of them tempted or disconsolate? And have we not errands, at the throne of grace, to beg relief and succour for them?

Now lay all this together, and then consider whether you have not something to say to God every day; and particularly in days of trouble, when it is meet to be said unto God, "I have borne chastisement;" and when, if you have any sense of things, you will say unto God, "Do not condemn me."

3. If you have all this to say to God, What should hinder you from saying it? from saying it every day? Why should not he hear your voice, when you have so many errands to him?

(1.) Let not distance hinder you from saying it. You have occasion to speak with a friend, but he is a

great way off, you cannot reach him, you know not where to find him, nor how to get a letter to him, and therefore your business with him is undone: but this needs not keep you from speaking to God; for though it is true, God is in heaven, and we are upon earth, yet he is nigh to his praying people in all that they call upon him for; he hears their voice wherever they are. *Out of the depths I have cried unto thee*, says David, Ps. cxxx. 1. *From the ends of the earth I will cry unto thee*, Ps. lxi. 2. Nay, *Jonah* says, *Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. Undique ad cœlos tantundem est viæ—In all places we may find a way open heavenward:* thanks be to him who by his own blood has consecrated for us a new and living way into the holiest, and settled a correspondence between heaven and earth.

(2.) Let not fear hinder you from saying what you have to say to God. You have business with a great man it may be; but he is so far above you, or so stern and severe toward all his inferiors, that you are afraid to speak to him, and you have none to introduce you, or to speak a good word for you, and therefore you choose rather to drop your cause; but there is no occasion for your being thus discouraged in speaking to God; you may come boldly to the throne of his grace; you have there a *παρρησια, a liberty of speech*, leave to pour out your whole souls. And such are his compassions to humble supplicants, that even his terror need not make them afraid. It is against the mind of God that you should frighten yourselves, he would have you encourage yourselves, for *you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption*, by which you are brought into this among other the glorious liberties of the children of God. Nor is this all, we have one to introduce us, and to speak for us, an advocate with the Father. Did ever children need an advocate with a father? But that by those two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, we have not only the relation of the Father to depend upon, but the interest and intercession of an Advocate; a *High Priest over the house of God*, in whose name we have access with confidence.

(3.) Let not his knowing what your business is, and what you have to say to him, hinder you; you have business with such a friend, but you think you need not put yourselves to any trouble about it, for he is already apprized of it; he knows what you want, and what you desire, and therefore it is no matter for speaking to him: it is true, all your desire is before God, he knows your wants and burthens, but he will know them from you; he has promised you relief, but his promise must be put in suit, and he will for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them, Ezek. xxxvi. 37. Though we cannot by our prayers give him any information, yet we must by our prayers give him honour. It is true, nothing we can say can have any influence upon him, or move him to show us mercy, but it may have an influence upon ourselves, and help to put us into a frame fit to receive mercy. It is a very easy and reasonable condition of his favours, *Ask, and it shall be given you.* It was to teach us the necessity of praying, in order to our receiving favour, that Christ put that strange question to the blind men, *What would ye that I should do unto you?* He knew what they would have, but those that touch the top of the golden sceptre must be ready to tell, *what is their petition*, and *what is their request.*

(4.) Let not any other business hinder our saying what we have to say to God. We have business with a friend perhaps, but we cannot do it because we have not leisure; we have something else to do, which we think more needful; but we cannot say so concerning the business we have to do with God, for that is without doubt the one thing needful, to which every thing else must be made to give way. It is not at all necessary to our happiness that we be great in the world, or raise estates to such a pitch; but it is absolutely necessary that we make our peace with God, that we obtain his favour, and keep ourselves in his love. Therefore no business for the world will serve to excuse our attendance upon God; but, on the contrary, the more important our worldly business, the more need we have to apply ourselves to God by prayer for his blessing upon it, and so to take him along with us in it. The closer we keep to prayer, and to God in prayer, the more will all our affairs prosper.

Shall I prevail with you now to let God frequently hear from you? Let him hear your voice, though it be but the voice of your breathing, (Lam. iii. 56.) that is a sign of life; though it be the voice of your groanings, and those so weak that they cannot be uttered, Rom. viii. 26. Speak to him, though it be in a broken language, as Hezekiah did; *Like a crane or a swallow so I did chatter*, Isaiah xxxviii. 14. Speak often to him; he is always within hearing. Hear him speaking to you, and have an eye to that in every thing you say to him; as when you write an answer to a letter of business you lay it before you. God's word must be the guide of your desires, and the ground of your expectations in prayer; nor can you expect that he should give a gracious ear to what you say to him, if you turn a deaf ear to what he says to you.

You see that you have frequent occasion to speak with God, and therefore are concerned to grow in your acquaintance with him, to take heed of doing any thing to displease him, and to strengthen your interest in the Lord Jesus, through whom alone it is that you have access with boldness to him. Keep your voice in tune for prayer, and let all your language be a pure language, that you may be fit to

call on the name of the Lord. And in every prayer remember you are speaking to God, and make it to appear you have an awe of him upon your spirits: let us not be rash with our mouth, nor hasty to utter any thing before God, but let every word be well weighed, because *God is in heaven, and we upon earth*, Eccl. v. 2. And if he had not invited and encouraged us to do it, it had been unpardonable presumption for such sinful worms as we are to speak to the Lord of glory, Gen. xviii. 27. And we are concerned to speak from the heart, heartily, for it is for our lives, and for the lives of our souls, that we are speaking to him.

2. We must direct our prayer unto God. He must not only hear our voice, but we must with deliberation and design address ourselves to him. In the original it is no more but, *I will direct unto thee;* it might be supplied, *I will direct* my soul *unto thee*, agreeing with Ps. xxv. 1. *Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.* Or, *I will direct my* affections *to thee;* having set my love upon thee, I will let out my love to thee. Our translation supplies it very well, *I will direct my prayer unto thee.* That is,

(1.) When I pray to thee I will direct my prayers; and then it denotes a fixedness of thought, and a close application of mind, to the duty of prayer. We must go about it solemnly, as those who have something of moment much at heart, and much in view therein, and therefore dare not trifle in it. When we go to pray we must not give the sacrifice of fools, who think not either what is to be done, or what is to be gained, but speak the words of the wise, who aim at some good end in what they say, and suit it to that end; we must have in our eye God's glory, and our own true happiness; and so well ordered is the covenant of grace, that God has been pleased therein to twist interests with us, so that in seeking his glory we really and effectually seek our own true interests. This is directing the prayer, as he that shoots an arrow at a mark directs it, and with a fixed eye and steady hand takes aim right. This is engaging the heart to approach to God, and in order to that disengaging it from every thing else. He who takes aim with one eye shuts the other; if we would direct a prayer to God, we must look off all other things, must gather in our wandering thoughts, must summon them all to draw near and give their attendance, for here is work to be done that needs them all, and is well worthy of them all; thus we must be able to say with the psalmist, O God, *my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed.*

(2.) When I direct my prayer, I will *direct it to thee.* And so it speaks,

[1.] The sincerity of our habitual intention in prayer. We must not direct our prayer to men, that we may gain praise and applause with them, as the Pharisees did, who proclaimed their devotions as they did their alms, that they might gain a reputation, which they knew how to make a hand of: *Verily they have their reward*, men commend them, but God abhors their pride and hypocrisy. We must not let our prayers run at large, as they did who said, *Who will show us any good?* nor direct them to the world, courting its smiles, and pursuing its wealth, as those who are therefore said not to *cry unto God with their hearts*, because they *assembled themselves for corn and wine*, Hos. vii. 14. Let not self, carnal self, be the spring and centre of your prayers, but God; let the eye of the soul be fixed upon him as your highest end in all your applications to him; let this be the habitual disposition of your souls, to be to your God for a name and a praise; and let this be your design in all your desires, that God may be glorified, and by this let them all be directed, determined, sanctified, and, when need is, overruled. Our Saviour has plainly taught us this, in the first petition of the Lord's prayer; which is, *Hallowed be thy name:* in that we fix our end, and other things are desired in order to that; in that the prayer is directed to the glory of God, in all that whereby he has made himself known, the glory of his holiness; and it is with an eye to the sanctifying of his name, that we desire his kingdom may come, and his will be done, and that we may be fed, and kept, and pardoned. An habitual aim at God's glory is that sincerity which is our gospel perfection, that single eye, which where it is, the whole body, the whole soul, is full of light. Thus the prayer is directed to God.

[2.] It speaks the steadiness of our actual regard to God in prayer. We must direct our prayer to God, that is, we must continually think of him, as one with whom we have to do in prayer. We must direct our prayer, as we direct our speech, to the person we have business with. The Bible is a letter God has sent to us, prayer is a letter we send to him; now you know it is essential to a letter that it be directed, and material that it be directed right; if it be not, it is in danger of miscarrying, which may be of ill consequence. You pray daily, and therein send letters to God; you know not what you lose if your letters miscarry: will you therefore take instructions how to direct to him?

Give him his titles, as you do when you direct to a person of honour; address yourselves to him as the great Jehovah, God *over all, blessed for evermore;* the *King of kings*, and *Lord of lords;* as *the Lord God, gracious and merciful;* let your hearts and mouths be filled with holy adorings and admirings of him, and fasten upon those titles of his, which are proper to strike a holy awe of him upon your minds, that you may worship him with reverence and godly fear. Direct your prayer to him as the God of glory, with whom is terrible Majesty, and whose greatness is unsearchable, that you may not dare to trifle with him, or to mock him in what you say to him.

Take notice of your relation to him, as his children, and let not that be overlooked and lost in your

awful adorations of his glories. I have been told of a good man, among whose experiences, which he kept a record of, after his death, this among other things was found; that such a time at secret prayer, his heart at the beginning of the duty was much enlarged, in giving to God those titles which are awful and tremendous, in calling him the *Great*, the *Mighty*, and the *Terrible* God; but going on thus he checked himself with this thought, "And why not my Father?" Christ has both by his precept and by his pattern taught us to address ourselves to God as *our Father;* and the Spirit of adoption teaches us to cry *Abba, Father.* A son, though a prodigal, when he returns and repents, may go to his father, and say unto him, *Father, I have sinned;* and though no more worthy to be called a son, yet humbly bold may call him "Father." When Ephraim bemoans himself *as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*, God bemoans him as a *dear son*, as a *pleasant child*, (Jer. xxxi. 18, 20.) and if God is not ashamed, let us not be afraid to own the relation.

Direct your prayer to him in heaven; this our Saviour has taught us in the preface to the Lord's Prayer, *Our Father which art in heaven.* Not that he is confined to the heavens, or as if the heaven, or the heaven of heavens, could contain him; but there he is said to have prepared his throne, not only his throne of government, by which his kingdom ruleth over all, but his throne of grace, to which we must by faith draw near. We must eye him as God in heaven, in opposition to the gods of the heathens, which dwelt in temples made with hands. Heaven is a high place, and we must address ourselves to him as a God infinitely above us; it is the fountain of light, and to him we must address ourselves as the Father of lights; it is a place of prospect, and we must see his eye upon us, from thence beholding all the children of men; it is a place of purity, and we must in prayer eye him as a holy God, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness; it is the firmament of his power, and we must depend upon him as one to whom power belongs. When our Lord Jesus prayed, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, to direct us whence to expect the blessings we need.

Direct this letter to be left with the Lord Jesus, the only Mediator between God and man; it will certainly miscarry if it be not put into his hand, who is that other angel who puts much incense to the prayers of saints, and so perfumed presents them to the Father, Rev. viii. 3. What we ask of the Father must be in his name; what we expect from the Father must be by his hand; for he is the High Priest of our profession, who is ordained for men, to offer their gifts, Heb. v. 1. Direct the letter to be left with him, and he will deliver it with care and speed, and will make our service acceptable. Mr. George Herbert, in his Poem called "The Bag," having pathetically described the wound in Christ's side as he was hanging on the cross, makes him speak thus to all believers as he was going to heaven:

If you have any thing to send or write,
I have no bag, but here is room,
Unto my Father's hands and sight,
Believe me, it shall safely come;
That I shall mind what you impart,
Look, you may put it very near my heart.
Or if hereafter any of my friends
Will use me in this kind, the door
Shall still be open, what he sends
I will present, and something more,
Not to his hurt; sighs will convey
Any thing to me; hark, despair, away.

3. We must look up. That is,

(1.) We must look up in our prayers, as those who speak to one above us, infinitely above us, the *High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity;* as those who expect every good and perfect gift to come from above, from the Father of lights; as those who desire in prayer to enter into the holiest, and to draw near with a true heart. With an eye of faith we must look above the world and every thing in it, must look beyond the things of time. What is this world, and all things here below, to one that knows how to put a due estimate upon spiritual blessings in heavenly things by Christ Jesus? The spirit of a man at death goes upward, (Eccl. iii. 21.) for it returns to God who gave it; and therefore, as mindful of its original, it must in every prayer look upward toward its God, toward its home, as having set its affections on things above, wherein it has laid up its treasure. Let us, therefore, in prayer lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens. It was anciently usual in some churches for the minister to stir up the people to pray with this word, *Sursum corda,—Up with your hearts; unto thee, O Lord, do we lift up our souls.*

(2.) We must look up after our prayers,

[1.] With an eye of satisfaction and pleasure; looking up is a sign of cheerfulness, as a down-look is a melancholy one. We must look up as those who, having by prayer referred ourselves to God, are easy and well pleased, and with an entire confidence in his wisdom and goodness patiently expect the issue. Hannah, when she had prayed, looked up, looked pleasant; she went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad, 1 Sam. i. 18. Prayer is hearts-ease to a good Christian; and when we have prayed we should look up, as those who through grace have found it so.

[2.] With an eye of observation, what returns God makes to our prayers. We must look up, as one who has shot an arrow looks after it to see how near it comes to the mark; we must look within us,

and observe what the frame of our spirits is after we have been at prayer, how well satisfied they are in the will of God, and how well disposed to accommodate themselves to it; we must look about us, and observe how Providence works concerning us, that if our prayers be answered, we may return to give thanks; if not, that we may remove what hinders, and may continue waiting. Thus we must set ourselves upon our watch-tower, to see what God will say unto us, and must be ready to hear it, (Ps. lxxxv. 8.) expecting that God will give us an answer of peace, and resolving that we will return no more to folly. Thus must we keep up our communion with God; hoping that whenever we lift up our hearts unto him, he will lift up the light of his countenance upon us. Sometimes the answer is quick, *While they are yet speaking, I will hear;* quicker than the return of any of your posts; but if it be not, when we have prayed we must wait.

Let us learn thus to direct our prayers, and thus to look up; to be inward with God in every duty, to make heart-work of it, or we make nothing of it. Let us not worship in the outward court, when we are commanded and encouraged to enter within the vail.

II. The particular time fixed in the text for this good work is the morning; and the Psalmist seems to lay an emphasis upon this, in the morning, and again, in the morning: not then only, but then to begin with; let that be one of the hours of prayer. Under the law we find that every morning there was a lamb offered in sacrifice, (Exod. xxix. 39.) and every morning the priests burned incense, (Exod. xxx. 7.) and the singers stood every morning to thank the Lord, 1 Chron. xxiii. 30. And so it was appointed in Ezekiel's temple, Ezek. xlvi. 13—15. By which an intimation was plainly given, that the spiritual sacrifices should be offered by the spiritual priests every morning, as duly as the morning comes. Every Christian should pray in secret, and every master of a family with his family morning by morning; and there is good reason for it.

1. The morning is the first part of the day, and it is fit that he that is first should have the first, and be first served. The heathen could say, *A Jove principium—Let your beginning be with Jupiter.* Whatever you do, begin with God. The world had its beginning from him, we had ours, and therefore whatever we begin, it concerns us to take him along with us in it. The days of our life, as soon as ever the sun of reason rises in the soul, should be devoted to God, and employed in his service; *From the womb of the morning let* Christ have *the dew of thy youth,* Ps. cx. 3. The first-fruits were always to be the Lord's, and the firstlings of the flock. By morning and evening prayer we give glory to him who is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last; with him we must begin and end the day, begin and end the night, who is the beginning and the end, the first cause, and the last end.

Wisdom has said, *Those that seek me early shall find me;* early in their lives, early in the day; for hereby we give to God that which he ought to have, the preference above other things. Hereby we show that we are in care to please him, and to approve ourselves to him, and that we seek him diligently. What we do earnestly we are said in Scripture to do early, Ps. ci. 8. Industrious men rise betimes. David expresses the strength and warmth of his devotion, when he says, *O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee,* Ps. lxiii. 1.

2. In the morning we are fresh and lively, and in the best frame; when our spirits are revived with the rest and sleep of the night, and we live a kind of new life; and the fatigues of the day before are forgotten. The God of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps, yet, when he exerts himself more than ordinary on his people's behalf, he is said to *awake as one out of sleep,* Ps. lxxviii. 65. If ever we be good for any thing, it is in the morning; it is therefore become a proverb, *Aurora musis amica—The morning is a friend to the muses;* and if the morning be a friend to the muses, I am sure it is no less so to the graces. As he that is the first should have the first, so he that is the best should have the best; and when we are fittest for business, we should apply ourselves to that which is the most needful business.

Worshipping God is work that requires the best powers of the soul, when they are at the best; and it well deserves them; how can they be better bestowed, or so as to turn to a better account? Let *all that is within me bless his holy name,* says David, and all little enough. If there be any gift in us by which God may be honoured, the morning is the time to stir it up, (2 Tim. i. 6.) when our spirits are refreshed, and have gained new vigour; then *Awake, my glory, awake psaltery and harp, for I myself will awake early,* Ps. lvii. 8. Then let us stir up ourselves to take hold on God.

3. In the morning we are most free from company and business, and ordinarily have the best opportunity for solitude and retirement; unless we be of those sluggards who lie in bed, with *yet a little sleep, a little slumber,* till the work of their calling calls them up with, *How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?* It is the wisdom of those who have much to do in the world, that they have scarce a minute to themselves of all day, to take time in the morning, before business crowds in upon them, for the business of their religion; that they may be entire for it, and therefore the more intent upon it.

As we are concerned to worship God, when we are least burthened with deadness and dulness within, so also when we are least exposed to distraction and diversion from without; the apostle intimates how much it should be our care to attend upon the

Lord without distraction, 1 Cor. vii. 35. And therefore that one day in seven, (and it is the first day too, the morning of the week,) which is appointed for holy work, is appointed to be a day of rest from other work. Abraham leaves all at the bottom of the hill, when he goes up into the mount to worship God. In the morning, therefore, let us converse with God, and apply ourselves to the concerns of the other life, before we are entangled in the affairs of this life. Our Lord Jesus has set us an example of this, who, because his day was wholly filled up with public business for God and the souls of men, rose up in the morning a great while before day, and before company came in, and went out into a solitary place, and there prayed, Matt. i. 35.

4. In the morning we have received fresh mercies from God, which we are concerned to acknowledge with thankfulness to his praise. He is continually doing us good, and loading us with his benefits. Every day we have reason to bless him, for every day he is blessing us; in the morning particularly; and therefore, as he is giving out to us the fruits of his favour, which are said to be *new every morning*, (Lam. iii. 23.) because though the same we had the morning before, they are still forfeited, and still needed, and upon that account may be called still new; so we should be still returning the expressions of our gratitude to him, and of other pious and devout affections, which, like the fire on the altar, must be new every morning, Lev. vi. 12.

Have we had a good night? and have we not an errand to the throne of grace to return thanks for it? How many mercies concurred to make it a good night! distinguishing mercies, granted to us, but denied to others! Many have not where to lay their heads, our Master himself had not; *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*; but we have houses to dwell in, quiet and peaceable habitations, perhaps stately ones; we have beds to lie in, warm and easy ones, perhaps beds of ivory, fine ones, such as they stretched themselves upon who were at ease in Zion; and are not put to wander in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth, as some of the best of God's saints have been forced to do, of whom the world was not worthy. Many have beds to lie on, yet dare not, or cannot, lie down in them, being kept up either by the sickness of their friends, or the fear of their enemies. But we have laid us down, and there has been none to make us afraid; no alarms of the sword, either of war or persecution. Many lay them down and cannot sleep, but are full of tossings to and fro until the dawning of the day, through pain of body, or anguish of mind. Wearisome nights are appointed to them, and their eyes are held waking; but we have laid us down and slept without any disturbance, and our sleep was sweet and refreshing, the pleasant parenthesis of our cares and toils. It is God who has given us sleep, has given it us as he gives it to his beloved. Many lay them down and sleep, and never rise again, they sleep the sleep of death, and their beds are their graves; but we have slept and waked again, have rested, and are refreshed; we shake ourselves, and it is with us as at other times, because the Lord has sustained us; and if he had not upheld us, we had sunk with our own weight when we fell asleep, Ps. iii. 5.

Have we a pleasant morning? Is the light sweet to us, the light of the sun, the light of the eyes, do these rejoice the heart? and ought we not to own our obligations to him who opens our eyes, and opens the eye-lids of the morning upon us? Have we clothes to put on in the morning, garments that are warm upon us, (Job xxxvii. 17.) change of raiment, not for necessity only, but for ornament? We have them from God; it is his wool and his flax that is given to cover our nakedness, and the morning when we dress ourselves is the proper time of returning him thanks for it; yet, I doubt, we do it not so constantly as we do for our food when we sit down to our tables, though we have as much reason to do it. Are we in health and at ease? Have we been long so? We ought to be thankful for a constant series of mercies, as for particular instances of it, especially considering how many are sick and in pain, and how much we have deserved to be so.

Perhaps we have experienced some special mercy to ourselves or our families, in preservation from fire or thieves, from dangers we have been aware of, and many more unseen; weeping perhaps endured for a night, and joy came in the morning; and that calls aloud upon us to own the goodness of God. The destroying angel perhaps has been abroad, and the arrow that flies at midnight, and wastes in darkness, has been shot in at others' windows, but our houses have been passed over. Thanks be to God for the blood of the covenant, sprinkled upon our door-posts; and for the ministration of the good angels about us, to which we owe it that we have been preserved from the malice of the evil angels against us, those rulers of the darkness of this world, who, perhaps, creep forth like the beasts of prey, when he makes darkness and it is dark. All the glory be to the God of the angels.

5. In the morning we have fresh matter ministered to us for the adoration of the greatness and glory of God. We ought to take notice, not only of the gifts of God's bounty to us, which we have the comfort and benefit of, they are little narrow souls that confine their regards to them; but we ought to observe the more general instances of his wisdom and power in the kingdom of providence, which redound to his honour, and the common good of the universe. The 19th Psalm seems to have been a morning meditation, in which we are directed to observe how *the*

heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work; and to own not only the advantage we receive from their light and influence, but the honour they do to him who stretched out the heavens like a curtain, fixed their pillars, and established their ordinances, according to which they continue to this day, for they are all his servants. *Day unto day utters this speech, and night unto night showeth this knowledge*, even the eternal power and godhead of the great Creator of the world, and its great Ruler. The regular and constant succession and revolution of light and darkness, according to the original contract made between them, that they should reign alternately, may serve to confirm our faith in that part of divine revelation, which gives us the history of the creation, and the promise of God to Noah and his sons, Gen. viii. 22. His *covenant with the day and with the night*, Jer. xxxiii. 20.

Look up in the morning, and see how exactly the day-spring knows its place, knows its time, and keeps them: how the morning light takes hold of the ends of the earth, and of the air which is turned to it as clay to the seal, instantly receiving the impressions of it, Job xxxviii. 12—14. I was pleased with an expression of a worthy, good minister, I heard lately in his thanksgivings to God for the mercies of the morning: "How many thousand miles" (said he) "has the sun travelled this last night to bring the light of the morning to us poor sinful wretches, that justly might have been buried in the darkness of the night!" Look up and see the sun as a bridegroom richly dressed, and greatly pleased, coming out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race: observe how bright his beams are, how sweet his smiles, how strong his influences: and, if there be no speech or language where their voice is not heard, the voice of these natural preachers, proclaiming the glory of God, it is pity there should be any speech or language where the voice of his worshippers should not be heard, echoing to the voice of those preachers, and ascribing glory to him who thus makes the morning and evening to rejoice. But whatever others do, let him hear our voice to this purpose in the morning, and in the morning let us direct our praises unto him.

6. In the morning we have, or should have, had fresh thoughts of God, and sweet meditations on his name, and those we ought to offer up to him in prayer. Have we been, according to David's example, *remembering God upon our beds*, and *meditating upon him in the night-watches?* When we awake, can we say as he did, *We are still with God?* If so, we have a good errand to the throne of grace by the words of our mouths, to offer up to God the meditations of our hearts, and it will be to him a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour. If the heart has been inditing a good matter, let the tongue be as the pen of a ready writer, to pour it out before God, Ps. xlv. 1.

We have the word of God to converse with, and we ought to read a portion of it every morning: by it God speaks to us, and in it we ought to meditate day and night, which if we do, that will send us to the throne of grace, and furnish us with many a good errand there. If God in the morning by his grace direct his word to us, so as to make it reach our hearts, that will engage us to direct our prayer to him.

7. In the morning, it is to be feared, we find cause to reflect upon many vain and sinful thoughts that have been in our minds in the night season; and upon that account it is necessary that we address ourselves to God by prayer in the morning, for the pardon of them. The Lord's prayer seems to be calculated primarily in the letter of it for the morning; for we are taught to pray *for our daily bread this day:* and yet we are then to pray, *Father forgive us our trespasses;* for as in the hurry of the day we contract guilt by our irregular words and actions, so we do in the solitude of the night, by our corrupt imaginations, and the wanderings of an unsanctified ungoverned fancy. It is certain, *The thought of foolishness is sin*, Prov. xxiv. 9. Foolish thoughts are sinful thoughts; the first-born of the old man, the first beginnings of all sin; and how many of these vain thoughts lodge within us wherever we lodge? Their name is Legion, for they are many; who can understand these errors! They are more than the hairs of our head. We read of those who work evil upon their beds, because there they devise it; and when the morning is light they practise it, Mic. ii. 1. How often in the night season is the mind disquieted and distracted with distrustful careful thoughts; polluted with unchaste and wanton thoughts; intoxicated with proud aspiring thoughts; soured and leavened with malicious revengeful thoughts; or, at the best, diverted from devout and pious thoughts by a thousand impertinences: out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, which lie down with us, and rise up with us, for out of that corrupt fountain, which, wherever we go, we carry about with us, these streams naturally flow. Yea, and in the multitude of dreams, as well as in many words, there are also divers vanities, Eccl. v. 2.

And dare we go abroad till we have renewed our repentance, which we are every night as well as every day thus making work for? Are we not concerned to confess to him who knows our hearts, their wanderings from him, to complain of them to him as revolting and rebellious hearts, and bent to backslide; to make our peace with the blood of Christ, and to pray, that the thought of our heart may be forgiven us? We cannot with safety go into the business of the day under the guilt of any sin unrepented of, or unpardoned.

8. In the morning we are addressing ourselves to the work of the day, and therefore are concerned by prayer to seek unto God for his presence and blessing. We come, and are encouraged to come boldly, to the throne of grace, not only for mercy to pardon what has been amiss, but for grace to help in every time of need: and what time is it that is not a time of need with us? And, therefore, what morning should pass without morning prayer? We read of that which the duty of every day requires, (Ezra iii. 4.) and in reference to that we must go to God every morning to pray for the gracious disposal of his providence concerning us, and the gracious operations of his Spirit upon us.

We have families to look after, it may be, and to provide for, and are in care to do well for them; let us then every morning by prayer commit them to God, put them under the conduct and government of his grace, and then we effectually put them under the care and protection of his providence. Holy Job rose up early in the morning to offer burnt-offerings for his children, and we should do so to offer up prayers and supplications for them, according to the number of them all, Job i. 5. Thus we cause the blessing to rest on our houses.

We are going about the business of our callings perhaps, let us look up to God in the first place, for wisdom and grace to manage them well, in the fear of God, and to abide with him in them; and then we may in faith beg of him to prosper and succeed us in them, to strengthen us for the services of them, to support us under the fatigues of them, to direct the designs of them, and to give us comfort in the gains of them. We have journeys to go, it may be; let us look up to God for his presence with us, and go no whither, where we cannot in faith beg of God to go with us.

We have a prospect, perhaps, of opportunities of doing or getting good, let us look up to God for a heart to every price in our hands, for skill, and will, and courage to improve it, that it may not be a price in the hand of a fool. Every day has its temptations too; some perhaps we foresee, but there may be many more that we think not of, and are therefore concerned to be earnest with God, that we may not be led into any temptation, but guarded against every one; that whatever company we come into, we may have wisdom to do good and no hurt to them, and to get good and no hurt by them.

We know not what a day may bring forth; little think in the morning what tidings we may hear, and what events may befall us before night; and should therefore beg of God grace to carry us through the duties and difficulties which we do not foresee, as well as those which we do; that, in order to our standing complete in all the will of God, as the day is, so the strength may be. We shall find, that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, and that, therefore, as it is folly to take thought for to-morrow's event, so it is wisdom to take thought for to-day's duty, that sufficient unto this day, and the duty of it, may be the supplies of the divine grace, thoroughly to furnish us for every good word and work, and thoroughly to fortify us against every evil word and work; that we may not think, or speak, or do any thing in all the day, which we may have cause upon any account to wish unthought, unspoke, and undone at night.

The Application.

1. Let this word put us in mind of our omissions; for omissions are sins, and must come into judgment. How often has our morning worship been either neglected or negligently performed! The work has been either not done at all, or done deceitfully; either no sacrifice at all brought, or it has been the torn, and the lame, and the sick; either no prayer, or the prayer not directed aright, nor lifted up. We have had the morning's mercies, God has not been wanting in the compassion and care of a Father for us, yet we have not done the morning's service, but have been shamefully wanting in the duty of children to him.

Let us be truly humbled before God this morning for our sin and folly herein, that we have so often robbed God of the honour, and ourselves of the benefit, of our morning worship. God has come into our closets, seeking this fruit, but has found none, or next to none; has hearkened and heard, but either we spake not to him at all, or spake not right. Some trifling thing or other has served for an excuse to put it by once, and when once the good usage has been broken in upon, conscience has been wounded, and its bonds weakened, and we have grown more and more cool to it, and perhaps by degrees it has been quite left off.

2. I beseech you, suffer a word of exhortation concerning this. I know what an influence it would have upon the prosperity of your souls, to be constant and sincere in your secret worship, and therefore, give me leave to press it upon you with all earnestness; let God hear from you every morning, every morning let your prayer be directed to him, and look up.

(1.) Make conscience of your secret worship; keep it up, not only because it has been a custom you have received by tradition from your fathers, but because it is a duty, concerning which you have received commandments from the Lord. Keep up stated times for it, and be true to them. Let those who have hitherto lived in the total neglect, or in the frequent omission, of secret prayer, be persuaded henceforward to look upon it as the most needful part of their daily business, and the most delightful part of their daily comfort, and do it accordingly

with a constant care, and, yet, with a constant pleasure.

No persons who have the use of their reason, can pretend to an exemption from this duty; what is said to some is said to all, "Pray, pray, continue in prayer, and watch in the same." Rich people are not so much bound to labour with their hands as the poor, poor people are not so much bound to give alms as the rich, but both are equally bound to pray. The rich are not above the necessity of the duty, nor the poor below acceptance with God in it. It is not too soon for the youngest to begin to pray; and those whom the multitude of years has taught wisdom, yet at their end will be fools, if they think they have no further occasion for prayer.

Let none plead they cannot pray; for if you are ready to perish with hunger, you could beg and pray for food; and if you see yourselves undone by reason of sin, can you not beg and pray for mercy and grace? Art thou a Christian? Never for shame say, thou canst not pray, for that is as absurd as for a soldier to say, he knows not how to handle a sword, or a carpenter an axe. What are you called for into the fellowship of Christ, but that by him you may have fellowship with God? You cannot pray so well as others, pray as well as you can, and God will accept of you.

Let none plead that they have not time in a morning for prayer. I dare say, you can find time for other things that are less needful. You had better take time from sleep, than want time for prayer. And how can you spend time better, and more to your satisfaction and advantage? All the business of the day will prosper the better, for your beginning it thus with God.

Let none plead that they have not a convenient place to be private in for this work: Isaac retired into the field to pray; and the Psalmist could be alone with God in a corner of the house top. If you cannot perform it with so much secrecy as you would, yet perform it; it is doing it with ostentation that is the fault, not doing it under observation, when it cannot be avoided. I remember, when I was a young man coming up hither to London in the stage coach, in King James's time, there happened to be a gentleman in the company, who then was not afraid to own himself a Jesuit. Many rencounters he and I had upon the road, and this was one: He was praising the custom in popish countries of keeping the church doors always open, for people to go into at any time to say their prayers. I told him it looked too much like the practice of the Pharisees, that prayed in the synagogues; and did not agree with Christ's command, *Thou, when thou prayest* thyself, *enter* not into the church with the doors open, but *into thy closet and shut thy doors.* When he was pressed with that argument, he replied with some vehemence, "I believe you Protestants say your prayers no where; for" (said he) "I have travelled a great deal in the coach in company with protestants, have often lain in inns in the same room with them, and have carefully watched them, and could never perceive that any of them said his prayers night or morning but one, and he was a presbyterian." I hope there was more malice than truth in what he said: but I mention it as an intimation, that though we cannot be so private as we would be in our devotions, yet we must not omit them, lest the omission should prove not a sin only, but a scandal.

(2.) Make a business of your secret worship, and be not slothful in this business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Take heed lest it degenerate into a formality, and you grow customary in your accustomed services. Go about the duty solemnly: be inward with God in it; it is not enough to say your prayers, but you must pray your prayers, must pray in praying, as Elijah did, Jam. v. 17. Let us learn to labour fervently in prayer, as Epaphras did, (Col. iv. 12.) and we shall find that it is the hand of the diligent in this duty that makes rich. God looks not at the length of your prayers, nor shall you be heard for your much speaking or fine speaking; but God requires truth in the inward part, and it is the prayer of the upright that is his delight. When you have prayed, look upon yourselves as thereby engaged and encouraged, both to serve God and to trust in him; that the comfort and benefit of your morning devotions may not be as the morning cloud which passes away, but as the morning light which shines more and more.

THE SECOND DISCOURSE,

SHOWING HOW TO SPEND THE DAY WITH GOD.

PSALM XXV. 5.

——On thee do I wait all the day.

WHICH of us is there that can truly say this? Who lives this life of communion with God, which is so much our business, and so much our blessedness? How far short do we come of the spirit of holy David, though we have much better assistances for our acquaintance with God, than the saints then had, by the clearer discoveries of the mediation of Christ. Yet, that weak Christians, who are sincere, may not therefore despair, be it remembered, that David himself was not always in such a frame that he could say so; he had his infirmities, and yet was a *man after God's own heart;* we have ours, which, if they be sincerely lamented and striven against, and the habitual bent of our souls be toward God and heaven, we shall be accepted through Christ, for we are not under the law, but under grace.

However, David's profession in the text, shows us what should be our practice, On God we must wait all the day. That denotes two things, a patient expectation, and a constant attendance.

1. It speaks a patient expectation of his coming to us in a way of mercy; and then, all the day must be taken figuratively, for all the time that the wanted and desired mercy is delayed. David, in the former part of the verse prayed for divine conduct and instruction, *Lead me in thy truth and teach me.* He was at a loss, and very desirous to know what God would have him to do, and was ready to do it; but God kept him in suspense, he was not yet clear what was the mind and will of God, what course he should steer, and how he should dispose of himself; will he therefore proceed without divine direction? No, *On thee I will wait all the day,* as Abraham attended on the sacrifice from morning till the sun went down, before God gave him an answer to his inquiries concerning his seed, (Gen. xv. 5, 12.) and as Habakkuk stood upon his watch-tower to see what answer God would give him, when he consulted his oracle; and though it do not come presently, yet at the end it shall speak, and not lie.

David, in the words before the text, had called God *The God of his salvation,* the God on whom he depended for salvation, temporal and eternal salvation; from whom he expected deliverance out of his present distresses, those troubles of his heart that were enlarged, (*v.* 17.) and out of the hands of those enemies who were ready to triumph over him, (*v.* 2.) and who hated him with a cruel hatred, *v.* 19. Hoping that God will be his Saviour, he resolves to wait on him all the day, like a genuine son of Jacob, whose dying profession was, (Gen. xlix. 18.) *I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.* Sometimes God precedes his people with the blessings of his goodness, before they call he answers them, is in the midst of his church, to help her, and that right early, Ps. xlvi. 5. But at other times he seems to stand afar off, he delays the deliverance, and keeps them long in expectation of it, nay, and in suspense about it; the light is neither clear nor dark, it is day, and that is all; it is a cloudy and dark day, and it is not till evening time, that it is light, that the comfort comes which they have been kept all the day waiting for; nay, perhaps it comes not till far in the night, it is at midnight that the cry is made, *Behold the bridegroom comes.* The deliverance of the church out of her troubles, the success of her struggles, and rest from them, a rescue from under the rod of the wicked, and the accomplishment of all that which God has promised concerning it, is what we must continue humbly waiting upon God for, without distrust or impatience; we must wait all the day,

(1.) Though it be a long day; though we be kept waiting a great while, quite beyond our own reckoning; though, when we have waited long, we are still obliged to wait longer, and are bid with the prophet's servant to *go yet seven times,* (1 Kings xviii. 43.) before we perceive the least sign of mercy coming. *We looked that this* and the other *had been he that should have delivered Israel,* but are disappointed; *The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved,* Jer. viii. 20. The time is prolonged, nay, the opportunities are let slip, the summer time, and harvest time, when we thought to have reaped the fruit of all our prayers, and pains, and patience, is past and ended, and we are as far as ever from salvation. The time that the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim was long, much longer than it was thought it would have been, when it was first lodged there; it was twenty years, so that the whole house of Israel lamented after the Lord, and began to fear it would abide for ever in that obscurity, 1 Sam. vii. 2.

But though it be a long day, it is but a day, but one day, and it is known to the Lord, Zech. xiv. 7. It seems long while we are kept waiting, but the happy issue will enable us to reflect upon it as short, and but for a moment. It is no longer than God has appointed, and we are sure his time is the best time, and his favours are worth waiting for. The time is long, but it is nothing to the days of eternity, when those who had long patience shall be recompensed for it with an everlasting salvation.

(2.) Though it be a dark day, yet let us wait upon God all the day. Though while we are kept waiting for what God will do, we are kept in the dark concerning what he is doing, and what is best for us to do, yet, let us be content to wait in the dark. Though we see not our signs, though there is none to tell us how long, yet let us resolve to wait, how long soever it be; for though what God does we know not now, yet we shall know hereafter, when the mystery of God shall be finished.

Never was man more at a loss concerning God's dealings with him than poor Job was: *I go forward, but he is not there; backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, on the right hand, but I cannot see him,* (Job xxiii. 8, 9.) yet he sits down, (*v.* 10.) resolving to wait on God all the day with a satisfaction in this, that though he know not the way that he takes, *he knows the way that I take,* and *when he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold,* approved and improved. He sits by as a refiner, and will take care that the gold be in the furnace no longer than is needful for the refining of it. When God's way is in the sea, so that he cannot be traced, yet we are sure his way is in the sanctuary, so that he may be trusted, see Ps. lxxvii. 13, 19. And when *clouds and darkness are round about him,* yet even then *justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.*

(3.) Though it be a stormy day, yet we must wait upon God all the day. Though we are not only becalmed, and do not get forward, but though the

wind be contrary, and drive us back, nay, though it be boisterous, and the church be tossed with tempests, and ready to sink, yet we must hope the best; yet we must wait, and weather the storm by patience. It is some comfort, that Christ is in the ship; the church's cause is Christ's cause, he has espoused it, and he will own it; he is embarked in the same vessel with his people, and therefore, *Why are you fearful?* Doubt not but the ship will come safe to land; though Christ seem for the present to be asleep, the prayers of his disciples will awake him, and he will rebuke the winds and the waves; though the bush burn, if God be in it, it shall not be consumed. Yet this is not all, Christ is not only in the ship, but at the helm, whatever threatens the church is ordered by the Lord Jesus, and shall be made to work for its good. It is excellently expressed by Mr. George Herbert:

Away despair, my gracious God doth hear,
When winds and waves assault my keel,
He doth preserve it, he doth steer,
E'en when the boat seems most to reel.
Storms are the triumph of his art,
Well may he close his eyes, but not his heart.

It is a seasonable word at this day. What God will do with us we cannot tell; but this we are sure of, that he is a God of judgment, infinitely wise and just, and therefore, *Blessed are all they that wait for him*, Isa. xxx. 18. He will do his own work in his own way and time; and though we be hurried back into the wilderness, when we thought we had been upon the borders of Canaan, we suffer justly for our unbelief and murmurings, but God acts wisely, and will be found faithful to his promise; his time to judge for his people, and to repent himself concerning his servants, is when he sees that their strength is gone. This was seen of old in the mount of the Lord, and shall be again. And therefore let us continue in a waiting frame. Hold out faith and patience, for *It is good that a man should both hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.*

2. It speaks a constant attendance upon him in a way of duty. And so we understand the day literally; it was David's practice to wait upon God all the day, כל-היום It signifies both *every day*, and all *the day long;* it is the same with that command, (Prov. xxiii. 17.) *Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.*

Doct. It is not enough for us to begin every day with God, but on him we must wait every day, and all the day long.

For the opening of this I must show, I. What it is to wait upon God: II. That we must do this every day, and all the day long.

I. Let us inquire, what it is to wait upon God. You have heard how much it is our duty in the morning to speak to him, in solemn prayer. But have we then done with him for all day? No, we must still be waiting on him; as one to whom we stand very nearly related, and very strongly obliged. To wait on God, is to live a life of desire toward him, delight in him, dependence on him, and devotedness to him.

1. It is to live a life of desire toward God; to wait on him, as the beggar waits on his benefactor, with earnest desire to receive supplies from him; as the sick and sore in Bethesda's pool waited for the stirring of the water, and attended in the porches with desire to be helped in and healed. When the prophet had said, *Lord, in the way of thy judgments we have waited for thee*, he explained himself thus in the next words, *The desire of our soul is thy name, and to the remembrance of thee;* and *with my soul have I desired thee*, Isa. xxvi. 8, 9. Our desire must be not only toward the good things that God gives, but toward God himself, his favour and love, the manifestation of his name to us, and the influence of his grace upon us. Then we wait on God, when our souls pant after him, and his favour, when we thirst for God, for the living God; O that I may behold the beauty of the Lord! O that I may taste his goodness! O that I may bear his image, and be entirely conformed to his will! for there is none in heaven or earth, that I can desire in comparison of him. O that I may know him more, and love him better, and be brought nearer to him, and made fitter for him. Thus upon the wings of holy desire should our souls be still soaring upward toward God, still pressing forward, forward toward heaven.

We must not only pray solemnly in the morning, but that desire which is the life and soul of prayer, like the fire upon the altar, must be kept continually burning, ready for the sacrifices that are to be offered upon it. The bent and bias of the soul, in all its motions, must be toward God, the serving of him in all we do, and the enjoying of him in all we have. And this is principally intended in the commands given us to pray alway, to pray without ceasing, to continue in prayer. Even when we are not making actual addresses to God, we must have habitual inclinations toward him; as a man in health, though he is not always eating, yet has always a disposition in him toward the nourishment and delights of the body. Thus must we be always waiting on God, as our chief good, and moving toward him.

2. It is to live a life of delight in God, as the lover waits on his beloved. Desire is love in motion, as a bird upon the wing; delight is love at rest, as a bird upon the nest; now though our desire must still be so toward God, that we must be wishing for more of God, yet our delight must be so in God, that we must never wish for more than God. Believing him to be a God all-sufficient, in him we

must be entirely satisfied; let him be mine, and I have enough. Do we love to love God? Is it a pleasure to us to think that there is a God? that he is such a one as he has revealed himself to be? that he is our God by creation, to dispose of us as he pleases? our God in covenant, to dispose of all for the best to us? This is waiting on our God, always looking up to him with pleasure.

Something or other the soul has that it values itself by, something or other that it reposes itself in; and what is it? God or the world? What is it that we pride ourselves in, which we make the matter of our boasting? It is the character of worldly people, that they boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, (Ps. xlix. 6.) and of their own might, and the power of their own hands, which they think have gotten them this wealth; it is the character of godly people, that *in God they boast all the day long*, Ps. xliv. 8. That is waiting on God; having our eye alway upon him with a secret complacency, as men have upon that which is their glory, and which they glory in.

What is it that we please ourselves with, which we embrace with the greatest satisfaction, in the bosom of which we lay our heads, and in having which we hug ourselves, as having all we would have? The worldly man, when his barns are full of corn, says, *Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;* the godly man can never say so till he finds his heart full of God, and Christ, and grace; and then, *Return unto thy rest, O my soul*, here repose thyself. The gracious soul dwells in God, is at home in him, and there dwells at ease, is in him perpetually pleased; and whatever he meets with in the world to make himself uneasy, he finds enough in God to balance it.

3. It is to live a life of dependence on God, as the child waits on his father, whom he has a confidence in, and on whom he casts all his care. To wait on God, is to expect all good to come to us from him, as the worker of all good for us, and in us, the giver of all good to us, and the protector of us from all evil. Thus David explains himself, (Ps. lxii. 5.) *My soul, wait thou only upon God*, and continue still to do so, for *my expectation is from him*; I look not to any other for the good I need; for I know that every creature is that to me, and no more than he makes it to be, and from him every man's judgment proceeds. Shall we lift up our eyes to the hills? Does our help come thence? Does the dew that waters the valleys come no further than from the tops of the hills? Shall we go higher, and lift up our eyes to the heavens, to the clouds? Can they of themselves give rain? No, if God hear not the heavens, they hear not the earth; we must therefore look above the hills, above the heavens, for all our help cometh from the Lord. It was the acknowledgment of a king, and no good one neither, *If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee, out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press?*

And our expectations from God, as far as they are guided by, and grounded upon, the word which he has spoken, ought to be humbly confident, and with a full assurance of faith. We must know and be sure that no word of God shall fall to the ground, that the expectation of the poor shall not perish. Worldly people say to their gold, *Thou art my hope;* and to the fine gold, *Thou art my confidence*, and the rich man's wealth is his strong city: but God is the only refuge and portion of the godly man here in the land of the living; it is to him only that he says, and he says it with a holy boldness, *Thou art my hope and my confidence.* The eyes of all things wait on him, for he is good to all; but the eyes of his saints especially, for he is in a peculiar manner good to Israel, good to them. They know his name, and therefore will trust and triumph in him, as those who know they shall not be made ashamed of their hope.

4. It is to live a life of devotedness to God, as the servant waits on his master, ready to observe his will, and to do his work, and in every thing to consult his honour and interest. To wait on God is entirely and unreservedly to refer ourselves to his wise and holy directions and disposals, and cheerfully to acquiesce in them, and comply with them. The servant that waits on his master chooses not his own way, but follows his master, step by step: thus must we wait on God, as those who have no will of our own, but what is wholly resolved into his; and must therefore study to accommodate ourselves to his. It is the character of the redeemed of the Lord, that they follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes, with an implicit faith and obedience. As the eyes of a servant are to the hand of his master, and the eyes of a maiden to the hand of her mistress, so must our eyes wait on the Lord, to do what he appoints us, to take what he allots us; *Father, thy will be done;* Master, thy will be done.

The servant waits on his master, not only to do him service, but to do him honour; and thus must we wait on God, that we may be to him for a name, and for a praise. His glory must be our ultimate end, to which we, and all we are, have, and can do, must be dedicated; we wear his livery, attend in his courts, and follow his motions as his servants, for this end, that he may in all things be glorified.

To wait on God is to make his will our rule.

(1.) To make the will of his precept the rule of our practice, and to do every duty with an eye to that. We must wait on him to receive his commands, with a resolution to comply with them, how much soever they may contradict our corrupt inclinations or secular interests. We must wait on him as the holy angels do, who always behold the face of their Father, as those who are at his beck, and are

ready to go upon the least intimation of his will, though but by a wink of his eye, wherever he sends them. Thus must we do the will of God, as the angels do it who are in heaven, those ministers of his that do his pleasure, and are always about his throne in order to it, and never out of the way.

David here prays, that God would show him his way, and lead him, and teach him, and keep him, and forward him, in the way of his duty; and so the text comes in as a plea to enforce that petition, for *on thee do I wait all the day;* ready to receive the law from thy mouth, and in every thing to observe thy orders. And then it intimates this, that those, and those only, can expect to be taught of God, who are ready and willing to do as they are taught. If any man will do his will, be stedfastly resolved in the strength of his grace to comply with it, he shall know what his will is. David prays, Lord, *give me understanding*, and then promises himself, *I shall keep thy law, yea, I shall observe it*, as the servant that waits on his master. They that go up to the house of the Lord, with an expectation that he will teach them his ways, it must be with an humble resolution, that they will walk in his paths, Isa. ii. 3. Lord, let the pillar of cloud and fire go before me, for I am determined with full purpose of heart to follow it, and thus to wait on my God all the day.

(2.) To make the will of his providence the rule of our patience, and to bear every affliction with an eye to that. We are sure it is God who performs all things for us, and he performs the thing that is appointed for us; we are as sure that all is well that God does, and shall be made to work for good to all that love him; and in order to that we ought to acquiesce in, and accommodate ourselves to, the whole will of God. To wait on the Lord, is to say, It is the Lord, let him do to me as *seemeth good* to him, because nothing seemeth good to him but what is really good; and so we shall see, when God's work appears in a full light. It is to say, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt*, for *should it be according to my mind?* It is to bring our mind to our condition in every thing, so as to keep it calm and easy, whatever happens to make us uneasy.

And we must therefore bear the affliction, whatever it is, because it is the will of God; it is what he has allotted us, who does all according to the counsel of his own will. This is Christian patience; I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, not because it was to no purpose to complain, but because thou didst it, and therefore I had no reason to complain. And this will reconcile us to every affliction, one as well as another, because, whatever it is, it is the will of God, and in compliance with it we must not only be silent, because of the sovereignty of his will, *Woe unto him that strives with his Maker;* but we must be satisfied because of the wisdom and goodness of it. Whatever the disposals of God's providence may be concerning those who wait on him, we may be sure that as he does them no wrong, so he means them no hurt: nay, they may say as the Psalmist did, even when he was plagued all the day long, and chastened every morning, however it be, yet God is good, and therefore, *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him, yet will I wait on him.*

I might open this duty of waiting on God by other scripture expressions which speak the same thing, and are, as this, comprehensive of a great part of that homage, which we are bound to pay to him, and that communion which it is our interest to keep up with him. *Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ.*

It is to set God always before us, Ps. xvi. 8. To look upon him as one always near us, always at our right hand, and who has his eye upon us wherever we are, and whatever we are doing; nay, as one in whom we live and move, and have our being, with whom we have to do, and to whom we are accountable. This is pressed upon us, as the great principle of gospel obedience, *Walk before me, and be thou upright;* herein consists that uprightness which is our evangelical perfection, in walking at all times as before God, and studying to approve ourselves to him.

It is to have our eyes ever toward the Lord, as it follows here, Ps. xxv. 15. Though we cannot see him by reason of our present distance and darkness, yet we must look toward him, toward the place where his honour dwells; as those who desire the knowledge of him and his will, and direct all to his honour as the mark we aim at, labouring in this, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him. To wait on him, is to follow him with our eye in all those things wherein he is pleased to manifest himself, and to admit the discoveries of his being and perfections.

It is to acknowledge God in all our ways, Prov. iii. 6. In all the actions of life, and in all the affairs of life, we must walk in his hand, and set ourselves in the way of his steps. In all our undertakings, we must wait upon him for direction and success, and by faith and prayer commit our way to him to undertake for us, and him we must take with us wherever we go; *If thy presence go not up with us, carry us not up hence.* In all our comforts we must see his hand giving them out to us, and in all our crosses we must see the same hand laying them upon us, that we may learn to receive both good and evil, and to bless the name of the Lord both when he gives and when he takes.

It is to follow the Lord fully, as Caleb did, Numb. xiv. 24. It is to *fulfil after the Lord*, so the word is; to have respect to all his commandments, and to study to stand complete in his whole will. Wherever God leads us, and goes before us, we must be

followers of him as dear children, must follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes, and take him for our guide whithersoever we go.

This is to wait on God, and those who do so may cheerfully wait for him, for he will without fail appear in due time to their joy; and that word of *Solomon* shall be made good to them, *He who waits on his master shall be honoured*, for Christ has said, *Where I am, there shall also my servant be*, Prov. xxvii. 18.

II. Having showed you what it is to wait on God, I come next to show, that this we must do every day, and all the day long.

1. We must wait on our God, *omni die—every day*, so some. This is the work of every day which is to be done in its day, for the duty of every day requires it. Servants in the courts of princes have their weeks or months of waiting appointed them, and are obliged to attend only at certain times. But God's servants must never be out of waiting; all the days of our appointed time, the time of our work and warfare here on earth, we must be waiting, (Job xiv. 14.) and not desire or expect to be discharged from this attendance, till we come to heaven, where we shall wait on God, as angels do, more nearly and constantly.

We must wait on God every day.

(1.) Both on sabbath days, and on week days. The Lord's day is instituted and appointed on purpose for our attendance on God in the courts of his house, there we must wait on him to give glory to him, and to receive both commands and favours from him. Ministers must then wait on their ministry, (Rom. xii. 7.) and people must wait on it too, saying, as Cornelius for himself and his friends, *Now we are all here ready before God*, to *hear all things that are commanded thee of God*, Acts x. 33. It is for the honour of God, to help to fill up the assemblies of those who attend at the footstool of his throne, and to add to their number. The whole sabbath time, except what is taken up in works of necessity and mercy, must be employed in waiting on our God. Christians are spiritual priests, and as such it is their business to wait in God's house at the time appointed.

But that is not enough; we must wait upon our God on week days too, for every day of the week we want mercy from him, and have work to do for him. Our waiting upon him in public ordinances on the first day of the week, is designed to fix us to, and fit us for, communion with him all the week after; so that we answer not the intentions of the sabbath, unless the impressions of it abide upon us, and go with us into the business of the week, and be kept always in the imagination of the thought of our heart. Thus from one sabbath to another, and from one new moon to another, we must keep in a holy gracious frame; must be so in the Spirit on the Lord's day, as to walk in the Spirit all the week.

(2.) Both on idle days and busy days we must be found waiting on God. Some days of our lives are days of labour and hurry, when our particular calling calls for our close and diligent application; but we must not think that will excuse us from our constant attendance on God. Even when our hands are working about the world, our hearts may be waiting on our God, by an habitual regard to him; to his providence as our guide, and his glory as our end, in our worldly business; and thus we must abide with him in them. Those who rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness, in pursuit of the world, yet are concerned to wait on God, because otherwise all their care and pains will signify nothing; it is labour in vain, (Ps. cxxvii. 1, 2.) nay, it is labour in the fire.

Some days of our lives we relax from business, and take our ease. Many of you have your time for diversion; but then when you lay aside other business, this of waiting upon God must not be laid aside. When you prove yourselves with mirth, as Solomon did, and say, you will enjoy pleasure a little, yet let this wisdom remain with you, (Eccles. ii. 1, 3.) let your eye be then up to God, and take heed of dropping your communion with him, in that which you call an agreeable conversation with your friends. Whether it be a day of work, or a day of rest, we shall find nothing like waiting upon God, both to lighten the toil of our work, and to sweeten the comfort of our repose. So that whether we have much to do or little to do in the world, still we must wait upon God, that we may be kept from the temptation that attends both the one and the other.

(3.) Both in days of prosperity, and in days of adversity, we must be found waiting upon God. Does the world smile upon us and court us? yet let us not turn from attending on God to make our court to it. If we have ever so much of the wealth of the world, yet we cannot say we have no need of God, no further occasion to make use of him, as David was ready to say, when in his prosperity he said he should never be moved; but soon saw his error, when God hid his face, and he was troubled, Psalm xxx. 6. When our affairs prosper, and into our hands God brings plentifully, we must wait upon God as our great Landlord, and own our obligations to him; must beg his blessing on what we have, and his favour with it, and depend upon him both for the continuance and for the comfort of it. We must wait upon God for wisdom and grace, to use what we have in the world for the ends for which we are intrusted with it, as those who must give account, and know not how soon. And how much soever we have of this world, and how richly soever it is given us to enjoy it, still we must wait upon God for better things, not only than the world gives, but

than he himself gives in this world. "Lord put me not off with this for a portion."

And when the world frowns upon us, and things go very cross, we must not so fret ourselves at its frowns, or so frighten ourselves with them, as thereby to be driven off from waiting on God, but rather let us thereby be driven to it. Afflictions are sent for this end, to bring us to the throne of grace, to teach us to pray, and to make the word of God's grace precious to us. In the day of our sorrow we must wait upon God, for those comforts which are sufficient to balance our griefs; Job, when in tears, fell down and worshipped God, taking away, as well as giving. In the day of our fear we must wait upon God, for those encouragements that are sufficient to silence our fears; Jehoshaphat in his distress waited upon God, and it was not in vain, his heart was established by it; and so was David's often, which brought him to this resolution, which was an anchor to his soul, *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*

(4.) Both in the days of youth, and in the days of old age, we must be found waiting on God. Those who are young cannot begin their attendance on God too soon: the child Samuel ministered to the Lord, and the Scripture story puts a particular mark of honour upon it; and Christ was wonderfully pleased with the hosannas of the children who waited on him, when he rode in triumph into Jerusalem: when Solomon in his youth, upon his accession to the throne, waited upon God for wisdom, it is said, *The saying pleased the Lord. I remember thee,* (says God to Israel) even *the kindness of thy youth, when thou wentest after me,* and didst wait upon me *in a wilderness,* Jer. ii. 2. To wait upon God is to be mindful of our Creator, and the proper time for that is in the days of our youth, Eccl. xii. 1. Those who would wait upon God aright, must learn betimes to do it; the most accomplished courtiers are those who are brought up at court.

And may the old servants of Jesus be dismissed from waiting on him? No, their attendance is still required, and shall be still accepted; they shall not be cast off by their Master in the time of old age, and, therefore, let not them desert his service. When through the infirmities of age they can no longer be working servants in God's family, they may be waiting servants. Those who like Barzillai are unfit for the entertainments of the courts of earthly princes, may relish the pleasures of God's courts as well as ever. The Levites, when they were past the age of fifty, and were discharged from the toilsome part of their ministration, yet still must wait on God, must be quietly waiting to give honour to him, and to receive comfort from him. Those who have done the will of God, and their doing work is at an end, have need of patience to enable them to wait till they inherit the promise: and the nearer the happiness is which they are waiting for, the dearer should the God be they are waiting on, and hope shortly to be with, to be with eternally.

2. We must wait on our God, *toto die—all the day,* so we read it. Every day from morning to night, we must continue waiting on God; whatever change there may be of our employment, this must be the constant disposition of our souls, we must attend upon God, and have our eyes ever toward him; we must not at any time allow ourselves to wander from God, or to attend on any thing beside him, but what we attend on for him; in subordination to his will, and in subserviency to his glory.

(1.) We must cast our daily cares upon him. Every day brings with it its fresh cares, more or less; these awake with us every morning, and we need not go so far forward as to-morrow to fetch in care, *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.* You who are great dealers in the world, have your cares attending you all the day; though you keep them to yourselves, yet they sit down with you, and rise up with you; they go out and come in with you, and are more a load upon you than those you converse with are aware of. Some, through the weakness of their spirits, can scarce determine any thing but with fear and trembling.

Let this burthen be cast upon the Lord, believing that his providence extends itself to all your affairs, to all events concerning you, and to all the circumstances of them, even the most minute and seemingly accidental; that your times are in his hand. and all your ways at his disposal. Believe his promise, that all things shall be made to work for good to those that love him, and then refer it to him in every thing, to do with you and yours as seemeth good in his eyes, and rest satisfied in having done so, and resolve to be easy. Bring your cares to God by prayer in the morning, spread them before him, and then make it to appear all the day, by the composedness and cheerfulness of your spirits, that you left them with him, as Hannah did, who, when she had prayed, went her way and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad, 1 Sam. i. 18. Commit your way to the Lord, and then submit to his disposal of it, though it may cross your expectations; and bear up yourselves upon the assurances God has given you, that he will care for you as the tender father for the child.

(2.) We must manage our daily business for him, with an eye to his providence, putting us into the calling and employment wherein we are; and to his precept, making diligence in our duty; with an eye to his blessing, as that which is necessary to make it comfortable and successful; and to his glory, as our highest end in all. This sanctifies our common actions to God, and sweetens them, and makes them pleasant to ourselves. If Gaius brings his friends whom he is parting with a little way on their journey, it is but a piece of common civility, but let him do

it after a godly sort; let him in it pay respect to them, because they belong to Christ, and for his sake; let him do it that he may have an opportunity of so much more profitable communication with them, and then it becomes an act of Christian piety, 3 John 6. It is a general rule by which we must govern ourselves in the business of every day, *Whatever we do in word or deed, to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*, (Col. iii. 17.) and, thus, in and by the Mediator we wait on our God.

This is particularly recommended to servants, though their employments are but mean, and they are under the command of their masters according to the flesh, yet let them do their servile work as the servants of Christ, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; let them do it with singleness of heart as unto Christ, and they shall be accepted of him, and from him shall receive the reward of the inheritance, Eph. vi. 5—8. Col. iii. 22, 24. Let them wait on God all the day, when they are doing their day's work, by doing it faithfully and conscientiously, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, by aiming at his glory even in common business: they work that they may get bread, they would live not that they may live to themselves, and please themselves, but that they may live to God, and please him. They work that they may fill up time, and fill up a place in the world, and because that God who made and maintained us, has appointed us with quietness to work and mind our own business.

(3.) We must receive our daily comforts from him; we must wait on him as our Benefactor, as the eyes of all things wait upon him to give them their food in due season, and what he gives them that they gather. To him we must look as to our Father for our daily bread, and from him we are appointed to ask it, yea, though we have it in the house, though we have it upon the table. We must wait upon him for a covenant right to it, for leave to make use of it, for a blessing upon it, for a nourishment by it, and for comfort in it. It is in the word and prayer that we wait on God, and keep up communion with him, and by these every creature of God is sanctified to us, (1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.) and the property of it is altered, *To the pure, all things are pure;* they have them from the covenant, and not from common providence, which makes a little that the righteous man has, better than the riches of many wicked, and much more valuable and comfortable.

No inducement can be more powerful to make us see to it, that what we have we get honestly, and use it soberly, and give God his due out of it, than this consideration, that we have our all from the hand of God, and are intrusted with it as stewards, and consequently are accountable. If we have this thought as a golden thread running through all the comforts of every day; these are God's gifts, every bit we eat, and every drop we drink, is his mercy, every breath we draw, and every step we take, his mercy; this will keep us continually waiting upon him, as the ass on his master's crib, and will put a double sweetness into all our enjoyments. God will have his mercies taken fresh from his compassions, which for this reason are said to be new every morning; and, therefore, it is not once a week that we are to wait upon him, as people go to market to buy provisions for the whole week, but we must wait on him every day, and all the day, as those who live from hand to mouth, and yet live very easy.

(4.) We must resist our daily temptation, and do our daily duties in the strength of his grace. Every day brings its temptation with it; our Master knew that when he taught us, as duly as we pray for our daily bread, to pray, *Lead us not into temptation.* There is no business we engage in, no enjoyment we partake of, but it has its snares attending it; Satan by it assaults us, and endeavours to draw us into sin: now sin is the great evil we should be continually upon our guard against, as Nehemiah was, (*ch.* vi. 13.) *That I should be afraid, and do so, and sin.* And we have no way to secure ourselves, but by waiting on God all the day, we must not only in the morning put ourselves under the protection of his grace, but we must all the day keep ourselves under the shelter of it; must not only go forth, but go on in dependence upon that grace which he has said shall be sufficient for us, that care which will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able. Our waiting upon God will furnish us with the best arguments to make use of in resisting temptations, and with strength according to the day. *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, and then we wait on the Lord all the day.

We have duty to do, many an opportunity of speaking good words, and doing good works, and we must see and own that we are not sufficient of ourselves for any thing that is good, not so much as to think a good thought; we must therefore wait upon God, must seek to him, and depend upon him, for that light and fire, that wisdom and zeal, which is necessary to the due discharge of our duty; that by his grace we may not only be fortified against every evil word and work, but furnished for every good word and work. From the fulness that is in Jesus Christ, we must by faith be continually drawing *grace for grace;* grace for all gracious exercises; grace to help in every time of need: we must wait on his grace, must follow the conduct of it, comply with the operations of it, and must be turned to it as wax to the seal.

(5.) We must bear our daily afflictions with submission to his will. We are bid to expect trouble in the flesh, something or other happens every day that grieves us, something in our relations, something in our callings, events concerning ourselves, our families, or friends, that are causes of sorrow: per-

haps, we have every day some bodily pain or sickness; or, some cross and disappointment in our affairs; now, in these we must wait upon God. Christ requires it of all his disciples, that they take up their cross daily, Matt. xvi. 24. We must not wilfully pluck the cross down upon us, but must take it up when God lays it in our way, and not go a step out of the way of duty, either to meet it, or to miss it. It is not enough to bear the cross, but we must take it up, we must accommodate ourselves to it, and acquiesce in the will of God in it. Not, "This is an evil, and I must bear it," because I cannot help it, but, "This is an evil, and I will bear it," because it is the will of God.

We must see every affliction allotted us by our heavenly Father, and in it must discover his correcting hand, and, therefore, must wait on him to know the cause wherefore he contends with us; what the fault is for which we are in this affliction chastened; what the distemper is which is to be by this affliction cured; that we may answer God's end in afflicting us, and so may be made partakers of his holiness. We must attend the motions of Providence, keep our eye upon our Father when he frowns, that we may discover what his mind is, and what the obedience is which we are to learn, by the things that we suffer.

We must wait on God for support under our burthens; must put ourselves into, and stay ourselves upon, the everlasting arms, which are laid under the children of God to sustain them, when the rod of God is upon them. And him we must attend for deliverance; must not seek to extricate ourselves by any sinful indirect methods, nor look to creatures for relief, but still wait on the Lord until he have mercy on us; well content to bear the burthen till God ease us of it, and ease us in mercy, Ps. cxxiii. 2. If the affliction be lengthened out, yet we must wait upon the Lord, even when he hides his face, (Isa. viii. 17.) hoping it is but in a little wrath, and for a small moment, Isa. liv. 7, 8.

(6.) We must expect the tidings and events of every day, with a cheerful and entire resignation to the divine Providence. While we are in this world we are still expecting, hoping well, fearing ill; we know not what a day, or a night, or an hour will bring forth, (Prov. xxvii. 1.) but it is big with something, and we are too apt to spend our thoughts in vain about things future, which happen quite differently from what we imagined. Now in all our prospects we must wait upon God.

Are we in hopes of good tidings, a good issue? Let us wait on God as the giver of the good we hope for, and be ready to take it from his hand; and to meet him with suitable affections when he is coming toward us in a way of mercy. Whatever good we hope for, it is God alone, and his wisdom, power, and goodness, that we must hope in. And therefore our hopes must be humble and modest, and regulated by his will; what God has promised us, we may with assurance promise ourselves, and no more. If thus we wait on God in our hopes, should the hope be deferred, it would not make the heart sick; no, nor if it should be disappointed, for the God we wait on, will overrule all for the best: but when the desire comes, in prosecution of which we have thus waited on God, we may see it coming from his love, and it will be *a tree of life*, Prov. xiii. 12.

Are we in fear of evil tidings, of melancholy events, and a sad issue of the depending affairs? Let us wait on God to be delivered from all our fears, from the things themselves we are afraid of, and from the amazing tormenting fears of them, Ps. xxxiv. 4. When Jacob was with good reason afraid of his brother Esau, he waited on God, brought his fears to him, wrestled with him, and prevailed for deliverance. *What time I am afraid*, says David, *I will trust in thee*, and wait on thee. And that shall establish the heart, shall fix it, so as to set it above the fear of evil tidings.

Are we in suspense between hope and fear? sometimes one prevails, and sometimes the other? Let us wait on God, and the God to whom belong the issues of life and death, good and evil, from whom our judgments, and every man's, proceed, and compose ourselves into a quiet expectation of the event, whatever it may be, with a resolution to accommodate ourselves to it; hope the best, and get ready for the worst, and then take what God sends.

The Application.

1. Let me further urge upon you this duty of waiting upon God all the day, in some more particular instances, according to what you have to do all the day, in the ordinary business of it. We are weak and forgetful, and need to be put in mind of our duty in general, upon every occasion for the doing of it; and therefore I choose to be thus particular, that I may be your remembrancer.

(1.) When you meet with your families in the morning, wait upon God for a blessing upon them, and attend him with your thanksgivings for the mercies you and yours have jointly received from God the night past; you and your houses must serve the Lord, must wait on him. See it owing to his goodness, who is the Founder and Father of the families of the righteous, that you are together, that the voice of rejoicing and salvation is in your tabernacles, and therefore wait upon him to continue you together, to make you comforts to one another, to enable you to do the duty of every relation, and to lengthen out the days of your tranquillity. In all the conversation we have with our families, the provision we make for them, and the orders we give concerning them, we must wait upon God, as the

God of all the families of Israel, (Jer. xxxi. 1.) and have an eye to Christ, as he in whom all the families of the earth are blessed.

Every member of the family sharing in family mercies, must wait on God for grace to contribute to family duties. Whatever disagreeableness there may be in any family relation, instead of having the spirit either burthened with it, or provoked by it, let it be an inducement to wait on God, who is able either to redress the grievance, or to balance it, and give grace to bear it.

(2.) When you are pursuing the education of your children, or the young ones under your charge, wait upon God for his grace to make the means of their education successful. When you are yourselves giving them instruction in things pertaining either to life or godliness, their general or particular calling, when you are sending them to school in a morning, or ordering them the business of the day, wait upon God to give them an understanding, and a good capacity for their business; especially their main business, for it is God that giveth wisdom. If they are but slow, and do not come on as you could wish, yet wait on God to bring them forward, and to give them his grace in his own time; and while you are patiently waiting on him, that will encourage you to take pains with them, and will likewise make you patient and gentle towards them.

And let children and young people wait on God in all their daily endeavours, to fit themselves for the service of God and their generation. You desire to be comforts to your relations, to be good for something in this world; do you not? Beg of God then a wise and an understanding heart, as Solomon did, and wait upon him all the day for it, that you may be still increasing in wisdom, as you do in stature, and in favour with God and man.

(3.) When you go to your shops, or apply yourselves to the business of your particular calling, wait upon God for his presence with you. Your business calls for your constant attendance every day, and all the day; keep the shop, and thy shop will keep thee; but let your attendance on God in your callings be as constant as your attendance on your callings. Eye God's providence in all the occurrences of them. Open shop with this thought, I am now in the way of my duty, and I depend upon God to bless me in it. When you are waiting for customers, wait on God to find you something to do in that calling to which he has called you; those you call chance customers, you should rather call providence customers, and should say of the advantage you make by them, *The Lord my God brought it to me.*

When you are buying and selling, see God's eye upon you, to observe whether you are honest and just in your dealings, and do no wrong to those you deal with; and let your eye then be up to him, for that discretion to which God does instruct not only the husbandman, but the tradesman, (Isa. xxviii. 26.) that prudence which directs the way, and with which it is promised the good man shall order his affairs; for that blessing which makes rich, and adds no sorrow with it; for that honest profit which may be expected in the way of honest diligence.

Whatever your employments be, in country-business, city-business, or sea-business, or only in the business of the house, go about them in the fear of God, depending upon him to make them comfortable and successful, and to prosper the work of your hands unto you. And hereby you will arm yourselves against the many temptations you are compassed about with in your worldly business; by waiting on God, you will be freed from the care and cumber which attends much serving, will have your minds raised above the little things of sense and time, will be serving God when you are most busy about the world, and will have God in your hearts, when your hands are full of the world.

(4.) When you take a book into your hands, God's book, or any other useful good book, wait upon God for his grace to enable you to make a good use of it. Some of you spend a deal of time every day in reading, and I hope none of you let a day pass without reading some portions of Scripture, either alone or with your families; take heed that the time you spend in reading be not lost time; it is so, if you read that which is idle and vain, and unprofitable; it is so, if you read that which is good, even the word of God itself, and do not mind it, or observe it, or aim to make it of any advantage to you; wait upon God, who gives you those helps for your souls, to make them helpful indeed to you. The eunuch did so, when he was reading the book of the prophet Isaiah in his chariot, and God presently sent him one, who made him understand what he read.

You read perhaps now and then the histories of former times. In acquainting yourselves with them, you must have an eye to God, and to that wise and gracious providence which governed the world before we were born, and preserved the church in it, and therefore may be still depended upon to do all for the best, for he is Israel's King of old.

(5.) When you sit down to your tables, wait on God; see his hand spreading and preparing a table before you in despite of your enemies, and in the society of your friends; often review the grant which God made to our first father Adam, and in him to us, of the products of the earth, (Gen. i. 29.) *Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed,* bread-corn especially, *to you it shall be for meat*; and the grant he afterwards made to Noah, our second father, and in him to us, (Gen. ix. 3.) *Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb*; and see in those what a bountiful Benefactor he is to mankind, and wait upon him accordingly.

We must eat and drink to the glory of God, and

then we wait on him in eating and drinking. We must receive nourishment for our bodies, that they may be fitted to serve our souls in the service of God, to his honour in this world. We must taste covenant love in common mercies, and enjoy the Creator while we are using the creature. We must depend upon the word of blessing from the mouth of God, to make our food nourishing to us; and if our provisions be mean and scanty, we must make up the want of them by faith in the promise of God, and rejoice in him, as the *God of our salvation, though the fig-tree doth not blossom, and there is no fruit in the vine.*

(6.) When you visit your friends, or receive their visits, wait upon God. Let your eye be to him with thankfulness for your friends and acquaintance, that you have comfort in; that the wilderness is not made your habitation, and the solitary and desert land your dwelling; that you have comfort not only in your own houses but in those of your neighbours, with whom you have freedom of converse; and that you are not driven out from among men, and made a burthen and terror to all about you. That you have clothing not only for necessity but for ornament, to go abroad in, is a mercy, which, that we may not pride ourselves in, we must take notice of God in, *I decked thee with ornaments,* says God, *and put earrings in thine ears,* Ezek. xvi. 11, 12. That you have houses, furniture, and entertainment, not only for yourselves but for your friends, is a mercy in which God must be acknowledged.

And when we are in company, we must look up to God for wisdom to carry ourselves so that we may do much good to, and get no harm by, those with whom we converse. Wait on God for that grace with which our speech should be always seasoned, by which all corrupt communication may be prevented, and we may abound in that which is good, and to the use of edifying, and which may minister grace to the hearers, that our lips may feed many.

(7.) When you give alms, or do any act of charity, wait on God; do it as unto him, give to a disciple in the name of a disciple, to the poor because they belong to Christ; do it not for the praise of men, but for the glory of God, with a single eye, and an upright heart; direct it to him, and then your alms as well as your prayers, like those of Cornelius, come up for a memorial before God, Acts x. 4. Beg of God to accept what you do for the good of others, that your alms may indeed be offerings, (Acts xxiv. 17.) may be an *odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God,* Phil. iv. 18.

Desire of God a blessing upon what you give in charity, that it may be comfortable to those to whom it is given, and that though what you are able to give is but a little, like the widow's two mites, yet that by God's blessing it may be doubled, and made to go a great way, like the widow's meal in the barrel, and oil in the cruse.

Depend upon God to make up to you what you lay out in good works, and to recompense it abundantly in the resurrection of the just; nay, and you are encouraged to wait upon him, for a return of it even in this life; it is bread cast upon the waters, which you shall find again after many days. And you should carefully observe the providence of God, whether it do not make you rich amends for your good works according to the promise, that you may understand the loving-kindness of the Lord, and his faithfulness to the word which he has spoken.

(8.) When you inquire after public news, in that wait upon God; do it with an eye to him; for this reason, because you are truly concerned for the interests of his kingdom in the world, and lay them near your hearts; because you have a compassion for mankind, for the lives and souls of men, and especially of God's people; ask, "*What news?*" not as the Athenians, only to satisfy a vain curiosity, and to pass away an idle hour or two, but that you may know how to direct your prayers and praises, and how to balance your hopes and fears, and may gain such an understanding of the times, as to learn what you and others ought to do.

If the face of public affairs be bright and pleasing, wait upon God to carry on and perfect his own work; and depend not upon the wisdom or strength of any instruments. If it be dark and discouraging, wait upon God to prevent the fears of his people, and to appear for them when he sees that their strength is gone. In the midst of the greatest successes of the church, and the smiles of second causes, we must not think it needless to wait on God; and in the midst of its greatest discouragements, when its affairs are reduced to the last extremity, we must not think it fruitless to wait upon God; the creatures cannot help without him, but he can help without them.

(9.) When you are going journeys wait on God, put yourselves under his protection, commit yourselves to his care, and depend upon him to give his angels a charge concerning you, to bear you up in their arms when you move, and to pitch their tents about you where you rest. See how much you are indebted to the goodness of his providence, for all the comforts and conveniences you are surrounded with in your travels. It is he who has cast our lot in a land where we wander not in wildernesses, as in the deserts of Arabia, but have safe and beaten roads; and that through the terrors of war the highways are not unoccupied. To him we owe it that the inferior creatures are serviceable to us, and that our going out and coming in are preserved; that when we are abroad we are not in banishment, but have liberty to come home again; and when we are at

home, we are not under confinement, but have liberty to go abroad.

We must, therefore, have our eyes up to God at our setting out, "Lord, go along with me where I go;" under his shelter we must travel, confiding in his care of us, and encouraging ourselves with that in all the dangers we meet with; and in our return must own his goodness; all our bones must say, *Lord, who is like unto thee,* for he *keepeth all our bones, not one of them is broken.*

(10.) When we retire into solitude, to be alone walking in the fields, or alone reposing ourselves in our closets, still we must be waiting upon God; still we must keep up our communion with him, when we are communing with our own hearts. When we are alone we must not be alone, but the Father must be with us, and we with him. We shall find temptations even in solitude, which we have need to guard against; Satan set upon our Saviour when he was alone in a wilderness; but there also we have opportunity, if we know but how to improve it, for that devout, for that divine, contemplation, which is the best conversation, so that we may never be less alone than when alone. If when we sit alone and keep silence, withdrawn from business and conversation, we have but the art, I should say the heart, to fill up those vacant minutes with pious meditations of God and divine things, we then gather up the fragments of time which remain, that nothing may be lost, and so are we found waiting on God all the day.

2. Let me use some motives to persuade you thus to live a life of communion with God, by waiting on him all the day.

(1.) Consider, the eye of God is always upon you. When we are with our superiors, and observe them to look upon us, that engages us to look upon them; and shall we not then look up to God, whose eyes always behold, and whose eyelids try, the children of men? He sees all the motions of our hearts, and sees with pleasure the motions of our hearts towards him, which should engage us to set him always before us.

The servant, though he be careless at other times, yet when he is under his master's eye, will wait in his place and keep close to his business; we need no more to engage us to diligence, than to do our work with eye-service, while our master looks on, and because he does so, for then we shall never look off.

(2.) The God you are to wait on, is one with whom you have to do, Heb. iv. 13. *All things,* even the thoughts and intents of the heart, *are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do;* προς ὁν ἡμιν ὁ λογος—*with whom we have business,* or word; who hath something to say to us, and to whom we have something to say: or, as some read it, *To whom for us there is an account;* there is a reckoning, a running account between us and him; and we must every one of us shortly give account of ourselves to him, and of every thing done in the body; and therefore are concerned to wait on him, that all may be made even daily, between us and him in the blood of Christ, which balances the account. Did we consider how much we have to do with God every day, we would be more diligent and constant in our attendance on him.

(3.) The God we are to wait upon, continually waits to be gracious to us; he is always doing us good, precedes us with the blessings of his goodness, daily loads us with his benefits, and slips no opportunity of showing his care of us, when we are in danger, his bounty to us when we are in want, and his tenderness for us when we are in sorrow. His good providence waits on us all the day, to preserve our going out and our coming in, (Isa. xxx. 18.) to give us relief and succour in due season, to be seen in the mount of the Lord. Nay, his good grace waits on us all the day, to help us in every time of need; to be strength to us according as our day is, and all the occurrences of the day. Is God thus forward to do us good, and shall we be backward and remiss in doing him service?

(4.) If we attend upon God, his holy angels shall have a charge to attend upon us. They are all appointed to be ministering spirits, to minister for the good of them who shall be heirs of salvation, and more good offices they do us every day than we are aware of. What an honour, what a privilege, is it to be waited on by holy angels, to be borne up in their arms, to be surrounded by their tents! What a security is the ministration of those good spirits against the malice of evil spirits! This honour have all they that wait on God all the day.

(5.) This life of communion with God, and constant attendance upon him, is a heaven upon earth. It is doing the work of heaven, and the will of God, as they do it who are in heaven; whose business it is always to behold the face of our Father. It is an earnest of the blessedness of heaven; it is a preparative for it, and a preludium to it; it is having our conversation in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour. Looking for him as our Saviour, we look to him as our director; and by this we make it to appear that our hearts are there, which will give us good ground to expect that we shall be there shortly.

3. Let me close all with some directions, what you must do, that you may thus wait on God all the day.

(1.) See much of God in every creature; of his wisdom and power in the making and placing of it, and of his goodness in its serviceableness to us. Look about you, and see what a variety of wonders, what an abundance of comforts, you are surrounded with and let them all lead you to him, who is the fountain of being, and the giver of all good; all ou

springs are in him, and from him are all our streams; this will engage us to wait on him, since every creature is that to us that he makes it to be. Thus the same things which draw a carnal heart from God, will lead a gracious soul to him; and since all his works praise him, his saints will thence take continual occasion to bless him.

It was (they say) the custom of the pious Jews of old, whatever delight they took in any creature, to give to God the glory of it. When they smelled a flower, they said, "Blessed be he that made this flower sweet;" if they ate a morsel of bread, "Blessed be he that appointed bread to strengthen man's heart." If thus we taste in every thing that the Lord is gracious, and suck all satisfaction from the breasts of his bounty, (and some derive his name שדי from שד *mamma—a breast,)* we shall thereby be engaged constantly to depend on him, as the child is said to hang on the mother's breast.

(2.) See every creature to be nothing without God. The more we discern of the vanity and emptiness of the world, and all our enjoyments in it, and their utter insufficiency to make us happy, the closer we shall cleave to God, and the more intimately we shall converse with him, that we may find that satisfaction in the Father of spirits, which we have in vain sought for in the things of sense. What folly is it to make our court to the creatures, and to dance attendance at their door, whence we are sure to be sent away empty, when we have the Creator himself to go to, who is rich in mercy to all that call upon him, is full, and free, and faithful? What can we expect from lying vanities! Why then should we observe them, and neglect our own mercies? Why should we trust to broken reeds, when we have a *Rock of Ages*, to be the foundation of our hopes? And why should we draw from broken cisterns, when we have the *God of all consolation* to be the fountain of our joys?

(3.) Live by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot with any confidence wait upon God, but in and through a Mediator, for it is by his Son that God speaks to us, and hears from us; all that passes between a just God and poor sinners, must pass through the hands of that blessed *Days-man, who has laid his hand upon them both;* every prayer passes from us to God, and every mercy from God to us, by that hand. It is in the face of the Anointed that God looks upon us; and in the face of Jesus Christ, that we behold the glory and grace of God shining. It is by Christ that we have access to God, and success with him in prayer, and, therefore, must make mention of his righteousness, even of his only. And in that habitual attendance we must be all the day living upon God, we must have an habitual dependence on him, who always appears in the presence of God for us; always gives attendance to be ready to introduce us.

(4.) Be frequent and serious in pious ejaculations. In waiting upon God we must often speak to him, must take all occasions to speak to him; and when we have not opportunity for a solemn address to him, he will accept of a sudden address, if it come from an honest heart. In these David waited on God all day, as appears by *v.* 1. *Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul;* to thee do I dart it, and all its gracious breathings after thee. We should in a holy ejaculation ask pardon for this sin, strength against this corruption, victory over this temptation, and it shall not be in vain. This is to pray always, and without ceasing. It is not the length or language of the prayer that God looks at, but the sincerity of the heart in it; and that shall be accepted, though the prayer be very short, and the groanings such as cannot be uttered.

(5.) Look upon every day, as those who know not but it may be your last day. At such an hour as we think not the Son of man comes; and therefore we cannot any morning be sure that we shall live till night; we hear of many lately who have been snatched away very suddenly; *What manner of persons therefore ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?* Though we cannot say, we ought to live as if we were sure this day would be our last, yet it is certain, we ought to live as those who do not know but it may be so; and the rather, because we know the day of the Lord will come first or last: and, therefore, we are concerned to wait on him; for on whom should poor dying creatures wait, but on a living God?

Death will bring us all to God, to be judged by him; it will bring all the saints to him, to the vision and fruition of him; and one we are hastening to, and hope to be for ever with, we are concerned to wait upon, and to cultivate an acquaintance with. Did we think more of death, we would converse more with God. Our dying daily is a good reason for our worshipping daily; and, therefore, wherever we are, we are concerned to keep near to God, because we know not where death will meet us. This will alter the property of death; Enoch, who walked with God, was translated that he should not see death; and this will furnish us with that which will stand us in stead on the other side death and the grave. If we continue waiting on God every day, and all the day long, we shall grow more experienced, and consequently more expert in the great mystery of communion with God; and thus our last days will become our best days, our last works our best works, and our last comforts our sweetest comforts; in consideration of which take the prophet's advice, (Hos. xii. 6.) *Turn thou to thy God; keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.*

THE THIRD DISCOURSE,

SHOWING HOW TO CLOSE THE DAY WITH GOD.

PSALM iv. 8.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety.

THIS may be understood, either figuratively, of the repose of the soul, in the assurances of God's grace; or literally, of the repose of the body, under the protection of his providence: I love to give Scripture its full latitude, and therefore take in both.

1. The psalmist having given the preference to God's favour above any good, having chosen that, and portioned himself in that, here expresses his great complacency in the choice he had made. While he saw many making themselves perpetually uneasy with that fruitless inquiry, *Who will show us any good?* wearying themselves for very vanity; he had made himself perfectly easy, by casting himself upon the divine good will, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* Any good, short of God's favour, will not serve our turn, but that is enough, without the world's smiles. The moon, and stars, and all the fires and candles in the world, will not make day without the sun; but the sun will make day without any of them. These are David's sentiments, and all the saints agree with him. Finding no rest, therefore, like Noah's dove in a deluged defiled world, he flies to the ark, that type of Christ, *Return unto thy rest*, unto thy *Noah*, (so the word is in the original, for Noah's name signifies rest,) *O my soul*, Ps. cxvi. 7.

If God lift up the light of his countenance upon us, as it fills us with a holy joy, it puts gladness into the heart more than they have, whose corn and wine increase, (*v.* 7.) so it fixes us in a holy rest, I will lay me down and sleep. God is my God, and I am pleased, I am satisfied, I look no further, I desire no more, I dwell in safety, or in confidence; while I walk in the light of the Lord, as I want no good, nor am sensible of any deficiency, so I fear no evil, nor am apprehensive of any danger. The Lord God is to me both a *sun* and a *shield*; a sun to enlighten and comfort me, a shield to protect and defend me.

Hence learn, that those who have the assurances of God's favour toward them, may enjoy, and should labour after, a holy serenity and security of mind. We have both these put together in that precious promise, (Isa. xxxii. 17.) *But the work of righteousness shall be peace*; there is a present satisfaction in doing good; and in the issue, *the effect of righteousness shall be quietness and assurance for ever*; quietness in the enjoyment of good, and assurance in a freedom from evil.

(1.) A holy serenity is one blessed fruit of God's favour; *I will now lay me down in peace, and sleep.* While we are under God's displeasure, or in doubt concerning his favour, how can we have any enjoyment of ourselves. While this great concern is unsettled, the soul cannot but be unsatisfied. Has God a controversy with thee? Give not sleep to thy eyes, nor slumber to thy eye-lids, till thou hast got the controversy taken up. Go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend, thy best friend, and when thou hast made thy peace with him, and hast some comfortable evidence that thou art accepted of him, then say wisely and justly, what that carnal worldling said foolishly and without ground, *Soul, take thine ease*, for in God, and in the covenant of grace, *thou hast goods laid up for many years*, goods laid up for eternity, Luke xii. 19. Are thy sins pardoned? Hast thou an interest in Christ's mediation? Does God now in him accept thy works? *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart*, Eccl. ix. 7. Let this still every storm, and command, and create a calm in thy soul.

Having God to be our God in covenant, we have enough, we have all; and though the gracious soul still desires more of God, it never desires more than God; in him it reposes itself with a perfect complacency; in him it is at home, it is at rest. If we be but satisfied of his loving-kindness, we may be satisfied with his loving-kindness, abundantly satisfied. There is enough in this to satiate the weary soul, and to replenish every sorrowful soul, (Jer. xxxi. 25.) to fill even the hungry with good things, with the best things; and being filled they should be at rest, at rest for ever, and their sleep here should be sweet.

(2.) A holy security is another blessed fruit of God's favour. Thou, Lord, makest me to dwell in safety; when the light of thy countenance shines upon me I am safe, and I know I am so, and I am therefore easy, for *with thy favour wilt thou compass me as with a shield*, Ps. v. 12. Being taken under the protection of the divine favour, though an host of enemies should encamp against me, yet my heart shall not fear, in this I will be confident, (Ps. xxvii. 3.) Whatever God has promised me, I can promise myself, and that is enough to indemnify me, and save me harmless, whatever difficulties and dangers I may meet with in the way of my duty. *Though the earth be removed, yet will not we fear*, (Ps. xlvi. 2.) not fear any evil, no not in the valley of the shadow of death, in the territories of the king of terrors himself; for there thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. What the rich man's wealth is to him, in his own conceit, a strong city and a high wall, that the good man's God is to him, Prov. xviii. 10, 11. *The Almighty shall be thy gold, thy defence*, Job xxii. 25. *marg.*

Nothing is more dangerous than security in a sinful way, and men crying peace, peace, to them

selves, while they continue under the reigning power of a vain and carnal mind. O that the sinners that are at ease were made to tremble! Nothing is more foolish than a security built upon the world, and its promises, for they are all vanity and a lie; but nothing more reasonable in itself, or more advantageous to us, than for good people to build with assurance upon the promises of a good God; for those who keep in the way of duty, to be quiet from the fear of evil; as those who know no evil shall befall them, no real evil, no evil but what shall be made to work for their good; as those who know, while they continue in their allegiance to God as their King, that they are under his protection, under the protection of Omnipotence itself, which enables them to bid defiance to all malignant powers; *If God be for us, who can be against us?* This security even the heathen looked upon every honest virtuous man to be entitled to, that is,

Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus.
He whose life was upright and free from iniquity.

And thought that

Et si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.
If the world should fall in pieces about his ears, he needed not fear being lost in the desolations of it.

Much more reason have Christians, who hold fast their integrity, to lay claim to it; for who is he, or what is it, that shall harm us, if we be followers of him that is good, in his goodness?

[1.] It is the privilege of good people, that they may be thus easy and satisfied. This holy serenity and security of mind is allowed them, God gives them leave to be cheerful; nay, it is promised them, *God will speak peace to his people and to his saints;* he will fill them with joy and peace in believing; his peace shall keep their hearts and minds, keep them safe, keep them calm. Nay, there is a method appointed for their obtaining this promised serenity and security. The Scriptures are written to them that their joy may be full, and that through patience and comfort of them they may have hope. Ordinances are instituted to be wells of salvation, out of which they may draw water with joy. Ministers are ordained to be their comforters, and the helpers of their joy. Thus willing has God been to show the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, that they might have strong consolation, Heb. vi. 17, 18.

[2.] It is the duty of good people to labour after this holy security and serenity of mind, and to use the means appointed for the obtaining it. Give not way to the disquieting suggestions of Satan, and to those tormenting doubts and fears that arise in your own souls. Study to be quiet, chide yourselves for your distrusts, charge yourselves to believe, and to hope in God, that you shall yet praise him. You are in the dark concerning yourselves, do as Paul's mariners did, cast anchor and wish for the day. Poor trembling Christian, that art tossed with tempests and not comforted, try to lay thee down in peace and sleep; compose thyself into a sedate and even frame. In the name of him whom winds and seas obey, command down thy tumultuous thoughts, and say, *Peace, be still.* Lay that aching trembling head of thine where the beloved disciple laid his, in the bosom of the Lord Jesus; or, if thou hast not yet attained such boldness of access to him, lay that aching trembling heart of thine at the feet of the Lord Jesus, by an entire submission and resignation to him, saying, *If I perish, I will perish here:* put it into his hand by an entire confidence in him; submit it to his operation and disposal, who knows how to speak to the heart. And if thou art not yet entered into this sabbatism, as the word is, (Heb. iv. 9.) this present rest that remaineth for the people of God, yet look upon it to be a land of promise, and therefore, though it tarry, wait for it, for the vision is for an appointed time, and at the end it shall speak, and shall not lie. *Light is sown for the righteous,* and what is sown shall come up again at last in a harvest of joy.

2. The Psalmist having done his day's work, and perhaps fatigued himself with it, it being now bedtime, and having given good advice to those to whom he had wished a good night, to commune with their own hearts upon their beds, and to offer the evening sacrifices of righteousness, (*v.* 4. 5.) now retires to his chamber with this word, *I will lay me down in peace and sleep.* That which I chose this text for will lead me to understand it literally, as the disciples understood their Master, when he said, *Lazarus sleepeth,* of *taking rest in sleep,* John xi. 12, 13. And so we have here David's pious thoughts when he was going to bed. As when he awakes he is still with God, he is still so when he goes to sleep, and concludes the day as he opened it, with meditations on God, and sweet communion with him.

It should seem David penned this psalm when he was distressed and persecuted by his enemies; perhaps it was penned on the same occasion with the foregoing psalm, when he fled from Absalom his son; without were fightings, and then no wonder that within were fears; yet then he puts such a confidence in God's protection, that he will go to bed at his usual time, and, with his usual quietness and cheerfulness, will compose himself as at other times. He knows that his enemies have no power against him, but what is given them from above; and they shall have no power given them but what is still under the divine check and restraint; nor shall their power be permitted to exert itself so far as to do him any real mischief; and therefore he retires into the secret place of the Most High, and

abides under the shadow of the Almighty, and is very quiet in his own mind. That will break a worldly man's heart which will not break a godly man's sleep. Let them do their worst, says David, *I will lay me down and sleep: the will of the Lord be done.* Now observe here,

(1.) His confidence in God. *Thou, Lord, makest me to dwell in safety;* not only makest me safe, but makest me know that I am so; makest me to dwell with a good assurance. It is the same word that is used concerning him who walks uprightly, that he walks surely, Prov. x. 9. He goes boldly in his way, so David here goes boldly to his bed. He does not dwell carelessly, as the men of Laish, (Judg. xviii. 7.) but dwells at ease in God, as the sons of Zion, in the city of their solemnities, when their eyes see it a quiet habitation, Isa. xxxiii. 20.

There is one word in this part of the text that is observable; thou, Lord, *only* dost secure me. Some refer it to David; "even when I am alone, have none of my privy-counsellors about me to advise me, none of my life-guards to fight for me, yet I am under no apprehension of danger while God is with me." The Son of David comforted himself with this, that when all his disciples forsook him, and left him alone, yet he was not alone, for the Father was with him. Some weak people are afraid of being alone, especially in the dark, but a firm belief of God's presence with us in all places, and that divine protection which all good people are under, would silence those fears, and make us ashamed of them. Nay, our being alone a peculiar people, whom God has set apart for himself, (as it is here, *v.* 3.) will be our security. A sober singularity will be our safety and satisfaction, as Noah's was in the old world. Israel is a people that shall dwell alone, and not be reckoned among the nations, and therefore may set them all at defiance, till they foolishly mingle themselves among them; *Israel shall then dwell in safety alone*, Deut. xxxiii. 28. The more we dwell alone, the more safe we dwell. But our translation refers it to God; *Thou alone makest me to dwell safely;* it is done by thee only. God in protecting his people needs not any assistance, though he sometimes make use of instruments; the earth helped the woman, yet he can do it without them; and, when all our refuges fail, his own arm works salvation; *so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him*, Deut. xxxii. 12. Yet that is not all, I depend on thee only to do it; therefore I am easy, and think myself safe, not because I have hosts on my side, but purely because I have the Lord of hosts on my side.

Thou makest me to dwell in safety. It may look either backward or forward, or rather, both. Thou hast made me to dwell in safety all day, so that the sun has not smitten me by day; and then it is the language of his thankfulness for the mercies he had received; or, thou wilt make me to dwell in safety all night, that the moon shall not smite me by night; and then it is the language of his dependence upon God for further mercies. And both these should go together; and our eye must be to God as ever the same, who was, and is, and is to come; who has delivered, and does, and will.

(2.) His composedness in himself inferred hence, *Simul*, or *pariter in pace cubabo—I will both lay me down and sleep.* They who have their corn and wine increasing, who have abundance of the wealth and pleasure of this world, lay them down and sleep contentedly, as Boaz at the end of the heap of corn, Ruth iii. 7 But though I have not what they have, I can lay me down in peace, and sleep as well as they. We make it to join, his lying down and his sleeping: I will not only lay me down, as one that desires to be composed, but will sleep as one that really is so. Some make it to intimate his falling asleep presently after he had laid him down: so well wearied was he with the work of the day, and so free from any of those disquieting thoughts which would keep him from sleeping.

Now these are words put into our mouths, with which to compose ourselves when we retire at night to our repose; and we should take care so to manage ourselves all day, especially when it draws towards night, that we may not be disfitted, and put out of frame, for our evening devotions; that our hearts may not be overcharged either, on the one hand, with surfeiting and drunkenness, as theirs often are who are men of pleasure; or on the other hand, with the cares of this life, as theirs often are who are men of business; but that we may have such a command both of our thoughts and of our time, that we may finish our daily work well; which will be an earnest of our finishing our life's work well; and all is well indeed that ends everlastingly well.

Doct. As we must begin the day with God, and wait upon him all the day, so we must endeavour to close it with him.

This duty of closing the day with God, and in a good frame, I know not how better to open to you, than by going over the particulars in the text in their order, and recommending to you David's example.

I. Let us retire to lay us down. Nature calls for rest as well as food; *man goes forth to his work and labour*, and goes to and fro about it, but it is only till evening, and then it is time to lie down. We read of Ishbosheth, that he lay on his bed at noon, but death met him there, (2 Sam. iv. 5, 6.) and of David himself, that he came off from his bed at evening-tide, but sin, a worse thing than death, met him there. We must work the works of him that sent us while it is day, it will be time enough to lie down when the night comes, and no man can work; and it is then proper and seasonable to lie down.

It is promised, (Zeph. ii. 7.) *They shall lie down in the evening;* and with that promise we must comply, and rest in the time appointed for rest; and not turn day into night, and night into day, as many do upon some ill account or other.

1. Some sit up to do mischief to their neighbours; to kill, and steal, and to destroy: *In the dark they dig through houses which they had marked for themselves in the day-time,* Job xxiv. 16. David complains of his enemies, that at evening they go round about the city, Ps. lix. 6. They that do evil hate the light. Judas the traitor was in quest of his Master, with his band of men, when he should have been in his bed. And it is an aggravation of the wickedness of the wicked, when they take so much pains to compass an ill design; and have their hearts so much upon it, that they *sleep not except they have done mischief,* Prov. iv. 16. It is a shame to those who profess to make it their business to do good, that they cannot find in their hearts to intrench upon any of the gratifications of sense in pursuance of it;

Ut jugulent homines surgunt de nocte Latrones;
Tuque ut te serves non expergisceris?
Robbers arise in the night that they may slay men;
And will not you awake that you may preserve yourself?

Say then, while others sit up watching for an opportunity to be mischievous, *I will lay me down* and be quiet, and do nobody any harm.

2. Others sit up in the pursuit of the world, and the wealth of it. They not only rise up early, but they sit up late, in the eager prosecution of their covetous practices, (Ps. cxxvii. 2.) and, either to get or save, deny themselves their most necessary sleep; and this their way is their folly, for hereby they deprive themselves of the comfortable enjoyment of what they have, which is the end, under pretence of care and pains to obtain more, which is but the means. Solomon speaks of those who *neither day nor night see sleep with their eyes,* (Eccl. viii. 16.) who make themselves perfect slaves and drudges to the world, than which there is not a more cruel task-master: and thus, they make that which of itself is vanity, to be to them vexation of spirit, for they weary themselves for very vanity, (Heb. iv. 3.) and are so miserably in love with their chain, that they deny themselves not only the spiritual rest God has provided for them, as the God of grace, but the natural rest, which, as the God of nature, he has provided; and it is a specimen of the wrong sinners do to their own bodies, as well as their own souls. Let us see the folly of it, and never labour thus for the meat that perisheth, and that abundance of the rich, which will not suffer him to sleep; but let us labour for that meat which endureth to eternal life, that grace which is the earnest of glory, the abundance of which will make our sleep sweet to us.

3. Others sit up in the indulgence of their pleasures. They will not lay them down in due time, because they cannot find in their hearts to leave their vain sports and pastimes, their music, and dancing, and plays, their cards and dice; or, which is worse, their rioting and excess; for they that are drunk are drunk in the night. It is bad enough when these gratifications of a base lust, or at least of a vain mind, are suffered to devour the whole evening, and then to engross the whole soul, as they are apt enough to do insensibly; so that there is neither time nor heart for the evening devotions, either in the closet, or in the family: but it is much worse when they are suffered to go far into the night too, for then of course they trespass upon the ensuing morning, and steal away the time that should then also be bestowed upon the exercises of religion. Those who can of choice, and with so much pleasure, sit up till I know not what time of night, to make, as they say, "a merry night of it," to spend their time in filthiness and foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient, would think themselves hardly dealt with, if they should be kept one half hour past their sleeping time, engaged in any good duties; and would have called blessed Paul himself a tedious preacher, and have censured him as very indiscreet, when, upon a particular occasion, he continued his speech till midnight, Acts xx. 7. And how loth would they be, with David, at midnight to rise and give thanks to God; or, with their Master, to continue all night in prayer to God.

Let the corrupt affections which run out thus and transgress, be mortified, and not gratified. Those who have allowed themselves in such irregularities, if they have allowed themselves an impartial reflection, cannot but have found the inconvenience of them, and they have been a prejudice to the prosperity of the soul, and should therefore deny themselves for their own good. One rule for the closing of the day well is to keep good hours; *Every thing is beautiful in its season.* I have heard it said long since, and I beg leave to repeat it now, that

"Early to bed, and early to rise,
Is the way to be healthy, and wealthy, and wise."

We shall now take it for granted, that unless some necessary business, or some work of mercy, or some more than ordinary act of devotion, keep you up beyond your usual time, you are disposed to lay you down. And let us lay us down with thankfulness to God, and with thoughts of dying; with penitent reflections upon the sins of the day, and with humble supplications for the mercies of the night.

(1.) Let us lie down with thankfulness to God. When we retire to our bed-chambers or closets, we should lift up our hearts to God, the God of our mercies, and make him the God of our praises; whenever we go to bed, I am sure we do not want matter for praise, if we did not want a heart. Let us

therefore address ourselves then to that pleasant duty, that work which is its own wages. The evening sacrifice was to be a sacrifice of praise.

[1.] We have reason to be thankful for the many mercies of the day past, which we ought particularly to review, and to say, *Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits.* Observe the constant series of mercies, which has not been interrupted or broken in upon any day. Observe the particular instance of mercy with which some days have been signalized and made remarkable. It is he who has granted us life and favour; it is his visitation that preserves our spirits. Think how many are the calamities which we are every day preserved from; the calamities which we are sensibly exposed to, and perhaps have been delivered from the imminent danger of; and those which we have not been apprehensive of; many of which we have deserved, and, which others, better than we are, groan under. All our bones have reason to say, *Lord, who is like unto thee?* For it is God who keepeth all our bones, not one of them is broken; it is of his mercies that we are not consumed.

Think how many are the comforts we are every day surrounded with, all which we are indebted to the bounty of the divine Providence for; every bit we eat, and every drop we drink, is mercy; every step we take, and every breath we draw, mercy. All the satisfaction we have in the agreeableness and affections of our relations, and in the society and serviceableness of our friends; all the success we have in our callings and employments, and the pleasure we take in them; all the joy which Zebulun has in his going out, and Issachar in his tents, is what we have reason to acknowledge with thankfulness, to God's praise.

Yet it is likely that the day has not passed without some cross accidents, something or other has afflicted and disappointed us, and if it has, yet that must not indispose us for praise; however it be, yet God is good; and it is our duty in every thing to give thanks, and to bless the name of the Lord when he takes away, as well as when he gives; for our afflictions are but few, and a thousand times deserved; our mercies are many, and a thousand times forfeited.

[2.] We have reason to be thankful for the shadows of the evening, which call us to retire and lie down. The same wisdom, power, and goodness which make the morning, make the evening also, to rejoice; and give us cause to be thankful for the drawing of the curtains of the night about us in favour to our repose, as well as for the opening of the eye-lids of the morning upon us in favour to our business. When God divided between the light and the darkness, and allotted to both of them their time successively, he saw that it was good, it should be so; in a world of mixtures and changes, nothing more proper. Let us therefore give thanks to that God who forms the light and creates the darkness; and believe, that as in the revolutions of time, so in the revolutions of the events of time, the darkness of affliction may be as needful for us in its season, as the light of prosperity. If the hireling longs till the shadow comes, let him be thankful for it when it does come, that the burthen and heat of the day is not perpetual.

[3.] We have reason to be thankful for a quiet habitation to lie down in; that we are not driven out from among men as Nebuchadnezzar, to lie down with the beasts of the field; that though we were born like the wild ass's colt, yet we have not with the wild ass the wilderness for our habitation, and the desolate and barren land for our dwelling. That we are not put to wander in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth, as many of God's dear saints and servants have been forced to do, of whom the world was not worthy: but the good Shepherd makes us to lie down in green pastures. That we have not, as Jacob, the cold ground for our bed, and a stone for our pillow, which yet one would be content with, and covet, if, with it, one could have his dream.

[4.] We have reason to be thankful that we are not forced to sit up; that our Master not only gives us leave to lie down, but orders that nothing shall prevent our lying down. Many go to bed, but cannot lie down there, by reason of painful and languishing sicknesses, of that nature, that if they lie down they cannot breathe: our bodies are of the same mould, and it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not so afflicted. Many are kept up by sickness in their families; children are ill, and they must attend them. If God takes sickness away from the midst of us, and keeps it away, so that no plague comes near our dwellings, a numerous family, perhaps, and all well, it is a mercy we are bound to be very thankful for, and to value in proportion to the greatness of the affliction where sickness prevails. Many are kept up by the fear of enemies, of soldiers, of thieves. The good man of the house watches that his house may not be broken through; but our lying down is not prevented or disturbed by the alarms of war, we are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of our repose; there therefore should we rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, even his righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel, which under his protection are as safe as walled cities with gates and bars. When we lie down, let us thank God that we may lie down.

(2.) Let us lie down with thoughts of death, and of that great change which at death we must pass under. The conclusion of every day should put us in mind of the conclusion of all our days; when our night comes, our long night, which will put a period to our work, and bring the honest labourer both to

take his rest, and receive his penny. It is good for us to think frequently of dying, to think of it as often as we go to bed; it will help to mortify the corruptions of our own hearts, which are our daily burthens, to arm us against the temptations of the world, which are our daily snares; it will wean us from our daily comforts, and make us easy under our daily crosses and fatigues. It is good for us to think familiarly of dying, to think of it as our going to bed, that by thinking often of it, and thinking thus of it, we may get above the fear of it.

[1.] At death we shall retire, as we do at bed-time; we shall go to be private for a while, till the public appearance at the great day; *Man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more;* till then *they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep,* Job xiv. 12. Now we go abroad to see and be seen, and to no higher purpose do some spend their day, spend their life; but when death comes, there is an end of both, we shall then see no more in this world; I *shall behold man no more,* (Isa. xxxviii. 11.) we shall then be seen no more; *The eye of him that hath seen me, shall see me no more,* (Job vii. 8.) we shall be hid in the grave, and cut off from all living. To die is to bid good night to all our friends, to put a period to our conversation with them. We bid them farewell, but, blessed be God, it is not an eternal farewell; we hope to meet them again in the morning of the resurrection, to part no more.

[2.] At death we shall put off the body, as we put off our clothes when we lie down. The soul is the man, the body is but the clothes. At death we shall be unclothed, the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, the garment of the body shall be laid aside. Death strips us, and sends us naked out of the world, as we came into it; strips the soul of all the disguises wherein it appeared before men, that it may appear naked and open before God. Our grave-clothes are night-clothes.

When we are weary and hot, our clothes are a burthen, and we are very willing to throw them off; are not easy till we are undressed; thus *we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burthened;* but when death frees the soul from the load and encumbrance of the body, which hinders its repose in its spiritual satisfactions, how easy will it be! Let us think then of putting off the body at death, with as much pleasure as we do of putting off our clothes at night; be as loose to them as we are to our clothes; and comfort ourselves with this thought, that though we are unclothed at death, if we be clothed with Christ and his grace, we shall not be found naked, but be clothed upon with immortality. We have new clothes a making, which shall be ready to put on next morning; a glorious body like Christ's, instead of a vile body like the beasts.

[3.] At death we shall lie down in the grave, as on our bed, shall lie down in the dust, Job xx. 11. To those who die in sin, and impenitence, the grave is a dungeon, their iniquities which are upon their bones, and which lie down with them, make it so; but those who die in Christ, who die in faith, it is a bed, a bed of rest, where there is no tossings to and fro until the dawning of the day, as sometimes there are upon the easiest beds we have in this world; where there is no danger of being scared with dreams, and terrified with visions of the night; there is no being chastened with pain on that bed, or the multitude of the bones with strong pain. It is the privilege of those, who while they live walk in their uprightness, that when they die they enter into peace, and rest in their beds, Isa. lvii. 2. Holy Job comforts himself with this, in the midst of his agonies, that he shall shortly make his bed in the darkness, and be easy there. It is a bed of roses, a bed of spices, to all believers ever since he lay in it, who is the *Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valleys.*

Say then of thy grave, as thou dost of thy bed at night, *There the weary are at rest;* with this further consolation, that thou shalt not only rest there, but rise thence shortly, abundantly refreshed; shalt be called up to meet the Beloved of thy soul, and to be for ever with him; shalt rise to a day which will not renew thy cares, as every day on earth does, but secure to thee unmixed and everlasting joys. How comfortably may we lie down at night, if such thoughts as these lie down with us; and how comfortably may we lie down at death, if we have accustomed ourselves to such thoughts as these.

(3.) Let us lie down with penitent reflections upon the sins of the day past. Praising God and delighting ourselves in him is such pleasant work, and so much the work of angels, that methinks it is a pity that we should have any thing else to do; but the truth is, we make other work for ourselves by our own folly, that is not so pleasant, but absolutely needful, and that is, repentance. While we are at night solacing ourselves in God's goodness, we must intermix therewith the afflicting of ourselves for our own vileness; both must have their place in us, and they will very well agree together; for we must take our work before us.

[1.] We must be convinced of it, that we are still contracting guilt; we carry corrupt natures about with us, which are bitter roots that bear gall and wormwood, and all we say or do is imbittered by them. *In many things we all offend,* insomuch *that there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sins not.* We are in the midst of a defiling world, and cannot keep ourselves perfectly unspotted from it. If we say we have no sin, or that we have past a day and have not sinned, we deceive ourselves; for if we know the truth by ourselves, we shall see cause to cry, *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse us from our secret faults;* faults which we ourselves

are not aware of. We ought to aim at a sinless perfection, with as strict a watchfulness as if we could attain it: but, after all, must acknowledge, that we come short of it; that we have not yet attained, neither are already perfect. We find it by constant sad experience, for it is certain that we do enough every day to bring us upon our knees at night.

[2.] We must examine our consciences, that we may find out our particular transgressions of the day past. Let us every night search and try our ways, our thoughts, words, and actions, compare them with the rule of the word, examine our faces in that glass, that we may see our spots, and may be particular in the acknowledgment of them. It will be good for us to ask, What have we done this day? What have we done amiss? What duty have we neglected? What false step have we taken? How have we carried it in our callings, in our converse? Have we done the duties of our particular relations, and accommodated ourselves to the will of God in every event of providence? By doing this frequently, we shall grow in our acquaintance with ourselves, than which nothing will contribute more to our soul's prosperity.

[3.] We must renew our repentance, for whatever we find has been amiss in us, or has been said or done amiss by us; we must be sorry for it, and sadly lament it, and take shame to ourselves for it, and give glory to God by making confession. If any thing appear to have been wrong more than ordinary, that must be particularly bewailed; and in general, we must be mortified for our sins of daily infirmity, which we ought not to think slightly of, because they are returning daily, but rather be the more ashamed of them, and of that fountain within, which casts out these waters.

It is good to be speedy in renewing our repentance, before the heart be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Delays are dangerous; green wounds may soon be cured, if taken in time, but if they are corrupt, as the Psalmist complains, (Ps. xxxviii. 5.) it is our fault and folly, and the cure will be difficult. Though through the weakness of the flesh we fall into sin daily, if we get up again by renewed repentance at night, we are not, nor ought we to think ourselves, utterly cast down. The sin that humbles us shall not ruin us.

[4.] We must make a fresh application of the blood of Christ to our souls, for the remission of our sins, and the gracious acceptance of our repentance. We must not think that we have need of Christ only at our first conversion to God; no, we have daily need of him, as our Advocate with the Father, and, therefore, as such he always appears in the presence of God for us, and attends continually to this very thing. Even our sins of daily infirmity would be our ruin, if he had not made satisfaction for them, and did not still make intercession for us. He who is washed, still needs to wash his feet, from the filth he contracts in every step; and, blessed be God, there is a fountain opened for us to wash in, and it is always open.

[5.] We must apply ourselves to the throne of grace for peace and pardon. Those who repent must pray, that the thought of their heart may be forgiven them, Acts viii. 22. And it is good to be particular in our prayers for the pardon of sin; that as Hannah said concerning Samuel, *For this child I prayed;* so we may be able to say, "For the forgiveness of this I prayed." However, the publican's prayer, in general, is a very proper one for each of us to lie down with, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

(4.) Let us lie down with humble supplications for the mercies of the night. Prayer is as necessary in the evening, as it was in the morning, for we have the same need of the divine favour and care, to make the evening out-goings to rejoice, that we had to beautify those of the morning.

[1.] We must pray, that our outward man may be under the care of God's holy angels, who are the ministers of his providence. God has promised, that he will give his angels charge concerning those who make the Most High their refuge, and that they shall pitch their tents round about them, and deliver them; and what he has promised we may and must pray for. Not as if God needed the service of the angels, or as if he did himself quit all the care of his people, and turn it over to them; but it appears by abundance of scripture proofs, that they are employed about the people of God, whom he takes under his special protection, though they are not seen, both for the honour of God, by whom they are charged, and for the honour of the saints, with whom they are charged. It was the glory of Solomon's bed, that threescore valiant men were about it, of the valiant of Israel, all holding swords, because of fear in the night, Cant. iii. 7, 8. But much more honourably and comfortably are all true believers attended; for though they lie ever so meanly, they have hosts of angels surrounding their beds, and by the ministration of good spirits are preserved from malignant spirits. But God will for this be inquired of by the house of Israel; Christ himself must pray the Father, and he will send to his relief legions of angels, Matt. xxvi. 53. Much more reason have we to ask, that it may be given us.

[2.] We must pray, that our inward man may be under the influences of his Holy Spirit, who is the author and fountain of his grace. As public ordinances are opportunities in which the Spirit works upon the hearts of men, and, therefore, when we attend on them, we must pray for the Spirit's operations; so are private retirements, and, therefore we must put up the same prayer, when we enter upon them. We find that in slumbering upon the

bed, God opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction, Job xxxiii. 15, 16. And with this David's experience concurs. He found that God visited him in the night, and tried him, and so discovered him to himself, Ps. xvii. 3. And that God gave him counsel, and his reins instructed him in the night season, and so he discovered himself to him, Ps. xvi. 7. He found that was a proper season for remembering God, and meditating upon him; and in order to our due improvement of this proper season for conversing with God in solitude, we need the powerful and benign influences of the blessed Spirit, which, therefore, when we lie down we should earnestly pray for, and humbly put ourselves under, and submit ourselves to. How God's grace may work upon us when we are asleep we know not; the soul will act in a state of separation from the body, and how far it does act independent of the body, when the bodily senses are all locked up, we cannot say, but are sure, that the Spirit of the Lord is not bound. We have reason to pray, not only that our minds may not be either disturbed or polluted by evil dreams, in which for aught we know evil spirits sometimes have a hand, but may be instructed and quieted by good dreams; which Plutarch reckons among the evidences of increase and proficiency in virtue, and on which the good Spirit has an influence. I have heard of a good man, that used to pray at night for good dreams.

II. When we lay us down, our care and endeavour must be to lay us down in peace. It is promised to Abraham that he should go to his grave in peace, (Gen. xv. 15.) and this promise is sure to all his spiritual seed, for *the end of the upright man is peace;* Josiah dies in peace, though he is killed in a battle: now as an earnest of this let us every night lie down in peace. It is threatened to the wicked, that they shall lie down in sorrow, Isa. l. 11. It is promised to the righteous, that they shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid, Lev. xxvi. 6. Job xi. 19. Let us then enter into this rest, this blessed sabbatism, and take care that we come not short of it.

1. Let us lie down in peace with God; for without this there can be no peace at all; *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked,* whom God is at war with. A state of sin is a state of enmity against God; they who continue in that state are under the wrath and curse of God, and cannot lie down in peace; what have they to do with peace? Hasten therefore, (sinner,) hasten to make thy peace with God in Jesus Christ, by repentance and faith; take hold on his strength, that thou mayst make peace with him; and thou shalt make peace, for fury is not in him. Conditions of peace are offered, consent to them; close with him who is our peace; take Christ upon his own terms, Christ upon any terms. Defer not to do this; dare not to sleep in that condition, in which thou darest not die. *Escape for thy life, look not behind thee.* Acquaint now thyself with him, now presently, and be at peace, and thereby this good shall come unto thee, thou shalt lie down in peace.

Sin is ever and anon making mischief between God and our souls, provoking God against us, alienating us from God, we, therefore, need to be every night making peace, reconciling ourselves to him and to his holy will, by the agency of his Spirit upon us, and begging of him to be reconciled to us, through the intercession of his Son for us; that there may be no distance, no strangeness, between us and God, no interposing cloud to hinder his mercies from coming down upon us, or our prayers from coming up unto him. *Being justified by faith,* we have this *peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ;* and then we may not only lie down in peace, but we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Let this be our first care, that God have no quarrel with us, nor we with him.

2. Let us lie down in peace with all men; we are concerned to go to sleep, as well as to die, in charity. Those who converse much with the world can scarcely pass a day but something or other happens that is provoking, some affront is given them, some injury done them, at least they think so; when they retire at night and reflect upon it, they are apt to magnify the offence, and while they are musing on it the fire burns, their resentments rise, and they begin to say, *I will do so to him as he has done to me,* Prov. xxiv. 29. Then is the time of ripening the passion into a rooted malice, and meditating revenge; then, therefore, let wisdom and grace be set on work, to extinguish this fire from hell before it get head; then let this root of bitterness be killed and plucked up, and let the mind be disposed to forgive the injury, and to think well of, and wish well to, him that did it. If others incline to quarrel with us, yet let us resolve not to quarrel with them. Let us resolve, that whatever the affront or injury was, it shall neither disquiet our spirits nor make us to fret, which Peninnah aimed at in provoking Hannah, (1 Sam. i. 6.) nor sour or imbitter our spirits, or make us peevish and spiteful; but that we still love ourselves, and love our neighbours as ourselves, and therefore not, by harbouring malice, do any wrong to ourselves or our neighbour. And we shall find it much easier in itself, and much more pleasant in the reflection, to forgive twenty injuries than to avenge one.

That it should be our particular care at night to reconcile ourselves to those who have been injurious to us, is intimated in that charge, (Eph. iv. 26.) *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.* If your passion has not cooled before, let it be abated by the cool of the evening, and quite disappear with the setting sun. You are then to go to bed, and if you lie down with these unmortified passions boiling in your breasts, your soul is among lions, you lie down in a bed of thorns, in a nest of scorpions. Nay, some

have observed from what follows immediately, *neither give place to the devil*, (*v.* 27.) that those who go to bed in malice have the devil for their bed-fellow. We cannot lie down at peace with God, unless we be at peace with men; nor in faith pray to be forgiven, unless we forgive. Let us, therefore, study the things that make for peace, for the peace of our own spirits, by living, as much as in us lies, peaceably with all men. I am for peace, yea, though they are for war.

3. Let us lie down in peace with ourselves, with our own minds, with a sweet composure of spirit and enjoyment of ourselves; *Return unto thy rest, O my soul*, and be easy; let nothing disturb my soul, my darling.

But when may we lie down in peace at night?

(1.) If we have by the grace of God in some measure done the work of the day, and filled it up with duty, we may then lie down in peace at night. If we have the testimony of our consciences for us, that *in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God*, we have this day *had our conversation in the world*, that we have done some good in our places, something that will turn to a good account; if our hearts do not reproach us with a *diem perdidi*, alas! *I have lost a day;* or with that which is worse, the spending of that time in the service of sin, which should have been spent in the service of God; but if, on the contrary, we have abode with God, have been in his fear, and waited on him all the day long; we may then lie down in peace, for God says, *Well done good and faithful servant;* and the sleep of the labouring man, of the labouring Christian, is sweet, is very sweet, when he can say, As I am a day's journey nearer my end, so I am a day's work fitter for it. Nothing will make our bed-chambers pleasant, and our beds easy, like the witness of the Spirit of God with our spirits, that we are going forward for heaven; and a conscience kept void of offence, which will be not only a continual feast, but a continual rest.

(2.) If we have by faith and patience, and submission to the divine will, reconciled ourselves to all the events of the day, so as to be uneasy at nothing that God has done, we may then lie down in peace at night. Whatever has fallen out cross to us, it shall not fret us, but we will kiss the rod, take up the cross, and say, "All is well that God does." Thus we must in our patience keep possession of our own souls, and not suffer any affliction to put us out of the possession of them. We have met with disappointments in husbandry perhaps, in trade, at sea, debtors prove insolvent, creditors prove severe, but this and the other proceed from the Lord; there is a providence in it, every creature is what God makes it to be, and therefore I am dumb, I open not my mouth; that which pleases God ought not to displease me.

(3.) If we have renewed our repentance for sin, and made a fresh application of the blood of Christ to our souls for the purifying of our consciences, we may then lay us down in peace. Nothing can break in upon our peace but sin; that is it which troubles the camp; if that be taken away there shall no evil befall us. The inhabitant, though he be far from well, yet shall not say, I am sick, shall not complain of sickness, for the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity, Isa. xxxiii. 24. The pardon of sin has enough in it to balance all our griefs, and therefore to silence all our complaints. A man sick of the palsy has yet reason to be easy, nay, and to be of good cheer, if Christ says to him, *Thy sins are forgiven thee;* and *I am thy salvation.*

(4.) If we have put ourselves under the divine protection for the ensuing night, we may then lay us down in peace. If, by faith and prayer, we have run into the name of the Lord as our strong tower, have fled to take shelter under the shadow of his wings, and made the Lord our refuge and habitation, we may then speak peace to ourselves, for God in his word speaks peace to us. If David has an eye to the cherubim, between which God is said to dwell, when he says, (Ps. lvii. 1.) *In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge;* yet, certainly, he has an eye to the similitude which Christ makes use of, of a hen gathering her chickens under her wings, when he says, (Ps. xci. 4.) *He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust;* and the chickens under the wings of the hen, are not only safe but warm and pleased.

(5.) If we have cast all our cares for the day following upon God, we may then lay us down in peace. Taking thought for the morrow is the great hinderance of our peace in the night; let us but learn to live without disquieting care, and to refer the issue of all events to that God who may and can do what he will, and will do what is best, for those that love and fear him; *Father, thy will be done*, and then we make ourselves easy. Our Saviour presses this very much upon his disciples, not to perplex themselves with thoughts what they shall eat and what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed, because their Heavenly Father knows that they have need of these things, and will see that they be supplied. Let us, therefore, ease ourselves of this burthen, by casting it on him who careth for us; what need he care and we care too?

III. Having laid ourselves down in peace, we must compose ourselves to sleep; *I will lay me down and sleep.* The love of sleep for sleeping sake is the character of the sluggard, but as it is nature's physic for the recruiting of its weary powers, it is to be looked upon as a mercy equal to that of our food, and in its season to be received with thankfulness.

And with such thoughts as these we may go to sleep:

1. What poor bodies are these we carry about with us, that call for rest and relief so often, that are so soon tired, even with doing nothing, or next to nothing. It is an honour to man above the beasts, *Os homini sublime dedit—that he is made so erect;* it was part of the serpent's curse, *On thy belly shalt thou go;* yet we have little reason to boast of this honour, when we observe how little a while we can stand upright, and how soon we are burthened with our honour, and are forced to lie down. The powers of the soul, and the senses of the body, are our honour, but it is mortifying to consider, how after a few hours' use they are all locked up under a total disability of acting, and it is necessary they should be so. *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,* or the *strong man in his strength,* since they both lie for a fourth part of their time utterly bereft of strength and wisdom, and on a level with the weak and foolish.

2. What a sad thing it is to be under the necessity of losing so much precious time as we do in sleep. That we should lie so many hours out of every four and twenty, in no capacity at all of serving God or our neighbour, of doing any work of piety or charity! Those who consider how short our time is, and what a great deal of work we have to do, and how fast the day of account hastens on, cannot but grudge to spend so much time in sleep, cannot but wish to spend as little as may be in it; cannot but be quickened by it to redeem time, when they are awake, and cannot but long to be there where there shall be no need of sleep, but they shall be as the angels of God, and never rest day or night from the blessed work of praising God.

3. What a good Master do we serve, that allows us time for sleep, and furnishes us with conveniences for it, and makes it refreshing and reviving to us. By this it appears, the Lord is for the body, and it is a good reason why we should present our bodies to him as living sacrifices, and glorify him with them. Nay, sleep is spoken of as given by promise to the saints, (Ps. cxxvii. 2.) *So he giveth his beloved sleep.* The godly man has the enjoyment of that in a quiet resignation to God, which the worldly man labours in vain for, in the eager pursuit of the world. What a difference is there between the sleep of a sinner, who is not sensible of his being within a step of hell, and the sleep of a saint, that has good hopes, through grace, of his being within a step of heaven: that is the sleep God gives to his beloved.

4. How piteous is the case of those from whose eyes sleep departs, through pain of body, or anguish of mind, and to whom wearisome nights are appointed; who, when they lie down, say, *When shall we arise?* and who are thus made a terror to themselves. It was said, that of all the inhuman tortures used by those whom the French king employed to force his protestant subjects to renounce their religion, none prevailed more than keeping them by violence long waking. When we find how earnestly nature craves sleep, and how much it is refreshed by it, we should think with compassion of those, who upon any account want that and other comforts which we enjoy, and pray for them.

5. How ungrateful we have been to the God of our mercies, in suffering sleep, which is so great a support and comfort to us, to be our hinderance in that which is good. As when it has been the gratification of our sloth and laziness, when it has kept us from our hour of prayer in the morning, and disfitted us for our hour of prayer at night; or when we have slept unseasonably in the worship of God; as Eutychus, when Paul was preaching; and the disciples, when Christ was in his agony at prayer. How justly might we be deprived of the comfort of sleep, and upbraided with this as the provoking cause of it! *What! could ye not watch with me one hour?* Those who would sleep, and cannot, must think how often they should have kept awake, and would not.

6. We have now one day less to live, than we had in the morning. The thread of time is winding off apace, its sands are running down, and as time goes eternity comes; it is hastening on. Our days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; which passes and repasses in an instant. And what do we of the work of time? What forwardness are we in to give up our account? O that we could always go to sleep with death upon our thoughts, how would it quicken us to improve time! It would make our sleep not the less desirable, but it would make our death much the less formidable.

7. To thy glory, O God, I now go to sleep; whether we eat or drink, yea, or sleep, for that is included in whatever we do, we must do it to the glory of God. Why do I go to sleep now, but that my body may be fit to serve my soul, and able for a while to keep pace with it in the service of God tomorrow? Thus common actions, by being directed toward our great end, are done after a godly sort, and abound to our account; and thus the advantages we have by them are sanctified to us. *To the pure all things are pure;* and *whether we wake or sleep, we live together with Christ,* 1 Thess. v. 10.

8. To thy grace, O God, and to the word of thy grace, I now commend myself. It is good to fall asleep with a fresh surrender of our whole selves, body, soul, and spirit, to God: now, *Return* to God as *thy rest, O my soul; for he has dealt bountifully with thee;* thus we should commit the keeping of our souls to him, falling asleep, as David did, (Ps. xxxi. 5.) with, *Into thy hands I commit my spirit;* and as Stephen did, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.* Sleep does not only resemble death, but is sometimes an inlet to it; many go to sleep and never wake, but sleep the sleep of death; which is a good reason why we should go to sleep with dying thoughts, and put ourselves under the protection of

a living God, and then sudden death will be no surprise to us.

9. O that when I awake I may be still with God! that the parenthesis of sleep, though long, may not break off the thread of my communion with God, but that as soon as I awake I may resume it. O that when I wake in the night I may have my mind turned to good thoughts! may remember God upon my bed, who then is at my right hand, and to whom the darkness and the light are both alike; and that I may sweetly meditate upon him in the night watches; that thus even that time may be redeemed, and improved to the best advantage, which otherwise is in danger not only of being lost in vain thoughts, but mispent in ill ones. O that when I awake in the morning, my first thoughts may be of God, that with them my heart may be seasoned for all day!

10. O that I may enter into a better rest than that which I am now entering upon! The apostle speaks of a rest, which we that have believed do enter into, even in this world, as well as of a rest which in the other world remains for the people of God, Heb. iv. 3, 9. Believers rest from sin and the world; they rest in Christ, and in God through Christ; they enjoy a satisfaction in the covenant of grace, and their interest in that covenant; *This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell.* They enter into this ark, and there are not only safe but easy. Now, O that I might enjoy this rest while I live, and when I die might enter into something more than rest, even the joy of my Lord, a fulness of joy!

IV. We must do all this in a believing dependence upon God, and his power, providence, and grace. Therefore I *lay me down in peace*, and compose myself to sleep, because thou, Lord, keepest me, and assurest me that thou dost so; *Thou, Lord, makest me to dwell in safety.* David takes notice of God's compassing his path, and his lying down, as his observer, Ps. cxxxix. 3. He sees his eye upon him when he is retired into his bed-chamber, and none else sees him; when he is in the dark, and none else can see him. Here he takes notice of him, compassing his lying down as his preserver; and sees his hand about him to protect him from evil, and keep him safe; feels his hand under him to support him, and to make him easy.

1. It is by the power of God's providence that we are kept safe in the night, and on that providence we must depend continually. It is he that preserveth man and beast, (Ps. xxxvi. 6.) that upholds all things by the word of his power. That death, which by sin entered into the world, would soon lay all waste, if God did not shelter his creatures from its arrows, which are continually flying about, we cannot but see ourselves exposed to in the night. Our bodies carry about with them the seeds of all diseases. Death is always working in us; a little thing would stop the circulation either of the blood or the breath, and then we are gone; either never awake, or awake under the arrests of death. Men by sin are exposed to one another; many have been murdered in their beds, and many burned in their beds. And our greatest danger of all is from the malice of evil spirits, that go about seeking to devour.

We are very unable to help ourselves, and our friends unable to help us; we are not aware of the particulars of our danger, nor can we foresee which way it will arise; and, therefore, know not where to stand upon our guard; or if we did, we know not how. When Saul was asleep, he lost his spear and his cruse of water, and might as easily have lost his head, as Sisera did when he was asleep, by the hand of a woman. What poor helpless creatures are we, and how easily are we overcome when sleep has overcome us! Our friends are asleep too, and cannot help us. An illness may seize us in the night, which, if they be called up and come to us, they cannot help us against; the most skilful and tender are *physicians of no value.*

It is therefore God's providence that protects us night after night, his care, his goodness. That was the hedge about Job, about him and his house, and all that he had round about, (Job i. 10.) a hedge that Satan himself could not break through, nor find a gap in, though he traversed it round. There is a special protection which God's people are taken under, they are hid in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle, under the protection of his promise, (Ps. xxvii. 5.) they are his own, and dear to him, and he keeps them as the apple of his eye, Ps. xvii. 8. He is round about them from henceforth and for ever, as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, Ps. cxxv. 2. He protects their habitations, as he did the tents of Israel in the wilderness; for he has promised to create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion *a pillar of cloud by day*, to shelter from heat, *and the shining of a flaming fire by night*, to *shelter from cold*, Isa. iv. 5. Thus he blesseth the habitation of the just, so that no real evil shall befall it, nor any plague come nigh it.

The care of the divine Providence concerning us and our families we are to depend upon, so as to look upon no provision we make for our own safety sufficient, without the blessing of the divine Providence upon it; *Except the Lord keepeth the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.* Be the house ever so well built, the doors and windows ever so well barred, the servants ever so careful, ever so watchful, it is all to no purpose, unless he that keeps Israel, and neither slumbers nor sleeps, undertake for our safety; and if he be thy Protector, *at destruction and famine thou shalt laugh*, and *shalt know that thy tabernacle is in peace.* Job v. 22, 24.

2. It is by the power of God's grace that we are

enabled to think ourselves safe, and on that grace we must continually depend. The fear of danger, though groundless, is as vexatious as if it were ever so just. And, therefore, to complete the mercy of being made to dwell safely, it is requisite that, by the grace of God, we be delivered from our fears, (Ps. xxxiv. 4.) as well as from the things themselves that we were afraid of; that shadows may not be a terror to us, no more than substantial evils.

If, by the grace of God, we are enabled to keep conscience void of offence, and still to preserve our integrity; if iniquity be put far away, and no wickedness suffered to dwell in our tabernacles, then shall we lift up our faces without spot, we shall be stedfast, and shall not need to fear, (Job xi. 14, 15.) for fear came in with sin, and goes out with it. *If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God*, and man too, and are made to dwell securely, for we are sure nothing can hurt us but sin: and whatever does harm us, sin is the sting of it; and, therefore, if sin be pardoned and prevented, we need not fear any trouble.

If, by the grace of God, we be enabled to live by faith; that faith which sets God alway before us; that faith which applies the promises to ourselves, and puts them in suit at the throne of grace; that faith which purifies the heart, overcomes the world, and quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked one; that faith which realizes unseen things, and is the substance and evidence of them: if we be actuated and governed by this grace we are made to dwell safely, and to bid defiance to death itself, and all its harbingers and terrors: *O Death, where is thy sting?* This faith will not only silence our fears, but will open our lips in holy triumphs, *If God be for us, who can be against us?*

Let us lie down in peace, and sleep, not in the strength of a natural resolution against fear, nor merely of rational arguments against it, though they are of good use, but in a dependence upon the grace of God to work faith in us, and to fulfil in us the work of faith. This is going to sleep like a Christian under the shadow of God's wings, going to sleep in faith; and it will be to us a good earnest of dying in faith; for the same faith that will carry us cheerfully through the short death of sleep, will carry us through the long sleep of death.

The Application.

1. See how much it is our concern to carry our religion about with us wherever we go, and to have it always at our right hand; for at every turn we have occasion for it, lying down, rising up, going out, coming in; and those are Christians indeed, who confine not their religion to the new moons and the sabbaths, but bring the influences of it into all the common actions and occurrences of human life. We must sit down at our tables and rise from them, lie down in our beds and arise from them, with an eye to God's providence and promise. Thus we must live a life of communion with God, even while our conversation is with the world.

And in order to this, it is necessary that we have a living principle in our hearts, a principle of grace, which, like a well of living water, may be continually springing up to life eternal, John iv. 14. It is necessary likewise that we have a watchful eye upon our hearts, and keep them with all diligence, that we set a strict guard upon their motions, and have our thoughts more at command than I fear most Christians have. See what need we have of the constant supplies of divine grace, and of a union with Christ, that by faith we may partake of the root and fatness of the good olive continually.

2. See what a hidden life the life of good Christians is, and how much it lies from under the eye and observation of the world. The most important part of their business lies between God and their own souls, in the frame of their spirits, and the workings of their hearts, in their retirements, which no eye sees but his, that is all eye. Justly are the saints called God's hidden ones, and his secret is said to be with them, for they have meat to eat, and work to do, which the world knows not of; and joys, and griefs, and cares which a stranger does not intermeddle with. *Great is the mystery of godliness.*

And this is a good reason why we should look upon ourselves as incompetent judges one of another, because we know not each other's hearts, nor are witnesses to their retirements. It is to be feared, there are many whose religion lies all in the outside; they make a fair show in the flesh, and perhaps a great noise; and, yet, are strangers to this secret communion with God, in which consists so much of the power of godliness. And on the other hand it is to be hoped, there are many who do not distinguish themselves by any thing observable in their profession of religion, but pass through the world without being taken notice of, and yet converse much with God in solitude, and walk with him in the even, constant tenor of a regular devotion and conversation. *The kingdom of God comes not with observation.* Many merchants thrive by a secret trade, that make no bustle in the world. It is fit, therefore, that every man's judgment should proceed from the Lord, who knows men's hearts and sees in secret.

3. See what enemies they are to themselves, who continue under the power of a vain and carnal mind, and live without God in the world. Multitudes I fear there are, to whom all that has been said of secret communion with God is accounted as a strange thing, and they are ready to say of their ministers when they speak of it, *Do they not speak parables?* They lie down and rise up, go out and come in, in

the constant pursuit either of worldly profits, or of sensual pleasures; but God is not in all their thoughts, not in any of them. They live upon him, and upon the gifts of his bounty from day to day, but they have no regard to him, never own their dependence on him, nor are in any care to secure his favour.

Those who live such a mere animal life as this, do not only put a great contempt upon God, but do a great deal of damage to themselves; they stand in their own light, and deprive themselves of the most valuable comforts that can be enjoyed on this side heaven. What peace can they have who are not at peace with God? What satisfaction can they take in their hopes, who build them not upon God, the everlasting foundation? or in their joys, who derive them not from him, the fountain of life and living waters? O that at length they would be wise for themselves, and remember their Creator and Benefactor!

4. See what easy, pleasant lives the people of God might live, if it were not their own faults. There are those who fear God and work righteousness, and are accepted of the Lord, but go drooping and disconsolate from day to day, are full of cares and fears and complaints, and make themselves always uneasy; and it is because they do not live that life of delight in God, and dependence on him, that they might and should live. God has effectually provided for their dwelling at ease, but they make not use of that provision he has laid up for them.

O that all who appear to be conscientious, and are afraid of sin, would appear to be cheerful, and afraid of nothing else; that all who call God Father, and are in care to please him, and keep themselves in his love, would learn to cast all their other care upon him, and commit their way to him as to a Father. He shall choose our inheritance for us, and knows what is best for us, better than we do for ourselves. "Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me." It is what I have often said, and will abide by, "That a holy, heavenly life, spent in the service of God, and in communion with him, is the most pleasant, comfortable life any body can live in this world."

5. See in this, what is the best preparation we can make for the changes that may be before us in our present state; and that is, to keep up a constant acquaintance and communion with God, to converse with him daily, and keep up stated times for calling on him, that so when trouble comes, it may find the wheels of prayer a going. And then may we come to God with a humble boldness and comfort, and hope to speed when we are in affliction, if we have been no strangers to God at other times, but in our peace and prosperity had our eyes ever toward him.

Even when we arrive to the greatest degree of holy security and serenity, and lie down most in peace, yet, still, we must keep up an expectation of trouble in the flesh. Our ease must be grounded not upon any stability in the creature; if it be, we put a cheat upon ourselves, and treasure up so much the greater vexation for ourselves. No, it must be built upon the faithfulness of God, which is unchangeable. Our Master has told us, *In the world you shall have tribulation*, much tribulation, count upon it, it is only in me that you shall have peace. But if every day be to us, as it should be, a sabbath of rest in God, and communion with him, nothing can come amiss to us any day, be it ever so cross.

6. See in this, what is the best preparation we can make for the unchangeable world, that is before us. We know God will bring us to death, and it is our great concern to get ready for it. It ought to be the business of every day, to prepare for our last day, and what can we do better for ourselves in the prospect of death, than, by frequent retirements for communion with God, to get more loose from that world which at death we must leave, and better acquainted with that world which at death we must remove to. By going to our beds as to our graves, we shall make death familiar to us, and it will become as easy to us to close our eyes in peace and die, as it used to be to close our eyes in peace and sleep.

We hope God will bring us to heaven; and by keeping up daily communion with God, we grow more and more meet to partake of that inheritance; and have our conversation in heaven. It is certain, all that will go to heaven hereafter, begin their heaven now, and have their hearts there. If we thus enter into a spiritual rest every night, that will be a pledge of our blessed repose in the embraces of divine love, in that world wherein day and night come to an end, and we shall not rest day or night from praising him, who is and will be our eternal rest.

Mr. FLATMAN'S HYMN for the Morning. Poems, p. 57.

AWAKE, my soul! Awake mine eyes,
Awake, my drowsy faculties;
Awake, and see the new-born light
Spring from the darksome womb of night.
Look up and see th' unwearied sun,
Already has his race begun;
The pretty lark is mounted high,
And sings her matins in the sky.
Arise, my soul, and thou my voice,
In songs of praise early rejoice.
O Great Creator, Heavenly King!
Thy praises let me ever sing!
Thy power has made, thy goodness kept
This fenceless body while I slept;
Yet one day more hast given me,
From all the powers of darkness free.
O keep my heart from sin secure,
My life unblamable and pure;
That when the last of all my days is come,
Cheerful and fearless I may wait my doom.

His ANTHEM for the Evening, p. 58.

SLEEP, downy sleep! come close mine eyes,
Tir'd with beholding vanities!
Sweet slumbers come and chase away
The toils and follies of the day.
On your soft bosom will I lie,
Forget the world and learn to die.
O Israel's watchful Shepherd, spread
Tents of angels round my bed.
Let not the spirits of the air
While I slumber me insnare;
But save thy suppliant free from harms,
Clasp'd in thine everlasting arms.
Clouds and darkness is thy throne,
Thy wonderful pavilion;
O dart from thence a shining ray,
And then my midnight shall be day:
Thus when the morn, in crimson drest,
Breaks through the windows of the east,
My hymns of thankful praises shall arise,
Like incense or the morning sacrifice.

Mr. WATT's Morning HYMN; Ps. xix. 5, 8. lxxiii. 24, 25. p. 63.

1 GOD of the morning, at whose voice
The cheerful sun makes haste to rise,
And like a giant doth rejoice,
To run his journey through the skies.

2 From the fair chambers of the east
The circuit of his race begins;
And without weariness or rest
Round the whole earth he flies and shines.

3 O like the sun may I fulfil
Th' appointed duties of the day,
With ready mind and active will
March on, and keep my heavenly way!

[4 But I shall rove and lose the race,
If God my sun should disappear,
And leave me in this world's wild maze
To follow every wand'ring star.

5 Lord, thy commands are clean and pure,
Enlight'ning our beclouded eyes,
Thy threat'nings just, thy promise sure,
Thy gospel makes the simple wise.]

6 Give me thy counsels for my guide,
And then receive me to thy bliss;
All my desires and hopes beside
Are faint and cold, compar'd with this.

An Evening HYMN; Ps. iv. 8. iii. 5, 6. cxliii. 8.

1 THUS far the Lord has led me on,
Thus far his power prolongs my days;
And every evening shall make known
Some fresh memorial of his grace.

2 Much of my time has run to waste,
And I perhaps am near my home;
But he forgives my follies past,
He gives me strength for days to come.

3 I lay my body down to sleep,
Peace is the pillow for my head,
While well appointed angels keep
Their watchful stations round my bed.

4 In vain the sons of earth or hell
Tell me a thousand frightful things,
My God in safety makes me dwell
Beneath the shadow of his wings.

[5 Faith in his name forbids my fear:
O may thy presence ne'er depart!
And in the morning make me hear
The love and kindness of thy heart.

6 Thus when the night of death shall come,
My flesh shall rest beneath the ground,
And wait thy voice to rouse my tomb,
With sweet salvation in the sound.]

A SONG for Morning or Evening; Lam. iii. 23. Isa. xlv. 7.

1 MY God, how endless is thy love!
Thy gifts are every evening new,
And morning mercies from above
Gently distil like early dew.

2 Thou spread'st the curtains of the night,
Great guardian of my sleeping hours;
Thy sovereign word restores the light,
And quickens all my drowsy powers.

3 I yield my powers to thy command,
To thee I consecrate my days;
Perpetual blessings from thine hand
Demand perpetual songs of praise.

FOUR DISCOURSES

AGAINST

VICE AND PROFANENESS,

VIZ. AGAINST

I. DRUNKENNESS.
II. UNCLEANNESS.
III. SABBATH-BREAKING.
IV. PROFANE SPEAKING.

To the Reader.

Without doubt it is possible that a man may be no drunkard or adulterer, no swearer or sabbath-breaker, and yet be for ever ruined by his unmortified pride and passion, his worldliness and covetousness, his secret fraud and injustice, or his infidelity and close impiety; the pharisee in the parable went to his house not justified, though he could say, *I am not as other men are;* yet so great a decay is there of religion, even in the Christian world, and such a prevalency of sin, that it is easy to observe how far it goes toward the gaining a man a fair character among his neighbours, to be able to say of him, that he is free from these vices, as if it were a rare thing to find them that are so.

I hope the matter is not so bad; but it is too plain to be denied, that drunkenness and uncleanness, sabbath-breaking and profane speaking, the sins against which these four plain discourses are levelled, do still very much abound both in city and country, notwithstanding the good and wholesome laws of the land, made pursuant to the laws of God, for the suppressing of them; and both enforced by her Majesty's proclamation, solemnly read at certain times, in the chief places of concourse; and the pious endeavours in many parts of the kingdom, both of magistrates, and of others also in their places, formed into societies for that purpose, to reform the manners of the age. Though their endeavours have not been altogether in vain, yet it is evident the disease is not conquered.

It would be a vanity to think, that such will be reclaimed and reformed by books, as will not be wrought upon by those more sensible methods of conviction; and yet our writing against these sins may be of some use, to give a check to those, who are entering into temptations to them, and who are therein checked by their own consciences likewise; with which, if we can but seasonably set in, they may be prevailed with to start back in time, before their hearts be hardened.

It may likewise be of use to those who fall under the censure of the law for any of these sins, and are thereby awakened to some degree of consideration, to make the punishment answer the end aimed at, which is nothing else but their reformation; and that would contribute too to the reformation of others. If the rod and reproof together might but give wisdom to the foolish and disobedient, as there would be more joy in heaven, so there would be more benefit on earth, by the example of one sinner that repenteth, than of ninety-nine just persons, that need no repentance.

And we may hope there are some, who through the strength of temptation, and the weakness of resolution, are drawn away by these lusts, and enticed, that yet are willing to be reasoned with, and to read and consider what is said to them; and may more probably be wrought upon by a book, which they may peruse over and over again, than by a sermon which they hear once; and may in this way, by the grace of God, be recovered out of the snares of the devil, and become trophies of Christ's victory over him.

However, such endeavours as these to turn sinners from the error of their ways, though they may not have the desired success, will turn to us for a testimony, that we would have healed them, and they would not be healed. By this and other methods the watchmen give warning, and so deliver their own souls.

What more have we to do, but to be earnest with God in prayer night and day, that the wickedness of the wicked may at length come to an end, and the just be established by a more plentiful pouring out of the Spirit of grace upon us from on high, which would soon turn the wilderness into a fruitful land, and make even the desert to blossom as the rose.

And while we yet see the wicked walk on every side, it is expected from us, that our souls weep in secret for it, that we complain of it to God, that we sigh and cry for the abominations committed among us, and that by a regular and exemplary conversation, conformable to the gospel, we vindicate the honour of our holy religion, and approve ourselves God's faithful witnesses in the places where we live; then shall a mark be set upon us, and we shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger, hid either in heaven or under heaven.

MATT. HENRY.

A FRIENDLY ADMONITION

TO

DRUNKARDS AND TIPPLERS.

To address ourselves to you (sinners) when you are actually overcome with wine or strong drink, is to cast pearls before swine, that will trample them under their feet, and perhaps will turn again and rend us. You are then as incapable to hear reason, as you are to speak it. It was the prudence of Abigail, that she would not reprove Nabal when he was drunk, 1 Sam. xxv. 36. *They have smitten me*, then *shalt thou say, and I felt it not*, (Prov. xxiii. 35.) and then to what purpose wast thou smitten?

But I will take it for granted that you are sometimes sober, and allow yourselves liberty to think; and that Nebuchadnezzar's misery is not your chosen happiness, to be continually beasts from one year's end to another. I am willing to hope that sometimes your understanding returns to you; and at such a happy hour, when you are your own men, and masters of your own reason, I heartily wish this paper might fall into your hands, to be read with a serious and unprejudiced eye, and grace with it into your hearts, to enable you to consider your ways, and to turn from the error of them.

And now at length, I beseech you, *show yourselves men, O ye transgressors*, (Isa. xlvi. 8.) and let me bespeak one hour's application of mind, and a little impartial consideration, while one, who really wishes you well, attempts to recover you out of the snare you are led captive in. You are, perhaps, many a time thankful to your friend, who helped you when you were drunk, helped you to your houses, helped you to your beds, when you were not able to help yourselves; I beseech you then, count not one your enemy, who would persuade you to such a course of life, as that your own hands may be sufficient for you, and you may not again need their help upon any such occasion.

The transgressors to whom I address this paper, I shall choose to describe in the express words of scripture, hoping that such a description of them will be not only least exceptionable, but most effectual to discover them to themselves, and to their own consciences; and further I do not desire to discover them; *for I write not these things to shame you*, (unless it be to shame you out of your sin,) *but as my beloved friends, to warn you*, 1 Cor. iv. 14.

Those therefore that I am exhorting in God's name to repent and reform, are such as fall under some of the following characters:

1. Those who inordinately love drink, are hereby admonished. Solomon foretells the misery of him who loves pleasure, that he shall be a poor man, and particularly he who loves wine, Prov. xxi. 17. To use wine or strong drink soberly, and with a moderate delight, as a good creature of God, made for the service and comfort of man, is allowed us; and it is sanctified, as other the good things of this life, by the word of God and prayer, and the pleasure more than doubled to a good man by thanksgiving. But to love wine and strong drink, to set the heart upon it, to let out the desire towards it, for the sake of the pleasure of drinking, and because it is a gratification of the sensual appetite; this is a corrupt and vicious habit, which leads to drunkenness, as it is usually contracted by it.

To drink wine for the stomach's sake is prescribed as a medicine, (1 Tim. v. 23.) but then it is a little wine, for a little, a very little, will serve the necessities and regular desires of nature: but to eat or drink for drunkenness, that is, purely to please the palate, has a brand put upon it by the wise man, (Eccl. x. 17.) where it is made the character of virtuous princes, that (notwithstanding the temptation of dainties and varieties they have about them) they eat in due season, for strength and not for drunkenness.

It is the everlasting reproach of Israel in the wilderness, that when God gave them meat enough for their bodies, that did not content them, though it was bread from heaven, but they asked meat for their lusts, Ps. lxxviii. 18. After the similitude of their transgression do those sin, who are not pleased with that which satisfies the just desires of nature, but they thirst after that which really puts a force upon nature.

This love of the pleasure of drinking is commonly jested with, as a "spark in the throat;" but such a spark it is as must be quenched by true repentance and mortification, or it will break out shortly into such a flame, as will burn to the lowest hell.

2. Those who err through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way, are hereby admonished. Such are complained of by the prophet, (Isa. xxviii. 7.) who though they do not drink so far

as ordinarily to deprive themselves of the common exercise of reason, yet they debauch their own consciences with the love of pleasure; so that they are unable to make a right judgment of divine things, and especially of their own spiritual state and interest: so losing the exercise of their reason about that for the sake of which they had their reason given them.

Their case is greatly to be lamented, who, by associating with drunkards, and habituating themselves to loose practices, inconsistent with the rules, and destructive to the seeds, of divine life, come to imbibe loose principles concerning God and Christ, and the Scriptures, and their souls, and another world, and entertain rooted prejudices against serious godliness, and a holy life. Thus the strong man armed gets and keeps possession of the heart, and it will be a miracle of free grace, if ever he be dispossessed.

It is sad to see how many form their notions of religion, and settle their rules of living, by their free conversation, as they call it, over a glass of wine; and for instruction in the most weighty concerns of their souls, they have recourse not to reading, study, prayer, or the serious advice of their grave and pious teachers, but to the banter of their club in the ale-house or tavern; by this they resolve to steer their course, and they take it for granted they are in the right. These are the oracles they consult, in these schools they choose their education, and so they err through wine; and in the greatness of their folly wander endlessly.

3. Those who tarry long at the wine are also branded in the Scripture, Prov. xxiii. 30. Those who waste a great many of their precious hours thus idly and unprofitably, so as at the best to serve none of the purposes of the rational, much less of the divine, life. Those, I mean, who spend the best part of every day in piping, and sipping, and chatting over the glass, as if they had nothing else to do in this world, but to please as brutish an appetite of the mere animal life as any it has. They divide their time, perhaps even their sabbath time, between the bed and the bottle, and make tippling the constant business of a worthless, useless life. They do not stand in the market-place, but they sit in a worse place, all the day idle.

These are such as we call sots; the most insignificant animals under the sun, the unprofitable burthens of the earth, under which it groans: of whom we may truly say, it had been as good for the world if it had never known them; and they themselves will say shortly, when they come under the fearful doom of the wicked and slothful servant, that it had been better, a thousand times better, if they had never been born: for the time thus spent, thus mispent, will perhaps occasion melancholy reflections upon a death-bed; it will, however, pass very *ill* in the account, in the judgment of the great day.

4. Those who follow strong drink are under a woe, (Isa. v. 11.) *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink:* and as another scripture expresses it, *They fill themselves with strong drink,* Isa. lvi. 12. These are deliberate drunkards, who are continually seeking opportunities to make themselves drunk; who follow it as their trade, and are in it as in their element. The desire of excessive drinking will draw them at any time, into any place, among any company, though ever so sordid and so much below them; it will give them a diversion from the prosecution of any business, though ever so urgent. They are as solicitous in their inquiry "Where are the best liquors?" as the most industrious tradesman is in inquiring "Where are the best goods, and the best bargains?" When they awake out of a drunken fit, it is to seek it yet again, Prov. xxiii. 35.

5. Those who are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink, are likewise under a woe, Isa. v. 22. There are those who glory in it as a mighty perfection, that they are able to bear a great deal of strong liquor without sinking under it; and boast of it as an heroic achievement, that they have made shift to keep their seats, and to keep their feet, when they had laid so many dead drunk under the table. Probably such as these were those drunkards of Ephraim, who wore the crown of pride, the garlands they won by those sort of victories, Isa. xxviii. 1. But it is there threatened, (*v.* 3.) That those drunkards of Ephraim, with their crown of pride, shall be trodden under foot. Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and wonder, O earth, that ever any should arrive to such a pitch of impudence in sin, as thus to glory in their shame, and value themselves upon that which is rather the commendation of a brewer's horse, than of a man, to be able to carry a great deal of liquor. But the day is coming, when those who are so well able to bear the cup of drunkenness, will find themselves too weak to bear the cup of trembling.

6. Those who are easily and commonly brought to *drink themselves drunk,* as the expression is, (1 Kings xvi. 9. and *ch.* xx. 16.) fall under his reproof. Those, I mean, who though they know their own weakness, the weakness of their heads, and their inability to bear drink, together with the weakness of their hearts, and their inability to resist temptations to this sin, yet are ordinarily drawn into such company as proves a snare to them, and are soon brought to take more than does them good; the effect whereof is, that their reason is disturbed, their tongues stammer, their feet stumble, and they reel to and fro, and are at their wits' end. They become like the fool, whom Solomon describes, (Eccl. x. 3.) who *when he walketh by the way, his*

wisdom faileth him, and he says to every one he meets, *that he is a fool.* Those certainly drink to excess, who by drinking lose the government of themselves, and disable their own bodies and minds for their respective offices.

They who are but once surprised into this excess, as Noah was, have reason to lament their own unwariness, and to double their guard for the future; but they who are again and again overcome by it have no cloak for their sin. Wine is such a mocker, that if it thus deceive us once, it is its part, it may be its fault, but if twice, it is our own, wholly our own.

7. Those who make others drink and be drunk, though they themselves may escape being so, are under a woe, (Hab. ii. 15.) *Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, and makes him drunken also.* Those who contrive by urging healths, or other the arts of drunkenness, to force this trade, must doubtless be accountable for all the sin they decoy others into, and the blood of those souls and bodies, which perish thereby, will be required at their hands. Those especially incur guilt, who not only make a jest of drawing an unguarded soul now and then into a particular act of drunkenness, but lay plots to debauch those who were soberly educated and inclined, and to engage them in the course and way of this sin; and triumph in their success herein as glorious victories, boasting how often they have thus quenched the glowing sparks of virtue, and crushed its hopeful seeds. These have arrived at the highest pitch of this wickedness; they are factors for hell, and betray such a malice against God and souls, and such a zeal for the propagating of sin, as is the very constitution of Satan himself.

Having thus described the disease, in the several symptoms and degrees of it, we must next attempt the cure: and that which makes the attempt more difficult, and yet more necessary, is, that the disease is epidemical; the contagion is spread through the nation, and multitudes are tainted with it. It is not here and there one that is thus deprived of his reason, and become distracted at times; if so, hospitals might be built in which to keep them up, and endeavour their relief; but the iniquity abounds in every place. If the honour of temperance were to be carried by the major vote, we have reason to fear that the sober would be out-polled. Whether the former days were in this respect any whit better than these, I know not; but these are certainly very bad, and the prophet's complaint may too justly be revived, (Isa. xxviii. 8.) *All tables are full of vomit and filthiness, there is no place clean.*

Now as when the pestilence rages in a city, whilst care is taken by the government to confine the infected, that they appear not abroad to spread the infection, it is likewise incumbent upon physicians, to prescribe and publish the best methods they can think of both of prevention and cure; so, when this brutish vice of drunkenness is grown so very common as it is, it is high time to take the same course with it. It is the duty of magistrates with their power, to restrain and suppress it, that it appear not barefaced. Their sword ought to be a terror to these evil doers; for without doubt a common drunkard is a common nuisance, which the conservators of the public peace ought to take cognizance of. It is also requisite that ministers in their places, as spiritual physicians, should direct people what course to take, and how to manage themselves, that they, who are yet sound, may be preserved from the infection, and they who are sick, who most need the physician, may be recovered.

I must alter the title of this paper, if I should here address myself to the sober, to give them rules for the preserving of their sobriety: Let the fear of God be kept up in the heart; let the flesh be crucified, with all its corrupt affections and lusts; let not the dread and abhorrence of this sin be lessened by the frequent sight of those who indulge themselves in it; but let drunkards, as vile persons, be contemned in their eyes, (Ps. xv. 4.) and let their company be avoided, as much as is possible. Let temperance be a constant pleasure to them, and let them value themselves by it as their honour and reputation; and let its rules be religiously and inviolably observed, and no sensual appetite gratified; but let the body be kept under, and brought into subjection to religion and right reason; and then, I hope, by the grace of God, daily prayed for, and duly improved, he that is sober will be sober still, and will still hold fast his integrity.

But my business at present lies with those who are infected, and already captivated to the power of this lust; whether they be known and open drunkards, who declare their sin as Sodom, and seek not to hide it, or whether they be more close and secret tipplers, who roll it under their tongue as a sweet morsel. O that ye would, both the one and the other, suffer a word of exhortation; and let me beg of you with all earnestness and seriousness, if you have any regard to the eternal God that made you, or to the blessed Jesus that bought you, or to your own precious and immortal souls, that you will break off this sinful course of life you lead; cease to do this evil, and learn to do well. Fain I would persuade those who have been drunk, to be drunk no more; to forsake the foolish and live, and to go in the way of understanding. Though the disease be inveterate and very threatening, yet I would not doubt but, by the grace of God, a cure might be effected, if the diseased were but willing to be made whole.

These sinners must be ranked under two heads, who must be differently dealt with, according as their case differs.

I. There are some drunkards, who justify themselves in the sin, and so go on in it, under the protection of a debauched conscience; and these must be addressed to by way of conviction.

II. There are others, who condemn themselves for it, but not knowing how to disentangle themselves from it, they go on in it, notwithstanding the checks of an accusing conscience; and these must be addressed to by way of counsel and advice.

I. Let me begin with those who wallow in the mire of this sin, and think there is no harm in it; who insist upon their own justification in it; and plead for Baal. They are retained of counsel for this sin, and they confess the fact, that they are often in drink, yet they deny the fault, and with the adulterous woman, wipe their mouth and say, they have done no wickedness, Prov. xxx. 20. They have, if not satisfied, yet silenced, their own consciences, with the corrupt and foolish reasonings of that flesh and blood, which they make their delight and their counsellors. They are ready to ask, Why should not the natural appetite, which we brought into the world with us, be indulged and gratified? And how can the time and estate be better spent than in the service of it? And to show that they can quote Scripture as well as Satan, (Matt. iv. 6.) they will tell you that the fruit of the vine was created to make glad the heart, and in vain was it created, if it be not used for that purpose; you shall not persuade them that that is unlawful (how express soever the divine law is against it) which seems so natural.

They plead also the benefit and advantage of it; for their parts they know no way to ease the cares of this life, and take off the fears of death, but to drown them in good liquor. "What!" (say they) "a man is never merry till he is half drunk; never enjoys himself till he has thus raised himself." And, besides, they take it for granted that there can be no good fellowship with their friends, no free or pleasant conversation, but in the tavern or ale-house, and must either seek it there, or be perpetually melancholy, and never enjoy one another; they cannot, that is, they will not, believe that such a pleasant entertainment and diversion as this should have any evil in it: what if they be drunk, they hope it is no treason; it is past off with a jest, and made a laughing matter the next day, among their companions.

But will you give me leave to ask you, (you that thus palliate the matter,) what if your drinking to excess, and your tippling, should not prove such an innocent harmless thing, as you would make yourselves believe it is? What if all these fig-leaves you sew together, prove too thin and too narrow to cover your shame? Your consciences, which you have so often baffled and brow-beaten, now, perhaps, begin to let you alone, and give you no disturbance; you therefore, with a great deal of security and carelessness, walk in the way of your own heart, and in the sight of your eyes, and allow yourselves all the looses of a vain and carnal conversation; but what if for all these things God should bring you into judgment? Eccl. xi. 9. What will you do in the day of visitation, when you shall be called to account for all your drunken frolics and excesses? Can you think that these pleas you insist on will stand you in any stead at God's bar, or bring you off in the judgment of the great day? No, they will all be overruled and rejected as frivolous, and you yourselves will be ashamed of your confidence. You now say, that you shall have peace, though you go on to add drunkenness to thirst; you think God will not be so severe upon you as we are, and at the worst you shall fare as well as most of your neighbours, and if you go to hell, God help a great many! But what if this self-flattery prove a self-deceit? What if your making light of the sin makes it really the heavier? What if you come at last within reach of that fearful threatening against the sinner, who thus promises himself impunity in the way of drunkenness? (Deut. xxix. 19, 20.) *The Lord will not spare him, but the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smoke against that man.* Is it not better for you to be undeceived in time, than to have this mistake discovered, when it is too late to rectify it? Come, therefore, and let us reason together: you plead that drinking is natural, it is so; but drinking to excess is certainly unnatural. You plead it is pleasant and profitable, but the plea is false, there is no pleasure nor profit in it.

You ask what harm is there in being drunk? What hurt does it do to any body? But will you give me leave to ask you a few questions? and I will appeal to the impartial and unbiassed judgment of your own consciences for an answer to them.

1. Is it no harm to transgress the law of the great God, the God that made you and will judge you? The very law of nature forbids this sin; the heathen condemned it, and cried out shame on it, though it is not expressly forbidden in the law of Moses, (only the use of all wine and strong drink is prohibited to the priests when they went in to minister, (Lev. x. 9.) and to the Nazarites, (Num. vi. 3.) and Christians are spiritual priests and gospel Nazarites) yet it is frequently condemned by the prophets, and many a woe denounced against it, as in the places before quoted. And in the New Testament, which is more immediately our rule, we have many express laws against it. Luke xxi. 34. *Take heed, lest your heart be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness;* and again, (Rom. xiii. 13.) *Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness;* and again, (Eph. v. 18.) *Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit;* and again, (1 Thess. v. 7, 8.) *They that be drunk, are drunk in the night, but let us who are of the day be sober.* Are these the commands of God or are they not? If they be,

are they to be quarrelled with, and jested with, or are they to be obeyed? Are they repealed or antiquated, or are they not still in as full force, power, and virtue as ever? Were these sacred laws enacted for the restraining and mortifying of our lusts, and can we think that they should be relaxed and dispensed with in favour of our lusts? No; as long as the carnal mind is enmity to the just and holy God, the holiness and justice of God will be enmity to the carnal mind.

You argue that drunkenness must needs be lawful, because it is grateful to the flesh, and you cannot think that God should be so hard upon you, as to bind you out from that which you have so strong an appetite to; as if God were altogether such a one as yourselves, and as much a friend to the ease and pleasure of the body as you are: thus the sensual lives of Epicures are justified, by the atheistical doctrine of Epicurus. But stay awhile and you shall see this refuge of lies swept away, and shall know whose word shall stand, God's or yours, (Jer. xliv. 28.) *Fools make a mock at sin;* but be not deceived, *God is not mocked.* How light soever you now make of the divine law, and the injunctions of it, you will find to your cost, that if it shall not command you, it will condemn you; if it shall not rule you, it will ruin you; for God will magnify his law and make it honourable, though you vilify it and make it contemptible.

2. Is it no harm to disturb the exercise of your own reason, and to break in upon that? Reason is the crown and glory of the human nature, by the noble powers and faculties of which you are distinguished from, and dignified above, the inferior creatures: this is that which teaches you more than the beasts of the earth, and makes you wiser than the fowls of heaven. This is God's image upon the human soul; and is it no harm to deface that image? It is this spirit of a man, that is the candle of the Lord; and is it no harm to extinguish this candle, or at least for the present to put it into a dark lanthorn? The inspiration of the Almighty has given us understanding; and will you throw away that gift as not worth your keeping? Is it no harm thus to profane your crown by casting it to the ground, and to undervalue the honour God has put upon you, by putting yourselves upon a level with the beasts?

If, indeed, you have but little value for the sacred ties and honours of religion; yet, is reason become of so small account with you, that you can tamely resign that too, and prostitute it to the tyranny and arbitrary government of a brutish appetite? Hast thou no concern, no jealousy, for the liberty and property of thy own soul; but shall it be contentedly, and without any struggle or regret, sacrificed to a base and imperious lust? Wilt thou sell such a birthright, as that which has so many privileges annexed to it, like profane Esau, for a mess of pottage? Is thy own soul, that precious soul of thine, which is capable of such noble services and enjoyments, so little worth in thy esteem, that thou art so easily persuaded to put thyself out of the possession of it?

By excess of drink the understanding is clouded, that sun in the little world is for the time eclipsed; it has no government of the thoughts, they are all in confusion, and a perfect tumult; no command of the passions, they are in an uproar, and are carried headlong; no command of the tongue, it utters perverse things, (Prov. xxiii. 33.) and the whole soul is for the present incapacitated to perform its offices, *all its foundations are out of course.* This is thy case (man) when thou art drunk; thy wisdom is departed from thee, and folly ascends the throne in thy soul; and is there no harm in this? If a man wound, or maim, or lame his body, or any way disable it for its services, he is justly accounted either a mad man, or a bad man; and is he neither the one nor the other, who does worse than this to his own soul, his nobler and better part? Is not he the worst of robbers, who deprives himself of the use of his reason, and says to that seer, "See not;" who puts out his own eyes, that, Samson-like, he may grind in Satan's prison. Consider (man) *if the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* We pity those who are either born idiots, or become mad by disease; yet drunkards, who make themselves little better than idiots and mad, think all the world should envy them their liberty and pleasures: it is such a liberty as is the worst of slavery, such a pleasure as will be bitterness in the end.

Wicked men are often in Scripture compared to brute beasts, and particularly to swine, who wallow in the mire; (2 Pet. ii. 22.) but of all sinners none have more of the resemblance than drunkards have. They say of any other brute creature, that if once it has been intoxicated with any liquor, it will never be brought to drink of that liquor again; only the swine will again and again be drunk with the same liquor; and a thousand pities it is that ever the same should be said of a man, who has so much more to lose by being drunk, than a beast has, and is endowed with so much better powers for the correcting of the appetite than the beasts are. Man being in honour, understands not, abides not, but thus becomes like the beasts that perish. The Lord pity these poor sinners, and show them their folly, that they may pity themselves.

I confess I have often wondered that any, who think themselves in reputation for wisdom and honour, should yield themselves willing captives to this vice, which does so much degrade and diminish a man, and make him mean and despicable. If he that is drunk is in his own imagination as great as a king, yet he is, in the eyes of all wise and sober men, as contemptible as a brute, and in some re-

spects more so; and his conceit of himself does but make him so much the more ridiculous.

A man may sweep the streets and rake the kennel, and yet have the honour of being a man, while his reason remains with him; but he who voluntarily drinks himself out of his reason, has resigned his crown, and is so much more vile than a beast, that he becomes one by his own act, and still retains the shape and name of a man. It is an excellent distich of Mr. Herbert's, among other weighty sayings against this sin, in his Church-Porch;

The drunkard forfeits man, and doth divest
All worldly right, save what he hath by beast.

For this reason the ancient Lacedæmonians, if any man happened to be drunk in their streets, (and they thought none but scoundrels would be so,) they brought their children out to look at him; not to divert them and make them merry, but that seeing the foolish carriage, and hearing the foolish talk, of a drunken man, they might conceive a loathing of that detestable sin, and might be afraid of ever making such fools of themselves. And verily it is strange by what charms any rational man can be drawn to drunkenness, who has ever seen and observed the motions of a drunken man.

3. Is it no harm to abuse the gifts of God's bounty to you? If God has created wine to refresh the spirits of men, and has allowed them the sober and moderate use of it, as far as is for their real good; will you by using it intemperately, pervert the design of the donor, and make that the food and fuel of your lusts, which he gave for the support and comfort of your lives? What is this but fighting against God with his own weapons? It is alienating the inheritance of the Lord to his enemies, and suffering the strong man armed to divide his spoils; it is a traitorous assigning over of the prince's grants to the rebels.

Surely (sinner) thou dost not know, at least thou dost not consider, that God by his providence gives wine and strong drink, and gives them thee: that he makes the earth to yield her increase, and gives thee thy share of it, a large share it may be: and shall this be sacrificed to Baal, to a dunghill god? Doubtless they do so whose God is their belly, Hos. ii. 8. And *is this of thy whoredoms a small matter?* that thou hast taken God's gifts, and used them to his dishonour, and hast made a calf of these spoils of the Egyptians, which ought in gratitude to have been consecrated to the service of the tabernacle? Justly may God by some judgment or other recover his corn and his wine, for the property is not altered by thy alienation. It aggravated the barbarous idolatry of the bigoted and besotted Jews, in sacrificing their children to Moloch, that they were God's children whom they had born unto him, Ezek. xvi. 20. It likewise aggravates thy sin, that what God gave thee to serve him with, thou servest the devil and a base lust with.

Know then that thou art but a steward of these things, and thou must very shortly give account of thy stewardship, when thou must be no longer steward. And if this be not wasting thy Lord's goods, I know not what is. Thy account, therefore, unless it be first balanced by repentance and faith, will be given up with grief and not with joy. Strong drink should be given to him who through emptiness is ready to perish, that so it may help to save a life; not to him who is so full already, that he is ready to vomit, so to destroy a life. Wine should be given, not to them who are of a merry heart, who have more need of a curb to their mirth than a spur, but to them that are of a heavy heart, to revive their drooping spirits: thus Solomon's mother taught him, Prov. xxxi. 6. Those, therefore, who make that the support of corruption, which was intended for the refreshment of nature, pervert that which is right, and must be accountable for the injury: to what purpose is this waste?

Know also that this abuse of the creatures, is that which makes the whole creation groan, being burthened because of its subjection to vanity, by this means, Rom. viii. 20—22. But when it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, Woe be to that man by whom the offence came. As the stone cries out of the wall, against him who builds his house by iniquity, (Hab. ii. 11.) so the corn and the wine cry against those who make them the instruments of unrighteousness to God's dishonour.

4. Is it no harm to endanger the health and life of your own bodies? Let us reason with you from a topic that is very sensible, and try what impression that will make. The Lord is for the body, and he would have you to be for it too in a regular way; but while you indulge its brutish appetites, you prejudice its true interest, and by advancing it to the power of a master, you really abuse it worse than a slave.

Consider then how many are the dangers you are imminently exposed to, when you are drunk, and incapable of self-preservation; your souls are continually in your hands, but never more so than when the liquor is in your heads. That foolish proverb, which passes current, as an answer to this argument, that drunken people catch no harm, is convicted of falsehood by frequent instances to the contrary. How often do we hear of those to whom, being in drink, a fall down stairs, or off a house, or into a shallow water, has been fatal, and (which is a dreadful thought) has sent them drunk out of the world, under the black and heavy charge of being self-murderers! And not only so, but has hastened them to the judgment immediately after death, without giving them time to cry, *Lord have mercy upon me!* So great a death do drunkards often die, a sudden death, a

violent death, a death in their sin, and a death to which they themselves are highly accessary. And shall this consideration sway nothing with you? Do the perils of the wars and the seas keep you upon dry ground, and in a land of peace, and shall not the perils of drunkenness prevail to keep you sober? Dare you put your lives in your hand for the service of sin, and at the same time put yourselves out of God's protection? To say you have often been drunk, and yet never got any hurt, and therefore you will venture still, is such a contempt of the patience and forbearance of God, as will certainly treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, except you repent.

But besides this danger which you run your own bodies into by this sin, consider further the real wrong and prejudice that is done to them by every act of drunkenness. It is a sin that does violence to nature, and overcharges the heart; drunkenness is a present sickness, a present distemper and disorder. You will own you take more than does you good, and when it is so much more, how can it choose but to do you hurt? And why must those bodies of yours, which are so fearfully and wonderfully made, which were made to be instruments of righteousness, and temples of the Holy Ghost, be thus basely abused? Why must those vessels, which should be possessed in sanctification and honour, be thus unsanctified and dishonoured? that curious structure made a sink and a swine-sty? Shall that which has been washed in the waters of baptism, and so dedicated to the service of the sanctuary, thus wallow in the mire of sin, and be alienated to the slavery of Satan? Shall *the shield of the mighty be thus vilely cast away and prostituted, as though it had not been anointed with oil?* 2 Sam. i. 21.

Art thou not told what will be in the end hereof? If the sorrow of the world slays its thousands; this mirth of the world, running into these excesses, slays its ten thousands. And art thou so much in love with woe, (man,) so fond of sorrow, and redness of eyes, and wounds without cause, so well pleased with all the instances of a dying life and a lingering death, that thou wilt sell thy soul, and all thy happiness in the other world, to purchase all these miseries and calamities in this world?

You who drive a trade of drunkenness, if I thought you were capable of looking a little way before you, I would desire you to foresee, for without a spirit of prophecy it is easy to foretell, the threatening and fatal diseases, which by every debauch you are preparing matter for. Are there not a great many instances, and those melancholy ones, daily before your eyes, of persons who have drunk themselves into dropsies, consumptions, and other diseases, which have soon carried them off in the midst of their days, and have sent many a green and flourishing head, in the flower of youth, unpitied to the grave? And is the honour of being a martyr to Bacchus, or at least a faithful confessor to his shrine, so valuable, so desirable, that you are willing to be at the expense of your all, to purchase it? Those are unwise, unthinking prodigals indeed, who can sell their health and strength so shamefully cheap; and they have indeed made their belly their god, their supreme god, who have prevailed with themselves, not only to let out their blood as the worshippers of Baal, or to burn their children, as the worshippers of Moloch, but voluntarily to sacrifice their own lives at its altar; and by resolutely persisting in these paths of death, even to bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of that altar. There needs no faith, nor is there much occasion to appeal to reason; sense itself, one would think, were enough to make this argument cogent: for surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.

I entreat you therefore, for the sake of your own bodies, which you pretend to be indulgent of, that you will break off this destructive course of life. Have you no regard to their ease, and health, and safety, and honour, and life? Will you disorder, and defile, and destroy your ownselves, after we have so often cried unto you with a loud voice, as St. Paul to the jailer, when he had his sword at his own breast, *Do yourselves no harm?* Be not your own murderers. Why (man) there is death in the cup, there is poison in the glass, of which thou drinkest immoderately. Thou dost not think how fatal the consequences of thy drunken surfeits may prove; but I desire thee to consider this one thing, while thou canst not but have (if conscience be awake) a most uncomfortable prospect of another world, it is certain thou hast no reason to hasten thy departure out of this world.

5. Is it no harm to waste and mispend precious time? If we would but seriously consider for what great and excellent purposes time is appointed us and continued to us, we should reckon that an enemy to us which robs us of it, and alienates it from the intentions for which it was designed us. Nothing does this more than tippling; nor are there any who are worse husbands of their time than those who tarry long at the wine. Therefore when the apostle had minded us to *redeem the time*, (Eph. v. 16.) he presently adds, (*v.* 18.) *and be not drunk.*

Time is a talent that must shortly be accounted for; a price put into the hand to get wisdom; but what account will they give of it who spend, not only hours, but days and nights, in this folly? They sit sotting in the ale-house or tavern day after day, because they know not how otherwise to pass away their time. Pass away the time (man)! why, thou wouldst see thy time pass away fast enough, if thou wert but sensible what work thou hast to do, which is yet undone, and which, if it be never done, thou art undone for ever; and thou wouldst rather con-

trive how to recover the time that is past away, by a close and vigorous application to the great business of life, than how to lavish away the few remaining minutes, in that which is opposite and destructive to thy great and true interests.

Believe it (sirs) you have an eternal God to serve, an immortal soul to save, an everlasting state to provide for, and it is no time to trifle. So much of the stock of life, the quick stock, is spent, and so little of the work of life done, that you must not think of spare hours; you have none to spare for the service of sin, who have already lost so many that should have been spent in the service of God. Yet a little while is this light with you, and you know not what you do, while you waste it in the *works of darkness.*

Judge within yourselves; do not you think that the time which you spend in drinking and tippling, might be much better spent in reading the word of God, and meditating upon it, and in prayer and acts of devotion in their season? But you leave no room for these, or next to none; and one of the proper times for them, which is the evening of the day, is the time you ordinarily spend in this service of the flesh. Or if your untoward hearts would snuff at the religious exercises that are drawn out to any length, and say, *Behold what a weariness is it!* yet, might not you better spend your time in reading and profitable conversation with wise and sober people, for the cultivating and improving yourselves in useful knowledge? Have you not a calling to attend, a family to take care of, children to educate? And do not these press urgently for the time you idle away? Or if not these, might not your time be better spent in doing good to your neighbours, and serving your generation some way or other, according to the will of God? You might find work enough to do, if you had but a heart to it, which would be fruit abounding to your comfort in the day of reckoning; while the unprofitable talk, and idle words, spent over your cups, will come against you, when they must all be accounted for in the day of judgment.

Thou sayst, that they are but vain words, that it is better to spend thy time thus than spend it as many do, in doing mischief to their neighbours, and creating trouble and vexation to all about them; you thank God you do nobody any hurt: but others spending their time worse, will be far from justifying or excusing you in spending it ill, while there are so many ways of spending it well, and much better than you do: may you be allowed to bury your talents, because others waste theirs?

Let those therefore who tarry long at the wine, and sit at it, as they say, consider how in the mean time their souls are neglected, and become like the *field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the man void of understanding;* their families are neglected, and they leave them as the ostrich leaves her eggs in the earth, forgetting that the foot may crush them; they are hardened against their young ones, as though they were not theirs, because they are deprived of wisdom, Job xxxix. 14, &c. The duties of their callings are neglected, and the duties of God's worship in their closets and families neglected too, and, in short, they live in the world to no good purpose at all; the good which they should do, they do it not; the business they were made for, they mind it not; the time that should be spent in serving God and doing good, is thrown away upon the flesh and the lust thereof.

Think how bitter the reflection upon this will be when you come to die, if your consciences be not seared: then you will wish you had those hours again which you wasted in unprofitable talk, and, perhaps, will cry in vain (as one did) "Call back time, call back time." A thousand worlds for an inch of time, to be spent in making your peace with God, and sure work for your souls. What would damned sinners in hell give for a few of those minutes in a state of probation, which you are now so lavish of. You may now, if you be wise, redeem time, but you cannot then recall it.

6. Is it no harm to misemploy your estates, and the gain of your callings, and to take the most effectual course to bring yourselves and yours to want and beggary? Perhaps you have much to spend, and can gratify this sensual appetite, without doing any considerable damage to your estate; but then will you consider that your estates are not your own, to be spent as you please; no, you are but stewards of them, and are accountable to God for them. If you thus waste them, you waste your Lord's goods, and pervert the design of giving them to you; your families, which you ought to provide for, according to your rank, are robbed; the poor are defrauded, for the more you spend upon your own lusts, the less you have to give for the supply of their wants; the commonwealth is injured, for that which should be expended for the encouragement of honest labour, which would enrich the nation, is wasted in the support of idleness and luxury, which impoverish the nation.

But there are many that have but little to spend, and that little shall be spent in the ale-house, so that at last they spend their all there. Solomon's observation is confirmed by daily experience, that he *that loves pleasure shall be a poor man,* (Prov. xxi. 17.) *and that the drunkard shall come to poverty,* Prov. xxiii. 21. Have we not seen many a fair patrimony sacrificed to this brutish lust? Many a portion we have known spent, many a house and field sold, and many a good estate mortgaged and made away, to maintain an idle drunken sot in his excess of riot. Many a gentleman we have heard of, and many a farmer, and many a tradesman, who

have been reduced to rags and beggary, brought to a morsel of bread, and perhaps lodged at last in a prison, and it was drunkenness that brought them to it. *One sinner destroys much good*, Eccl. ix. 18. And is there no harm in all this? no sin? no shame?

How amazing is the power which the god of this world has over the children of disobedience! The Lord that bought them, cannot persuade them to expose themselves to a little loss, hardship, and reproach, in his service, though they shall be abundantly recompensed for it another day. But Satan, their sworn enemy, can prevail with them for the serving of him and of his lusts, to ruin themselves in both worlds; so wretchedly are they led captive by him at his will.

But think how very dismal and insupportable those calamities will be, which you thus bring upon yourselves, by your own sin and folly. The devil's poor are the most miserable, and yet the least commiserated of any poor whatsoever. What wilt thou have to comfort thyself with, when thou art brought into straits by thy own wickedness? what wilt thou do in such a day of visitation? when the remembrance of what thou hast mispent, will grate upon thee? when thy lusts will continue craving, and thou wilt not have that plenty of fuel for them which thou hast had? but especially when divine consolations, the only support of an afflicted state, shall be denied thee? *Awake ye drunkards, and weep and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine, for it is cut off from your mouth*, Joel i. 5.

7. Is it no harm to unfit yourselves for the duties of God's worship, and to put yourselves out of a capacity to perform them? Dare you go to bed at night without solemn prayer? Dare you sleep from under God's protection? and can you see yourselves under that protection, if you do not by prayer commit yourselves to it? Can you expect the mercies of the night, when you have not penitently asked pardon for the sins of the day, nor given God thanks for the favours you have received? and can this be done, when your hearts are overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and you scarcely know where you are, or what you say? Dare you venture to speak to God, when you are not able to speak sense to a man like yourselves?

When the evening has been spent in the ale-house or tavern, and in immoderate drinking there, the evening worship, not only in the family, but in secret, will be either wholly omitted, or miserably performed, so that it were better let alone. Either there will be no evening sacrifice at all, or (which is worse) it will be the sacrifice of fools, the torn, and the lame, and the sick, and an affront to God rather than a service of him. Pretend not to address your God, when you are in such a condition, that it would be rudeness to address your governor.

8. Is it no harm to lay yourselves open to Satan's temptations, and to make yourselves an easy prey to them? By this sin you expose yourselves to many other sins, and disable yourselves to discern or resist the most dangerous assaults of Satan. Is mocking a sin? Is rage a sin? Behold, *wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging*, Prov. xx. 1. The drunkard's bench is commonly the seat of the scornful; and David was the song of the drunkards. Is strife and contention a sin? Are wounds given without cause a sin? these are the practices of them who tarry long at the wine, Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. Drunken frays, and those sometimes ending in barbarous murders, are the common products of that, which, yet, will be called good fellowship. When reason is sunk and drowned, rage and passion will ride admiral; and when men have drunk themselves out of the possession of their own souls, no wonder if the devil (who is too watchful an enemy to lose any advantages against us) soon get possession of them, and oftentimes cast them into the fire and into the water. Are chambering and wantonness sins? These are the companions of rioting and drunkenness, Rom. xiii. 13.

What mischief may not that man do, who neither knows nor cares what he does, neither fears God nor regards man, nor has any conduct or government of himself? Yet this inability will be no excuse for the sin that you are thus betrayed into, because it is a self-created inability. Be not deceived; a man's offence will never be his defence, nor will one sin serve for a cloak to another. He who sins when he is drunk, must repent when he is sober or do worse.

You who think that it is but a little sin to be drunk, yet, dread it because it may be the inlet of great sins. I knew one who was effectually reclaimed from this sin of drunkenness, by being once in danger of killing a man when he was drunk, the horror of which, when he came to himself, made such an impression upon him, as proved a happy occasion of his conversion: I wish others would in like manner consider it and be wise.

9. Is it no harm to make yourselves obnoxious to God's wrath and curse in the other world? You have fair warning given you, and are cautioned to take heed of deceiving yourselves with a fancy to the contrary, *drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God*. If God be true they shall not, for so it is written, (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.) and thy case is miserable, when it is come to this dilemma, that either God must be false, or thou must be damned. If heaven be not thy portion, hell will, unless thou repent and reform in time.

Assure yourselves (sinners) heaven is no place for beasts and self-made fools. Has God need of madmen? The word of God has said it, and all the world cannot unsay it; *If ye live after the flesh ye shall die*, die eternally, (Rom. viii. 13.) *thine end*

is destruction if thy *god be thy belly*, Phil. iii. 19. Nothing that defiles shall enter into the New Jerusalem; no, hell is the proper recepticle of unclean spirits.

When you are serious, (if ever you can persuade yourselves to be so,) heaven and hell will not be looked upon as jesting matters; for a few years certainly will, nay, a few hours possibly may, demonstrate the reality of those invisible things, which now you make so light of: *Behold the Judge standeth before the door.*

Now lay all this together, and then tell me whether drunkenness be indeed an innocent diversion, a harmless entertainment, or at worst but a venial sin, which will be pardoned of course though it be still persisted in? No, I hope by this time the thing appears to you in other colours, and you will grant that those, who make a mock at this sin, are like the madman, who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, and yet says, "Am not I in sport?"

II. We are in the next place to apply ourselves to those who are convinced in some measure, that their drunkenness is their sin, and a dangerous one, at least their own consciences sometimes tell them so; but they know not how to leave it off, it is become so habitual to them that they are perfectly captivated and overcome by it.

Is this thy case, sinner? Wouldst thou then be delivered from this bondage of corruption, and brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God? God in his infinite mercy deliver thee! And O that I could say something to pluck thee as a brand out of this burning! This paper comes to call upon thee to repent, and amend thy ways and doings, which, certainly, are not right. But who can call loud enough to awaken drunkards? Their sin takes away their heart, it blinds their understandings, perverts their judgments, and bribes their consciences, so that they cannot weigh things in an even balance; *they drink and forget the law*, Prov. xxxi. 5. Strike them and they are not sick, beat them and they feel it not, Prov. xxiii. 35. And is it possible to convince and reclaim such? We cannot do it; but if God himself will take the work into his own hands, and by his grace do wonderfully, who knows what good may be effected? To him, therefore, we commit the success of this endeavour, and will try to put you into the right method of cure.

If then you be willing to be cleansed from this pollution, you will thankfully take the following directions, not as the commands of a taskmaster, who would insult over you, but as the prescriptions of a faithful physician, who consults your good.

1. Indulge not an excuse for this sin. There is no sin so sinful, so shameful, but the wicked wit of sinners has found out some fig-leaves or other to cover it with; and if you are fond of the fig-leaves, it is a sign that you are in love with the sin, and it is your own iniquity. While the word of God says so much to aggravate it, you confront that, and put a cheat upon your own souls, if you are industrious to extenuate it.

Custom will not excuse you in it; neither your own custom, nor the custom of the place you live in; there can be no prescription pleaded for a thing in itself evil. If this has been thy way and thy manner from thy youth up, thou hast the more reason to be humbled and ashamed; but know, that a sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. To say, "I have long used myself to this course of life, and therefore I must be excused, if I go on in it;" is to say in effect, "I have long been walking in the way that leads to hell, and therefore I will go on to the end of it." The longer you have persisted in this sin, the more reason there is why the time past of your life should suffice that you have thus wrought the will of the Gentiles, walking in excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4. Custom in sin (I know) is a great bar to conversion, and renders it extremely difficult; but it is such a bar as must be broken, or you are undone.

Nor will it excuse you that you are drawn in by your wicked companions: it is your fault to choose such for your companions, who have fellowship with sin, and those for your friends, who are enemies to your souls. But how bad soever your companions are, you are then tempted, when you are *drawn aside of your own lust and enticed*, Jam. i. 14. If thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it; and thy partners in sin shall be thy partners in ruin; *Bind them in bundles to burn them.*

Your calling will not excuse you, whatever it is; That is not a calling for a Christian, which will not be followed without sin, or unavoidable and invincible temptation; and, therefore, if thou canst not otherwise leave thy sin, leave thy calling, and choose another more safe and innocent: it cannot be dearer to thee than a right eye or a right hand, which must be plucked out and cut off, if it become sin to thee. But are there not some of the same calling who preserve their sobriety, and will be witnesses against thee? If thy calling be laborious, and require more refreshment and diversion than others, wilt thou, therefore, disfit thyself for it by overcharging thy heart?

Never go about to palliate this sin; say not, it is but being a little merry, it is but being somewhat too free in keeping company, it hurts nobody, and therefore what needs so much ado about it? This is agreeing with your corruptions against your convictions, and taking part with the house of Saul against the house of David. But by thus diminishing our sins we deceive ourselves; for God will not stand to our definitions and distinctions: we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth.

2. Persuade yourselves to consider. If you would

but be subject to the great and fundamental law of consideration, I cannot think that you would ever rebel against the royal law of temperance and sobriety, which effectually secure both the prerogative of the prince in thy soul, that is, thy reason, and the liberty of the subject, that is, thy inferior faculties.

Consider what thou art; a rational creature, do not dethrone thy reason; a noble creature, do not stain thy honour. Thou art an embodied spirit; let not the interests of the spirit, by which thou art akin to the upper world, be crushed and ruined by the tyranny of the body, which is of the earth earthy.

Consider who made thee. The eternal God gave thee that noble and excellent being, and did he give it thee to be thus abused? Is this to answer the ends of thy creation, and to do that which thou camest into the world for? Is this to serve and honour thy Creator, who made thee for himself, to show forth his praise? Thou canst not think it is.

Consider whom thou servest by this sensual course of life thou livest. The devil is the master thou obeyest; he it is who puts the cup of drunkenness into thy hand, and bids thee drink it, and laughs at thee when thou art overcome by it; and wilt thou please the devil thy worst enemy, rather than God the best friend?

Consider that thou art a Christian, a baptized Christian; and by these evil practices of thine, thou reproachest that worthy name by which thou art called, and forfeitest all the honours and privileges of thy Christianity. What? A Christian, and yet a tippler! a sot! Called a brother, and yet a drunkard! 1 Cor. v. 11. What an absurdity is this! Dost thou partake of the *cup of the Lord*, and yet partake of the *cup of devils?* Canst thou think to compound light and darkness, or to maintain a fellowship both with Christ and Belial? It cannot be; if thou treat thy Christianity thus disdainfully, thou dost in effect renounce it, and shalt be for ever abandoned by it. It is not for kings, O Lemuel, *it is not for kings to drink wine*, Prov. xxxi. 4. So it is not for Christians: it is not for the professors of that holy religion, to make themselves slaves to a base lust; it is not for them who have tasted the wine of God's consolations, and hope to drink it new in the kingdom of the Father, to put their mouths out of taste to it, by the sordid pleasures of drunkenness.

Consider how near death and eternity are, how uncertain the time of thy continuance here below is, and how certain thy removal very shortly to an unchangeable world is; and what if death should surprise thee the next time that thou art drunk, as it did Amnon when his heart was merry with wine? Darest thou go to judgment in such a condition? *Can thy heart endure, or can thy hands be strong, when the righteous God shall come to deal with thee?* Thou sayest, *Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;* but what if God should say to thee, *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee*, Luke xii. 19, 20.

Couldst thou but see with an eye of faith, as Belshazzar did with an eye of sense, in the midst of his drunken frolics, the handwriting upon the wall determining thy fatal doom, surely it would frighten thee from this vitious course, and make the pretended pleasures of it sapless and insipid to thee. And believe it, those mystical characters upon Belshazzar's wall are more applicable to thee than thou art aware, (Dan. v. 25.) *Mene, Tekel, Peres*, may be rendered *death, judgment, hell.* The two first are very easy, *Mene, numbered*, for thy days upon earth will very shortly be *numbered, and finished; Tekel, weighed*, after death we must be weighed in the balance of God's judgment, and drunkards, I am sure, will be found too light. And the third is not much forced, *Peres, divided*, for damned sinners are cut asunder, (Matt. xxiv. 51.) their kingdom is for ever separated from them; and if there be an allusion to the Persians, they are to be looked upon as the executioners of the doom, and hell is the execution of the sentence of the great day: angels both good and bad employed as executioners. Now consider this, ye that forget God.

3. Humble yourselves greatly before God for your former excesses. While after a debauch or drunken fit, which your consciences reproach you for the sin and folly of, you can make all whole again, with a cold, *Lord have mercy upon me*, and can forgive yourselves, before you have any good reason to think that God has forgiven you, no wonder if you easily return to the sin again; and, therefore, deep sorrow is made necessary in repentance, as a means to imbitter the sin, and so to prevent a relapse.

Be convinced of the evil of this sin, apply it to your own guilt, and charge it home upon your conscience, in the heinous nature of it, and all its aggravating circumstances, which make it exceeding sinful; be pricked to the heart at the remembrance of it, and say, *So foolish have I been and ignorant, yea, I have been as a beast*, and worse, *before thee*, Ps. lxxiii. 22. *Surely I am more brutish than any man*, Prov. xxx. 2. What a fool have I been, to hazard the life of my soul, for the gratifying of the lusts of my flesh! And for the pleasing of a brutish appetite, to unchristian and unman myself, and so to pawn and forfeit all I have, and all I hope for, that is valuable and honourable! For these things I have reason to weep, and let my eye, my eye run down with tears day and night. As a sword in my bones is the remembrance of my folly herein, and the just reproaches of a guilty wounded conscience: if God be not merciful to me in Christ, I am undone for ever, this iniquity will be my ruin.

They who have conceived such a horror as this of the sin, and of the fatal consequences of it, and

have felt the pain and smart of it in their souls, will not be easily decoyed into it again. *The burnt child dreads the fire.*

4. Pray earnestly to God for his grace. The divine power can cure the most obstinate and inveterate disease, and can conquer and change the most depraved and vitious habits. You find by sad experience that you cannot keep nor govern yourselves; commit yourselves therefore, by prayer, to the protection and government of that grace, which alone is sufficient for you.

Pray for grace to enable you to discern, resist, and vanquish all temptations to this sin, that you may never be surprised into it by the suddenness of the temptation, nor overcome by the strength of it. You pray every day that you may not be led into temptation, but delivered from evil. If this be the sin that most easily besets you, level your prayers against it particularly, "Lord, lead me not into this temptation, but deliver me from this evil."

Pray for grace likewise, effectual grace, to mortify and subdue all inward inclinations to this sin, and to work in you a holy aversion and antipathy to it; pray that the axe may be laid to the root of bitterness, and that, not only these polluted streams may be closed up, but the corrupt fountain dried up. Nothing is too hard for the grace of God to do, nor shall that grace be denied to those who in sincerity seek it, with a resolution to submit to it.

5. Take up a firm and stedfast resolution, in the strength of divine grace, against this sin, and all appearances of it, and approaches to it. Will you be persuaded to resolve this day, that you will never be drunk again, never sit to drink unseasonably, nor ever drink immoderately; that you will never by drinking distemper your bodies, or disturb your minds, or unfit yourselves for the service of God; that you will never keep improper hours, nor be in the ale-house or tavern when you should be about business, or worshipping God with your families; and that you will never suffer your free conversation with your friends, to indispose you for, or divert you from, your communion with your God.

Be peremptory and at a point in these resolutions; and let not a secret inclination, either to the drink, or to the company, make your resolutions weak or wavering; but as the people said in general with an air of resolution, *Nay, but we will serve the Lord*, Josh. xxiv. 21. so do you say in particular, "Nay, but I will be sober;" I am resolved by the grace of God I will. Do not resolve, as you say children do, that you will never be drunk again till the next time; *Be not deceived, God will not be mocked.*

You would take up an invincible resolution, grounded upon an antipathy against the cup, if you knew there were poison in it; and would drink with a great deal of caution, if you were sure that you should be hanged if you were drunk; and will you not be as solicitous not to exceed, when you are told that the drunkard's *feet go down to death*, eternal death, and *his steps take hold on hell.*

Let your resolution be very solemn, and contrive all the ways you can to make it strong and binding, and to remind conscience of it, that these bonds may never be broken asunder, nor these cords cast from you. And it will be your wisdom to renew this resolution, with a fresh dependence on divine grace, when you see yourselves entering into any particular temptation.

6. Industriously avoid the place and company that insnare you. If you would have no fellowship with the sin, you must have no unnecessary fellowship with those who practise it, but keep at a distance from them, that you may keep out of harm's way. Enter not into the path of the wicked, lest you be drawn to walk in that path; *avoid it* therefore, *pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away*, Prov. iv. 14, 15.

You may think the company good innocent company, pleasant, and diverting, and obliging to you; but be it what it will, it is no company for you if you cannot keep sober in it. Think not that your easiness, and good nature, and complaisance to your friends, will excuse your continuing in that society, which you find ordinarily draws you to sin; or that your engagement to the company can weaken your obligations to your God. Art thou linked with a drunken club, know *that thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, and do this now, my son, deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter*, Prov. vi. 2, 3, 5.

Go to thy companions, and tell them thou findest it impossible to preserve thy virtue in their company, and that therefore thou art resolved to take leave of them. Tell them that thou canst not look upon those as thy friends who entice thee to sin, and that thou wouldst rather lose their society and good will, than lose thy God and thy soul. Be deaf to their allurements, and be above their reproaches; say as David, (Ps. cxix. 115.) *Depart from me, ye evil doers, for I will keep the commandments of my God*, and I cannot keep in with you and keep in with God too.

7. Look not upon the wine when it is red. This is a scripture caution, Prov. xxiii. 31. Take heed of the beginnings of this sin, and do not entertain a pleasant thought of it. Crush the first risings of the irregular appetite toward wine and strong drink, and when you find you begin to love them, then try whether you have learned the first lesson in the school of Christ, which is, to deny yourselves.

Watch against all advances toward this sin, let the experience you have had of your own weakness make you very cautious and jealous over yourselves. Be afraid of every thing that borders upon drunkenness, and leads toward it insensibly. He that will

always venture as far as he may, will sometimes ere he is aware be drawn further.

When the wine gives its colour in the cup, and moves itself aright, be blind and deaf to all its smiles and charms, remembering what follows there; that at the *last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder. Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?*

8. Abhor all those drunken ceremonies, which force this cursed trade; such as drinking healths by measure; with an obligation upon the company to keep the round in pledging them. What a brutish senseless thing is it for men to offer violence to nature, and covet to make beasts, not only of themselves but of one another; what pleasure, what profit, what honour can there be in this? Surely nothing but sin for sin's sake.

The law of the Persians will shame and condemn the practice of many who are called Christians; for in the court of a prince, an arbitrary prince, yet the *drinking was according to the law, none did compel, for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house*, Esth. i. 8. Let all who wish well to sobriety do what they can, in their places, to put these arts of propagating vice out of countenance, and to run them down.

If you find you cannot govern yourselves, engage some friend or relation to govern you. If, after the most vigorous resistances and resolutions you have made, you still find yourselves baffled and foiled, think it not a disparagement to you to call in help, and pray the aid of your neighbours. You would do so if your house were on fire, and will you not do so when your souls are so?

Fix upon some discreet and serious friends; some such you may find, who heartily wish well to the prosperity of your souls, and would gladly contribute their best assistance to it. Beg of them to watch over you, to have an eye to you, and to warn you when you are entering into this temptation. Desire them, when there is occasion, to limit your drinking, and to control your expenses, and put it in their power to do so. Entreat them to fetch you from your drunken companions, though it be to your shame, rather than leave you with them, which will be to your ruin. When you are in your right mind, bespeak those about you, that they give you no more drink than they see does you good, though you call for it; and assure them, that though they may have your drunken reproach, yet, they shall have your sober thanks, for so doing; and when you come to yourselves make your words good.

Say not that it is below you thus to put yourselves under government, as if you were infants or idiots; for to be drunk is much more below you, and thereby you render yourselves more mean than either infants or idiots.

Lastly, See that there be a living principle of true grace in your hearts, and that will effectually fortify you against all temptations to this sin. Let but wisdom, heavenly wisdom, enter into thy heart. Let it have the innermost and uppermost place there, and it will keep thee from this way of the evil man, Prov. ii. 10, 12. The law of God in Christ written in the heart, and the love of God in Christ shed abroad there, would arm you against this temptation, and quench all his fiery darts.

When the apostle had cautioned us not to walk in rioting and drunkenness, (Rom. xiii. 13.) to make that caution effectual, he adds, *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, v.* 14. Submit to the grace of Christ, conform to the law of Christ, follow the example of Christ, and thus make good your baptismal covenant, by which you did in profession put on Christ, and then you will be well principled and well guarded against all these temptations. Study the cross of Christ, the riches of his love, and the design of his gospel, and then surely, being called by his name, you will not dare so directly to contradict the designs of his gospel, nor so ungratefully to spurn at the bowels of his love, and spit in the face of it.

And in another place we find, when the apostle had warned us not to be drunk with wine wherein is excess, he immediately subjoins, *But be filled with the Spirit*, (Eph. v. 18.) plainly intimating, that the best defence against drunkenness, is to lay our souls under the sanctifying operations of the blessed Spirit of grace, and to fill ourselves with spiritual things. This is the sovereign remedy for the cure of this disease, and the most powerful antidote for the prevention of it, (Gal. v. 16.) *Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.* An experimental taste of the spiritual pleasures of serious godliness, and a believing foretaste of the eternal pleasures that are at God's right hand for evermore, would enable us to look upon all sensual pleasures and delights with a holy loathing and disdain.

And now (sinners) is the point yet gained, or is it not? What issue have we brought it to at last? What shall be the result of this debate, and what the conclusion of the whole matter?

Are there any of these sinners in Sion, who through grace are now at length become willing that religion and reason should reform them and rule them? Are there any who now, at least in this their day, will begin to understand the things that belong to their peace, and to be wise for themselves? Are there any who are weary of the toil and shame of an intemperate life, and are resolved to try the true and noble delights of a sober religious conversation? *The Lord keep it always in the imagination of the thought of the heart, and establish their way before him.*

But to those who, after all, hate to be reformed, I must conclude with this word, and God by his grace

make it an awakening word! If all the fair warnings given you shall still be slighted, if you will set at nought all our counsel, and will none of our reproof, but say you shall have peace, though you go on to add drunkenness to thirst, know this, that when the cup of the Lord's wrath poured out without mixture shall be put into your hands, and shall be to you a cup of trembling, everlasting trembling, this will greatly aggravate your condemnation, that your blood will be upon your own heads, your watchmen, by giving you warning, having delivered their souls.

A WORD OF ADVICE

TO THE

WANTON AND UNCLEAN.

Of all gross sinners, none lie more hid from the eye of the world, and yet none more open to their own consciences, than those we are now dealing with, and endeavouring the reformation of. For though the eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight, and he is very solicitous to draw a veil over his lewdness, yet the works of the flesh are manifest, that is, manifestly bad, and such as the sinner's own heart cannot but disallow: though they are works of darkness, yet they cannot avoid the discovery of that light, that *candle of the Lord.*

The apostle tells us, that the works of the flesh which are thus manifest, are these; *Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,* (Gal. v. 19.) in short, all seventh-commandment sins, which are not to be named among Christians but with the greatest abhorrence and detestation. Nor are they to be treated of, but with purity and caution, and a strict and careful watch over our own hearts, lest sin should take occasion by the commandment: they are as thorns, which cannot be taken with hands; but the man who shall touch them, in order to the removal of them, must be fenced with iron, and the staff of a spear, 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7.

And it were to be wished that there were no need to name them, no need to discourse of them; it is a kennel which one cannot take any delight to rake in; but while this iniquity abounds, as it does in all places, while so much of it comes to light, and we have reason to fear there is much more that lies concealed, it must be named; Jerusalem must be made to know her abomination, and the filthiness that is in her skirts (as the prophet speaks) must be witnessed against, as one of the crying sins of the land, and one of the damning sins of sinners.

The prophet Ezekiel little thought, till God showed him in a vision, the great abominations which the house of Israel committed, (Ezek. viii. 6.) and afterwards he showed him greater, and yet greater abominations, *v.* 13, 15. I wish it were not so as to this abomination in our own land, which the day will declare, when God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing. We desire not to know these depths of Satan; we are willingly ignorant of them; but we earnestly desire that those who are fallen into those depths, and are sinking to the lowest hell, may by the grace of God be effectually recovered, that their everlasting ruin may be prevented in time.

To you then who call yourselves the sons and daughters of pleasure, but whom the word of God calls *children of disobedience,* and *children of wrath,* who live in the fire of lust, and wallow in the filth of whoredom and fornication, even to you is the word of this exhortation sent in God's name, with a kind and sincere design, if possible, to lift you up out of this mire, and to snatch you as brands out of the burning. Assure yourselves nothing is intended but your good. This paper comes not to inform against you, or to expose you to shame or punishment; but to persuade you to turn from your evil way, that you may live and not die, that you may have everlasting life, and may not be hurt by the second death.

And O that I could now choose out proper words wherewith to reason with you; and that words of truth might, by the grace of God, be made words of power! I draw the bow at a venture, not having an eye to any particular person, but God can direct the arrow between the joints of the harness, so that it may pierce the heart of the sinner to his humiliation, and the heart of the sin to its mortification, for the word of God is quick and powerful. God by his Spirit make this word so!

Let me tell you then, who are the sinners to whom this discourse is now addressed,

1. You that make a constant practice of this sin, and give yourselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness, must be put in the front of this black regiment of unclean spirits, which we are now charging, in the name of the Captain of our salvation, who came into the world to conquer and cast out unclean spirits.

If this paper should ever come into the guilty and polluted hands of any of those wretched creatures who have abandoned themselves to a life of whoredoms, who are the devil's sworn slaves and votaries, and who, as factors for hell, and avowed enemies to God and virtue, drive a trade of debauching others and making themselves vile; those, I mean, who keep houses of uncleanness, those nests of wickedness, or who live in those houses, or who frequent them, or acquaint themselves with them: let such know and consider, that Sodom's doom will infallibly be the lot of all those who thus tread

in Sodom's steps, unless they speedily repent and reform: *Fire and brimstone and a horrible tempest, this shall be the portion of their cup.*

That is a miserable calling which lust only lives by, and which soul and body will certainly be ruined by. That is a miserable service wherein the devil is the master, sin's drudgery is the work, and hell-fire the wages, for *the end of those things is death.* Such houses, and their inhabitants and maintainers, are the scandal of a Christian nation, the pests of the towns and countries where they are, the slaughter-houses of precious souls, the rendezvous of the vilest of creatures; and more frightful habitations of devils, holds of foul spirits, and cages of unclean and hateful birds, than Babylon the great will be when it is fallen, Rev. xviii. 2. Solomon tells us, that such houses are the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death, Prov. vii. 27.

And therefore, as it is the duty of those who have power over them, vigorously to suppress such houses, in which the strong man armed keeps his palace; and the duty of those who have power in them, to alter the property of them, and to put away iniquity, this abominable iniquity, far from their tabernacles; so it is the wisdom of every one, with the greatest dread, caution, and resolution imaginable, to avoid such houses, to shun them as they would a house infected with the plague, and not to come nigh the door of them, or enter into any familiarity with them, upon any colour or pretence whatsoever. It is Solomon's advice, (Prov. v. 8.) *Remove thy way far from her;* he having observed that that unwary young man, who was drawn into the ruining snares of the adulteress, was caught passing through the street near her corner, at an unseasonable time, Prov. vii. 8, 9.

Under this head we must also rank those who, though they do not thus declare their sin as Sodom, yet by their cursed arts of deceiving under the disguise of love and honour, diversion and entertainment, keep up and carry on a more secret, less suspected, trade of debauchery and uncleanness; who (as they are described by the apostle, 2 Pet. ii. 14.) *have eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin,* from this sin, *beguiling unstable souls* by their wiles, and decoying them gradually, and by steps which seem harmless, into the fatal snare. These are they who are continually projecting and making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it, out of the road of common prostitutes, and among those who have yet preserved some degrees of innocency and reputation; and the wickedness of these is so much greater than the former, as the methods they take, and the snares they lay, by plays, dances, and other recreations, have a more fatal tendency to the corruption of those, "who" (as one of the proclamations against vice and immorality expresses it) "have been soberly educated, and whose inclinations would lead them to the exercise of virtue and piety, did they not daily find such frequent and repeated instances of dissolute living." Let such know, that the sin is never the less sinful for its being carried on with wit and intrigue, and all the plot and management that the playhouse instructs them in; but it is rather so much the worse, as it speaks the more design and deliberation in the tempters, and the more danger to the tempted. The more there is of subtilty in any wickedness, the more there is of Satan in it.

Nor is their guilt and danger much less, who, though they traverse not the ranges of an unbounded lust, yet keep up a cursed league with some one particular person, with whom they live in adultery or fornication, directly contrary to the law of God, or in contempt of his ordinance, and yet flattering themselves with a fancy, that this is of their abominations a small matter. And is it indeed a small matter, for the gratifying of a base lust to live in disobedience to the divine precept, and in defiance of the divine wrath and threatenings? This is a covenant with death which must be broken, and an agreement with hell which must be disannulled, or it will certainly bind over to that judgment which whoremongers and adulterers must expect.

2. You who at any time yield to this temptation, and in any instance suffer yourselves to be overcome by it, must next look upon yourselves as concerned in this call to repentance. I speak to those, who, though they are not arrived to that height of wickedness, nor have so far seared their consciences, as to make a common practice of this wickedness, yet have such favourable thoughts of this sin, and these sinners, as to be drawn into their snare without any great resistance or reluctance, thinking it, though a sin, yet a very excusable one, and which they can easily pardon both to themselves and others. When a fair opportunity offers itself, that they can admit the sin, and yet avoid the shame, they can promise themselves to pass off the guilt with a "Lord, have mercy upon me," or, "God forgive me," and a little regret, when the pleasure is over, they think will atone for the crime, and all will be well.

Such as these have need to be told, that every particular act of this sin is exceeding sinful, that it is highly provoking to God Almighty, contrary to, and destructive of, the spiritual and divine life in the soul, and that it puts the eternal happiness very much to a present doubt and a future hazard. You flatter yourselves that you will commit it but once, and will repent of that. But how can you be sure that it will be truly repented of, when it is but peradventure whether God will give you repentance to recover yourselves out of this snare? The grace of repentance is promised to those who sincerely pray for it, but it is forfeited by those who boldly presume upon it, and venture to sin in expectation of it: and

how can you be sure that you will not relapse into the same sin another time, when, by yielding to one temptation you strengthen the next, give the devil hold of you, and provoke the Holy Spirit to withdraw from you? What Solomon says of strife is true of this sin, *The beginning of it is like the letting forth of water;* therefore it is wisdom to leave it off before it be meddled with, that is, never to begin it.

3. You who perhaps keep yourselves from the gross acts of adultery and fornication, but allow yourselves in other instances of lewdness and lasciviousness, must be numbered among those to whom this word of advice and warning is sent. You bless yourselves in your own way, and thank God, with the Pharisee, that you are not adulterers, when at the same time unclean lusts reign in your hearts, are indulged and harboured, lodged and welcomed there. Have you never read of committing adultery in the heart? And is not that heart chargeable therewith which burns continually in an inordinate affection and evil concupiscence? Are not those heart-adulterers who give up themselves to vile affections, and make filthy thoughts and imaginations, unchaste reflections and desires, the constant entertainments and disports of a lewd and vicious fancy.

Those are to be reckoned among the wanton and unclean, out of whose mouth filthy communication daily comes, produced by the unclean lusts that reign in their own hearts, and designed to provoke the like in the hearts of others; whose stinking breath plainly manifests that their inwards, their very vitals, are corrupted. No subject is so grateful to them, so pleasing, as this, nor any discourse so agreeable as that which is offensive to chaste ears. These are unclean, their speech betrays them. No song, no story, no jest entertains them so as a lewd one does, nor can they laugh at any thing with so much pleasure as that which they ought to blush at. These plainly show that the unclean spirit is upon the throne in their souls; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Those also must be numbered with the unclean, whose wanton carriage, lascivious dalliances, are upon all occasions their delight, and the fuel that feeds the fire of lust in their hearts, (I should call it the fire of hell,) and keeps it burning.

Now these are the sinners we would endeavour to reform, and reduce into subjection to the sacred laws of chastity and modesty; and we should hope, by the grace of God, to do them some good, if they would but be persuaded to hear reason, and not desperately to resolve against a change of their way. When you are called (as you are at this time in God's name) to return and repent, I beseech you be willing to take it into your consideration, and do not say, as they did who hated to be reformed, (Jer. xviii. 12.) *There is no hope, no, for we will walk after our own devices.*

Admit a parley then; enter into a treaty, and let us see whether we cannot propose such inducements as shall overcome you, and prevail with you to surrender to the Lord Jesus (your Lord and ours) that heart which has long been garrisoned against him by the unclean spirit.

Shall I ask thee seriously, Wouldst thou not be helped? Wouldst thou not be healed? Wouldst thou not be made whole? Wouldst thou not be made clean? Wouldst thou not have this devil, this unclean devil, dispossessed, which oftentimes casts thee into the fire of sin, and often into the water of sorrow for it? Tell me, wouldst thou not exchange the filthy sordid pleasures of a carnal, sensual life, for the pure, rational, and divine pleasures of a spiritual, heavenly life?

If you be indeed in this good mind, will you be convinced of the great evil of this sin? And will you be put into a way to break off from it? These are the two things I shall endeavour in this address to you, and I am willing to hope the attempt shall not be altogether in vain; the Lord choose out words for me wherewith to reason with you!

I. I shall endeavour to convince you of the evil of this sin of uncleanness. Till the mistakes of the judgment are rectified, the errors of the life will never be reformed. Here, therefore, we must begin: and God by his grace begin here! The carnal mind suggests to you the pleasures of it, tells you that *stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant*, Prov. ix. 17. That this pleasure is present and certain, but that the hurt of it is future and doubtful: but that you may not be cheated into your own ruin by this fallacy, I shall not question but to make it out to you, that the hurt of it is not at all doubtful, but of unquestionable certainty, nor only future, but so much present, that, if you will weigh things in an even balance, you will find the evil of it to be infinitely greater than the good of it, and that therefore our exhortations to virtue should have your ears and hearts, and that your ears should be deaf, and your hearts shut, against all temptations to this vice.

This will appear, if you consider both the malignity and guilt there is in this sin, and the misery and wrath that follows after it. They who choose and wear the garment spotted with the flesh, must thus be saved with fear, and plucked with a shriek out of the very fire, Jude 23. If you have any dread either of sin or its punishment, you will acknowledge the evil of wantonness and uncleanness.

1. Consider the malignity and guilt there is in it. It is a sin, an exceeding sinful sin, one of those that are as scarlet and crimson, an abominable thing which the Lord hates.

There is no sin so heinous, so odious, but a resolved custom in it will do much towards the reconciling of the judgment to it, so that either it is

thought no sin at all, or but a little one, an excusable trick of youth: and thus, if it be not justified, yet it is palliated and excused, and a thousand arts used to shift off the conviction of it. And verily the case is bad, and extremely dangerous, when conscience, which should be of counsel for the government to detect and prosecute the sin, is so debauched and vitiated that it is retained on the other side, and becomes an advocate for the sin. *If this light which is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?* If the judgment be bribed, the judge is so, and the sentence will be accordingly.

Let me, therefore, beg of you to favour the case with an impartial trial; be willing to hear what we have to say, upon the principles of revelation and right reason, to prove uncleanness to be a sin, and a very great sin. And if we prove in the general that it is a sin, we desire you will do us and yourselves the justice to acknowledge that your uncleanness, and the lasciviousness you allow yourselves in, is a sin, a daring and dangerous transgression of the divine law; that it is so to be accounted now, and must so be accounted for shortly, whatever you have imagined to the contrary.

Let us then carefully consider the intrinsic evil that there is in adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness, and in the indulgence of these fleshly lusts.

(1.) It is contrary to God, and to his purity and holiness, and, therefore, it is sin, both in its root and in all its branches.

God who governs the world is a Spirit; you impeach the equity of his dominion, if you, who consist of flesh and spirit, give the pre-eminence to the flesh, and be governed by that; for the spirit ought to rule, and the body to be in subjection.

God is a holy Spirit; his holiness is his glory; it becomes his house and servants for ever to be holy; you contradict the design of the divine revelation of God's holiness, if you wallow in uncleanness. The more spiritual you are, the more conformable you are to God, but the carnal mind is enmity against him, Rom. viii. 7. Nor is any thing more directly opposite to that divine nature which the saints, through grace, partake of, than the corruption that is in the world through lust, 2 Pet. i. 4. The laws made for the restraint of these fleshly lusts are ratified with this reason, *For I the Lord am holy*, Lev. xix. 2. and xx. 7, 26. For no sin more defaces the image of God's holiness upon the soul than uncleanness, nor renders it more odious in the eyes of the pure and holy God.

When Joseph was tempted to this sin he called it great wickedness, because it was a sin against God, Gen. xxxix. 9. When David had been surprised into this sin, he laid the emphasis of his confession upon this, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned*, Ps. li. 4. As the prodigal son also, when he was returned from his harlots, thus aggravated his folly, *I have sinned against heaven, and before thee*, Luke xv. 18.

And is this nothing with you? Have you no regard to the God who made you, and maintains you, and will judge you? Is it nothing to you to be in a state of enmity against him, and war with him? With what satisfaction can you walk contrary to him whose nature and will are the eternal original and rule of good and right? Are you his creatures, and dare you be his enemies? Have you a necessary dependence upon him, and yet dare you persist in an avowed rebellion against him? Consider this, ye that forget God.

(2.) It thwarts the design of the gospel of Christ. You are Christians, you profess that holy religion which the Lord Jesus came into the world to institute and establish; you are baptized into the profession of it, and by your baptism you are bound to obey the laws of it, and to answer the intentions of it. The gospel of Christ is a remedial law, and you hope to have remedy by it. It is a charter of privileges, and you hope to be privileged by it; but how can you expect either remedy or privilege by it, if you will not observe its precepts, nor come up to its conditions? The gospel will never save you if it shall not rule you.

The design of Christ's coming into the world, was to purify a people to himself, Tit. ii. 14. The design of his gospel, is to cleanse us from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, 2 Cor. vii. 1. He has established a religion, which, as far as it has the ascendant, brings all carnal lusts and appetites to be subject to the dictates of right reason, sanctified by the grace of God. Christ suffered in the flesh, that we might die to the flesh, 1 Pet. iv. 1—3. Now uncleanness, as far as that is yielded to, contradicts this design, and supports the works of darkness, and consequently the powers of darkness, in opposition to the interests of the kingdom of light. For, *what communion hath light with darkness?*

We are not dealing with professed pagans, nor with the worshippers of Baal-Peor, who learned of the gods they adored to be vile and unclean; no, the religion you profess gives us some hold of you; for it is a pure religion and undefiled; you are called by the name of the holy Jesus, that great pattern of mortification and purity. You are enlisted under the banner of the cross, and profess to believe in Christ, and him crucified, and to be planted together in the likeness of his death; but while you live in uncleanness you espouse the opposite cause, you are the devil's soldiers, and fight under his banner, with his weapons, for his interest.

Now Christ and Belial are contrary the one to the other; in God's name, therefore, I charge you, either to forsake your uncleanness, or (at your peril) to renounce your Christianity. *Aut nomen, aut mores*

muta—Either change your name, or reform your manners; either be what you seem to be, or seem not to be what you are not.

(3.) It grieves the blessed Spirit of God, and always resists the Holy Ghost. As it contradicts the designs of him that was sent by the Father to save us, so it fights against the intentions of him that was sent by the Son to sanctify us, and to carry on his undertaking for us. It forfeits all his comforts, and counterworks his operations.

The fleshly lusts of the old world provoked God to say, "His Spirit should not always strive with them;" Gen. vi. 3. for his motions are quenched by the motions of the flesh. When the apostle cautions us (Eph. iv. 30.) not to grieve the Spirit of God, he tells us, (*v.* 29.) what grieves him; nothing more than corrupt and filthy communication. That pure and holy Dove will not dwell in a cage of unclean and filthy birds.

Now, if the Spirit of the Lord depart from you, as he did from Saul, if he withdraw his influences and operations from you, you are undone. If he let you alone you are in the suburbs of hell already, abandoned of God, past conviction, past help, past hope, given up to a reprobate mind and vile affections; and this you have reason to fear will be the consequence of your persisting in that which is a constant grief to him. What reason have you to expect the continuance of the Spirit's powers if you yield to the power of the carnal mind, and side with the unclean spirit against him? What have you to do with spiritual comforts, who prefer sensual pleasures before them? If you thus sin against the Spirit, take heed lest you sin away the Spirit.

(4.) It is a great abuse of your own bodies. He who commits fornication, or any other act of uncleanness, sins against his own body, 1 Cor. vi. 18. If self-murder be therefore justly condemned as the worst of murders, because it is against our own bodies, shall not uncleanness for the same reason be an abomination to us? No man, no man in his wits, ever yet hated his own flesh, so as to destroy it, yet multitudes hate it so as to defile it.

Those who indulge the pleasures of their bodies forget the honour of them; and the honour of the body we should be as careful to support and maintain, as to nourish and cherish the life of it. Some people insist more upon honour than upon life itself. This makes seventh-commandment sins their own punishment, and sometimes the punishment of other sins too, that by them sinners dishonour their own bodies, Rom. i. 24. It is as good an argument against adultery as it is against murder, that in the image of God made he man, Gen. ix. 6. Wilt thou deface the image of God, and quite destroy the poor remains of it? Wilt thou pervert the intention of him that made thy body so fearfully and wonderfully, and formed it for himself, to show forth his praise, the doing of which will be indeed thine own praise.

Man, woman, insist upon thy honour, and preserve it by maintaining thy virtue. Argue thus with thyself, shall that noble structure which was erected for a palace be converted into a swine-stye? That curious frame which was designed to be the tabernacle of the human spirit, and the temple of the Divine Spirit, shall that become the habitation of unclean spirits? What a base and sordid thing is it to make these bodies *members of a harlot*, which were designed to be *the members of Christ*, as the apostle argues, (1 Cor. vi. 15.) to make them instruments of unrighteousness to the dishonour of God, which he made to be instruments of righteousness to his praise, Rom. vi. 13. The body is for the Lord, for his service, for his glory, and therefore ought not to be for fornication, 1 Cor. vi. 13.

If you have any sense of honour, surely you will not do so vile a thing, as to prostitute that body to the slavery of a base lust which was framed and fitted for the service of God. If you should escape reproach among men for the sin, yet surely you cannot reflect upon yourselves without shame and blushing; and self-reproaches are of all other the most uneasy. Chastity is called *sanctification and honour*, (1 Thess. iv. 4.) for every thing that is unchaste is a profanation both of your holiness and of your honour. You were made but a little lower than the angels, make not yourselves a great deal lower than the brutes

(5.) It unfits you for communion with God both here, and hereafter. You were made for him that made you, to serve, glorify, and enjoy him; and this is the greatest happiness you are capable of; but by indulging these filthy lusts, you render yourselves utterly incapable either to do any thing for God, or to have any thing to do with him; you quench all the sparks of love to him, and utterly extinguish that holy fire; you root up all the seeds of grace, and kill them with these weeds.

Whoredom takes away the heart, (Hos. iv. 11.) takes it away from God, who has the right to it, and should have the possession of it, and puts it into the hand of his enemy and ours. It takes the heart away from Christ the Redeemer of souls, and gives it to Satan the destroyer of souls; it alienates the affections from every thing that is heavenly and divine, and causes them to cleave to the earth, and to embrace dunghills. It fills the mind with vile and wicked thoughts in holy duties, which render them an abomination to the Lord; for thus polluted bread is offered on his altars. This we find a convinced adulterer reproaching himself for as sensibly as for any thing, (Prov. v. 14.) *I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.*

These unclean lusts are the corruption of all the faculties of the soul. They are the blindness of the

understanding, the debauchery of the conscience, the alienation of the soul from its felicity, and the obstruction of all its intercourse with heaven. For what communion has light with darkness, the father of lights with the works of darkness? What fellowship can there be between the holy God and an unclean and filthy heart? 2 Cor. vi. 14.

(6.) It is a sin not only against God and yourselves, but against your neighbour also. The seventh commandment is therefore one of the laws of the second table; and the apostle makes it the first of those commandments which are comprehended in this saying, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, Rom. xiii. 9.

Consider this, sinner; if thou thyself be under the sacred ties and bonds of marriage, every act of uncleanness is downright perjury, it is a violation of the covenant of thy God, and a breach of the marriage vow; it is a great injury to thy yoke-fellow, whose thou art by solemn contract, who ought to be dearer to thee than any other person whatsoever, and to whom thou hast promised to be faithful. Darest thou deal treacherously with her who is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant? Mal. ii. 14. or with him who is the guide of thy youth, and that ought to be to thee for a covering of the eyes? Prov. ii. 17. and Gen. xx. 16. Is the marriage covenant nothing with thee? Is it nothing to thee, that thou art guilty of the greatest injustice that can be to one whom thou oughtest to be not only just but kind to? and to do a wrong which thou canst never by any restitution make amends for? Though thy injured yoke-fellow may perhaps know nothing of the injury done, yet the righteous God knows it, and will certainly avenge it.

If thou thyself be single, but the person with whom thou committest lewdness is in the married state, thou contractest the same guilt, by being injurious to the yoke-fellow of another; a crime of so heinous a nature, that besides the prohibition of it in the letter of the seventh commandment, the very desire of this forbidden fruit is expressly restrained by the tenth commandment, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.*

Yet this is not all; the greatest injury of all is done to the precious soul of that person who is thy partner in the sin, and whom thou courtest, or consentest to. Know, sinner, that thou perishest not alone in thy iniquity; but, as if it were a light thing for thee to defile and destroy thy own soul, thou art accessary to the pollution and ruin of another soul, a precious soul, more worth than all the world. If thou be the tempter, thy guilt is double, thou art not only a sinner, but a Satan, a child of the devil, (Acts xiii. 10.) an agent and factor for him, who, not content to be himself a wicked one, goes about continually, seeking to make the children of men wicked like himself. Verily, they are of their father the devil, who thus do his lusts, they bear his image, and they are in his interests, John viii. 44. And if thou only consent to the temptation, yet besides thy own guilt, thou sharest in the sin of those to whom thou consentest, strengthening their hands, and hardening their hearts in their wicked way. Hearken to this, ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship ye pretend to each other is really the greatest enmity that can be? You hurt, you wrong, you ruin one another's souls. O what a stinging reflection will this be hereafter! How many precious souls are you accessary to the murder of? Except a miracle of mercy give you and them repentance, you will die in your iniquity, but their blood will be required at your hands.

God by his grace make these words convincing! Nothing less than almighty grace can make them so, but that can do wondrously.

2. Besides the malignity and guilt that there is in this sin, consider also the mischief and misery that follow after it. If calling it sin will not frighten you from it, we will call it death, and try what that will do; and we do not, either in the one, or in the other, miscall it. It is one of those things for which the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience, Col. iii. 5, 6. And woe to those, ten thousand woes to those upon whom the wrath of God alights and lies!

Let us take a distinct view of some of the dismal, and perhaps fatal, consequences of this sin.

(1.) Uncleanness wastes the body. He that commits fornication sins against his own body, not only by putting a dishonour upon it, and prostituting it to a base and scandalous service, but by contributing to the consumption and destruction of it. If you have any regard to your own bodies (the pleasing of the vitious appetites of which is the utmost the tempter can pretend to) you will surely avoid that sin which threatens so much mischief to them. Shall the fundamental law of self-preservation have no command over you, nor influence upon you?

Have you no dread of those pains and loathsome sicknesses which are commonly the products of these abominations? The righteous God, by a disease not known in the world till these latter ages, has stigmatized very many who have given themselves over to uncleanness, and has set them forth as monuments of his justice; in them the Scripture has been fulfilled, that *whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*, if men will not. Multitudes have been made to mourn at the last, (though I doubt very few have been brought to repentance by it,) when their flesh and their body have been consumed, and they have rotted above ground, Prov. v. 11.

The bones of many an old fornicator are full of the sins of his youth, which will *lie down with him in the dust*, as Zophar speaks, Job xx. 11. Yea, and many in the midst of their days become the devil's martyrs, and after they have long been racked and tortured with grievous pains, end a miserable life in a more

miserable death, and fall unpitied sacrifices to their own lusts. The word of God has said it, and all the world cannot unsay it, *He that defiles the temple of God, him shall God destroy*, 1 Cor. iii. 17.

(2.) It wars against the soul, the better, the immortal part of the man. Fleshly lusts, though they appear in the soft and charming guise of courtiers, yet really they are warriors, they are enemies, they are in arms against us; they are rebels, enemies in our own bosoms, and therefore the more dangerous; the apostle tells us, (1 Pet. ii. 11.) they *war against the soul*, they lay siege to it, batter it, and threaten the ruin of it.

How many precious souls have been undone by these enemies! They disturb the peace of the soul, and make it subject to continual frights and alarms, which fill it with secret terrors night and day. They waste the wealth of the soul, as soldiers that make havoc of all that is good for any thing in the countries they ravage and plunder. They obstruct the administration of all government in the soul; reason loses its dominion and conduct; conscience loses all its power and influence, it is not heard, it is not heeded; these base lusts put all into tumult and disorder.

And is thy soul, that precious soul of thine, nothing to thee? Darest thou thus neglect it, thus expose it, thus suffer it to be wasted and overrun by the enemy? Dost thou not know that thou must very shortly give an account of it to him that made it, and made thee the keeper of it? And an uncomfortable account thou wilt give, if thou thus resign it to Satan, and yield it as his easy prey. The serpent could not beguile thee but by thy own fault.

(3.) It is reproachful to the name. An incurable wound and dishonour is got by it, Prov. vi. 33. Though there may be other sins as provoking to God, and as mischievous to the soul, yet there is none so scandalous among men as this is. *It is a shame even to speak of these things*, Eph. v. 12.

And is this nothing to you? Have you no value for a good name, nor any care to preserve an interest in the esteem of wise and sober people? Can you contentedly be looked upon as slaves and willing captives to a sordid lust, and to lie under a stain and brand of perpetual infamy and disgrace? Is it nothing to you what people think or say of you, when they speak evil of you truly, and your own consciences know a great deal more and worse than they say? Is it nothing to you for good people to be ashamed of you, as fit only for the society of those who are altogether such as yourselves? Is it nothing for you to bring such a blot upon your reputation as will stick to it when you are dead and gone?

Or if your own names be of such small account with you, yet have you no regard to the name of Christ, that worthy name by which you are called? If you have made, and still make, a personal profession of relation to Christ, and call yourselves by the name of Jacob, the scandal of your sin goes further than your own names, it is a reproach to God himself, and to the Lord Jesus. The name of God and his doctrine is blasphemed through you. What shall pagans and Mahometans, atheists and deists, make of Christianity, if those who profess that holy religion, act worse than heathens? What will they say of Christ and his gospel, if those who, by their baptism, profess to follow Christ, and believe his gospel, live impure, unholy lives, contrary to the sacred character of both? Surely then the old reproach of our Master will be again renewed, *This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them*, and you who have occasioned it will bear this iniquity. The apostle in God's name directs us, *If any man that is called a brother*, called a Christian, *be a fornicator*, with such a one we must *not so much as eat*, that we may testify the utmost abhorrence and detestation of those who thus name the name of Christ, and yet allow themselves in this iniquity, 1 Cor. v. 11.

(4.) It is ruining to the estate. The prodigal son who spent his living on harlots at last was reduced to husks, and became fellow-commoner with the swine. Many a one has been brought to a morsel of bread by means of a whorish woman, in our days, as well as in Solomon's, Prov. vi. 26. Almost every place and every year can produce fresh instances of the wastefulness and expensiveness of these fleshly lusts. Many have so outspent themselves and their patrimony in these lewd and dissolute courses, that they have worn out the latter end of their days in miserable poverty, and, perhaps, ended them at last in a prison. So that if a careless world would take warning, others also might see and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

As there is a direct tendency in the sin itself to the impoverishing of men, for it spends that upon the devil which should be spent upon the man, so it provokes the righteous God to entail a curse upon the house and family, which will undoubtedly sink and ruin it. Holy Job says concerning this sin, and he seems to speak the sense of the patriarchal age, that it was a heinous crime, and an iniquity proper to be punished by the judges, as it was under the law of Moses. But if they, out of a contempt of other people's guilt, or consciousness of their own, should leave the sin unpunished, yet God would take the work into his own hands, and it should be a *fire consuming to destruction, which would eat out all the increase*, Job xxxi. 11, 12.

(5.) It is dreadful to the conscience, if ever it be awake. Know this, (sinner,) that though now thou makest a light matter of this sin, and thy conscience altogether holds its peace concerning it, yet if ever God open thy eyes to see the error of thy ways, and set thy sins in order before thee, thy uncleanness will appear above all the rest exceeding sinful, and

the remembrance of it will bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder. Solomon himself, in the reflection, found it more bitter than death, (Eccl. vii. 26.) and more terrible; and so wilt thou, if God have mercy in store for thee, and set home the conviction of it upon thy soul, making thee to know thy abominations, and to see them in their own colours and consequences.

O the horror and amazement thou wilt then be filled with! Then the sin which thou madest a sport of will sit heavy; though the iniquity was sweet in thy mouth, and rolled under thy tongue as a pleasant morsel, it will then be as the gall of asps, and the reflection upon it will perhaps make thee a terror to thyself, and to all about thee: how canst thou be otherwise, if the terrors of the Almighty set themselves in array against thee? Thou wilt then loathe thyself and abhor thyself, and call thyself fool a thousand times, for venturing upon counterfeit and transient pleasures, which thou seest and feelest attended with real and remaining pains.

Think (sinner) when thou art tempted to this sin, think seriously what will come of it: the best that can come of it is, that thou wilt repent of it, and this thou presumest upon; but dost thou know what it is to repent? That it is to be filled with grief, and shame, and fear, to see thyself under the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, and upon the brink of hell, and to be under all the terrors that may be supposed to arise from hence. And is repentance a thing to be bought so dear? Or, *What fruit will you then have of these things whereof you are now ashamed?*

(6.) It is damning to eternity, if it be not repented of in time. It is a sin which shuts the sinner out of heaven. The Scripture speaks expressly, more than once, that *they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Gal. v. 21. Nothing that defiles must enter into the New Jerusalem, that holy city. Heaven indeed would be no heaven to these impure polluted souls; nor will the holy God take those to be near him and with him for ever, who chose to set themselves at such a distance from him, and engaged themselves in opposition to him here.

And if thy sin shut thee out of heaven, I need not tell thee where it will shut thee up; but the word of God tells thee, that the abominable, and particularly the whoremongers, shall have their part in the lake that burns eternally with fire and brimstone, which is the second death, Rev. xxi. 8. The filthy Sodomites, who gave themselves over to fornication, suffered the vengeance of eternal fire, and are set forth for an example to all who should afterwards in like manner live ungodly, Jude 7. There is a special reservation of this kind of sinners to the judgment of the great day, because, commonly, they escape punishment from men; for when all sinners are bound over to that judgment, it is added, *Chiefly they that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness*, 2 Pet. ii. 9, 10.

Let no man deceive you with vain words, as if God would not be so severe with sinners as his word says he will. Is he not a God of truth, faithful to his threatenings as well as to his promises? Is he not a righteous Governor, the God to whom vengeance belongs? And canst thou think that he will suffer his law to be violated, and the authority of it ridiculed, his gospel to be slighted, and the grace of it trampled upon, and never reckon for all these indignities done him? No, sinner, thou art mistaken if thou think him altogether such an one as thyself.

Say not then, "I shall have peace though I go on," for that is to contradict God, who has said, *There is no peace to the wicked:* neither say thou, "I will repent of it hereafter, though I go on in it for a while;" for that is to contradict thyself, since the same reason that there is for thy repenting hereafter holds for thy repenting now. Do not then by a daring presumption run thyself upon an endless despair.

Now, consider this ye that forget God, consider it seriously, and be persuaded to break off this wicked course of life you lead.

Consider that an unclean conversation is a certain sign and evidence of a graceless heart; it manifests the prevalence and predominance of the corrupt nature, and that the unclean spirit is upon the throne. And if thou live and die graceless, thou art undone for ever.

Consider also that it is a very dangerous thing to sin against the warnings and checks of conscience. Few go on in this sin without disturbance sometimes from their own consciences, which say, *O do not this abominable thing which the Lord hates.* Take heed of baffling your own consciences, and of rushing as Balaam upon this sword's point, lest you provoke God to sear your consciences, and to give you up to your own hearts' lusts, and so to seal you unto condemnation. When men deal with their consciences as the Sodomites dealt with Lot, press hard upon them, and will not allow them to be reprovers and judges, (Gen. xix. 9.) Sodom's plagues are not far off; *Fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest.*

Consider also that an outward profession of religion is so far from excusing, that really it aggravates, these abominations; it now aggravates the guilt of the sin, and will shortly aggravate the ruin of the sinner. *Be sure your sin will find you out*, though perhaps your neighbours do not.

II. If you be in some measure convinced of the evil of this sin, I would now put you in a way to break off from it; and God, by his grace, put you into the right way! Perhaps, by this time, some of these sinners, these sinners against their own souls, may be so sick of their disease as to be glad of a physician,

and desirous of a cure. You that are enslaved to these filthy lusts, and under the power of them, that labour in these fires, like Israel in Egypt, do you not sigh, as they did, by reason of the bondage? Are you not weary of serving divers lusts, and pleasures, those unreasonable task-masters, and suffering at the same time the frequent lashes of an accusing conscience, that just avenger under God? Are you never brought to wish that you were disentangled out of the snare you are in, and that you could live a virtuous and a religious life, as you see some do who have the comfort and honour of so doing? Do you never blush to think of the abominable lusts you are under the dominion of? Nor ever tremble to think of the bottomless pit you are upon the brink of?

Know (sinner) that the God of heaven thinks the time long that thou continuest in thine uncleanness. See how he expostulates with filthy sinners, (Jer. xiii. 27.) *Wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?* And dost thou not think it long enough? May not *the time past suffice* that thou hast *walked in lasciviousness?* 1 Pet. iv. 3. Is thy conscience seared? Is thy heart quite hardened? Are darts, God's darts, counted as stubble before thee, and canst thou with the leviathan, laugh at the shaking of this spear? Job xli. 29. Shall no considerations influence thee? Shall neither reason nor religion sway with thee? If they may be calmly and impartially heard, I dare say thou wouldst be prevailed with to break off this vile and wicked course of life, and wouldst thankfully submit to the method of cure, though the operations necessary to the cure may be difficult and displeasing to flesh and blood.

Would you then be cleansed from this leprosy, this noisome and dangerous disease? Observe these directions;

1. Heartily repent of all the uncleanness you have been guilty of, and be deeply humbled for it before the Lord this day. Rest not in a bare disgust and dislike of the sin, as if that would amount to repentance; Amnon hated Tamar, when he had satisfied his brutish lust, and, yet, was far from being a true penitent: no, it is necessary that you experience in your own souls a very great and deep sorrow for the sin, and that you reflect upon it with the highest regret and remorse imaginable.

Think of the affront that you have offered to the holy God, the guilt and stain you have brought upon your own souls; think of the folly and filthiness of it. Think what you have lost and forfeited by it, the favour of God, the grace of Christ, and the joys of heaven; think what you have deserved and exposed yourselves to by it, temporal, spiritual, and eternal judgments. Think of these things till you are pricked to the heart, and in bitterness for the sin, as one that is in bitterness for a first-born; and contract such an habitual indignation against the sin, and yourselves because of it, that you may be pained upon every remembrance of it, and may even loathe yourselves because of it.

They that can easily forgive themselves upon a slight and superficial repentance, and flatter themselves with a conceit that God has thereupon forgiven them, will easily be brought to yield to the next temptation; it is therefore necessary that you take pains with your own hearts, to work upon them the powerful influence of those considerations which are proper to open springs of godly sorrow there, and to keep them ever flowing.

After David had been but once guilty of uncleanness, he went mourning from day to day for it. The sin was ever before him, Ps. li. 3. The remembrance of it broke his bones, (*v.* 8.) and was to him as a heavy burthen, too heavy even for him to bear, Ps. xxxviii. 4—6. Solomon confesses that he had found it more bitter than death, and calls it not a trick of youth, or an excusable slip of human frailty, but the *wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness*, Eccl. vii. 25, 26. Imitate these great penitents. Lay a load upon yourselves, and lie in the dust before God in penitential tears. Let the sin be a terror to you in the reflection upon what is past, and then it will not appear such a pleasure to you as formerly, in the next temptation. Thus the quarrel with it must begin with true remorse and godly sorrow for our former folly, and then it is to be hoped the quarrel will be irreconcilable.

Perhaps it will help to melt and break the hard and stony heart, if you humbly confess your guilt, not only to God but to your minister, or to some Christian friend, especially if the offence has been made public, and has proved a scandal: the Scripture prescribes this method of cure, (Jam. v. 16.) *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed.* That you may effectually humble yourselves, it will be of use for you to shame yourselves; you have not been ashamed to sin, be not ashamed to repent, for next to the credit of an innocent is that of a penitent. Do then as the convinced leper under the law, Lev. xiii. 45. Put thyself into his place and posture, and cry with sorrow and self-loathing, *Unclean, unclean.*

2. Take up a full resolution, by the grace of God, now to break off this vitious course of life, and never to return to it again. Faint purposes will not serve for the disentangling of you from the strong cords of this iniquity; they will but deceive you and betray you to the tempter. Wishing is but trifling; it is not enough to say "I hope I shall never be guilty of this sin again, surely I shall never again be such a fool as I have been;" but you must say, "In the strength of God I am firmly resolved I never will." If these fleshly lusts be indeed your enemies, as certainly they are dangerous enemies, you must carry on a war against them with vigour. Feeble efforts

will never repel the strong assaults of this temptation: you must be stedfastly resolved against it. Say not, "If I make a resolution I doubt I shall break it;" that is to yield to Satan: but, "I will make a resolution, and I trust in God I shall never break it;" this is to resist the devil, and if we do this faithfully he will flee from us.

There have been instances of those who, by the assistance of divine grace, have conquered and subdued habits that were extremely vicious, and have been wonderfully changed in the temper of their spirits, and the course of their lives; and the same grace that wrought mightily in them shall be sufficient for you, if you pray for it, improve it, and do not rebel against it. Argue the case with yourselves, reason with your own hearts upon it, and let the result be a settled resolution to cleanse yourselves from all filthiness, both of flesh and spirit, that you may perfect holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

What can hinder but that you should speedily come up to a firm resolution in this matter? Swear this to the Lord, and vow it to the mighty God of Jacob, that you will never, never more have fellowship with these unfruitful works of darkness; that you will never return again to this folly. Bind your souls with a solemn bond to this purpose, bind them fast, for they are apt to fly off. Let every Christian in this sense vow chastity, and call God to witness that you are sincere in it.

3. Let the fear of God rule in your hearts. You believe there is a God, you dare not deny it, you dare not question it; and do you not know that this God sees you, and is acquainted with all your ways; that he will judge you, and call you to an account for all your works? Do you not know that his eye is always upon you, and that all the hidden works of darkness are open before him?

Be persuaded, therefore, to set the Lord always before you; and dare not to do that in his sight and presence, which you would not dare to do in the sight and presence of a worm of the earth like yourselves. When none else sees, take heed, God sees.

A living principle of grace in your hearts will purify and cleanse them, and then the streams will not be thus muddy and polluted. Cast salt, the salt of grace, into these springs, and then the waters will be healed. Make the tree good, and then the fruit will be good. Stand in awe of God's unspotted purity, his tremendous majesty, and his strict and unerring justice; and say, How dare I live such a life as this in a constant contempt of God's authority, and rebellion against his justice? "How dare I provoke a God of almighty power to jealousy? Am I stronger than he?" None cast off modesty till they have cast off the fear of God, and are resolved to live without him. If you have the fear of God before your eyes, you will say as Joseph did, whenever you are insulted by any temptations of this kind, *How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?*

4. Stand upon your guard against the first appearance of this evil, and all approaches towards it. Take heed of every thing that leads to uncleanness, that looks like it, or looks towards it. If you would be innocent from the great transgression, allow not yourselves in lesser transgressions of this kind. The unwary fly often fools away her life by playing about the candle. Those sports and dalliances which seem harmless may introduce the greatest mischiefs, as the little thief thrust in at the window opens the door to the great ones. *Nemo repente fit turpissimus —Men arrive not at first to the highest pitch of this wickedness*, but gradually, and by indulgences less criminal, come to the vilest enormities. The way of this sin is down hill, a man cannot easily stop himself; one unclean thought, word, or action, draws on another, strengthens the corruptions by gratifying them, weakens the convictions by baffling them, and so the unthinking sinner goes from bad to worse: so like to the letting forth of water is the beginning of this sin; therefore, if you love your souls, meddle not with it.

Dread a snake under the green grass, and take heed where you tread. Fear this enemy, and come not within his borders. Watch that you enter not into this temptation, for it will be no easy matter to make a retreat. Do as holy Job did, make a covenant with your eyes (the common inlets of this sin) that you may not admit, much less entertain, any wanton and unchaste desires, Job xxxi. 1. If you would not be burnt, do not take fire into your bosom, nor go upon hot coals, it is Solomon's comparison, Prov. vi. 27, 28. Crush this cockatrice in the egg, lest the fruit of it be a fiery flying serpent. Pluck up this root of bitterness as soon as it puts forth, lest it spring up and trouble you, and thereby you and many more be defiled, Heb. xii. 15.

5. Be quick and peremptory in your resistance of temptations to this sin. Stand not to parley with them, nor ever listen to terms of surrender. Eve was half betrayed when she entered into discourse with the serpent, and was willing to hear what he had to say.

Arguments enough there are against this sin, and very convincing, cogent ones; your sober thoughts have many a time represented them to you in their evidence and demonstration. Be satisfied then, and look upon the case to be so plain that there needs not a dispute upon it: there are no probabilities, nothing but fallacies, on the side of the temptation. And yet, such is the weakness, deceitfulness, and desperate wickedness of your own hearts, that you may be imposed upon ere you are aware, if you admit of a debate concerning it, and recommit the resolves you have made.

Therefore, whenever you are solicited to this sin, startle at the thought of it, with the utmost abhorrence and detestation imaginable. Say as Peter, (Acts x. 14.) *Not so, for nothing unclean hath come into my mouth.* Say as David in another case, (1 Chron. xi. 19.) *My God, forbid it me, that I should do this thing!* Say as our Saviour has taught us to say, when the tempter assaults us, *Get thee hence, Satan*, Matt. iv. 10. The Lord rebuke this unclean spirit, so that it may not be suffered to speak; the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke it. Let the very temptation be to you as a thorn in the flesh, a pain and a terror, and not a pleasure. You who have fallen into this sin have found, by sad experience, how dangerous it is to venture too far; therefore, dread the thoughts of reasoning with indifference, concerning that which, being confessedly most unreasonable, must be gainsaid with a severe resolution. As he who will dispute whether there be a God or no, must be hissed at in the schools, and not argued with, so must he who will question whether he should keep the law of God, in so plain a case, or break it.

6. Keep at a distance from the tempter. If there be any particular person that you are in special danger of being insnared by, avoid that person as you would avoid one that you were in danger of being infected by with the plague, though otherwise dear to you.

The wise man's advice, or rather the wise God's command, is, *Remove thy way far from the house*, (Prov. v. 8.) much more far from the man, the woman, who, under the colour of love and friendship, would allure you, with the devil's baits, into the devil's nets. This seems to be in part intended in that command which our Saviour has given us, to cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye, which offends us, Matt. v. 29, 30. and again, Matt. xviii. 8, 9. Though the person be dear to us, and could be as ill spared as a right eye, or a right hand, yet resolve upon a separation. This was Joseph's wisdom, that he would not be alone in the house with his mistress, when he perceived her vile designs, Gen. xxxix. 10, 11. When we thrust ourselves into temptation, we put ourselves out of God's protection, for he has promised to keep us in all our ways, and not otherwise. Presume not too near the danger, in the strength of your own resolutions, that hitherto you will go and no further, lest you be found tempting the devil to tempt you, and so become your own betrayers. If you would be kept from harm keep out of harm's way.

This caution must go further than the particular person you are in danger of being insnared by; you must carefully avoid the places of temptation to this sin. As the plays have many of them, in this degenerate age, been plainly designed to teach the arts of debauchery, and not only to palliate this wickedness as a jest, but to recommend it as the accomplishment of a finished gentlemen, so the playhouses have been the rendezvous of these sinners, where the plays have been indeed acted. There those are mustered and disciplined, who having in their baptism renounced "the pomps and vanities of this world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh," and listed themselves under the banner of the cross, now in effect disclaim their baptism, return to those pomps and vanities, (by which were originally meant the plays,) and embrace these fleshly lusts, and engage themselves to fight manfully against virtue and religion, and all that is sacred, and to continue the devil's faithful servants and soldiers to their lives' end. And are these persons fit for you to associate with? Are these places fit for you to be found in? No, if thou love thy soul, if thou wouldst preserve thy purity, peace, and honour, come not nigh the door of that house; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away.

7. Think much of death and hell. Sinners of this kind must be saved with fear, that is, they must be frightened out of their sin, pulled out of the fire with a friendly violence. We must not, we dare not, prophesy smooth things to you; we prophesy deceit if we do. O that these sinners in Sion were afraid! O that fearfulness might surprise them! Let your hearts meditate terror, the terrors of the Lord, which from the word of God we desire to set before you, not to frighten you out of your wits, but to frighten you out of your sins. And it is better to be saved with fear, than that you should be damned yourselves without fear.

Death is the king of terrors; O that it might appear so terrible to you as to cool the courage you take in a sinful way! Sirs, you are dying creatures, your days upon earth are to be but few; and, perhaps, you are shortening the days of this life, and hastening the day of your death, by this lewd and vicious course of life you live. But O what a dismal change will death make when it comes! A dismal change, when the charming eyes (as they now call them) which give the wanton glances, shall sink and fall, and be closed up; when the countenance that is now proud of its skin-deep beauty shall gather blackness, and become ghastly; when the body that is now pampered and indulged, and such provision made for it, shall become a loathsome carcass. O let the thoughts of the pains and agonies of a death-bed, and the darkness and terror of a bed in the grave, be an effectual damp and check to all the forbidden pleasures of the bed of uncleanness! It would be thought unaccountably absurd, and would be imputed to a very high degree of hardness and scaredness, if a malefactor condemned to die, and the warrant signed for his execution to-morrow, should so far forget the dreadful pomp of it, as to spend the night in wanton sport and revelling, in

mirth and laughter. And are you sure that you shall live till to-morrow? *This night*, perhaps, your *soul may be required of you.* And O what a terror will death be if it surprise you while you go on in this sinful way!

But this is not all; after death will be the judgment, a strict and particular judgment, into which God will bring every secret thing; and after judgment, the fire of hell will certainly be the portion of all those who live and die in this sin: if God be true it will. Our Saviour thunders hell and damnation against this sin, and you may assure yourselves he is in earnest: he has told us that if we do not mortify these corrupt dispositions, our *whole body shall be cast into hell*, Matt. v. 29, 30.

Lay your ears by faith to the gates of hell, and hear the doleful shricks and out-cries of multitudes who lived as securely in this sin as you do, and said they should have peace though they went on, and are now paying dear for all their brutish pleasures, in an eternity of easeless and remediless torments. The prophet speaks of it as a very sad change, which approaching judgments in this world would make with the daughters of Sion, when there should be *instead of a girdle a rent*, and *instead of well set hair, baldness*, Isa. iii. 24.

But much more dreadful and amazing will the change be, when, instead of the cup of fornication, wherewith these besotted sinners are now intoxicated, the righteous God, who has said he will judge whoremongers and adulterers, shall put into their hands a cup of fury, a cup of trembling, a cup of fire and brimstone. Instead of music and songs of mirth, there shall be *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.* Instead of a bed of down shall be a bed of flames. Instead of the amorous society of them that wear soft clothing, there shall be the company of devils and damned spirits. Let a holy fear of this be a damp to all carnal mirth, and an effectual check to all forbidden pleasures. *Who among you can dwell with devouring fire, who can inhabit everlasting burnings?*

8. Lift up your hearts in prayer to God for strength and grace to enable you to mortify fleshly lusts, and to resist every temptation to this sin. Prayer is a principal part of that armour of God which we are to put on, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. It is that which girds on all the rest, and fetches in that Spirit from on high, which alone makes our armour impenetrable, and us invulnerable, Eph vi. 18.

Let it be your daily prayer to Almighty God, that he would lead you out of this temptation which assaults you so frequently, so vigorously; that he would deliver you from this evil, this sin which most easily besets you. Pray against your own iniquity, which has so often, and so long, had dominion over you. O pray earnestly that the power of divine grace may be greatly magnified and glorified in the suppressing and extirpating those vicious habits, which have hitherto seemed inveterate and obstinate to the methods of grace. Go and complain to Christ for thyself, as some did for their relations when he was here on earth, *Have mercy on me, thou Son of David*, my soul is *grievously vexed with an unclean spirit;* Lord, dispossess him, cast him out. *This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting;* add fasting therefore to thy prayers, and thou shalt not seek in vain.

Whenever you find yourselves entering into this temptation, *Watch and pray.* Lift up your hearts to God in such an ejaculation as that of Nehemiah in another case, *Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands;* strengthen them for this conflict, that I may come off a conqueror. Some of the ancients thought that the thorn in the flesh which St. Paul complained of was a violent temptation to uncleanness, *a messenger of Satan* (for so all such temptations are) which buffeted him; and it was so far from pleasing him that it pained him, and was as a sword in his bones. But by prayer, instant and importunate prayer, he prevailed for grace sufficient, 2 Cor. xii. 7—9. And if we come in faith on the same errand, we need not fear but we shall speed as he did.

9. Bring the body into subjection by abstinence and labour. Luxury and idleness are often the unhappy incentives and causes of this sin. Sodom was made a very sink of uncleanness by fulness of bread (not plenty, but the abuse of plenty) and abundance of idleness, Ezek. xvi. 49. What Solomon says of a servant is true of the body: *He that delicately brings it up from a child, shall have it become his son*, nay, his master, his taskmaster, *at the length*, Prov. xxix. 21. They that do not deny themselves in other things, will find it the more difficult to deny themselves in this.

Corporal austerities and mortifications, though merit is not to be placed in them, nor will they of themselves, without the grace of God, gain us a victory; yet they are excellent means to subdue lust, and to bring the body into a good temper, that it may be more manageable by religion and right reason. If you cannot drive out this enemy by storm, try to starve him out, by denying yourselves the use even of those lawful things, which through the infirmity of the flesh may prove a snare to you. Pamper not the body with varieties and dainties, lest it grow wanton, but use yourselves to deny yourselves, so shall it become easy to you.

Live not in sloth; for when you have nothing to do, the devil will quickly find you something to do. Standing waters gather filth, while running streams keep pure. Be always employing yourselves in some good business, and then perhaps you will find it as effectual an answer to a temptation, to say "I have no leisure," as to say "I have no leave." Love not the bed of idleness, lest it turn into the bed of lust.

10. Do not keep the devil's counsel. This treason is in effect quashed when it is discovered, and the devices of it will be brought to nought, if they be but brought to light, for it is an evil that hates the light and seeks the shade as much as any other. Does this sin then most easily beset you? Is it violent and importunate in its assaults? If you have a friend who is fit to make a confidant of, it may do well to open your case to such a friend who will deal faithfully with you, and will help you by prayer and suitable advice, and, it may be, speak some word in season.

It may be of use to shame yourselves out of the danger of being overcome, by confessing your weakness, and obliging yourselves to confess your wickedness, if, in any instance, you should be overcome. You had better shame yourselves to a faithful friend that will pity you and help you, than let the sin get head, and not only shame you in this world before men who will insult over you, but fill your face with everlasting shame and contempt.

If you think these methods of cure too difficult, and call these directions "hard sayings which cannot be borne," you have reason to fear that you are not yet thoroughly convinced of the danger of your disease, nor truly desirous to be made whole. If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing for the cure of a bodily sickness, wouldst thou not have done it? how much more when for thy spiritual cure he only says to thee, *Wash and be clean?*

And now (sinner) must I close this paper and leave thee as I found thee? Will he that is filthy resolve to be filthy still? And will he that is unclean be unclean still? God forbid: shall neither the terrors of the Lord startle thee and awaken thee out of thy security in this sinful way? Nor his goodness win upon thee to lead thee to repentance? Wilt thou make thy condition desperate by adhering to that desperate resolve, *There is no hope, no, for I have loved strangers, and after them I will go*, Jer. ii. 25. Is religion a jest, and reason a sham, and the arguments fetched from the word of God, and the sober sense of all mankind, but rant and banter? Shall all that has been said be turned off with a flout, and converted into sport and ridicule? Yet know that thy unbelief cannot make the wrath and curse of God of none effect. Though thou lovest to slumber, yet thy damnation slumbers not.

If, after all, thou dost indeed prefer the gratification of a base lust before the favour of God, and the pleasures of wisdom's ways; if thou dost indeed choose the puddle water of sensual delights rather than the pure water of life, and the wine of divine consolations; if thou wilt rather expose thyself to all the just reproaches of thy own conscience now, and to all the miseries of the damned for ever, than submit thyself to the restraint and conduct of virtue and religion; know then, that *God also will choose thy delusions*, and they will be thy eternal destruction: *So shall thy doom be, thou thyself hast decided it.*

A SERIOUS ADDRESS

TO THOSE WHO

PROFANE THE LORD'S DAY.

THOSE I reckon guilty of profaning the Lord's day, and to them in the name of God direct this paper, who neglect the appointed work of that day, and who violate the prescribed rest of that day.

1. It is a profanation of the Lord's day, and a breach of the law of it, to neglect and omit the proper duty and business of that day, which is, the immediate service and worship of our God. If we leave undone that which on this day ought to be done, we are transgressors, for omissions are sins, and must come into judgment.

That the eternal God is to be solemnly and religiously adored by the children of men, and that we are all bound, by acts of piety and devotion, to give unto him the glory due unto his name, and pay our homage to him, none will question, who really believe that there is a God, who is a being infinitely perfect and blessed, and the fountain of all being and blessedness, our Creator, Owner, Ruler, and Benefactor, on whom we have a necessary and constant dependence, and to whom we lie under the highest obligations imaginable. Never did reasonable creatures speak more unreasonably, than they did who said, *What is the Almighty that we should serve him?* Job xxi. 15.

Something of this work ought to be done every day; no day must pass without some solemn acts of religious worship, both morning and evening; when we address ourselves to the work of the day, and when we compose ourselves to the rest of the night, we ought actually to acknowledge God, both by our prayers and praises, as our Protector, Guide, and Benefactor. *Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work;* and is this no part of our work? Is it not the most needful and excellent work we have to do? Those who live without daily worship live without God in the world. As God allows us time for works of necessity and mercy out of his day; so we ought to allow time for works of piety and devotion out of our days, else we are not only undutiful, but very ungrateful.

But besides the morning and evening sacrifice, which the duty of every day requires, the wisdom of God, for the preserving and securing of divine worship in the world, has instituted and appointed a particular time for the special solemnities of it

which is one day in seven. The body of a seventh day, that is, the working hours of it, are by this institution appointed to be spent in the acts of religion and devotion, as the other days of the week are intended for secular business, and the works of our particular calling.

Now this instrumental part of religion, (give me leave to call it so,) though it be not equally necessary with the essentials of it, the love of God, and faith in Christ, yet it is undoubtedly necessary, both as a duty in obedience to the divine law, which requires us thus to consecrate a seventh day to the services of religion, and as a means of keeping up communion with God in holy ordinances, and preparing ourselves, by his grace, for the vision and fruition of him. It is so necessary, that revealed religion, and with it all religion, would in all probability have been lost and forgotten long ere this, if it had not been kept up by the observation of sabbaths.

Now, forasmuch as it is the work of the Lord's day to worship God, not only in public solemn assemblies, which we ought conscientiously to attend upon both the former and the latter part of the day, but in secret and in our families, morning, evening, and at noon, those do, certainly, profane the day, who do not spend the best part of it, and much more those who scarce spend any part of it, in pious exercises; either not attending on them at all, or with such a constant and allowed carelessness and indifference, as discovers a great contempt of the God they pretend to honour.

Those profane this sacred day, who waste the precious hours of its morning in sleep and sloth, and proud and needless dressing, and the rest of the day in idle chat and perfect sauntering, as if sabbath time hung upon their hands, and they knew not what to do with it, nor how to idle it away, and pass it off fast enough, till they have that which is their heart's desire, *When will the sabbath be gone?*

Such as these, how innocent soever they may think themselves, are to be counted sabbath-breakers, who instead of keeping the sabbath day lose it, and throw it away, and wilfully suffer it to run waste; and instead of sanctifying it, and advancing it above other times, vilify it, and make it the most idle, insignificant, and unprofitable day of the week; for the days that are spent in worldly business serve to some purpose, but this, that should be spent in the business of religion, being trifled away, and the work of it undone, serves to no purpose.

2. It is a profanation of the Lord's day, to violate and break in upon the holy rest of that day, and to do that from which we are bound up and restrained by the law of the day, in order to our more close application to that which is the work of the day. On that day we are to rest both from those worldly employments of our particular callings, which on other days are our duty, and the work of the day, and from those sports and recreations which on other days are lawful, as the entertainment of our spare hours, and the preparatives for our busy ones; from both we are to rest on the Lord's day; for certainly carnal pleasure is as great an enemy to spiritual joy as the sorrow of the world is, and sport is as inconsistent with the sabbath rest as labour is.

Rest from worldly business on the sabbath day was under the Old Testament more primarily required as a duty, and a great stress laid upon it, according to the nature of that dispensation; to all the purposes of this rest we are not now so strictly tied up as the Jews then were: but it is still secondarily requisite as a means, in order to the due performance of the work of the day; and so far it is a duty.

Then, when the more solemn worship of God was appropriated to one place, where the ark was, the place which God chose to put his name there, which the people were appointed generally to attend but thrice a year, the rest of those, who were at a distance, was required and accepted as a tacit joining with the temple service on the sabbath day; by a strict cessation from other work, they testified an implicit concurrence in that work. But now, under the gospel, we are not so confined to one place as they then were; it is God's will that men pray every where, and that in every place the spiritual incense be offered; we have now larger opportunities and better helps for doing the work, and enjoying the comforts, of that day than they then had; and therefore, now the bare rest from worldly labour is not in itself so much a sanctification of the sabbath as it was then. Yet we cannot think ourselves less obliged than they were to rest from worldly employments and recreation, as far as that rest will contribute to our attendance on the work of the day, with more solemnity, and with greater freedom and closeness of application, and without distinction.

Those, therefore, undoubtedly profane the Lord's day, who absent themselves from the public worship of God, either the former or the latter part of the day, that they may underhand follow their callings, settle their accounts, drive bargains, push on journeys, make visits, or the like, unless when the occasion is urgent, and mercy comes to take place of sacrifice.

Yet, not they only are guilty of the breach of the sabbath rest, who spend that part of the day, which we call "church time," in worldly employments and recreations; but they also who spend the time before, between, and after public worship, so as either to intrench upon that full scope of time, that they ought to take on that day, for their secret and family worship, and to abridge themselves of that, or so as to unfit themselves and put themselves out of frame for holy duties, or obstruct their profiting by them, do violate the sabbath rest. Works of ne-

cessity (which yet ought not to be a self-created necessity) we are allowed time for, the body must be fed, and clothed, and rested, that it may be fit to serve the soul in the service of God on this day. But no more of the time than is convenient for these must be alienated from the business of the day; if it be, we break in upon the appointed rest.

Those who go to their shops, and exercise their trades openly or secretly on the Lord's day, thereby show that they mind the world more than God, and that they are more solicitous for the meat that perishes, than for that which endures to eternal life; and those who go to the ale-house, or follow their sports, and divert themselves or others with idle walking and talking, show that they mind the flesh more than God, and that they are wholly taken up with the mere animal life, and wretchedly estranged from the principles, powers, and pleasures of the spiritual and divine life.

If any pretend that they can perform the work of the Lord's day well enough, though they do not observe the rest of the day, they suppose themselves wiser than God, who has instituted the sabbath rest in order to the better and more solemn management of the sabbath work, both public and private.

We find now who are chargeable with the sin of profaning the Lord's day; let the conscience of every one that is guilty herein deal faithfully with him in the reading of this, and say, *Thou art the man;* thou art the man, the woman that makest the day of the Lord either a day of idleness, or a day of worldly business, and dost not spend it in the service of God and communion with him. Either thou dost not diligently attend the public worship in its season, or but one part of the day, or without any just cause stayest at home, or walkest abroad, when thou shouldst be in the holy convocation; or, if thou go to church for fashion sake, thou thinkest when that service is over thou hast no more to do, and dost not spend the remaining part of the day as thou oughtest, in prayer, reading, meditation, and other religious exercises, alone and with thy family. God's time, which is devoted to him, and should be employed for him, thou givest to the world, and thy worldly business, or (which is perhaps more common) to the body, and to the ease and pleasure of it, and to the entertainments of a vain and foolish conversation. Art thou verily guilty in these or any of these things? This paper comes with an humble request to thee, that thou wouldest consider thy ways and amend them.

This is one of those sins which the public attempts for the reformation of manners at this day are levelled against, at least in some instances of it; and justly, for the profanation of God's sabbaths, which he is very jealous for the honour of, is a sin, that brings judgments upon a land, perhaps, as soon as any other. It is a sin that *kindles fires in the gates of Jerusalem*, (Jer. xvii. 27.) a sin that *brings yet more wrath upon Israel*, Neh. xiii. 17, 18. And, therefore, all who wish well to the public peace, and those, especially, who are intrusted with the preservation of it, are concerned in interest, as well as duty, to take care of the due sanctification of the sabbath, as far as it falls within their cognizance, so that whatever guilt of this kind particular persons may contract, it may not become national.

Now in our dealing with this sin, as we have this advantage, that we are not struggling with the violent impetus of a particular lust, appetite, or passion, which is commonly deaf to reason and expostulation; so, on the other hand, we labour under this difficulty, that they who are guilty of this sin, are commonly more ready to insist upon their own justification, than any other sort of sinners. It is a way that seems right, and they who walk in it say, *They have done no wickedness;* and not only so, but they are forward to censure and condemn those who allow not themselves the same latitude, as needlessly and superstitiously precise.

I should transgress the designed limits of this paper, if I should enter into the dispute concerning the perpetual obligation of the fourth commandment, which (as to the substance of it, the keeping of one day in seven holy to God) is I hope no dispute with us, since we are all agreed to pray to God to *have mercy upon us*, and *incline our hearts to keep this law*.

I shall therefore only in a few lines (that I may hasten to what I principally intend) endeavour to make out the divine appointment of the Christian sabbath, as a day of holy rest in order to holy work, by these three steps:

(1.) It appears by the light of nature, that there must be some such day observed. If God is to be worshipped by us solemnly and in comfort, there must be some fixed and stated times for the doing of it, the designation of which is necessary both to preserve the thing itself, and to put a solemnity upon it.

The Gentiles had days set apart to the honour of their gods, which they spent accordingly, in rest from worldly labour, and, by the solemnities of their religion, looking upon those as peculiar days, distinguished from and dignified above other days. Does not even nature teach men thus to own God the Lord of time, and to constitute opportunities for the public solemn worship of him? Now, if all people will thus walk in the name of their god, should not we walk in like manner in the name of the Lord our God? Mic. iv. 5.

(2.) It appears by the Old Testament, that one day in seven should be thus religiously observed. It is plain that a sabbath was instituted from the beginning, it was a positive institution in paradise as marriage was; the former necessary to the preserving of the church and sacred fellowship, as the

latter to the support of families and human fellowship, Gen. ii. 2, 3. When the Scripture says expressly there, *that God rested on the seventh day*, and that *he blessed and sanctified it because he so rested;* we wrest the Scripture, if we suppose it recorded there as a thing done long after. By this management the plainest evidence of Scripture may be turned off and evaded. To suppose that sabbaths were not kept in the patriarchal age, because no mention is made of them in the history of that age, is absurd; since we have a record of the institution of the sabbath in the beginning, and an account of the religious observation of a sabbath, before the giving of the law upon mount Sinai, viz. when the manna was given, Exod. xvi. 23, 26. As at the first planting of religion in the world, so now at the revival of it out of its ruins in Egypt, one of the first things taken care of is the sabbath, and it is spoken of, not as a new institution, but as an old law, which, when Moses had notified the day to them, (they having lost their reckoning in Egypt,) they are sharply rebuked for the violation of, *v.* 28. *How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?*

The first word of the fourth commandment, *Remember the sabbath day*, plainly shows that it was the revival of an old commandment, which had been forgotten, viz. That one day in seven should be sanctified to God. It is the solemn declaration of an ancient institution, and is of perpetual obligation, that the seventh day, not the seventh from the creation, which in the revolution of so many ages, we cannot be infallibly certain of, but the seventh day, after six days worldly labour, is the *sabbath of the Lord our God*, and is so to be sanctified. And though God rested the seventh day from the creation, yet in the fourth commandment it is not said he blessed the seventh day, but he blessed the sabbath day, or a sabbath day, (in that proportion of time,) and sanctified it: and this part of the blessing of Abraham's seed comes upon the Gentiles through faith.

Very much stress was laid, in the times of the Old Testament, upon the observation of the sabbath, more than on any institution purely ceremonial: and the Old-Testament prophecies, that point at gospel times, make it part of the description of converted strangers, that they make conscience of keeping the sabbath from polluting it, Isa. lvi. 6.

(3.) It appears by the New Testament, that the first day of the week should be observed and sanctified as a Christian sabbath. It is evident to any who read the New Testament without prejudice,

[1.] That a weekly sabbath is to be religiously observed in the Christian church. We not only find no repeal of the fourth commandment, in the New Testament, nor any reason for the repeal of it; but on the contrary we find it expounded by our Saviour, and vindicated from the corrupt glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, who, as in other things they were profanely loose, so in this they were superstitiously strict. Several occasions Christ took to show that works of necessity and mercy are no violations of the sabbath rest; as Luke xiii. 14. John v. 18; ix. 14. and especially Matt. xii. 1, &c. Had the law of the fourth commandment been to expire presently, our Saviour would not have been so careful to explain it; but it is plain he designed to settle a point, which would afterwards be of use to his church, and to teach us, that our Christian sabbath, though it is under the direction of the fourth commandment, yet, it is not under the arbitrary injunctions of the Jewish elders.

Our Saviour has likewise told us, that the sabbath was made for men, and not for the Jews only; and that he himself was *Lord of the sabbath day*, that is, that it should be in a special manner his day, and devoted to him. He likewise supposed the continuance of a sabbath, to be so religiously observed by his disciples, at the very time of the destruction of Jerusalem, which put a final period to all the peculiarities of the Jewish economy, that he bids them pray that their then flight might not be in the winter, nor on the sabbath day, Matt. xxiv. 20. And the apostle (Heb. iv. 9.) plainly speaks of a sabbath, or day of rest, which believers have now under the gospel, like that day of rest which God instituted, when he had finished the work of creation.

[2.] It is likewise evident, that the day which the Christian church has in all ages observed, and does still, which is commonly reckoned the first day of the week, is the day which it is the will of Christ we should observe as our Christian sabbath. It is certain that the apostles were authorized and appointed to teach the churches of Christ those things pertaining to the kingdom of God, wherein he had instructed them; the Spirit was poured out upon them to enable them rightly and duly to execute their commission, so as to answer all the great ends of it. Now it is plain that the apostles and first Christians did religiously observe the first day of the week, as the day of their solemn assemblies for divine worship, (Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.) and that with a regard to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This they called, *The Lord's day*, (Rev. i. 10.) as a day that answers all the intentions of a weekly sabbath; as such it has been received and observed by the churches of Christ. *It is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it*, Ps. cxviii. 24.

What there was in the Old-Testament sabbath which was typical, has had and will have its accomplishment in the spiritual and eternal rest of true believers; but that which was the main scope of the fourth commandment, that the seventh day, after six days' labour, should be kept holy to God, remains still in full force. But now, under the New

Testament, a greater stress is laid upon the holy work of the day, than upon the holy rest, and upon the rest, only in order to the work, and worship, and the ends of it. When the church was in its infancy and childhood, it was dealt with accordingly; a bodily rest was then mainly insisted on, as the sanctification of the sabbath, which was so called because it was a day of rest, for so sabbath signifies. But now, under the gospel, the church is grown up to full age, and, therefore, now more notice is taken of the business to which the day is devoted; viz. joy in God, (Ps. cxviii. 24.) communion with Christ, (John xx. 19, 26.) and with the Spirit, (Rev. i. 10.) and with our fellow-Christians, Acts xx. 7. And as to the rest, this general rule is to be observed, that nothing be done to derogate from the solemnity and honour of the day, and to lay it common with other days, nor any thing to divert us from, or distract us in, any part of the work of the day. Yet, still it is not improper to call it the Christian sabbath, because it is a day of rest from the world, and rest in God.

Having thus endeavoured to set this matter in a true and convincing light, I come now to reason the case a little with the consciences of those who make light of the Lord's day. Those I mean who spend it, or any part of it, in idleness, sport, tippling, or secular business, and turn their backs upon the public worship of God in religious assemblies; or, if not that, yet, either wholly neglect, or very carelessly and superficially perform, their secret and family worship. And O that I could offer something now, which by the grace of God might help to convince and awaken such!

I will take it for granted (sirs) that you have not abandoned religion, that you are not desirous to disengage yourselves from its sacred bonds, nor willing to disclaim its joys and hopes; you are not arrived to that desperate resolution of living without God in the world; no, it is not come to that with you. You have not renounced the Christian faith, nor abjured your baptismal covenant, nor by searing your consciences, as with a hot iron, marked them for the devil and hell; what I shall say, will have little influence upon those who are of such a character as this. But *to you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men*, not to such incarnate devils: I speak to those, who, I hope, have some sense of religion, and of whose consciences God has still some hold.

Give me leave, therefore, to recommend to your serious consideration the two great intentions and designs of the Lord's day, which are (as far as lies in you) defeated and frustrated by your profanation of it, and your constant neglect of the duties of it.

The Lord's day was appointed to be kept holy and religiously observed,

I. For the glory and honour of God;

II. For the good and happiness of man. So that all those who profane the Lord's day, do a great dishonour to God to whom it is dedicated, and no less an injury to themselves, for whose benefit and comfort it was intended.

I. In profaning the Lord's day you sin against heaven, and put a daring affront upon the divine authority and grace. Here let me speak boldly, let me speak warmly, as an advocate for God. I beseech you consider seriously what I have to say, and give me your patient hearing while I reason with you.

You are baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and it is your honour and privilege that you are so; you say you adhere to it, and you would not for all the world be unbaptized, nor renounce your Christian name. Suffer me then a little to expostulate with you upon the acknowledged principles of your baptism, which, I think, you are not true to, while you continue to profane the Lord's day as you do.

1. Have you no regard to the Eternal God, even the Father, that made you and all the world? The sabbath was first ordained to be celebrated by the reasonable creatures in this lower world (for in the upper world they keep an everlasting sabbath) to the honour of the great Creator, as a standing memorial of the finishing of the work of creation; that in the observance of it we may give him praise for the wonders we see in all the creatures, and may give him thanks for the favours and comforts we receive by them. This is specified in the fourth commandment, as the ground of that ancient institution, which bore date before the entrance of sin into the world.

The author and spring of all the movements of time justly claims to be the Lord of time, and he has wisely appointed one day in seven to be consecrated to him, as an acknowledgment that he is so, and that our times are both from his hand and in his hand. And dare you sacrilegiously rob him of this tribute, and demand to have even this also, as well as the rest of the days of the week, at your own disposal, to be given away to the world and the flesh?

Consider (sirs) you are God's creatures, and the work of his hands; you are his reasonable creatures, the priests of the visible creation, the collectors of his praises, to gather them in from the inferior creatures, which do all praise him objectively, and to pay them in by actual adorations. For this noble purpose you were endued with noble powers, those of reason; you were taught more than the beasts of the earth, and were made wiser than the fowls of heaven. All the supports and comforts of your lives are likewise the creatures of God's power, and the gifts of his providence; so that you are bound both in duty and gratitude to serve and praise him. And dare you then prostitute that time

to the world and the flesh, which is consecrated to the honour of your great Lord, the author of your beings, the protector of your lives, and the giver of all your comforts? You do thus in effect say to the Almighty, *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways*, like those impudent sinners, Job xxi. 14. And *do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish creatures and unwise?* O faithless creatures and unjust?

In your idle walks on the Lord's day, and the diversion you take abroad, while you find your own pleasure in them, I wonder how you can look either to the heavens above, or the earth beneath, or the ornaments of either, and not be ashamed to think, that when they observe their time of serving you, and contributing to your comfort, in the proper season of the day, the proper season of the year, according to the law of their Creator, you do not observe your time of serving God, and contributing to his praise, according to the law given you, but are playing abroad when you should be praying at home. The sun does the work of the day in its day, but you do not. The stork in the heavens knows her appointed time, and comes in her season to wait upon you; but you observe not the time God has appointed for your approaches to him. To say, can we not meditate, and praise our Creator, like Isaac, in the fields as well as in our closets, is no good reply to this reproof, unless your own hearts can witness for you, that indeed you do so, which I fear they cannot; for your walks are plainly chosen, to befriend your diversion by society, not to befriend your devotion by solitude.

When you spend any part of the Lord's day in the ale-house or tavern, do not the good creatures of God, which there you abuse, upbraid you with the basest ingratitude, that when you have been receiving the comfort of those gifts of God's bounty, the rest of the days of the week, you grudge to spend the Lord's day in humble and thankful acknowledgments of the goodness of God to the whole creation, and to you in particular. Do all God's works praise him every day, and will you think much this day, to join with his saints in blessing him? Ps. cxlv. 10.

Was it the will of God that his glorious rest from the work of creation, wherein the Eternal Mind took a complacency in the copies of its own wisdom, and the products of its own power, should be thus commemorated here on earth, by a holy rest every seventh day from worldly employments, while it is continually celebrated in heaven, by those blessed spirits there, who rest not day nor night from praising him? And will you in effect tell him to his face, that it does not deserve such a frequent and solemn commemoration? And is the will and law of the eternal God nothing with you? Is his authority and honour of so small account in your eyes? Shall the service of the flesh, to which you are not debtors, be preferred before the service of your God, to whom you are infinitely indebted?

You have your lives from God, your bodies, your souls, all your powers, and all your comforts, and therefore you ought to be his subjects, and to pay him tribute; you are his tenants, and must not withhold his rent: this is his tribute, this is his rent. Sabbath time is demanded as his part of your time; let this then that is his due be justly and faithfully paid him in full: for *will a man rob God?* Your receivings from him are rich and constant; grudge him not these poor returns in their season.

2. Have you no regard to the Lord Jesus who redeemed you, and who gave his life a ransom for many? The New-Testament sabbath, being observed on the first day of the week, is without doubt designed particularly for the honour of Christ, and to be celebrated as an abiding memorial of his resurrection from the dead, by which he was declared to be the Son of God with power, and our accepted surety; for, as by dying he paid our debt, for he was delivered for our offences, so by his resurrection he took our acquittance, for he was raised again for our justification, Rom. iv. 25. The advancement of that despised stone to be the head of the corner, was that which made this day remarkable, (Ps. cxviii. 22, 24.) and they who despise this dignified, distinguished day, do in effect still trample upon that exalted stone. It is for the Redeemer's sake that it is called, *The Lord's day*, an honourable title, and we ought to call it so, that we may show we look upon it as *holy of the Lord and honourable*, and may so honour it. It bears Christ's image, and his superscription; we ought, therefore, to render to him the things that are his.

You are called Christians; you profess relation to the blessed Jesus; you are baptized into his name, and wear his livery, and you say you hope to be saved by him; you are enrolled among his followers, and you have in his house, and within his walls, a place and a name; and can you find in your hearts, so treacherously, and so very disingenuously, to alienate from him any part of that time which he claims a special property in? Shall he to whom you owe your all, be defrauded of that little which he demands from you? You name Christ's name, you do well; but you contradict yourselves, and will be found liars and dissemblers, if you dare to profane his day, and grudge to spend it in his service to his praise.

Let me beg of you seriously to consider how much you are indebted to the Redeemer; from what a bondage, to what a liberty, and at what an expense, you were redeemed; think what were the kind intentions of the Redeemer's love, and what the blessed fruits of his undertaking; and you will see that you owe him even your ownselves, all you are, all you

have, all you can do, all little enough, and too little; and will you then grudge him the whole of his own day, which is instituted in remembrance of that blessed work, for which we are so much indebted, and should be ever studying what we shall render?

As the Old-Testament sabbath was appointed to be a solemn memorial, not so much of the work of creation itself, as of the finishing of it; so the Christian sabbath was appointed, to preserve in remembrance Christ's resurrection, which gave the finishing stroke to his undertaking on earth. Now consider, if he had not finished his undertaking, what had become of us; if he had left it, no other could have taken it up; if he that laid the foundation-stone, as the author of our faith, had not brought forth the top-stone, as the finisher of it, we had been undone, for ever undone. Unworthy therefore, for ever unworthy, art thou of an interest in and benefit by this undertaking, if really thou make so light a matter as thou seemest to do of that weekly solemnity in which the remembrance of it is celebrated, not only for the advancing of the Redeemer's honour, but for the advancing of the Redeemer's designs and interests.

Let me therefore with all earnestness beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, if you have any regard to the sweet and blessed name of Jesus, into which you were baptized; that name which is above every name, and which is as ointment poured forth; that name which is your strong tower, and your best plea for the best blessings; have a conscientious regard to that day which bears his name. As ever you hope to see the face of Christ with comfort, and expect he shall stand your friend, in the day of your extremity, testify your veneration for him now, by a veneration for his day, and dare not to break in upon that sacred rest, which is instituted to his honour, nor trifle away any of those precious hours, which he expects and requires should be employed in his service.

Shall we think one day in seven too much, when eternity itself will be too little, to be spent in the joyful contemplations, and thankful praises, of the height and depth, the length and breadth, of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge? Do the holy angels attend the Redeemer with their constant adorations, and praise him without intermission? and shall we who are more immediately interested in, and benefited by, his undertaking, convert to other purposes any of those few hours of the week which are consecrated to his praise? Is our Lord Jesus continually appearing in heaven for us, always mindful of our concerns there, and shall we make thus light of his glory, and care so little to appear before him, and before the world, for him? Might but the love of Christ command us, and that love constrain us, surely we should love the Lord's day, for his sake whose day it is, would bid it welcome, and call it a delight.

3. Have you no regard to the blessed Spirit of grace, into whose name also you were baptized, and in honour of whom the Christian sabbath is celebrated? The first day of the week was observed by the disciples as a day of solemn meeting, from the very day that Christ rose, for we find them together again that day seven-night, probably by his appointment, John xx. 26. The day of Pentecost that year fell on the first day of the week, and on that day they were together in a solemn meeting, all with one accord in one place, when the Spirit descended upon them, Acts ii. 1, &c.

Now the pouring out of the Spirit was the great promise of the New Testament, as the incarnation of Christ was of the Old Testament, and was a gift to the church no less necessary and valuable than the resurrection of Christ. He rose to carry on the good work in us, without which we could have no benefit by his mediation. The influences and operations of the Spirit are as necessary to our salvation, as the satisfaction and intercession of the Son. When Christ rose he retired to heaven, to receive his kingdom and to prepare ours; but when he sent the Spirit, he did in effect return to his church on earth; for thus the want of his bodily presence was supplied, abundantly to the advantage of his disciples. It was expedient for us that he should go away, that he might send the Comforter, John xvi. 7.

To the descent of the Spirit we owe those gifts of tongues, which spread the gospel to distant nations, and to ours among the rest; and those inspired writings which propagated the gospel to after ages, and will perpetuate it to the end of time. Without this the earth, even within the church's pale, had been still a wilderness and a barren land; for it is only the pouring out of the Spirit upon us from on high, that turns the wilderness into a fruitful field, Isa. xxxii. 15. To the gift of the Holy Ghost is owing the conviction of conscience, the regeneration of the soul, its progress and advances in holiness, and all those consolations of God, which are our songs in the house of our pilgrimage: had not the Spirit been given to apply the redemption, we had never been the better for Christ's purchase of it.

Now it is in remembrance of these gifts given to men, after the Redeemer was ascended on high, that we celebrate the Lord's day; and therefore, to the right sanctification of it, it is necessary that we be in the Spirit, (Rev. i. 10.) that is, that we compose ourselves into a spiritual frame, and submit ourselves to the Spirit's workings. The greatest honour we can do to the Spirit, is to walk after the Spirit. We then give glory to the Holy Ghost, when we diligently attend to that word, which was given by his inspiration, and lay our souls under the commanding power and influence of it; when we pray in the

Holy Ghost, under the conduct of the spirit of adoption, teaching us to cry, Abba, Father; and when we carefully hearken to the checks, and follow the dictates, of a well-informed conscience. Thus the sabbath must be sanctified to the praise of the Blessed Spirit.

And is it nothing to you who profane the Lord's day, that thereby you reflect dishonour upon the Eternal Spirit, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, and who with the Father and the Son, together is and ought to be worshipped and glorified on the Lord's day? You struggle against him who is given to strive with you for your good; you check your Monitor, you resist your Sanctifier, and grieve your Comforter.

Do you not indeed think it worth your while to spend so many hours every week, as the working part of the Lord's day amounts to, in the joyful, thankful commemoration of so great a blessing bestowed upon the church, which still remains a real benefit to all its ministers, and to all its members, and is the quickening root of all their fruitfulness and flourishing?

It was on the first day of the first week of time, that the Blessed Spirit moved upon the face of the waters to produce a world, a world of beauty and plenty, out of confusion and emptiness; and it was upon the first day of another week, that he descended on the apostles, and inspired them to produce a church; justly, therefore, is the first day of the week consecrated to the honour of that divine person, to whom we owe both our being, and our new-being, in order to our well-being. Profane not then that which is thus sanctified, to the praise of the great Sanctifier. How can you expect the comfort of his sacred influences, if thus you violate and break in upon his sacred interests? Our Saviour speaks of an affront put upon the Holy Ghost as more criminal, more dangerous, and of more fatal consequence to the sinner, than an affront put upon the Lord Jesus himself, Matt. xii. 31, 32. Not as if every sin against the Holy Ghost contracted the indelible stain of an unpardonable sin, God forbid! but it is intimated that there is a peculiar malignity and provocation in those sins, which put a slight upon the Blessed Spirit, as this certainly does, which not only profanes the time which is sacred to his honour, but neglects the opportunity of receiving his promised gifts, in the way of instituted ordinances.

If there be, therefore, any fellowship of the Spirit, value it, improve it, be not strangers to it. As ever you look for any comfort from the Holy Ghost, living or dying, here or hereafter, call it not a task, and a burthen, and a weariness, to separate yourselves from the world one day in a week, to an attendance upon the Spirit, that you may give honour to him, and may receive grace and comfort from him; but rejoice in those stated opportunities, not only of professing, but of improving, your faith in the Holy Ghost.

You see (brethren) how great and honourable, how holy and reverend, these names are by which we plead with you, and beseech you not to profane the Lord's day. I am willing to hope, that in what you do, you intend not an affront to the eternal God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; you still honour God with your lips, and call yourselves by his name; but whether you intend it so or no, you see it is with good reason so interpreted. Every contempt of the day of the Lord is, if not designedly, yet constructively, a contempt of him who is the Lord of the day; and so he will resent it, and reckon for it, for in the matters of his worship the Lord whose name is *Jealous is a jealous God.* I beseech you, therefore, (brethren,) for the sake of the blessed God, whose you are, and whom you are bound to serve, and to whom you are accountable, if you have any respect to the honour of his name, and the interests of his kingdom, and desire of his favour and grace, or any dread of his wrath and curse, *Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy, for it is the sabbath of the Lord your God.* Do not alienate to the world and the flesh any of those precious minutes, which he challenges a special property in; but by a double care and diligence for the future, endeavour to make restitution of those which by your neglects hitherto you have embezzled. God fills up your time with mercy, look upon yourselves, therefore, as bound in gratitude to fill up his time with duty; so shall God have the praise, and you the comfort.

II. In profaning the Lord's day, you sin against your own souls, and throw away that good and benefit, which is designed both to others and to yourselves by the institution of it. Our Saviour has told us that *the sabbath was made for man*, and it is reckoned among the favours God showed to his Israel, that he made known unto them his holy sabbath, Neh. ix. 14. And if the Old-Testament sabbath was so great a privilege, much more is our Christian sabbath so, for the New Testament begins with a proclamation of good-will toward men. If the ministration of death was glorious, much more the ministration of the Spirit. We solicit you for your own good, and beg of you to consider for what ends the Lord's day was appointed in your favours, and if you will but consult yourselves, and the comfort of your own souls, you will study to comply with the intentions of it; if thou be wise herein, thou shalt be wise for thyself.

1. The Lord's day was appointed for the benefit of the church and Christian societies. It was wisely designed, that by the religious observance of that day, and a visible difference made between it and other days, a face of religion and godliness might be kept up, and a profession of Christianity maintained, published, and propagated. This is the show

of that substance; and though the show without the substance, the form of godliness without the power of it, will not avail particular persons that rest in it; yet, it is for the advantage of the church in general, and helps to support it in the world.

It would have been hard for all Christian churches, by a common consent among themselves only, to have agreed upon such a badge and token of the communion of saints, as the solemnizing of the Lord's day is; and therefore the wisdom of the church's head and lawgiver has appointed it. Thus still the sabbath is a sign, a distinguishing sign, as it was to Israel of old, Exod. xxxi. 13. In the primitive times, when a Christian was examined by the heathen judges, *Hast thou kept the Lord's day?* His answer was, *I am a Christian;* intimating, that being a Christian he durst not do otherwise. By this might all men know who were Christ's disciples; it was one of the badges of their profession; so that in sanctifying the Lord's day, we testify our relation to, and concurrence with, all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours. Since all Christians cannot possibly meet in one and the same place, by meeting thus on one and the same day, and that the Lord's day, they testify their communion with each other in faith, hope, and love, and that though they are many, yet they are one. Those, therefore, who violate and profane the Lord's day, do as much as lies in them to thwart and defeat this intention.

I beseech you consider it seriously, you are baptized into the great body, and by virtue of that you are called Christians, and it is your honour; but unworthy, for ever unworthy, are you of that honour, while you manifestly do disservice to the Christian name and cause, stain the beauty of its profession, stop the progress of its interest, and endanger the cutting off of the entail of it, by putting the Lord's day upon a level with other days, and in effect, trampling upon it as a common thing: hereby you pluck up some of the best ranges of the church's pale, and lay all in common. Take away the conscience of sabbath sanctification, and you open a gap, at which all religion quickly runs out, and an inundation of wickedness breaks in of course; they who make no difference between God's day and other days, will not long make any difference between God's name and other names, and between God's book and other books. If sabbaths be generally neglected, Bibles, and ministers, and other institutions, will not be duly prized; and if these hedges of religion be broken down, religion itself will soon become an easy prey to the boar of the wood, and the wild beast of the forest.

And is it nothing to you whether the Lord Jesus has a church in the world or no? and whether his religion has a place and an interest among men or no? Are you indeed in confederacy with those who have said, "Come and let us cut off the Christian religion, that the name of it may be no more in remembrance," Ps. lxxxiii. 3, 4. Certainly, if all should make as light of the Lord's day as you do, it would come to this in a little time; the light of the gospel would be put out, its coal would be quenched, and there would remain to it neither root nor branch. If these outworks be betrayed to the enemy, the main forts cannot long be maintained; but the gates of hell will prevail against the church.

Let me, therefore, beg of you for the church's sake, as you value its being and welfare, its continuance and prosperity in the world, if you have any regard to its bleeding cause, to its dying interests, and would help to revive it, do what you can to support the honour of the Lord's day. Let not Sion's friends deal treacherously with her, nor betray her to those who seek her ruin; let them not join with her enemies in mocking at her sabbaths; for if those fall into contempt, and the sanctification of them be disused, she soon sits solitary, becomes as a widow, and all her beauty is departed from her. I refer to those complaints, Lam. i. 1, 2, 6, 7. You would willingly see the good of Jerusalem, and religion in a flourishing state; help then to maintain the honour of God's sabbaths, and thereby show before the churches your professed subjection to the gospel of Christ.

2. The Lord's day was appointed for the weaning of us from this present world, and the taking off of our affections from the things of it, by giving a stop and pause once a week to our secular pursuits; and we lose this benefit of it if we neglect it, and violate the appointed rest of that day. It is certain that much of the power of godliness lies in our living above the world, and being dead to it; those are Christians indeed who look upon the things that are seen with a holy indifference and contempt, as those who know their felicity and portion lie in the things that are not seen.

But it would be very hard, and even impossible, to attain to this heavenly mind, if we were to be constantly in the crowd and hurry of worldly employments and recreations, and in an uninterrupted converse with the things of sense and time: if every day were to be entirely for the world, without any intermission, every thought and intent of the heart will be for it too, and the whole soul will be plunged and lost in it.

And, therefore, he who knows our frame, and that we are, in mind as well as body, dust, apt to move toward the dust of this earth, and to mingle with it he who knows where we dwell, even where Satan's seat is, the prince of this world, (Rev. ii. 13.) has wisely and graciously appointed us some rest from our worldly pursuits. His providence has appointed us the natural rest of every evening, which calls us in from our work and labour, and gives us some ad

vantageous minutes (if we have but wisdom to improve them) for retirement into ourselves; and reflection upon ourselves, for communing with our own hearts, and meditating on God and his word. But this is not all; his grace has also provided for us the instituted rest of every sabbath, which gives us a longer breathing time; that while our hands rest from the business of the world, our minds may rest from the cares of it, and so we may be saved from the inordinate love of it.

Six days thou shalt labour and do all thy work, all that work that must be done for the body thou carriest about with thee, that that may be supported, and for the world thou livest in, that thou mayst pass comfortably through it; but thou must shortly put off this body, and bid adieu to this world; and therefore, one day in seven thou shalt rest from this work and labour, and lay it aside, that thou mayst recall thy thoughts and affections from the world and the body; and so learn to sit loose to them, and by these frequent acts confirm the habit of heavenly-mindedness. By our weekly retirements from the world, it will be made the more easy to us always to live above the world, as those who are strangers and sojourners in it.

And do you not find (sirs) that there is need of such pauses, such parentheses, as these? Do you not find the world encroaching upon you, and gaining ground in your hearts? Do you not experience the insinuating nature of these present things, even of care and toil about them, which are strangely bewitching; and that by constant converse with the things of the earth, we grow in love with them and become earthy? And will you not then take the advantage which this institution gives you, to recover the ground you lose all the week, by a total cessation of worldly business on the Lord's day? By a close application of yourselves to the proper business and pleasure of the Lord's day, you will find yourselves so well employed, and so well entertained by your religion, that you will look with a holy contempt upon the employments and entertainments of the world.

Let me add under this head, that your accustoming of yourselves to a strict retirement from the world on the Lord's day, will make your final removal out of it at death more easy and less formidable. Brethren, you are dying, your souls are continually in your hands; death will shortly seal up your hands, it will cut off all your purposes, and put a full stop to all your pursuits; yet a little while, and the place that knows you will know you no more; yet a little while, and you must bid an eternal farewell to your houses and lands, your farms and merchandise, and this will be a hard task, if you never knew what it was to intermit these cares and pleasures. If you will not think it worth your while to leave them at the bottom of the hill, while you go up to worship, with a purpose to return to them again, as Abraham, (Gen. xxii. 5.) what a difficulty will it be to you to leave them, not to return to them again! You cannot find in your hearts to keep from your shops or sports, to lay aside your worldly business and diversions, one day in seven; how then will you persuade yourselves willingly to quit all at death? which yet you must do, whether you will or no. We must forsake these things shortly; to prepare us for which, it is good for us, at least as often as God hath appointed us, to forget them now, and lay aside the thoughts of them. If we would make a virtue of the necessity we shall be under of leaving the world when we die, let us make a necessity of the virtue of retiring from the world, and putting off the care and business of it, every Lord's day.

3. The Lord's day was appointed for our communion and fellowship with God, with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, by the Spirit, and we are enemies to ourselves, if we neglect to improve it for this purpose; we are on that day not only called off from the world, but called up into the *holiest*, into which, by the blood of Jesus, we have access with humble boldness. We are invited from on high, *Come up hither*, to the highest degrees of comfort and honour that man on earth is capable of, and will you choose to tarry below, to converse with earthly things, when you are invited to a conversation with things heavenly and divine? How much soever this may seem a paradox to those who are strangers to the life of God, and to the power of godliness, all who are serious and devout know what it is.

This is a day in which we are with all humility to make visits to God, and with all reverence and observance to receive visits from him; to hear what he speaks to us out of his word, and to speak to him by prayer. This is the proper conversation of that day, for this it was instituted and intended; and, therefore, to spend it in idle visits, and in impertinent talk, either foolish in itself, and which would be culpable any day, or, at least, in that which is foreign to the business of this day, is to put a great slight upon God Almighty, and upon the provision he has made for our communion with him. It is as if a prince, or some great or wise man, should invite you into his company, offer to entertain you with the most pleasant and edifying discourse, and appoint a time and place for the interview, and you should leave him, and turn your back upon him, to go and talk with some idle beggar or buffoon at the door. Would not this justly be construed an intolerable affront? Would you not blush to think that you should ever be guilty of such a piece of rudeness? Would you not expect to be forbidden the house and presence of the person you had thus slighted? Yet you do ten thousand times worse than this, when you trifle away that day in common conversation and business, which God has appointed you to spend in

communion with himself, according as your opportunities are.

The whole life of a Christian ought to be a life of communion with God; our eyes must be ever toward the Lord, we must walk with him, and set him always before us, and in all our ways we must acknowledge him. Now, in order to the keeping up of this habitual regard to God, wherein consists so much of the power of godliness, it is requisite that we be frequent and constant at stated times in the solemn acts of devotion. We contract an acquaintance with our friends, and an affection for them, by being often in their company, interchanging knowledge and love: thus our acquaintance with God is cultivated by religious worship, and without that it withers and dies, and comes to nothing. The divine life is supported and maintained by the receiving and digesting of the bread of life, and no otherwise.

Communion with God is in short this: it is to admit into our minds the discoveries God has been pleased to make of himself, and of his will and grace, and to dwell upon them in our thoughts, and to make returns of agreeable affections and motions of soul suited to those discoveries. It is to delight ourselves in the pleasing contemplation of the beauty, bounty, and benignity of our God, and to employ ourselves in the pious exercises of faith, love, and resignation to him, and in the joyful praises of his name.

And is one day in seven too much to be spent in such work as this? Or shall we break in upon the bounds which the divine law has set about that mountain, on which God has promised to come down, —and lay it in common with the wilderness? Should we not rather wish that every day were a sabbath day, and that we might always dwell in God's house, with them who are there still praising him?

If we did indeed love God, as we ought, with all our heart and soul, we would not say, when we have been attending upon him two or three hours in public worship, now we have sure done enough for this day, when we are invited, encouraged, and appointed still to continue our communion with him, still to feast upon his holy word, and repeat our addresses at the throne of his grace in our closets and families. Would we be so soon weary of an intimate conversation with a friend we love and take pleasure in? No, with such a friend we contrive how to prolong the time of conversation, and when the hours of sitting together are expired, we stand together, and, as those who are loth to part, bid often farewell, and we add to this a walk together for further discourses. *Is this thy kindness to thy friend*, and wilt thou say of communion with thy God, *Behold what a weariness is it?* and contrive excuses to contract it, to break it off, or cut it short?

Reading the Holy Bible and other good books, repetition, catechising, singing psalms, praying, praising, profitable discourse; these are the exercises which, if they meet with a heart piously and devoutly affected toward God, will furnish us with such a pleasing variety of good works, to fill up those hours of the Lord's day which are not spent in public worship, or in works of necessity and mercy, and will turn so much to our advantage, that we shall complain of nothing so much as the speedy returns of the sabbath evening, and the shadows thereof. Did we call the sabbath a delight, as we ought, and the work of it a pleasure; we would be ready to say, *Sun, stand thou still upon this Gibeon;* let the day be prolonged, and the minutes of it doubled, for *it is good to be here*, here let us *make tabernacles:* or rather let us endeavour, by the grace of God, to do a double work in a single day, and long to be there where we shall spend an everlasting sabbath in communion with God, a sabbath that will have no night at the end of it, nor any week-day to come after it.

You who trifle away sabbath time, I beseech you consider this seriously; *Seemeth it a small thing to you, that the God of Israel* has *separated you to bring you near to himself?* That he has not only admitted you into covenant, but invited you into communion with himself? And is this a favour that must go a begging with you, and that after all the court it makes to you, you will not be persuaded to accept of? And shall the conversation of a vain companion in an ale-house or tavern, the entertainments of a coffee-house, or an idle walk into the fields, be preferred before the honour and pleasure of communion with God in Christ? And will you indeed choose these broken cisterns rather than the fountain of living waters; these lying vanities rather than your own mercies? God in mercy open your eyes and show you your folly! Would David rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness? and will you rather be door-keepers, slaves, and drudges, in the tents of wickedness, than dwell in liberty, ease, and honour in the house of your God?

O that I could now prevail with you to look upon it as your main business on the Lord's day, from the beginning to the end of the day, to converse with God, and to mind it accordingly. If God will condescend to meet with you in your secret, as well as public, addresses to him, and has appointed you a set time for them, be not you so rude to him, and so unjust to yourselves, as to neglect them, or make but a short and slighting business of them.

4. The Lord's day was appointed for our further ance and increase in holiness, and the carrying o of the work of sanctification in us; in the due per formance of the work of the Lord's day, and the du observance of its rest. In order thereunto there i not only the pleasure of maintaining communio

with God, but the real benefit of increasing our conformity to him. This profit we shall have, if we pray to him, and keep his ordinances; while thus we behold the glory of the Lord, we are through grace changed into the same image. By worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness, we come to be partakers of his holiness, and so the beauty of the Lord our God is upon us. And is it not worth while to oblige ourselves to the strictest and most careful observance of the Lord's day, in prospect of those advantages by it?

The sabbath day is a market day, a harvest day for the soul; it is an opportunity,—it is time fitted for the doing of that which cannot be done at all, or not so well done, at another time: now, if this day be suffered to run waste, and other business minded than that which is the proper work of the day, our souls cannot but be miserably impoverished and neglected, and the vineyards, we are made keepers of, cannot but be like the field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the man void of understanding. While you make no conscience of keeping the sabbath day, and improving the precious minutes of it, no wonder that you are ignorant in the things of God, fools, or at least but babes in knowledge, for that is the time of getting understanding; no wonder that your lusts and corruptions are so strong as they are, and you so unable to resist Satan's temptations, your graces so weak, and you so unready to every good word and work; for when you should be furnishing yourselves with what is needful for the support of your spiritual life, and the carrying on of your spiritual warfare, you are doing something else, that is not only foreign and impertinent, but prejudicial and inconsistent.

Solomon has long since pronounced it, not only as the sentence of a wise king, but of a righteous God, that he who sleeps or plays in harvest, is a *son that causeth shame*, and when he *begs in winter, he shall have nothing*. This is your character, and this, if you do not repent and amend your doings, will be your case. If at last you perish eternally, under the power of a vain and carnal mind, and go down to hell in impenitence and unbelief, your contempt and profanation of the Lord's day will greatly aggravate your condemnation; because your due improvement of that sacred day would have been a means to prevent your coming to that place of torment, without a messenger sent to you from the dead.

Sirs, it is better to think of this now, when lost sabbaths may be redeemed by an after care and diligence, than remember it in the bottomless pit, when the reflection upon it will but pour oil into the flames, and it will be too late to retrieve the precious hours that you are now so prodigal of. O what a cutting, what a killing, remembrance will it be hereafter, to think, if I had spent that time on the Lord's day in reading and meditation, in prayer and praise, and the study of the Scriptures, and other religious exercises, public, private, and secret, which I spent in tippling, or sporting, or working at my calling, or in idle or unprofitable conversation, I might have got that knowledge and grace, and kept up that communion with God, which would not only have prevented my misery in this land of darkness, but would have prepared me for the inheritance of the saints in light! If I had been as eager to get wisdom, as I was to get wealth, and as solicitous and industrious to please God, as I was to gratify my own sensual appetite, and to recommend myself to a vain world, I might have been eternally happy, and equal to the angels of light, who am now likely to be for ever miserable, a companion with devils, and a sharer with them in their endless pains and horrors.

Then, O then, thou wouldst give a thousand worlds, if thou hadst them, for one of those days of the Son of man thou art now so prodigal of. But the impassable gulph between thee and that grace which is now offered thee, will then be immovably fixed, the bridge of mercy will then be drawn, and the door of hope will be shut for ever. Sabbaths cannot then be recalled, nor will the offers of life be made thee any more; now God calls and thou wilt not hear, then thou shalt call and he will not hear. Thou art now called once a week to rest; to rest from the world, and rest in God; but thou callest even this rest a weariness, and snuffest at it; justly, therefore, will he swear in his wrath, that thou shalt never enter into that rest of which this is a type, and if thou be shut out from it, thy condition will be for ever restless. Surely thy heart is desperately hardened, if this consideration make no impression on thee.

5. The Lord's day was appointed to be an earnest and sign of our everlasting rest; the rest that remains for the people of God. It is intended to remind us of heaven, to fit us for heaven, and to give some comfortable pledges and foretastes of the joys and glories of that blessed state, to all those who have their conversation in heaven, and their affections set upon things above. These are the days of heaven, and if heaven be an everlasting sabbath, surely sabbaths are a heaven upon earth, in them the *tabernacle of God is with men*.

And have you no value for eternal life, (sirs,) no concern about it? Is heaven nothing to you, or not worth the thinking of? Do you indeed despise the pleasant land, and prefer Egypt's garlic and onions before Canaan's milk and honey, and a mess of pottage before such a birthright and the privileges of it? Your profanation and contempt of the Lord's day plainly says that you do so, and according to your choice you shall have your lot, *so shall your doom be*.

You say you hope to be saved; but what ground have you for those hopes, while you plainly show that you neglect this great salvation, by your neglect to commemorate Christ's resurrection, by which it was wrought out, and your neglect to improve the means of grace, by which you are prepared for it? If you had indeed any good hope of eternal life, you would not think much to spend one day in seven, in the joyful contemplation of it, and in getting yourselves ready for it.

You say you hope to go to heaven; but what pleasure can you take in the expectations of an everlasting sabbath, and of the employments and enjoyments of that world, when you are so soon weary of these short sabbaths, which are types of that, and are ready to say, *When will they be gone?* What pleasure can it be to you to be for ever with the Lord, to whom it is a pain and a penance to be an hour or two with him now? What happiness will it be to you to dwell in his house, and to be still praising him in heaven, who, by your good-will, would be never praising him on earth, but grudge the few minutes that are so employed? Heaven will not be heaven to a sabbath-breaker, for there is no idle company, no vain sports, no foolish mirth or unprofitable chat, there; and these are his delights now, which he prefers before that communion with God, which is both the work and bliss of that world. All who shall go to heaven hereafter, begin their heaven now; as in other things, so, particularly, in their cheerful conscientious observance of the Lord's day.

And now lay all this together, and then tell me if there be not a great deal of reason why you should keep holy the sabbath day, *call it a delight, holy of the Lord,* and therefore truly honourable, and why you should therefore honour and sanctify him on that day; not doing your own ways but his; not finding your own pleasure, but aiming to please God; not speaking your own words as on other days, but speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Isa. lviii. 13.

Can the entanglements of custom, company, carnal pleasure, or worldly profit, be more powerful with you than all those sacred cords and bonds? Can the pleasing of a customer, the obliging of a friend, much less the gratifying of a base lust, balance the displeasing of God, the dishonouring of Christ, and the wronging of your own souls? I beseech you to consider it seriously, and be wise for yourselves.

After these considerations which I have urged, surely I need not insist upon any other. I am confident, the reigning love of God in your hearts, and a deep and serious concern about your precious souls and their eternal welfare, will furnish you with considerations sufficient to oblige you to as much strictness and care in the sanctification of the Lord's day, as the word of God requires, and as is necessary to answer the intentions of the institution: and more than this we do not insist on. Think much of that of the Pharisees, which though blasphemously misapplied to the Saviour, was grounded upon a great truth; *This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day,* John ix. 16.

Will it be to any purpose to suggest this further consideration to you; That the way to prosper in your affairs all the week, and to have the blessing of God upon you in them, is to make conscience of the Lord's day? That truly great and good man, the Lord Chief Justice Hale, writes very solemnly to his children; "I have found by a strict and diligent observation, that a due observance of the duties of the Lord's day hath ever had joined to it a blessing upon the rest of my time, and the week that hath been so begun hath been blessed and prosperous to me; and on the other side, when I have been negligent of the duties of this day, the rest of the week hath been unsuccessful and unhappy to my own secular employments the week following. This I write, (saith he,) not lightly or inconsiderately, but upon long and sound observation and experience."*

Shall I remind you how much it will be for your credit with all wise and good people? Those who honour God he will honour. Shall I tell you with what comfort you may lie down at night in the close of a sabbath, after you have carefully done the work of the day in its day? Yea, thou *shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.* Especially, think how sweet and easy your reflections upon well spent sabbaths will be when you come to die, and with what pleasure you will then look forward upon the everlasting sabbath you hope to keep within the veil.

Wonder not that I am thus earnest with you in this matter; I see how much depends upon it, and I persuade as one who desires and hopes to prevail with you; let me not be disappointed, as you value the glory of your Creator, the honour of your Redeemer, and your own comfort and happiness in both worlds. I beseech you, *Remember the sabbath day,* the Christian sabbath, *to keep it holy.* Most certainly true that saying is, which I have somewhere met with; *That the stream of all religion runs either deep or shallow, according as the banks of the sabbath are kept up or neglected.*

* Lord Hale's Contemplations, vol. I. p 323.

A CHECK

TO AN

UNGOVERNED TONGUE.

The criminal we are now dealing with, is pronounced by an inspired writer, *An unruly evil, full of deadly poison*, (James iii. 8.) and, which is a very great discouragement to any attempt for the reformation of it, it is there said, *That the tongue can no man tame:* not that it is impossible for men to govern their own tongues, but it is extremely difficult, and next to impossible, to reclaim and reform the extravagances of other people's tongues. And yet, though no man can tame this unruly evil, doubtless, the almighty grace of God can. With *men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible;* even this. And that grace, though not tied to any methods in its operations, yet, ordinarily, makes use of the endeavours of men, as means to accomplish and effect its purposes.

Against this Goliah, therefore, we go forth to battle, though armed only with a sling and a stone, in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom it hath defied; leaving the success of the attempt to him who made man's mouth, and is alone able to new-make it, as he certainly does, wherever he gives a new heart.

And we will first mention particularly the most common and daring extravagances of an ungoverned tongue, and severally show the evil of them; designing and endeavouring thereby to confirm the innocent, and, especially, to reform the guilty: and then we will, in some general directions, offer something toward the cure of these epidemical diseases. And God grant that this labour may not be altogether in vain!

I. Profane swearing is one of the common transgressions, or rebellions rather, of an ungoverned, ill-governed tongue. A sin so common, that in most places it is become the vulgar dialect of all sorts of persons, with whose poisonous breath the air itself seems to be infected; and yet a sin so exceeding sinful, that the tongue is therein set against the heavens, (Ps. lxxiii. 9.) insults over and tramples upon that which is most sacred and honourable.

The malignity of this sin lies especially in the prostituting of that solemn appeal, which by an oath is made, to God's knowledge and justice, to the most impertinent and trivial purposes. Devout and religious swearing, when we are duly called to be sworn, is an ordinance of God, whereby we give unto him the glory due unto his name, as an omniscient, true, and righteous God. Profane swearing is a scornful and insolent contempt of that ordinance, treading it under foot, as a common thing, and thereby doing despite to him, for whose honour it is intended. It is a sacrilegious alienating of those forms of speech which are consecrated to the glory of God, and turning them to a profane and wicked use; like Belshazzar's polluting the vessels of the temple, by gracing his drunken revels with them, which filled the measure of his iniquity. It is trifling and jesting with that, which in its own nature is awful and reverend, and which ought at all times to be treated and attended to with the greatest seriousness.

Some accustom themselves wholly to this language of hell; all their discourse is corrupted by it. They cannot talk with you about business, nor tell you a story, nor give you an answer to the most common question, but almost every other word must be an oath. It is so familiar to them, that it passes altogether unregarded; charge them with it, and they will tell you in the next breath, they do not know that they swore.

Others, with whom it is not altogether so common, yet think it no harm now and then, when they are in a passion, or speak earnestly, or when they are in company with those to whom they know it is agreeable, to "rap out an oath," (as they call it,) and perhaps, to multiply oaths; and by these frequent acts, at length they contract a habit, and become as bad as the worst. It may be, some swear under pretence of gaining credit, nobody will believe them unless they swear what they say; and I know no wise man will believe them the sooner for it; for he that can dispense with the sin of profane swearing, which he gets nothing by, I fear will not boggle much at the sin of wilful lying; especially, when any thing is to be got by it. Others swear under pretence of striking an awe upon their inferiors, nobody will fear them unless they swear at them; that is, they would rather be dreaded and shunned, as roaring lions and ranging bears, than respected and honoured as wise, sober, and religious men, who make conscience of what they say and do, even when they are ever so much provoked.

And there are many who are such hearty well-wishers to this sin, that though they have not yet learned to swear distinctly, and in plain English, for fear of the censure, either of the law, or of their friends, or of their own consciences, yet they venture to lisp this language, and have the Sibboleth of an oath, upon every occasion, at their tongue's end. Though it be not swearing at large, and in express terms, it is the abridgment of it; it is swearing in short-hand. They have learnt to contract wicked words, and to disguise them by half words, which, as they have the resemblance of profane swearing, take rise from it, and border upon it; are bad words, and at the best, are idle words, for which they must give account in the judgment; and being more than yea, yea, and nay, nay, more than bare affirmations

and negations, they come of evil, Mat. v. 37. No wise man will say he knows not what, or that which has no sense at all; and no good man will say that which he knows has the appearance of evil, and borders upon a bad sense.

And now, O that this paper might seasonably fall into the hands of the swearer, the common swearer, and the more cautious one, and might (by the blessing of God) be an effectual and happy means to convince and reform both the one and the other, before the flying roll which carries the curse (which we read of as the swearer's doom, Zech. v. 3, 4.) come into their houses, or, which is worse, into their souls, to consume them: that is a roll which cannot be slighted and thrown by, as I suppose this paper will.

You ask sometimes what evil there is in swearing? Why so much ado should be made about a common form of speech, and a man made an offender for a word? You plead, that it hurts nobody, words are but wind.

But you will not say so, if you can but be persuaded seriously to weigh the following considerations, and to fix them in your minds:

1. Consider what an enmity there is, in profane swearing, to the Blessed God, and what an indignity is done by it to his glorious and fearful name. Would it not be justly interpreted a very high affront to a magistrate, though a man like yourselves, if you should send for him in all haste, to keep the peace, to decide a controversy, to seize a criminal, or to do any act of his office; and when he comes, it is all ludicrous, and a jest, and you intend nothing but to make a fool of him, and to expose him and his authority to contempt and ridicule? How would such an intolerable abuse be resented among men, especially if it were often repeated! Yet just such an affront, a daring affront, does the insolent swearer put upon God Almighty; making his truth, justice, and omniscience to attend all the extravagances of an ungoverned passion and an unbridled tongue. And the affront is so much the worse, because it reflects upon his government, profanes his crown, disgraces the throne of his glory, vilifies his judgment-seat, and attempts to make it mean and contemptible, and thereby to render it questionable.

And is there no harm in this? Whence can this proceed but from that carnal mind which is enmity against God, and from a rooted antipathy to him, and to his dominion? To this poisonous fountain the Psalmist traces all these bitter streams, (Ps. cxxxix. 20.) *Thine enemies take thy name in vain.* It cannot be imputed either to the lusts of the flesh, or the lusts of the eye, or the pride of life; this is a forbidden fruit that neither is good for food nor pleasant to the eye, nor at all to be desired to make one wise, or bespeak one so; the sinner is not led to it by the love of pleasure, or the hope of any gain or reward; it can, therefore, proceed from nothing else but a spirit of contradiction to God Almighty, a contempt of his honour, and a hatred of his government. This sin, as much as any other, seems to have taken occasion from the commandment, and to have put forth itself purposely in defiance of the divine law; so that it may be questioned whether there would have been such a sin as profane swearing, if it had not been prohibited by the third commandment. Now this renders the sin exceeding sinful, and adds rebellion to it; and the swearer being a transgressor without cause, (as the Psalmist speaks, Ps. xxv. 3.) is a sinner without excuse, and sins purely for sinning sake.

This is excellently expressed by our divine poet, Mr. Herbert:

Take not his name, who made thy mouth, in vain,
It gets thee nothing, and hath no excuse:
Lust and wine plead a pleasure, avarice gain,
But the cheap swearer, through his open sluice
Lets his soul run for nought, as little fearing:
Were I an epicure, I could hate swearing.

And thinkest thou this, O man, whoever thou art that thus affrontest the majesty, ridiculest the government, and defiest the judgment, of the eternal God, that thou shalt go unpunished? *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* He is jealous for the honour of his own name, and will not see it trampled upon and made a by-word, as it is by every profane swearer. You would resent it, if your names should thus be turned into a proverb, and jested with by every idle fellow; and what then will God do for his great name, which is thus abused? Shall he not visit for these things? Shall not his soul be avenged on such sinners as these? Yes, no doubt, when the day of recompence comes; for, he has said, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay. Nemo me impune lacessit —No one provokes me with impunity.*

2. Consider what an evidence it is against yourselves, that you have no fear of God before your eyes. Though you should indeed neither fear God nor regard man, yet why should you hang out a sign to give notice of this to every one who passes by? What need you declare your sin as Sodom, and thus publicly proclaim the devil king in your souls? Is it not enough, that you harbour in your hearts a secret enmity to God and godliness, but dare you thus avow the quarrel, and openly wage war with heaven? Dare you thus bid defiance to all that is sacred, and wear the livery of Satan's family? Is it not enough that your hearts are graceless, and you yourselves in the interest of the kingdom of darkness, but you must be industrious to let the world know this? Thy wisdom fails thee, indeed, if (like the fool Solomon describes) when thou walkest by the way, thou thus *sayest to every one that thou art a fool*, Eccl. x. 3.

Shall I beg of you to consider this a little: You are called Christians; your baptism, which I take it for granted you have not renounced, entitles you to that worthy name; you live in an age and place wherein it is your honour to be called by that name; it will do you neither credit nor kindness to have your Christianity disproved; nay, you would take it as an affront to have it questioned; this you would have looked upon as a thing so certain, that "As I am a Christian" must pass for an oath with you, or vehement assertion; which gives just cause to suspect that you have little value for your Christianity, since you are so willing to pawn it, as you do other sacred things, upon every trifling occasion. But while thus you boast of your Christianity, you do with your own tongues disprove it by your common swearing, and plainly give yourselves and your profession the lie. *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.* I see not how it is possible that such a daring contempt of God's sovereign authority, and sacred name, as profane swearing (especially where it is commonly used) most certainly is, can consist with the reigning fear and love of God in the heart, and that sincere regard to the glory and honour of God, which are necessary to denominate a man a true Christian.

When Peter was charged with it as a crime, that he was a disciple of Christ, he took this method to make it appear that he was not, he began to curse and to swear, Matt. xxvi. 74. His speech indeed bewrayed him to be a Galilean; but this manner of speech bewrayed him to be none of the followers of Christ, for none of them used to curse and swear; all that knew any thing of their Master, and his life and doctrine, would certainly conclude so. When Peter therefore cursed and swore, he did as effectually deny his Master, as when he said, *I know not the man:* these are none of the spots of God's children. It was but once that Peter was thus guilty, and many a bitter tear it cost him; let none, therefore, make Peter's example an excuse for their swearing, unless they intend, as he did, to signify thereby that they disown Christ, and their Christianity; and since they are resolved not to be ruled by their religion, they disclaim all hopes of benefit by it. I have that charity for you, as to believe that you will not do this professedly, and, therefore, you should be so just to yourselves, as not to do that which amounts to it, and which is capable of such a construction, and which, the apostle tells us, endangers our falling into condemnation, Jam. v. 12. While there is a possibility of your being heirs of heaven, and of the inheritance of the saints in light, prove not yourselves the children of hell, by your speaking the language of that kingdom of darkness.

3. Consider what an injury it is to those with whom you converse. You think it does no harm to others, because it does not hurt them in their bodies, goods, or good name; but is harm done to the souls of others no harm? Nay, is it not the worst harm you can do them? If those who hear you swear be wicked, their hearts are hardened by it, and their hands strengthened, that they may not turn from their evil way; from your poisonous breath they take their infection, and add this to all their other sins. And is it no harm to propagate sin, and to support the devil's interest, as his agents, and factors for hell? Yes, it is harm to them who are thus, by your means, instructed and confirmed in wickedness; and you will find it harm to you too, when you shall bear the iniquity of those who by your example are taught and encouraged to swear. To what a height will your account rise, when you shall be to answer for all the sins you have thus been accessary to! Which, though it aggravate your sin, yet will not excuse those who have learnt this evil from you, nor lessen their account; for they also shall die in their iniquity.

If they who hear you swear have the fear of God in their hearts, and any concern for his glory, their hearts are grieved, and their hands weakened. It may be, that they have not courage to reprove you for it, but it troubles them, and saddens their spirits, to hear God's name dishonoured, and his sovereignty thus insulted, and to see you thus sell your souls, and all your valuable birthrights, for less than a morsel of meat. It spoils the pleasure of their conversation with you, makes them shy of your company, and, perhaps, dull and uneasy in it; such an affliction it is to them to hear you swear. When David had mentioned those who take God's name in vain, he immediately adds, *Do I not hate them, am not I grieved because of them?* Ps. cxxxix. 21. Though now perhaps you make a light matter of this, and rather take a pride and pleasure in thus creating vexation to a good man; yet, shortly, you will find it had been *better that a mill-stone were hanged about your neck, and you cast into the sea,* than that you should wilfully *offend one of Christ's little ones.* They are the words of our Lord Jesus, and we are sure no word of his shall fall to the ground.

Besides this, is it no harm to bring the curse of God into your house, which shall consume it? Is it no harm to add to the measure of the nation's guilt, and to increase God's controversy with it? *Because of swearing, the land mourns,* (Jer. xxiii. 10.) the land of your nativity, and is it nothing to you that you contribute to its grief, and to the reproach which this, as other sins, puts upon any people? Prov. xiv. 34.

4. Consider, how very frivolous all your pleas in defence of this sin are, and how unbecoming one who pretends reason. When your own consciences sometimes rebuke you for it, and admonish you to reform, you shift off these convictions with such

trifling excuses as you would be ashamed to offer in any other case.

I cannot think of more than two things that you can allege in your own defence, and they have neither of them so much as the colour of an excuse; while there is all that intrinsic malignity in the sin which we have already showed you, and God has declared he will not hold you guiltless.

(1.) You urge, that it is what you have been long accustomed to, and you cannot leave it off. But this cannot make it lawful, no, not though the custom were of so early a date, that you were taught to swear, as soon as you were taught to speak; for though we brought sin into the world with us, that does not make it the less sinful; though it be bred in the bone it must be forsaken, or it will be our ruin. If it be absurd to allege a prescription against a record, in human courts, much more to allege it against a divine law. If a thief has been accustomed to stealing, or an assassin to blood and murder, that will be so far from justifying their villanies, that it will justly be accounted the highest aggravation of them.

Nor does it follow, that because thou hast long used thyself to this profane and blasphemous dialect, that it will therefore be impossible to leave it off; if thou wert sure that the next time thou swearest thou shouldst certainly have thy tongue cut out, or thy head struck off, I am confident thou wouldst break off the custom: and is not the wrath of God, and the damnation of hell, infinitely more formidable than any punishment man can inflict? It is indeed difficult for a man to change his language, and requires some care and pains, but by the grace of God duly and diligently improved, even this Ethiopian may be made to change his skin, and this leopard his spots. And if now thou wilt not believe it, thou wilt be convinced of it when it is too late, that it is better a thousand times, to break through the difficulties of a reformation, than to perish eternally in the sin.

Despair not of a cure though the disease be chronical, but apply thyself with resolution to the use of proper means: thou wouldst do so in case of bodily sickness; be as wise for thy soul then. If a diseased appetite has long used itself to trash and dirt, does it therefore follow that it must never be healed? If the prodigal have been long upon the ramble, must he never return to his father's house? Better late than never.

The longer thou hast been accustomed to the sin, the more need thou hast to repent and reform, and that quickly, lest thy heart be hardened, and thy conscience seared; and lest by a judicial sentence of divine wrath, thou be at length given up to thy own heart's lusts, abandoned by the divine grace, and repentance ever hid from thy eyes. God's Spirit is, it may be, now striving with thee, but if thou resist him, he will not always strive.

Let me add this further, to shame you out of this plea, that by persisting in this sin, after you have been plainly told the evil of it, you not only in effect disclaim your religion, but you likewise cast a reproach upon your reason. Nothing can be more absurd, than for a man that pretends to any degree of wisdom, to confess himself so weak, and so incapable of governing himself, as not to be able to forbear a bad word, which he knows can do him no service, but will certainly turn to his prejudice. *Remember this, and show yourselves men*, men of reason, *O ye transgressors*, and allow not yourselves in that which your own sober thoughts cannot but condemn.

(2.) You urge, that it is the fashionable language of the place you live in, and the company you converse with, and therefore you are not willing to leave it off. And if it were so, it is too great a compliment to be willing to go to hell for company. What will you get by herding yourselves with those who shall be bundled for the fire, and by doing as they do who are *treasuring up to themselves wrath, against the day of wrath?* That is an expensive fashion indeed, which we cannot conform to without losing the favour of God and ruining our souls for ever. If that which is fashionable were manifestly prejudicial to your health, and threatening to your life, you would rather be singular than sick; and would you not rather be singular than damned?

But the matter is not so; we will not grant that swearing is the fashionable language of our country, it is only the common language of the fools in Israel, who are the shame and scandal of their country. That which is in its own nature ugly and indecent, and a reproach to mankind, though it may in some places become common, yet cannot be made fashionable. There are those, (thanks be to God,) there are many, who have a deep and sincere reverence for the blessed name of God, who fear an oath, and dare not profane it; there are enough such to save you from the imputation of singularity, and to keep you in countenance, though you distinguish yourselves from the vile herd of common swearers, and take not that imperious liberty of speech which they do, who say, *Our tongues are our own; who is lord over us?*

Is that to be called fashionable, which not only all the godly divines in the nation, of every persuasion, both in their preaching and conversation, witness against, as directly contrary to the law of God; but which has the laws of the land against it too, as an iniquity to be punished by the judge, and those laws enforced and strictly ordered to be put in execution, by her Majesty's most pious proclamations, and these publicly read, both in our churches, and in our courts of justice? Is that to be called fashionable, which is branded with so many marks of public infamy, and which is so frequently and so-

lemnly proclaimed to be a discredit to the kingdom, and a reproach to our holy religion? Shall it be in the power of a few inconsiderate, inconsiderable sots to keep up the reputation of that which all wise, sober, and good men are agreed to run down? Shall that be called fashionable among persons of distinction, which is become most customary with those of the meanest rank and employment, and is the vulgar language of the rakes, and such as are the refuse of the people?

Be persuaded, therefore, to break off all intimate society and conversation with those, who not only do such things, but have pleasure in them that do them; and with David, (Ps. cxix. 63.) be companions with those that fear God and keep his precepts, and then you will find it no hard matter (by the grace of God) to break off this wicked practice, how much soever you have been accustomed to it; and to forbear that language which you know is so provoking to God, so displeasing to all good men, and so destructive to the peace and welfare of your own souls.

Set a double watch before the door of your lips, that you thus offend not. Abstain from all appearances of this sin; avoid temptations to it. If gaming have insnared you in it, either never play at all, or fix it as a principle, that as there is no gain, so there is no game, worth a profane oath. Keep up a dread of the sin, which certainly you will do if you truly repent of it. Tremble to hear others swear. Learn to pray, and then you will not be so apt to swear.

II. Cursing is near akin to profane swearing, is the common companion of it, and is another of the exorbitances of an ungoverned tongue. Cursing is wishing evil to ourselves or others, absolutely or conditionally; a sin exceeding sinful; as great an instance of the corruption and degeneracy of the human nature, and as sure an evidence of the reigning power of Satan in the soul, as any other whatsoever. Nothing is more naturally the language of hell than this; nay, the devil himself seems to have smothered the curse implied, when he said, (Job i. 11. according to the original,) *If he curse thee not to thy face;* but that which he stifled, his children speak out, wishing themselves confounded and damned, and what not, if such a thing be not so.

To show you the evil of it, I will only recommend two things to your thoughts:

1. Consider, what a brutish piece of madness it is to curse yourselves. If you do it absolutely, it is of the same nature with self-murder; wishing harm to yourselves is in effect doing it; and is a breach of one of the first and great laws of nature, that of self-preservation. If you do it conditionally, it is of the same nature with profane swearing, and incurs the same guilt, with this additional stain, that it is not only a mocking of God's government, by a ludicrous appeal to him, but a defying of his judgment, a challenge to the Almighty to do his worst.

O the daring presumption of these sinners, sinners against their own heads, their own souls! The devils begged of our Saviour, whose power they were not ignorant of, not to torment them before the time; but these presumptuous wretches, as if they thought their judgment lingered, and their damnation slumbered too long, pull vengeance down upon their own heads, and pray to God to damn them; and they need not fear but they shall be heard, for so shall their doom be, themselves have decided it. They challenge the devil to take them, and he is ready enough to seize his prey. But, shall I ask you, are the arrests of devils, and the flames of hell, such delectable things that you should court them? Or are they only the creatures of fancy and imagination, that you should make so light of them? Be not deceived, God's judgment is not a jest, nor hell a sham; if you persist in this impious contempt of divine revelation, you will feel too late what you would not believe in time.

If you have no regard to God, nor any concern for his honour, yet have you no good-will to yourselves, nor any love to your own souls? Is it not enough that you are doing that every day which deserves damnation, but will you be solicitous to demand sentence against yourselves? It is but a moderate curse with you to wish yourselves hanged, yet, I have read of a person of quality in our own nation, who, coming to die upon the gallows for murder, publicly reflected upon it with bitter regret, that he had accustomed himself to that wicked imprecation, "and now" (says he) "I see the Lord is righteous."

But as if this were a small matter, you challenge God to damn you, and the devil to take you: and what if God should say "Amen" to the next curse, and immediately order death to fetch you, and hell to receive you? What if the devils should be ready at the next call, and take you presently? And *can thine heart endure, or thy hands be strong, when God shall deal with thee?* Art thou able to dwell with devouring fire, and to inhabit everlasting burnings? Knowest thou the power of God's anger? Is thy eternal salvation of such small account with thee, that thou art willing to pawn it upon every trifling occasion, and to imprecate the loss of it, if such or such a thing be not so, which it is very possible may prove otherwise? How darest thou thus *provoke the Lord to jealousy*, whilst thou canst not pretend to be *stronger than he?* 1 Cor. x. 22. *Woe unto you that* thus *desire the day of the Lord!* you know not what you do, for *the day of the Lord*, whatever it is to others, *will be* to you *darkness, and not light*, Amos v. 18.

2. Consider what diabolical malice it is to curse others. It is the highest degree of hatred, nor can any thing be more contrary than this to the royal

law of love and charity. He who prays to God to damn his neighbour, plainly intimates that he would do it himself if he could; and if he who hates his brother is a murderer, surely he who thus curses him is the worst of murderers, he is *Abaddon—a destroyer.* That tongue is doubtless set on fire of hell, which is for sending every body thither at a word, and which, by cursing men who are made after the similitude of God, would set on fire the whole course of nature, and is an advocate for the devil, that roaring lion which seeks to devour precious souls, Jam. iii. 6, 9. Must the righteous God be summoned to execute thy angry resentments, and called upon to destroy those whom he sent his own Son into the world to save, and to whom he is waiting to be gracious? Because thou art out of humour, must all about thee be sunk and ruined presently? As a madman in his frenzy throws about him firebrands, arrows, and death, so is he who curses his neighbour; nay, perhaps his wife, his child, his friend; and says, "Am not I in passion?" or, "Am not I in sport?" Hast thou no other way of signifying thy displeasure (if it be just) but by the imprecation of evil, the worst of evils, which bear no proportion at all to the offence given?

Put this case close to thy own heart. When thou wishest thy child, or servant, or neighbour hanged, confounded or damned, or sent to the devil, either thou meanest as thou sayest, or not. If thou dost not wish it, (as I charitably hope thou dost not,) thou art guilty of a manifest falsehood, and must own thyself a liar: if thou dost really wish it, (and what wickedness is it that will not enter into the heart of a furious man?) thou canst not but acknowledge thyself guilty of the most barbarous and inhuman malice imaginable. So that every curse proves thee a wilful transgressor, either of the law of truth, or of the law of love, two as sacred laws, and which have as much of the image of the law-maker, as any mankind is bound by.

Consider further, that the curses thou art so liberal of will not hurt those against whom they are levelled; thou dost but show thy ill-will; for *as the bird by wandering, and the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come*, Prov. xxvi. 2. But they will certainly return upon thy own head, to thy confusion, *As he loved cursing so let it come unto him: —into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones*, Ps. cix. 17, 18. They who are called to inherit the blessing, are commanded to *Bless and not to curse*, Rom. xii. 14. Believe it, sirs, curses are edge-tools, which *it is dangerous playing with.*

In your furious and outrageous cursing of the brute creatures, or that which is inanimate and incapable of the harm you wish it, what is wanting in malice is made up in folly and absurdity; like that which the apostle calls the *madness of Balaam*, when he wished he had his sword to kill his own ass with. By such silly nonsensical curses as you sometimes throw about in your passion, you make it to appear, that with your religion you put off common sense. You are men, you are rational creatures; speak with reason then, and act with reason, and *be ye not as the horse and the mule, that have no understanding; as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed.*

III. Lying is another of the exorbitances of an ungoverned tongue, and a very pernicious one.

It has been said of some, that though they do not swear yet they will lie; it is to be feared there are those, of whom it is too true; and let them bear their own burthen; but let not those, who would not for a world do either, suffer for the same; nor let swearers think it will in the least excuse their sin, that there are liars who are no swearers. It is certain they are both damning sins, and either of them persisted in will undoubtedly be the ruin of the sinner. But if we may guess at one sin by another, it is more probable, (as I hinted before,) that they who make no conscience of swearing will not stick at lying; and we may charitably hope, unless we know the contrary, that they who dread a profane oath, will be as much afraid of telling a wilful lie.

Let me, therefore, in God's name, seriously apply myself to those who (as the prophet speaks) have *taught their tongue to speak lies*, Jer. ix. 5. For there is an art in it, whether they be such lies as seem to do good, or such as are directly intended to do hurt, or such as are idle, and intended neither for good nor hurt. If they are lies, they are sins against God, and all liars shall have their portion in the bottomless pit, if they repent not; and the nice distinctions with which they think to justify, or at least excuse, themselves, will prove, in the great day, but a refuge of lies, which the hail will sweep away, Isa. xxviii. 17.

1. A few words, one would think, may serve for the conviction and discovery of these sinners. Sure you need not be told what lying is; your own consciences will tell you, if they be not seared, or bribed, or forbidden to deal plainly with you.

In your bargains and contracts if you say that, either for selling the dearer, or buying the cheaper, which you know to be false, it is a lie. Yet how common is it, in the multitude of those words, for the seller to call the commodity good and cheap, and to aver that he gave so much for it, when he knows that it is neither so nor so! And the buyer in his bidding will call that worthless and dear which he has no reason to call so, and will say he can buy it cheaper elsewhere, when he does not know that he can. *It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he is gone away, then he boasteth* of a good bargain, not considering that he was helped to it by a lie, Prov. xx. 14.

In your excuses which you make, either to superiors or equals, if you deny, extenuate, or conceal a fault, by representing a thing otherwise than it was,

though you may gain your point, and not be so much as suspected of falsehood, yet the guilt is never the less. When you are charged with any neglect or injury, you are ready to say you did not know, or did not remember, that which you are conscious to yourselves you did know, and did remember; you plead that you thought or intended so and so, when really you did not think or intend any such thing. These are the common refuges of those who are culpable, because the profession of a man's thoughts and purposes is not easily disproved. But though men cannot convict us of falsehood in those professions, he that searches the heart can. Men may be shammed with a frivolous excuse, but God is not mocked.

In your commendations of yourselves or others, if you give a better character than you know there is cause or ground for; if you boast of a false gift, and represent your abilities, possessions, and performances, to greater advantage than they deserve, and than the truth will bear, though these may pass for innocent hyperboles with those who take the same liberty themselves, yet your own consciences will tell you, if they be faithful, that hereby you add the sin of lying to the sin of pride, than which there are not two sins that God hates more.

In your censures, if you put false constructions upon the words and actions of your neighbours, making a great crime of that which was nothing, or next to nothing, unjustly aggravating faults, and making them worse than really they are, or representing that as certain, which is but suspected and doubtful, much more, if it should prove that you lay to men's charge things that they know not, hereby you involve yourselves in a double guilt, falsehood and uncharitableness.

In your promises, if you engage that you will do so or so, pay such a debt, or finish such a piece of work within such a time, or do such a kindness for your friend, when either you do not at all intend it, or foresee you cannot perform it, or afterward take no care either to fulfil the promise when it is in the power of your hand, or if disabled to do that, in due time to recall it, hereby there is guilt contracted. Either the promise should not have been made, or it should have been kept.

In your common reports, and the stories you tell for discourse sake, and the keeping up of conversation, if you report that as true and certain which you know to be otherwise, and do not make conscience of representing every thing as near as possible to the truth, and to your own sober thoughts, you become transgressors.

2. Sure there need not many words to persuade you to repent of this sin, and carefully to watch against it for the future, and all appearances of it. Consider how contrary it is to God; it is a breach of his law, it is a defacing of his image, for he is the God of truth; and it exposes us to his wrath, for lying lips are an abomination to the Lord. Consider how conformable it is to the devil, and how much it makes you to resemble him, for he is a liar, and the father of it. It is an injury to your brother, not only to the particular person, who, perhaps, is wronged by it, but to human society in general. And it will be the ruin of your own precious souls, if you persist in it. They who thus do the works of the devil, shall have their portion with the devil and his angels. A lie is soon told, and perhaps as soon forgotten, and a light matter made of it; but the punishment of it will be everlasting, in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, out of which there is no redemption.

IV. The common, careless using of the blessed name of God, without due application, is another instance of the ill government of the tongue, which needs a check.

Many who never curse or swear, yet allow themselves in the taking of God's name in vain, and either know not, or consider not, the evil of it, and the dishonour done (though not intended) to God by it. When you use those forms of speech, which are properly expressive of a pious ejaculation, in a light and careless manner, and to any other purpose than their genuine and original signification, which appears by your way of speaking not to be intended, but something else, you profane that which is sacred, and alienate to a common use that which appears to have been dedicated to God, and has holiness to the Lord written on it. To say, "O Lord," when you mean no more but "I am hurt;" and "God knows," when you mean no more but "I do not know;" and "God bless me," when you mean no more but "I am surprised;" and "God help you," when you mean no more but "I pity you," or any the like, is certainly taking the name of the Lord your God in vain, and to no purpose, that is, to no good purpose.

Now will you who accustom yourselves to this language consider a little,

1. That it is a great affront to the God of heaven. You hereby make his blessed name a by-word, and put that slight upon it which you would not bear to be put upon your own names. That is a great example which the bishop of Sarum tells us was observed of the honourable Mr. Boyle, that he never mentioned the name of God but with a discernible stop or pause in his discourse, in token of a reverence for that glorious and fearful name, and to leave room for a devout thought. Great and serious things ought to be spoken of with great seriousness, and they are abused if they are prostituted to a common use.

2. That it is certainly a breach of the law of the third commandment, which is very express, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,*

and it is backed with a threatening that *the Lord will not hold them guiltless* that do so, in which certainly more is implied than is expressed; it is supposed that many such will hold themselves guiltless, and think they do no harm, and others will hold them guiltless, but God will severely reckon with them, for he is a jealous God.

3. That it is a great profanation of the holy ordinance of prayer. The better any thing is, the worse it is when it is corrupted. There is nothing better than the devout and serious mention of the name of our God as there is occasion, nothing better than pious addresses to God when the heart goes along with them; but if this degenerate into a mockery, if the dead carcass hereof only is retained, and there is no spirit or life in it, if there be not so much as an outward solemnity and decorum observed, but the manner of using those good words plainly shows and avows it, that there is nothing pious and devout intended by them, it is in effect a banter upon prayer, turns it into burlesque and ridicule, and is exceeding offensive to God and good men.

It will be hard to use those words seriously, when they should be used so, which you have so often used vainly when you should not; and what comfort can you expect in prayer, when you are serious and need the comfort of it, if at other times you use the words of prayer thus lightly and profanely?

And now, shall I prevail with you never to mention the name of God but with seriousness, and in a holy and reverent manner? Say not you have so used yourselves to these expressions that you cannot leave them; resolution, by the grace of God, will change the dialect. Will those ever lose their lives for Christ who will not leave a sinful, inconsiderate word for him? One would think this a small piece of self-denial. Let the fear of God rule in your hearts, and always maintain a holy awe and reverence of him, and then out of the abundance of that the mouth will speak of him with reverence, and will not dare to speak otherwise. The description which the Scripture gives of hypocrites, (Isa. xlviii. 1.) is, that *they make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth;* but the description of true saints is, that *they think on God's name,* Mal. iii. 16. Act with reason, and either think of what you say, or do not say what you do not think of.

V. Scoffing at religion and godliness, and jesting with sacred things, is another of the exorbitances of an ungoverned tongue.

By the commonness of this sin, in this loose and degenerate age of ours, it appears that we live in the dregs of time; for the Scripture speaks expressly that in the last days, those corrupt and perilous times, there should arise *scoffers, walking after their own lusts,* 2 Pet. iii. 3. Profane people, when they set up for wits, think they cannot better show their wit than in endeavouring to justify their profaneness.

To show you the evil of it, consider,

1. The malignant principles whence it flows. When there is in the heart an habitual contempt of divine things, and an antipathy to them, and a reigning enmity to the power of godliness, thus it vents itself, and what is wanting in reason on its side, is made up in jest and banter. When men are resolved not to make themselves serious with the things of God, they will make themselves merry with them, and think they gain their point if they can but turn them off with a jest; as if that, which they are pleased to make the subject of their laughter, were therefore to be looked upon as a just object of contempt. They endeavour to represent the Word of God as a sham, heaven as a fool's paradise, and hell as merely the creature of a disordered imagination, by playing upon them, and turning them into burlesque; thus sporting themselves with their own deceivings; but it will prove like the Philistines' making sport with Samson, what they sport with will prove too strong for them, and their profane mirth will be a prologue to their ruin. *Be ye not mockers lest your bands be made strong,* Isa. xxviii. 22.

2. The mischievous consequences that flow from it. You who thus make a jest of holy things, though you make a light matter of it, ought to consider what you do, and what will be in the end hereof. Think what an affront you hereby put upon the blessed God, imputing folly to infinite wisdom, and vilifying him who is the fountain of honour. Think what an injury you hereby do to religion, and how much you serve the interest of the devil and his kingdom, as those who are retained of counsel in his cause. Seems it a light thing to you, that you are wicked yourselves, but will you do what you can to make others wicked too, that you may, besides your own torments hereafter, share in the torments of all the souls you help to ruin? Think how you will answer it at the great day, and what bitter reflections you will then make upon your daring impieties of this kind, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven to execute judgment upon all, for all their hard speeches spoken against him. It is better to reflect, and repent, and reform now, while there is a possibility of your reconciliation to the God you have provoked, than to be forced to remember it in hell to your utter confusion, in a state of endless and hopeless separation from God.

VI. Scurrilous and reproachful language given to those you have dealings with, or power over, is another exorbitance of an ungoverned tongue.

This is that which our Saviour has told us is a breach of the sixth commandment, *Thou shalt not kill;* it is tongue-murder, a sin exceeding sinful, and certainly damning to the sinner if it be not repented of and forsaken; so he has forewarned us who is to be our Judge. We are sure that his judgment will be according to the truth of his word

and he has said, (Matt. v. 22.) *Whosoever shall*, in wrath and passion, *say to his brother, Raca*, Thou base, empty fellow, rogue, and rascal, (for *Raca* was used then as those opprobrious names are now,) he that does so *shall be in danger of the council*, that is, shall be exposed to the wrath and curse of the eternal God; and not only so, but if he had his desert should be called to an account for it by the civil magistrate, for it is an iniquity to be punished by the judge. And whosoever shall in like manner say, *Thou fool;* thou reprobate, thou wicked wretch, thou damned confounded fellow, *shall* himself *be in danger of* that *hell fire*, to which he so rashly condemns his brother.

Calling foul names, and giving foul language, especially to servants and inferiors, is grown so very common among us, that with those who live at large, and not only *set their mouth against the heavens*, but let their *tongue walk* at liberty *through the earth*, (Ps. lxxiii. 9.) it is looked upon as part of the accomplishment of a gentleman to be able to do it blusteringly, and with fluency and variety; and yet, perhaps, there are those of the meanest rank who may vie with them, and can do it with as good a grace.

But how common soever it is, and how much soever countenanced by the practice of some who make a figure, you see it is a sin expressly against the law of Christ, and is certainly included, and perhaps principally intended, in that bitterness and wrath, that clamour and evil speaking, which ought to be put far from us, lest we grieve the Holy Spirit of God, Eph. iv. 30, 31.

You who allow yourselves this liberty of abusing all about you, and of dealing nick-names, and names of reproach, at your pleasure among those you converse with, or have power over; shall I propound two or three things to your serious thoughts?

1. Consider who they are that you thus abuse and trample upon, thus taunt and hector over. Are they not your fellow-creatures, of the same rank of beings with yourselves? Were not you made of the same clay that they were, and as mean as they in your original? Were not they made by the same great and mighty hand that you were, and as honourable as you in their relation to the Father of spirits? This consideration swayed with holy Job to carry it with all possible tenderness and respect, even to his own servant, when he contended with him, (Job xxxi. 15.) *Did not he that made me in the womb make him?* And the same argument is urged in a case not much unlike, (Mal. ii. 10.) *Have we not all one Father? why then do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?*

Perhaps those whom you so readily, and with so great an assurance, call "fools" and "knaves," have as much ingenuity and integrity as yourselves; nay it may be they are every way wiser and better. However, as the apostle argues, (Jam. iii. 9.) they are *made after the similitude of God*, they are of that species of creatures which was at first so made; and therefore God is reflected on by the ignominious treatment you give them. If they have natural defects and infirmities of body or mind, which they cannot help, those ought not to be turned to their reproach, for they are as God made them, and he might have made you so. If their condition in the world be mean and despicable, and the distance that Providence has put between you and them seems great, it does not therefore follow that you may give them what language and what usage you please. Though God be high, yet has he respect unto the lowly; much more should you. *He that mocketh the poor, reproacheth his Maker*, (Prov. xvii. 5.) not only him that made him, but him that made him poor.

The crime is much aggravated if those you thus abuse are pious and good, such as by grace are renewed after the image of God, and made partakers of his holiness, which possibly they may be, and yet not be numbered among either the witty or the wealthy part of mankind. Whatever you may think of yourselves, in comparison with those you thus insult over, a wiser than you, even infinite wisdom itself, has said it once, yea twice, (Prov. xix. 1. and *ch.* xxviii. 6.) *Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity than he that is perverse in his lips, though he be rich.* Will you then despise those whom God has honoured, and lay those under your feet whom God has laid in his bosom? Dare you put those among the dogs of your flock, whom Christ has put among the lambs of his flock?

2. Consider, that there is no good done by this sort of language, but a great deal of hurt. What desirable end can you propose to yourselves in it? You would be obeyed, you would be feared, and will not the meekness of wisdom command respect a thousand times better than the outrages of folly? It is certain there is nothing you say, which is introduced and accented with this rude and boisterous language, but the same thing might be better said, and to much better purpose, if it were not so prefaced. Solomon's observation holds true, that *the words of wise men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that rules among fools*, Eccl. ix. 17.

Nay, you do a great deal of hurt by using yourselves to such language.

(1.) You disturb and provoke others by it. These grievous words stir up anger; and who knows how long that anger may last, what it may produce, and where it may end? nor how great a matter a little fire of this kind may kindle? Put your souls into their souls' stead whom you thus abuse, and consider if you were in poverty and meanness, and in an inferior relation, how you would like it, and how you could bear it, to be rated and trampled on, and called by so many ill names: and do not

that to others which you would not should be done to you.

(2.) You disgrace and disparage yourselves by it. While you think hereby to keep up your authority, and make yourselves great and formidable, you really prostitute your authority, and render yourselves mean and contemptible, and give just occasion to those you abuse to think as ill of you as you say of them, though they dare not speak it out. You declare plainly, [1.] That you are slaves to your own passions, which is as toilsome and dishonourable a slavery as a man can be in: you say that in the heat of passion, which you yourselves could scarce turn your tongues to if you were sober and calm, and thereby proclaim passion king over you, that great leviathan who is *king over all the children of pride*, Job xli. 34. [2.] That you are not masters of your own reason; your anger is a fit of madness, and for the time your wisdom is departed from you. When in wrath you call others fools, the reproach returns upon your own heads. Some of this foul ill-favoured language you use to give, carries along with it its own conviction of absurdity. You will call him a "dog," whom you see to be a man, and a "bastard," whom you really take to be legitimate: and what sense is there in this? Does this become one who pretends to reason? Blush at it for shame, and resolve never again to make such a fool of thyself.

3. Consider how obnoxious you yourselves are to the righteous judgment of God. If you seriously retire into your own hearts, and impartially reflect upon your own ways, you will find that you have much more reason to reproach yourselves for your provocations against God, than to fall foul upon your servants or others for their defects in their duty to you. We ought to forbear threatening, and to moderate it, (Eph. vi. 9.) for what would become of us if God should enter into judgment with us? When we taunt others for their dullness and folly, their carelessness and forgetfulness, we ought to remember the same things against ourselves, and then we shall only give just and gentle reproofs, and not senseless and furious reproaches. Holy Job restrained himself from the heats of passion, with this consideration, (*ch.* xxxi. 14.) *What then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?* Think not that the strength of your passion will be a sufficient excuse for the indecencies of your language. The sin of the heart will never justify the sin of the tongue; but on the contrary, the sin of the tongue will aggravate the sin of the heart. Resolve therefore for the future, whenever your heart is hot within you, that you will keep your mouth as with a bridle.

VII. Lewd, obscene, and filthy talk, is another of the vile exorbitances of an unsanctified, ungoverned tongue.

It is a thing to be greatly lamented, that this impudent sin, which bids open defiance to virtue and honour, and wages war with them, like a spreading leprosy, stains the beauty of our land, turns a Canaan into a Sodom, and is become an epidemical disease. For the relief of those who are infected with it, and are not incurably unclean, I would in a few words show you the evil of it.

1. Consider what an offence it is to the pure and holy God, who takes notice of, and is much displeased with, the uncleanness of your lips, as well as of your hearts and lives. It is a violation even of the law of nature, which prescribes modesty, and teaches us to blush at every thing that is immodest. The law of Moses provided for the keeping up of this hedge of chastity, and in many instances punished that which broke through this hedge. It was one of the laws of Romulus, (some of the most ancient human laws that are extant,) *Nequis obscœna verba facit—None should dare to speak an obscene word.* But (which to us is above all) the law of Christ is very express against all filthiness and foolish talking and jesting, and appoints, that *fornication and all uncleanness* should *not be once named* among Christians without the greatest abhorrence, Eph. v. 3, 4. And is the law of Christ nothing with you? Can you go so directly contrary to it, and yet hope to prosper? God has told you plainly there, (*v.* 5.) that such unclean persons have *no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God*, and (*v.* 6.) that *because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.* And you cannot suppose that the fixed laws of heaven should be dispensed with to gratify your base lusts. The law of Christ shall either rule you or judge you.

2. Consider what an evidence it is against yourselves, that you are possessed by the unclean spirit, and are under his power. Out of the abundance of the filthiness that is in the heart the tongue speaks thus filthily, and from that root of bitterness arises this gall and wormwood. The abominable lewdness that is in the heart, and is harboured and indulged there, boils up in this noisome dross. Stinking breath is a sign of putrid lungs. While you please yourselves and your companions with this dirty language, you do but foam out your own shame, and sport yourselves with your own deceivings. You think you show your wit by it, but indeed you show your wickedness, and declare your sin as Sodom, as those who are not ashamed, and cannot blush. Chastity and modesty have been virtues, are so, and will be so, how much soever they are despised and disdained by the first-rate sinners of the age; and that which is a virtue, is a praise, is an honour; which if you want, yet you need not proclaim that you do so, nor be proud of your shame.

Unclean thoughts may, through the infirmity of the flesh, and for want of watchfulness, come into the minds of those who disallow them, lament them,

and strive against them, knowing that even these thoughts of foolishness are sin: but unclean discourse is much worse, and more exceeding sinful, for thereby you signify your approbation and allowance of those unclean thoughts; you put an "Imprimatur" to them, and consent to the publication of them for the common service of the devil's kingdom.

3. Consider what a great deal of hurt it is likely to do to others. Though this sin does not so immediately reflect upon the blessed name of God as swearing does, and, therefore, has not so much malignity in its nature, yet it does more toward the corrupting of the minds of others, and the propagating of vice and wickedness, than perhaps any other tongue-sin whatsoever, and so is more mischievous in its consequences. Such tinder is the corrupt heart of man to these sparks, that one unclean word to an unguarded soul may be the unhappy occasion of a thousand unclean thoughts, which may produce a world of iniquity. If this root of bitterness thus spring up and sprout forth, thereby many are defiled, (Heb. xii. 15.) more than perhaps you are aware of: and your account in the great day will rise high, if you must be answerable for all that uncleanness which has been spawned in the minds of others by your lewd talk.

Filthy stories, and songs, and jests, are the pestilential breath of hell, which propagates the infection of sin; old Satan's wiles, by which he betrays unwary souls into their own ruin. And those unclean lips which help to lay those snares, are factors for the unclean spirit, and by debauching the minds of others with their vile discourses, perhaps serve the devil's kingdom, and the interests of it, as effectually as those who debauch the bodies of others with their vile adulteries. *Evil communications corrupt good manners.*

If those who hear your lewd talk be not so bad as to be infected by it, certainly they are so good as to be offended at it. He is unfit for civil company, and breaks the law of good manners, who takes a pleasure in saying that which a wise and good man must frown upon, and hear with shame, or with an angry countenance. What Mr. Cowley says of lewd poems, is, with a little alteration, applicable to lewd discourse.

———'Tis just,
The speaker blush there where the hearer must.

That discourse is but bad entertainment which occasions either guilt or grief to all that hear it.

Therefore, let all who have accustomed themselves to this language, be persuaded to leave it off, and henceforward to set such a careful watch before the door of your lips, that they never more offend thus with their tongue: and if at any time they think this evil, let them lay their hand upon their mouth, (Prov. xxx. 32.) that it go no further. That mirth is dear bought, which is purchased at the expense of the favour of God, the honour of virtue, and the purity and peace of our own consciences. Better lose your jest, than lose all these jewels. Dread the consequences of it, not to others only, but to yourselves. Those who allow themselves in the transgression of the laws of modesty, it is to be feared, will not long be governed by the laws of chastity. The way of sin is down hill.

And let me bespeak all who are well-wishers to religion and virtue, not only to be very cautious themselves never to say any thing that looks like lewdness, or looks toward it, but in all companies to contrive how they may put this vice to the blush, expose it to contempt, and dash it out of countenance. They who would approve themselves strictly modest, must never seem pleased at the hearing of that which is otherwise, nor laugh at an immodest jest or story, lest they should have fellowship with these unfruitful works of darkness, which ought to be frowned upon, and reproved rather. Let it be seen that you can be merry and wise, merry and modest. Reckon it a burthen to dwell among a people of unclean lips, (Isa. vi. 5.) and pray to God that (according to his promise, Zeph. iii. 9.) he would *turn our people to a pure language*, that we may be fit to *call upon the name of the Lord.*

Having thus mentioned some of the vices of an ungoverned tongue, (especially those that are most common with such as are openly profane,) and given some particular hints of argument against them, I shall now close with some general directions for the reducing of the exorbitant power of an unruly tongue.

1. See that the heart be truly and thoroughly sanctified by the grace of God. If you would have the disease cured, you must lay the axe to the root, and meet it in its causes. The peccant humour within must be purged out, else these eruptions, though they may be checked for a time by external restraints, yet will never be healed. The right method prescribed by the great Physician, is first to *keep the heart with all diligence*, and then by that means to *put away the froward lips.* See Prov. iv. 23, 24. The way to heal the poisonous waters is, like Elisha, (2 Kings ii. 21.) to cast salt into the spring, *Make the tree good, and then the fruit will be good.* It is out of an evil treasure in the heart that evil things are brought; men speak slightly of God, and spitefully of their brethren, because they think so; let but the thoughts be rectified, and the language will be soon reformed.

If the law of holy love to God and your neighbour were written in your hearts, and you were, as you should be, actuated and governed by these as a living commanding principle, you would not dare to offend either the one or the other with your tongue;

that good treasure laid up in the heart would bring forth good things to the use of edifying, which would manifest grace in him that speaks, and minister grace unto the hearers. The fear of God always before your eyes will be an effectual restraint upon you from saying that by which either his name is dishonoured, or his law violated. The grace of God is *a coal from the altar*, which if it touch the tongue, the iniquity of it will be purged away, Isa. vi. 7.

Let the throne of Christ be set up in your hearts, and his love shed abroad there, and then you will not call it a needless preciseness to be thus careful of your words, but a necessary strictness, because by our words we must be justified or condemned. Then you will not call it a task and a slavery to be thus tied up, and to speak by rule, but an honour and a pleasure; for assuredly this blessed change, wrought in the soul by the renewing grace of God, will open such surprising springs of present joy and comfort, as will abundantly balance all the uneasiness which corrupt nature will complain of in these restraints.

2. Solemnly resolve against these and all other tongue-sins. Let holy David's vow be yours, and bind your souls with it this day, *I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue;* and remember, as he does there, that you have said it, that you may not break your promise, Ps. xxxix. 1, 2.

While the result of your convictions is no more but this, that you hope you shall govern your tongues better for the future, and that, for ought you know, you will not swear so much as you have done, and in the mind you are in, you will not speak so many idle filthy words as you have spoken—if this be all, you leave room for Satan to thrust in with his temptations; faint purposes are soon shaken, and prove to no purpose: but when you are come to a point, and without equivocation, or mental reservation, will solemnly promise that by the grace of God you will never swear nor curse any more; you will never take God's name in vain any more; you will never speak a lewd or scurrilous word any more; this fortifies the strong hold against the tempter, who (like Naomi, Ruth i. 18.) when he sees you are stedfastly resolved, will leave off speaking to you.

Renew this resolution every day, especially if you have a prospect of any occasion which will be a more than ordinary temptation to you. Thus set a guard upon the door of your lips, and at some times double your guard, where you find yourselves weakest and most exposed. Try the strength of your resolutions, and do not for shame suffer yourselves to be baffled in them. Only remember to make and renew these resolutions, in a dependence upon the grace of Jesus Christ, which alone is sufficient for you. Peter resolved against a tongue-sin in his own strength, but it failed him, and he was made ashamed of his confidence; confide therefore in divine strength only.

3. Keep out of the way of bad company. Speech is learned by imitation, and so is corrupt speech. We are apt in discourse to conform to those with whom we do associate; and therefore, if we would keep those commandments of our God which relate to the government of the tongue, we must say to evil doers, *Depart from us*, Ps. cxix. 115. Converse not familiarly, and of choice, with those who accustom themselves to any evil communication, lest you learn their way, lest you learn their words, and get such a snare to your souls as you will not easily disentangle yourselves from.

That dread and terror, and abhorrence of swearing and cursing, and all profane discourse, which all who are virtuously and piously educated, are conscious to themselves of at first, is apt to wear off by frequent and free conversation with those who use such language. It is excused as a slip of the tongue, which does nobody any harm; nay, it is justified as a fashionable ornament of speech; and so by degrees the debauched conscience comes to be reconciled to it, and at last the tongue is taught not only to lisp the same cursed language, but, with a great deal of art and assurance, to speak it plain. Joseph himself, in the court of Egypt, had unawares got the courtier's oath, *By the life of Pharaoh.*

If you love your souls, therefore, be very careful what company you keep; choose to converse familiarly with those of whom you may learn that which is edifying, and by whose discourse and example you may be made wiser and better; and avoid the society of those by whom, without a greater degree of wisdom and watchfulness than you can pretend to, you will certainly get hurt to yourselves. Improper words are sooner learned than unlearned. Therefore, *if sinners entice thee, consent thou not*, (Prov. i. 10.) though they do not say, (as they there, *v.* 11. *Come, and let us lay wait for blood,*) "Come, and let us swear and curse, and bid defiance to all that is sacred;" but palliate the temptation, and make it look very harmless, "Come, and let us take a glass and be merry over it." If they be such as are commonly profane and lewd in their discourse, fear a snare in their company, and keep at a distance from it. Walk not in their counsel, stand not in their way, sit not in their seat, Ps. i. 1. Make no friendship with those who make no conscience of their words, and who show that they have no veneration for the blessed name of God. Remember Solomon's advice, (Prov. xiv. 7.) and be ruled by it; *Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.*

4. Think twice before you speak once. We often speak amiss, because we speak in haste; when that comes out which comes uppermost, what can it be

but froth and dross? Moses spake unadvisedly with his lips, not consulting with himself before he spake, and then he said that which shut him out of Canaan, Ps. cvi. 33. What we speak in haste, we often find cause afterwards to repent of at leisure. David more than once reflects with regret upon what he said in his haste, and we have all a great deal of reason to do so. Our second thoughts, if we would take time for them, would correct the errors of the first; and we should not offend with our tongues so often as we do, if we would but consider what we say, before we say it. *The heart of the righteous studieth to answer* that which is fit and seasonable, while *the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.*

Be sparing of your words, and then you will not have so many bad words to answer for as most have; for, *in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin,* and *divers vanities.* You have often been the worse for speaking, but seldom the worse for keeping silence. Many a thing which you have said, you would have smothered and suppressed if you had but allowed yourselves the liberty of a serious and impartial thought upon it. "Little said, soon amended."

You durst not profane God's blessed name with your unhallowed breath, if you would but think seriously what a God he is whom you thus blaspheme and provoke. You durst not curse yourselves or others if you would but consider the weight of the curse, and what a fearful thing it is to fall under it. You durst not scoff at religion if you did but consider how sacred and honourable it is. Reason in other cases is of use to rectify the mistakes of imagination; use it here then.

5. Have a care to the account that is now kept, and must shortly be given, of all your idle wicked words. You believe the Holy Scriptures, you do well. Now they tell you what will be in the end hereof. The word of God will judge you shortly, therefore, let it rule you now.

Notice is now taken of all you say, whether you are aware of it or no. There is not a word in your tongue, though spoken in haste, and not regarded by you, but God knows it altogether, and a book of remembrance is written. God told the prophet Ezekiel what the people said of him by the walls, and in the doors of their houses, (Ezek. xxxiii. 30.) and he can make a bird of the air to carry the voice of that which is said in the heart, or in the bedchamber, Eccl. x. 20. You think you may curse and swear securely when you are out of the reach of those who would reprove you, or inform against you; and because God for the present keeps silence, you think he is altogether such an one as yourselves, as careless of his government as you are of your duty; but he will reprove you, and set them in order before you, and make it to appear that he kept an exact account of all you said: *Now consider this, ye that forget God,* (Ps. l. 21.) stand in awe of this, and sin not with your tongues. Take heed, God hears; were you in the presence of some grave men that you had a reverence for, you would have a care what you say, and shall not the presence of the great God strike an awe upon you?

But this is not all, the day is coming when there will be a review; when the books that are written will be opened, and all your profane oaths and curses, and corrupt communications, will be found upon record there, and produced as evidence against you. He that is to be the Judge in that day, has himself expressly told us, (Matt. xii. 36.) *Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment;* and if for every idle word, much more for every profane and wicked word. What an account will they have to make, all whose breath was corrupt, till their days were extinct; who always allowed themselves a boundless liberty of speech from under the dominion of religion and right reason, and never took care by repentance, and prayer, and reformation, to empty the measure of guilt they had filled, nor to balance the account in the blood of Christ which cleanses from all sin.

Think not that any profession of religion which you make will excuse you, or stand you in any stead in that day, while you thus contradict it, and give the lie to it, by the extravagances of your tongues. The word of God has laid it down as a certain rule, (Jam. i. 26.) *If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain;* and if your religion be vain, it will never bring you to heaven, and then I need not tell you whither your irreligion will bring you.

It will be the eternal doom of those who persisted in their tongue-sins, and would not be reformed, that *their own tongues shall fall upon themselves,* (Ps. lxiv. 8.) and if they do, they will sink them to the lowest hell, in which the remembrance of all the sins of an ungoverned tongue will be very bitter, and bring oil to the flames. We read of it, as the misery of condemned sinners, that they are tormented in a flame, where they have not a drop of water to cool their tongues. Words are soon spoken, and when they are spoken are soon gone, and yet words spoken against an earthly prince, though repented of, have cost many a man his life; and shall it then be difficult to us to believe, that words spoken against the King of kings, and never repented of, shall exclude men from his kingdom, and lay them for ever under his wrath? It is commonly said, "*Words are but wind,*" but wicked words will prove such a mischievous wind, as will not only keep the soul out of the blessed haven of rest and happiness, but sink it into the gulf of everlasting destruction.

6. Reflect upon it with sorrow and shame, and great regret, if at any time you have, ere you were aware, spoken any wicked word. Keep conscience

tender in this matter, and if, through the surprise of temptation, you any way offend with your tongue, let your heart presently smite you for it, humble yourselves greatly before God for it, pass it not over with a slighty careless, "God forgive me," but be in pain and bitterness at the remembrance of it; abhor yourselves, as holy Job, when he was reflecting upon his tongue-sins, and repent in dust and ashes. If you can easily forgive yourselves what is past, it is to be feared you will easily be brought to do the like again.

Lastly, Pray earnestly to God for his grâce, to keep you from sinning with your tongue. Though the tongue be an unruly evil, yet he can tame it who sets bounds to the proud waves of the sea, and once stopped the lions' mouths. To him, therefore, you must apply yourselves by faithful and fervent prayer, and put yourselves under the conduct and custody of his grace, which will be sufficient for you if you seek it, and improve it, and go forth in the strength of it. Let David's prayer be yours daily, (Ps. cxli. 3.) *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips;* for without his assistance we can do nothing. Pray against provocations to these sins, and pray for wisdom wherewith to govern yourselves in the midst of provocations; *Watch and pray,* that either you may not be led into temptation, or, however, not overcome by it. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.*

And now what shall be the success of this endeavour? Shall all our reasonings with you, in love to your souls, be slighted and laughed at like the foolish banter of your vain companions? Can we not prevail for a reformation of your language, when we plead the honour of God, the law of Christ, the good of your brethren, and the welfare of your own souls, and you have nothing to plead to the contrary but a foolish, wicked custom? *I hope better things, and things that accompany salvation.* Your tongue is your glory, do not turn this glory into shame, but use it as your glory, by honouring God and edifying one another with it; so shall the tongue which is thus accustomed to the language of Canaan, sing Hallelujahs eternally in the New Jerusalem.

SELF-CONSIDERATION NECESSARY TO SELF-PRESERVATION:

OR,

THE FOLLY OF DESPISING OUR OWN SOULS,

AND

OUR OWN WAYS.

DISPLAYED IN TWO SERMONS TO YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE FORMER ON PROV. XV. 32. THE LATTER ON PROV. XIX. 16.

TO THE READER.

I WAS far from any thoughts of publishing these two plain discourses, when I preached the former of them, at the request of Mr. Billingsley and his catechumens, the 25th of the last month, being Monday in Whitsun-week, a day of leisure; having designed not to trouble the press any more till the fifth volume of EXPOSITIONS was ready for it, which, if God spare my life and health, and continue his gracious assistances, I hope will be by the end of this year, and which (to answer a question that I am often asked) I purpose shall contain the four Evangelists and the Acts, if the Lord will.

The importunity of the many who earnestly desired me to publish that sermon, should not have overcome me to alter my purpose, if the advice of some of my brethren, whose judgment I have a value for, had not overruled me, to think it might be worth while to take so much time from my greater work, as the preparing and enlarging of that sermon for the press would require.

And this made me the more easily to yield to those who very earnestly pressed me to publish the latter sermon, which was preached the day following, at the request of Mr. Gordon and his catechumens.

It grieves me, (yet not so much as it should,) to see among the *children of my people*, a great carelessness and unconcernedness about the things that belong to their everlasting peace. I lament it in myself, and therefore I hope I shall not be blamed, if I thus endeavour, as God enables me, to awaken myself and others to a due seriousness in those things which relate to the soul and eternity; I think it can do harm to none; I hope it may do good to some. And nothing more likely to cool and compose the heated and disquieted minds of men, than thus to turn their zeal into the right channel.

June 4, 1713. MAT. HENRY.

THE FOLLY

OF

DESPISING OUR OWN SOULS.

PROVERBS XV. 32.

He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul.

SOLOMON'S proverbs being generally designed to instruct us in our duty to God and man, many of them are particularly intended to dispose us to receive those sacred dictates, and to make way for the rest, by opening the ear to instruction, and bowing the heart to comply with it. If people were but willing and desirous to learn, the teacher's work were half done; but (as says the proverb of the ancients) "They who will not be counselled cannot be helped." How should those attain to knowledge and grace, who will not be reconciled to the means of knowledge and grace?

In this text Solomon gives such an account of those (in a few words) whom he found he could do no good to, as makes their folly manifest before all men. Though this princely preacher made it his business still to teach the people knowledge; though his sermons were elaborate and well studied, for he gave good heed, and sought out and set in order

many proverbs; though his discourses were plain and practical, sententious and methodical; though he took pains to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth;[a] yet there were those who were never the better for such a preacher, and such preaching. Now Solomon gives this short account of them, and then leaves you to judge concerning them; they refuse instruction, and in so doing they despise their own souls. We who have the gospel preached among us, and Wisdom herself by it teaching in our streets, may truly say, *Behold, a greater than Solomon is here;* and yet, as to multitudes, he stretches out his hand in vain; even Israel is not gathered, his ministers labour in vain among them. And what is the reason?

I. They refuse instruction. The fool in the text, (and he is, without doubt, more despicable than the fool in the play,) is described to be one who refuseth instruction, פורע מוסר. We have the same words, and thus translated,—*Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction;*[b] that neglects instruction, (so some,) puts it far from him, and sets himself at a distance from it; not only because he hates it, but because he fears it. That strips himself of instruction, (that is another signification of the word, not only *elongare*, but *denudare*,)—*shaking off* his education, as a garment he will not be heated with, or hampered with, makes himself naked, to his shame. Nay, the original word has a further signification, *(ulcisci,)* he that will be *revenged on instruction;* that takes it for an affront, and studies revenge, if he be told of his faults.

The word for instruction the margin reads *correction;* for in our fallen state, when we are all wrong, that which instructs us must correct us; we cannot be taught to do well, but we must be showed wherein we have done ill. *The rod and reproof give wisdom.* The corrections of providence are intended for instruction; *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest and teachest.* But many, though they cannot help being chastened, yet refuse and reject the instruction designed them by the chastening, and will not learn any of the many good lessons designed to be taught them by the chastening: instead of that, they strive with their Maker, and kick against the pricks; they will not comply with the correction, or answer the ends of it. They refuse discipline; they will not be under check and control, will no more be admonished.

1. They refuse to hear instruction; they turn their backs upon the word, and will not come where it is preached, if they can help it. Wisdom cries, and they get out of the hearing of her cries, one to his farm and another to his merchandise. A little formality of devotion they can dispense with, to save their credit, and keep up their reputation among men, *missa non mordet—and being dismissed it no longer stings*, but the close and powerful application of the word, as a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, they cannot bear. They cannot go so far as Ezekiel's hearers, to whom his preaching was as a lovely song,[c] charming enough, and which, as they heard it, helped to lull them asleep; but it is to them as the sound of a trumpet, the alarm of war; it makes their ears to tingle, and therefore they get as far as they can from it.

2. They refuse to heed it; like the deaf adder, they (if they should come within hearing of it) stop their ears, and will not hearken to the voice of the *charmer, charm he never so wisely.*[d] If they cannot keep it from sounding in their ears, they keep it from sinking into their hearts, and, if possible, will keep it from going any further. They do not value instruction, they see no need of it, and, therefore, do not desire it. *The word of the Lord is to them a reproach,*[e] they are weary of it; yea, though it should come from the mouth of Christ himself; witness the lawyer that complained, *Master, in so saying, thou reproachest us also*, Luke xi. 45.

3. They refuse to comply with it; they will do as they have a mind, whatever they are told or taught to the contrary; they have loved strangers, and whatever you can say to put them out of love with them, after them they will go.[f] They hold fast deceit, though they are told of the deceitfulness of it, and refuse to return.[g] This is the way of many, who are running headlong upon their own ruin, and hate to be stopped.

But it may be thought improper for me to insist upon this now, when I am called to address myself to a number of serious young men, who are every Lord's-day evening catechised in this place, and who are so far from refusing instruction, that they covet it, they delight in it, they are forward to receive it, and, as the good ground, drink in this rain, that comes often upon them; who have piously projected and combined to set up this exercise, and diligently attend it, not only for their own benefit, but for the benefit of many; for what is said to them, is said to all; and whoever will, may come and feed upon that bread of life which is broken to them.

Yet to them it may be of use to hear of the sin and folly of them who refuse instruction, of the many that do so.

(1.) Bless God, who made you to differ; and let his grace have all the glory, which has given your hearts, by nature corrupt as others, such a different bent from what it was, from what others are; that you are crying after knowledge, when others are crying out against it; are seeking it as silver,[h] when

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a Eccl. xii 9, 10. b Eccl. xiii. 18.
c Ezek. xxxiii. 32. d Ps. lviii. 4, 5.
e Jer. vi. 10. f Jer. ii. 25.
g Jer. viii. 5. h Prov. ii. 3, 4.

others are seeking silver only, and not it; are delighting to know God's ways, when others are delighting in the by-paths of sin and vanity; are helping to let many into the knowledge of Christ, when there are those who are contriving to take away the key of knowledge; you have reason to say with thankfulness, *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?*[i] You ought not to take a pride in it, the honour of it is spoiled if you do so, you have nothing to boast of; but you ought to give God the praise, the honour of it is doubled if you do so, for you have a great deal to be thankful for. Who teacheth like God?

(2.) Take heed, lest any of you should, notwithstanding this, be found among those who refuse instruction; who are pleased with it, and yet are not ruled by it. It is not enough for you to have a pleasing relish of divine truths, but you must be delivered into the mould of them; your souls must be transformed by them, and conformed to them. The instructions given you, must be transcribed and copied out into your whole conversations, must guide and regulate them, must not only restrain them from the gross pollutions of sin, but must beautify and adorn them with every thing that is excellent and praise-worthy. You who are so much in the mount with God on the Lord's day, ought to show it, as Moses did, by the shining of your faces, in all instances of wisdom and grace, all the week after. That man does but shame himself, who boasts how long he went to the writing-school, and yet writes a bad hand; or to the dancing-school, and yet has a graceless carriage; much more does that man do so, who boasts how much he has been conversant with the principles of the Christian religion, and yet submits not to the laws of it, nor practises according to it.

(3.) Pity those who refuse instruction, and do not despise them, but if you can do any thing, have compassion upon them, and help them. You may have an opportunity, perhaps, in your common converse, to influence some who have hitherto turned a deaf ear to the calls of God, to be willing to hearken to Christ, and to bring them in by degrees to a liking of those truths of God which they have been prejudiced against, and those instances of serious godliness which they have looked upon with contempt; and they that will not be won by the word, may be won upon by your conversation with them.[k]

(4.) What is said of the folly of those who refuse instruction, is the commendation of the wisdom of those who receive instruction. You do well for yourselves, and so it will appear shortly; and therefore go on and prosper, for the Lord is with you while you are with him: encourage yourselves and one another in so good a work, and be not weary in well-doing.

[i] John xiv. 22.

II. They who refuse instruction thereby make it to appear, that they despise their own souls; they evidence that they have very low and mean thoughts of their souls. Now this is here mentioned as a very absurd thing, and that which no rational man will own himself guilty of, and yet which every wicked man is really guilty of. He who refuseth instruction, μισει εαυτον—so the Seventy—*he hates himself;* despises himself; for *Animus cujusque is est quisque—The soul is the man.*

There is a despising ourselves which is commendable, and our duty, the same with denying ourselves, abasing, abhorring, and humbling ourselves. The poor in spirit despise themselves; those who are willing to suffer rather than to sin, despise their own lives, and do not count them dear. This gracious self-contempt is a qualification for the greatest honour and advancement, to which nothing is a greater bar than self-conceit, and making an idol of ourselves.

But there is a despising of ourselves and of our own souls, which is culpable, and of pernicious consequence, such a piece of folly as is the cause of abundance of other folly, and particularly this of refusing instruction. By giving us divine revelation for the enlightening and directing, the renewing and sanctifying, of our souls, God has put the greatest honour imaginable upon them, has distinguished them not only from the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of heaven, but from many and mighty nations of the earth. Now if we regard not the dictates of divine revelation, we throw away this honour that God has put upon our souls, and declare that we do not value it.

The honour of the soul is, that it is rational and immortal: now they who refuse divine instruction despise their own souls under both these considerations; for the design of that instruction is to cure, direct, and cultivate the rational powers of the soul, to support their authority, and assist their operations; if, therefore, we have any value for that part of their honour, we shall receive that instruction. It is likewise intended to prepare the soul for its future and immortal state, and so to secure to it a blessed immortality: if, therefore, we have any value for that part of our soul's honour, we shall reckon the instructions of God's word well worthy of all acceptation.

But I shall speak to it more generally, that I may take in more of the many instances of contempt which people put upon their own souls. And being desired to address myself particularly to young people, I know not how I could better serve the design I have in view, which is to engage them to be truly religious betimes, than by possessing them with a value for their own souls, and arming them against the folly of despising them. If the soul is

[k] 1 Pet. iii. 1.

the man, (as certainly it is,) as there is a holy self-love, so there is a holy self-esteem, which is necessary to that due concern which we all ought to have about our souls and eternity.

Take this then for the Doctrine;

That it is the greatest absurdity and folly imaginable for men to despise their own souls. Or thus, It is the original error of wilful sinners, that they undervalue their own souls.

In prosecution of this I shall endeavour, I. To show who they are that despise their own souls. II. To prove the absurdity and folly of it. III. To make some application of it.

I. How do people make it appear that they despise their own souls? Who—where—is he that is guilty of such a gross absurdity?

1. Some despise their own souls in opinion; who advance notions of the human soul that derogate from the honour of it, and put men upon a level with the beasts that perish; that care not how mean a character they put upon the soul, so they can but place their own souls from under God's government and judgment.

The atheists and Sadducees of the age, that believe there is no substance but matter, and shut out all incorporeal nature out of the number of beings, and consequently make their own souls to be only a particular species of matter modified and put in motion, so as to produce sense and perception, and that that is it which thinks and apprehends, that reflects and deliberates, doubts and determines, chooses and refuses; that all the performances of philosophy and politics are the products of matter and motion; and, in short, that man is but a very little above the beasts, whereas the word of God has made him but a little below the angels. The absurdity of these notions is philosophically demonstrated by Dr. Bentley, in his "Confutation of Atheism from the Faculties of the Soul." But it is no wonder that men can look within them and say, "They have no souls," when they are such fools as to look about them and say, *There is no God.*

Many who would be thought to understand themselves better than their neighbours, that they may get clear of the obligations of reason and conscience, under colour of wit, wage war with Wisdom; and that they may not be charged with neglecting the salvation, or incurring the damnation, of their own souls, choose rather to despise them, as not capable either of salvation or damnation; and that they may not come under the imputation of acting unreasonably, ridicule reason, as the *ignis fatuus—the vapour* of the mind; so it is called in a profane poem which I remember to have seen in manuscript long since, (I know not whether ever it was printed,) called, "A Satire upon Man." It began thus:

Were I (who to my cost already am
One of those strange prodigious creatures man,)
A spirit, free to choose for my own share
What case of flesh and blood I'd please to wear,
I'd rather be a monkey, dog, or bear,
Or any thing, than that vain animal
That boasts himself of being rational.

Those who speak thus scornfully of that noble rank of beings, and of the faculties and capacities of their own souls, make me think of that of Solomon, Eccl. x. 3. *When he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool.*

Those despise their own souls who deny the immortality of them; who, that they may justify themselves in living like beasts, expect no other but to die like beasts. *Ede, bibe, lude, post mortem nulla voluptas—Let us eat, drink, and play, for after death there is no pleasure. Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die,*[l] and there is an end of us. What a contempt do they put upon this candle of the Lord, who think it is put out by death! whereas, it is only taken out of a dark lantern and set upon a candlestick, where it extends its light much further. And how ridiculously do the pretenders to free-thinking insinuate that Solomon, in his Ecclesiastes, (*ch.* iii. 21.) speaks doubtfully of the existence of the soul in a state of separation from the body, *Who knows that the spirit of a man goes upward?* whereas, he speaks so very expressly, and with the greatest assurance, of it in the same book, (*ch.* xii. 7.) that *when the dust returns to the earth as it was, the spirit returns to God who gave it;* and in that other place only speaks as one in the dark concerning the manner of its removal to that separate state; none knows the way of the spirit,[m] either into the body, or out of it.

The sober heathen will rise up in judgment against such men of this generation, and will condemn them; for though they had no divine revelation, as we have, to acquaint them how man at first became a living soul; that there is a spirit in man, and that the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding; that death itself cannot kill the soul; and, that it shall be redeemed from the power of the grave; yet had admirable notions of the excellent nature of the human soul, and of its immortality: they looked upon it to be a ray of divine light, a spark of divine fire. *Quid aliud voces animam quam Deum in corpore hospitantem—What can you call the soul but God dwelling in the body?* says Tully. He could not say, that the soul of man was made in the image of God, and after his likeness, because he was not told so, as we are, but he says that which is equivalent.

But among you here, I hope, I need not enlarge

[l] Isa. xxii. 13.

[m] Eccl. xi. 5.

upon these things; you know and believe that God has given to every man a soul of his own which is immaterial, intelligent, and immortal, which is formed by the Father of spirits, is nearly allied to the world of spirits, and must shortly remove to that world. The Lord strengthen and increase our faith herein, and fortify us against the sly and subtile insinuations of those who lie in wait to deceive!

2. Many more, who give not in with the notions of those who thus in opinion despise their own souls, and professedly degrade them, yet in practice despise them; as those who will give to a great man his titles of honour, and yet look upon him as a vile person, who is to be contemned. As many, who profess they know God, and his glory, so many, who profess they know the dignity of their own souls, yet in works deny both the one and the other.

Those despise their own souls, (1.) Who abuse them. (2.) Who hazard them. (3.) Who neglect them. (4.) Who prefer their bodies before them.

(1.) Those who abuse their own souls, may truly be said to despise them. Those we do injury to we put the greatest contempt upon, as not worthy to have right done them. Solomon fastens this brand of foolishness and madness upon those who sin against God, that they wrong their own souls, to that degree, that they may be said to be in love with the death and ruin of them.[n] Those who wrong their servants, and abuse them, show that they despise them, and set them with the dogs of their flock: so those who without compassion, or even sense of equity and justice, put despite upon their souls, do indeed despise them. O what base usage many people give their own souls, and, as the ostrich against her young ones, are hardened against them as though they were not theirs.

[1.] Those abuse their own souls who devote them to the service of Satan; as all wilfully wicked people do, who make themselves his children by doing his lusts,[o] and surrender themselves his slaves and vassals, to be led captive by him at his will,[p] and held fast in his snare; who, being children of disobedience, yield themselves not only to work for, but, which is worse, to be wrought upon, by the prince of the power of the air.[q] The faculties of the soul are employed in doing Satan's will, and serving his interest, so that the man seems listed under Satan's banner; he is for Baal, and not on the Lord's side; with Beelzebub, and, therefore, not only not with Christ, but against him.

It is the honour of our souls, that they are made to be the *temples of the Holy Ghost*, the living temples of the living God; they are capable of being so, and intended to be so; than which, what greater honour could be put upon them? But how then do those dishonour their own souls who suffer Satan, that apostate from God and rebel against him, the head of the apostasy and rebellion, to keep his palace as a rival with God, nay, and to keep garrison as an enemy against God, in the soul; and are willing not only that his goods should be in peace, and unmolested, but that all the powers of the soul should be employed for him, and be armour for him to trust in.[r]

It is the honour of our souls, that they have a relation to heaven, are in alliance with that upper world; and though they have by sin very much lost their acquaintance with it, yet they are still, through grace, capable of keeping up a correspondence with it, and stand fair for an inheritance in it. What greater dishonour then can they put upon themselves, than by entering into a league with the devil, (and all who go on still in their trespasses do so, instead of entering into a war with him,) who left his first estate there, was shamefully thrust out thence, cast down to hell, and is in no manner of hopes, as we are, to retrieve the honour from which he is degraded? Shall fire from heaven mingle itself with fire from hell? or that spirit of a man, which is the candle of the Lord, the light which lighteth every man that cometh into this world, come into the interests of the rulers of the darkness of this world? can it forget itself so far?

It is the honour of our souls, that they are made capable of serving God, of doing his will, carrying on his work, and so of pleasing him, and praising him, and advancing the interests of his kingdom among men: those souls, therefore, are basely abused that are subjected to the power of Satan, and are under his conduct. Our Saviour has represented this to us in the parable of the prodigal son, who when he had spent and wasted all his portion, (representing the wretched havoc which outrageous sinners make of their knowledge and gifts, the sparks of virtue that were struck into their minds by a good education, and the convictions of their own consciences,) then disparaged himself to the last degree, when he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine;[s] representing the slavery, that is, both the ignominy and the drudgery, which sinners submit themselves to, by giving themselves up to the service of Satan, and looking upon his temptations not as the assaults of an adversary, which are to be resisted, but as the commands of a master, which are to be obeyed; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage; as all those are who are the servants of corruption.[t]

What! Is the devil a master good enough for a soul that has God for its Maker? Is feeding swine, making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, work good enough for a soul that is capable

n Prov. viii. 36.
p 2 Tim. ii. 26.
o John viii. 44.
q Eph. ii. 2.
r Luke xi. 21, 22.
s Luke xv. 15.
t 2 Pet. xxi. 19.

of glorifying and enjoying God? Are husks, the food of swine, proper provision for a soul that is capable of being feasted with angels' food? What disparagement is it to a soul to serve its enemies, that tyrannize over it, and seek its ruin, especially since, if it had any spark of honour left in it, it might, by divine grace, easily and certainly not only regain a glorious liberty from them, but gain a more glorious victory over them! O that the sounding of the jubilee trumpet, which proclaims the release of captives, might awaken and animate poor enslaved souls, to think their own liberty from Satan's yoke worth struggling for, and to exert themselves accordingly. Let them apply to their own case what God by the prophet says to the Jews in Babylon, *Awake, awake, put on thy strength,*[u] O Zion. Put on thy strength, O soul, put on a holy resolution, in dependence upon divine grace, no longer to be ruled by a base lust, and led captive by Satan; throw away the rags of thy slavery, and put on thy beautiful garments; be bold and appear great; for if thou wilt but take Christ for thy Redeemer and Ruler, and give up thyself entirely to him, he will undertake, that henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean, that have no right to rule thee, but a design to ruin thee; sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace. And therefore, as it follows there, *Shake thyself from the dust*, the dust of the earth, dirt it should rather be called, that dust into which by sin thou art not only fallen, but in a manner turned; for dust thou art, earthly and carnal, and corrupt thou art; shake thyself from that, and arise and sit down, to consider what thou hast to do, and resolve to loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion: despise not thyself, despise not thy own soul, any longer, by a sneaking submission to the tyranny of Satan, but reach out to, and take up not short of, the glorious liberty of God's children.

[2.] Those abuse their own souls who defile them with the pollutions of sin; who having devoted themselves to the conduct of the unclean spirit, are unclean like him, and work all manner of uncleanness. All sin is defiling to the mind and to the conscience, brings a blot and stain upon the soul, which renders it odious in the eyes of the holy God, and nauseous, and uneasy too, to itself, whenever it comes to have spiritual senses exercised; renders it unfit to approach to God, and to eat of the holy things, as ceremonial pollutions under the law did. Now what an abuse is it to the soul, whose happiness consists in the enjoyment of God and itself, to be thus made offensive to both, afraid of its God, and ashamed of itself! What mean thoughts have those of their own souls who can do them this indignity, do them this injury, rather than deny themselves the gratification of a base lust! Let us, therefore, show that we have really a value for our own souls, by hastening to make use of the water of purification provided for them in the blood of Christ, that the conscience being sprinkled with that, may be purged from dead works, and so restored to the service and enjoyment of the living God, and the privileges of his sanctuary, from which we had debarred ourselves.[v]

But fleshly lusts are in a particular manner defiling, all the irregular inordinate use of the pleasures and delights of sense; these are said to war against the soul, against its purity and peace, and enjoyment of itself; they are a reproach and disparagement to the soul; and, therefore, we sadly abuse our souls when we think to refresh ourselves by bathing in the filthy, muddy streams of sensual pleasures, by which we do but defile ourselves, and like the sow wallow in the mire.

It is the honour of our souls that they are capable of spiritual and heavenly pleasures, of entertaining themselves with divine contemplations and devout affections, the pleasures of which may be brought near to the delights of blessed spirits above, that are already entered into the joy of our Lord. And those maintain the honour of their souls, who by faith and love, by prayer and meditation, keep up their correspondence with heaven. But how do those despise their souls, and this honour put upon them, who not only neglect those heavenly entertainments, but disfit themselves for them, and exclude themselves from them, by the guilt they contract every day in the use of the pleasures of sense, which become pleasures of sin to them!

For the soul to be thrown from its rest in God, where only it can find true rest, to be shut out from its communion with God, to be put in confusion in its approaches to God, and made uneasy to itself, is to have a deal of wrong done it, and a great deal of contempt put upon it; and all this they do in their own souls who go a whoring after their own inventions, and so are defiled with their own works, with their own ways.[w]

[3.] Those abuse their own souls who deceive them with lies and falsehoods; those certainly put a contempt upon them who put a cheat upon them, and delude them with flatteries to act against their own true interest. A man justly reckons himself affronted, and resents it accordingly, who is imposed upon with sham and banter; it is a reflection upon his understanding, as if he were not able to discern the fraud, as well as a wrong to his interests, which are prejudiced by it; and yet, perhaps, he is doing the same thing to his own soul. Taking advantage of its credulity in favour of itself, he not only suffers it to persist in its mistakes, and guards

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u Isa. lii. 1.

v Heb. ix. 14.

w Ps. cvi. 39.

against the rectifying of them, but does all he can to rivet and confirm them.

How many cheats do people put upon their own souls, which will turn at last to their own ruin, for self-flatterers and self-deceivers will prove in the end to have been self-destroyers! How do they make themselves believe the strangest and grossest absurdities, and proceed upon them as if they were undoubted truths! There is none bad, but they are so upon some bad principle, which if it were true, would bear them out; but it is a strong delusion. The wicked heart is a deceived heart, that turns men aside; and none perish, but it is with a lie in their right hand.[x] And it is with lying vanities that they are deceived who forsake their own mercies.[y] They who mock God, and think to put a cheat upon him, do but deceive themselves, and put a damning cheat upon their own souls.[z]

When the word of God, which is a discerner of the thoughts, tells us what sinners say in their hearts; or, as sometimes it is in the original, say to their hearts, we may thence infer what slights they put upon their own souls, and how they abuse them. The fool appeases his conscience with this, that there is no God; or if there be, that he may go on securely in his wicked way, for *the Lord hath forsaken the earth*;[a] *He hath forgotten, he hides his face, and will not require it.*[b] *The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard.*[c] Did ever any man banter another, as sinners banter their own souls, run them down with assurance, and beguile them with fraud and artifice.

When the soul begins to be afraid of the wrath of God, and to think of fleeing from it by repentance, it is abused with this suggestion, that there is no danger; as God is not so strict in his demands, so he is not so severe in his punishments, as the Scripture makes him to be. God has indeed said, *There is no peace to the wicked;* but when the sinner comes to apply it to himself, he tells his own soul, *I shall have peace, though I go on to walk in the way of my heart, and to add drunkenness to thirst.*[d] He says in his heart, *I shall not be moved, for I shall never be in adversity.*[e] He is drawn into an opinion, and lulled asleep with it, that heaven is a fool's paradise, and hell is but a bugbear to frighten children, and therefore he is taught to mock at fear, and not to be affrighted, and not to believe that it is the sound of the trumpet.

They who flatter themselves with a conceit that the external professions and performances of religion will serve to bear them out, and bring them off, in the judgment of the great day, though their spirit and conversation be ever so disagreeable, give the lie to their own consciences, and tell a lie to them, and in both abuse and despise their own souls. Thus the apostle tells us, that he who only seems to be religious, and is not so really, deceives his own heart, seduces it, misleads it, and so abuses it; and, that they who are hearers of the word only, and not doers, do but deceive themselves;[f] they put a fallacy or false reasoning upon themselves, and not in a small matter which one may safely make a jest of, but in a matter, of the greatest consequence, which every man is concerned to be in good earnest about.

Let us, therefore, do this justice to our own souls, and put this respect upon them, to tell them the truth. Let one faculty deal faithfully with another; for if they act separately, it will be to the ruin of the whole. Let the understanding be true to the conscience in informing it right concerning truth and falsehood, good and evil; and then let the conscience be true to the soul in applying it, otherwise we put a contempt upon our own souls.

[4.] Those abuse their own souls who distract and disquiet them with inordinate cares and griefs about this world, and the things of it. As those despise their souls who wallow in the mire of sensual pleasures, so do they who make them work in the mines, and tug at the oar, of worldly pursuits; who rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of sorrow,[g] in the business of this world; who are careful and cumbered about many things, and have their hearts burthened and quite overcharged with an anxious solicitude, not only what they shall eat and drink, but what they shall do to get estates and grow great in the world.

It is our duty to labour, working with our hands the thing that is good. It is our sentence, to eat our bread in the sweat of our faces; and it is our sin and folly, and an abuse to our own souls, if, all our days, we eat in sorrows and darkness,[h] always in fear of losing what we have, and always in care to make it more, to lay house to house, and field to field,[i] with an insatiable and boundless desire. If we be hurried hither and thither with the cares of this world; if our souls be put upon the rack, always to the stretch in pursuit of lying vanities; if we be of doubtful mind, live in careful suspense,[k] if we hover as meteors in the air, (so the word signifies,) so that we have no rest or enjoyment of ourselves, we abuse our own souls.

It is the honour of our souls that they are made capable of working, for the glory of God, and the securing of eternal life; of working for another world, in preparation for it, working out our own salvation; and of working with another world, in concert with it; of doing the will of God as the angels do it who are in heaven. What a disparagement then is it to these souls, to make them slaves

x Isa. xliv. 20. y Jon. ii. 8. z Gal. vi. 7. a Ezek. ix. 9. b Ps. x. 11, 13. c Ps. xciv. 7. d Deut. xxix. 19.

e Ps. x. 6. f Jam. i. 22, 26. g Ps. cxxvii. 2. h Eccl. v. 17. i Isa. v. 8. k Luke xii. 29.

and drudges to the world, and to keep all their faculties employed in the work of the beasts that perish, while those high and noble services for which they were designed, are last and least thought of! Covetous worldlings are said to load themselves with thick clay, and with a continual perplexity about it; such perfect pack-horses do they make of their souls, and so fast do they chain them to this earth, when they should be mounting up with wings like eagles heavenwards.

Let us, therefore, maintain the dignity of our own souls, by disentangling them from the world, and the cares of it, and managing ourselves with a holy indifference as to those things, rejoicing as though we rejoiced not, and weeping as though we wept not, and letting our souls dwell at ease, in an assurance of the wisdom and goodness of the Divine Providence working all for our good at last, and putting it out of the power of any worldly cross or disappointment to disturb us in that repose. This is to treat our souls respectfully, and as they ought to be treated, reserving them for the employments that become them, and that they are fitted for. Let us think it below us to fill our heads with contrivances about those things, which, when we have compassed them, we cannot fill our hearts with the enjoyment of them; nor suffer the losing of that to be vexation of spirit to us, the having of which is but vanity, and no satisfaction of spirit.

[5.] Those abuse their own souls who divide them a portion of the things of this world, and put them off with those things. As the soul is abused by an inordinate coveting and pursuing of the world, so it is abused by an inordinate complacency and repose in the world; for though that may give it a present easiness, and so seem to befriend it, yet it cuts it off from its true happiness, and lays a foundation for an eternal uneasiness.

Those know how to value their own souls, who can be content with a little of this world for their passage, because there is better in reserve; but those greatly undervalue them, who could be content with it all for their inheritance and home.

It is the honour of the soul, that its original and alliance is heavenly: it stands in relation to the upper world, and, therefore, it is a debasement to it to let it take up with the things of this world for its felicity, which can neither suit its capacities, nor satisfy its vast desires. This is excellently expressed by Mr. George Herbert;

> If souls be made of earthly mould,
> Let them love gold;
> If born on high,
> Let them unto their kindred fly:
> For they can never be at rest
> Till they regain their ancient nest.

It is the honour of the soul, that it is spiritual, and is capable of spiritual enjoyments, spiritual riches. Those, therefore, put a slight upon them who think that the entertainments of sense, which we have in common with the brutes, are sufficient to make them happy, and can call them *their good things*.[l] A father cannot more show his displeasure against a son he is irreconcilably fallen out with, than in making his will to cut him off with twelvepence, who, otherwise, was entitled to a child's part of a great estate: yet much greater is the disproportion between the happiness which the souls of men are born to, and that which the greatest part of men foolishly take up with, as their reward, as their consolation, as their all, and which, therefore, they shall justly be put off with; *Didst not thou agree with me for a penny?* And, therefore, so shall thy doom be.

It is the honour of the soul, that it is immortal, is so in its duration, and has something in its constitution, which, if it were not blinded and biassed by the world and the flesh, would aspire after immortal blessedness; *Non est mortale quod optat, immortale petit—It desires not mortal, but seeks immortal, objects.* How do they then dishonour their own souls, who take up a rest and home for them in those things that will not last so long as they must last, that must be very shortly either buried in our graves, or left to our heirs, and will not go with us to the judgment, nor stand us in any stead in the soul's state of separation from the body; who confine their happiness within the bounds of time, whereas they are not themselves so confined, but are hastening into a boundless eternity! And thus the soul's being must survive, must eternally survive, its bliss, and, therefore, must of course be eternally miserable.

How did that rich man in the parable despise and abuse his own soul, who, when he had his barns enlarged and filled, said to his soul, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years*, it is all thy own, and it is enough, it is thy all, now, *take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry!*[m] If the man had had the soul of a swine, it had been something to talk to it at this rate; but what is this to a soul that must this night be required, that must this night remove it knows not where, and must leave all these things behind, to it knows not who? From his folly let us all learn this wisdom for ourselves, this justice and kindness to our own souls, to lay up treasure for them, not in this world, which we are hastening from, but in the other world, which we are hastening to.

(2.) Those despise their own souls who hazard them, and lay them open to danger, as well as those who abuse them, and do them a direct mischief. What we value we are loth to venture the loss of: those who know how to value their souls will not endanger their souls' lives; yet this is that which

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l Luke xvi. 25.

m Luke xii. 19.

multitudes do, without any regret or reflection upon their own folly.

[1.] Those hazard their souls who expose them to the wrath and curse of God every day by wilful sin, upon presumption that after a while they shall repent of their sin, and it shall be forgiven them, and all shall be well. Those have very light thoughts of their own souls, who can thus venture them in hopes of God's mercy, when at the same time they bid defiance to his justice.

It is certain that every wilful sin lays us open to the curse of God, and to the arrests of his law; and it is the soul that is exposed. As the sin is the sin of the soul, so the curse it brings upon us is a curse to the soul: so it is expressed with an emphasis, (Job xxxi. 30.) by wishing a curse to his soul, which will destroy it, and all its comforts, as a curse in the house consumes it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof. A curse upon the soul is a penetrating thing, it comes into the bowels like water, and like oil into the bones.[n] How little account do they make of their souls who run them upon this sword's point, and tremble not at all at the apprehension of their danger! They do in effect say, "No matter what becomes of them." They are by nature as children of disobedience, children of wrath, and that wrath they not only leave abiding on them,[o] but are daily adding to it, and treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, not considering what a deluge of wrath it will be when this treasury comes to be broken up, nor what will become of their souls in that deluge; it is as much as to say, they care not what comes of them.

It is true, there is a way of escaping that wrath, by repentance and faith in Christ, but these are God's gift, and his work, for those who pray for them, not for those that presume upon them. It is but a peradventure, whether God will give repentance, whether the Divine Providence will give space to repent, and whether the divine grace will give a heart to repent, a tender heart, to those who have thus hardened their hearts by the deceitfulness of sin. Those have certainly little regard to their own souls, who throw them thus into the fire of God's wrath, in hopes of snatching them as brands out of it, when there is such danger of perishing in it.

But, of all sinners, none do more impudently avow and proclaim their contempt of their own souls, than those do who curse themselves in their passions or vehement asseverations; who challenge God Almighty to damn them, nay, and sometimes explain themselves, and challenge him with a horrid emphasis to damn their souls: as if they thought that their damnation lingered and slumbered too long, they imprecate that which the devils themselves deprecated, and that is, being tormented before the time. Do they know what damnation is, what the damnation of the soul is, who dare thus run upon God, upon his neck, upon the thick bosses of his buckler, and stretch out their hands against him?[p] Those make nothing of their own souls, who make nothing of God's wrath, nor consider what a fearful thing it is for a living soul, who hates holiness, to fall into the hands of a living God, who hates sin, and will reckon for it.

[2.] Those hazard their souls who embark them in a false and deceitful bottom, and in that venture them into the vast ocean of eternity. We have a house to build for our souls, for them to retire to and repose in when a storm comes, when the night comes: now, if we build this house upon the sand, when there is a rock provided for us to build it upon, it is a sign that we despise our own souls, and think any thing will serve to be a security for them; as it is a sign that a man makes small account of his money when he puts it out upon very slender security, and cares not who he trusts with it, nor what hands he lodges it in.

It is a great thing (my brethren) to venture into another world, to be brought to judgment, and to have our everlasting state determined by an irreversible sentence; and it concerns us all seriously to consider, what hope we have that we shall come off well in that day, and what ground we have for that hope; whether it be a hope that will not make us ashamed. You are baptized, you are called Christians, you make a visible profession of religion, a passable, perhaps a plausible, one; you have a form of godliness, and perhaps join yourselves with those who are most strict and serious; and this, you think, will be a good security to you for the favour of God, and the happiness of heaven, though you are strangers to the power of godliness, and are under the dominion of the world and the flesh. It is a sign that you know not the worth of your souls, when you dare venture them thus upon that which will not bear their weight.

Those despise their souls, who can send them to God's bar with no other plea in their hands but that, *We are Abraham's seed:* or that, *I am rich, I have found me out substance; in all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me, that were sin:*[q] or that, *We have eaten and drank in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets:* or that, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we;* though they have no evidence at all for them that they love God, or believe in Christ, or repent of their sins, or that they are sanctified by the grace of God. They would not bring a cause to man's bar supported with no better pleas, that will certainly be overruled; nor venture a rich cargo in an old rotten vessel, that a thousand to one founders at sea.

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n Ps. cix. 18. o John iii. 36. p Job xv. 25, 26. q Hos. xii. 8.

Let us, therefore, show the esteem we have for our own souls, by building upon a firm foundation, and making sure work for them, and preparing that for their removal into another world which will stand them in stead, and which they may triumph in. Let us not think it enough when we die, to say, We commit our souls into the hands of Almighty God, and to cry, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;* but let us make it the care and business of our lives to prepare our souls, and get them made meet to be committed into the hands of God and Christ, and to be welcomed, that it may not be said to them, *Depart, I know you not:* these are not souls prepared for heaven, and therefore heaven was not prepared for them.——Let not us run a risk in the concerns of our souls, but press after that assurance which blessed Paul had attained when he said, *I know whom I have believed,* whom I have trusted with this precious soul of mine, that great trust which I have lodged in the hands of the great trustee, and he is able to keep that which I have submitted to his conduct, and then committed to his care against that day.[r]

[3.] Those hazard their souls, who engage them as a pawn for the world, and the gains of it. They are aiming at great things here below, they will be rich, for they think they must be rich, or they cannot be happy. And this mistake makes way for a thousand more. They are in haste to be rich, and are told, that they who are so cannot be innocent;[s] yet they will hazard their innocence, and with it all the comfort and happiness of their souls, rather than not be rich, than not be quickly rich. Contrary to the judgment of Christ, they think themselves profited if they gain the world, though they should lose their souls at last by it.

Here is a bargain to be made, some worldly design to be compassed, which, with the help of a lie, of a fraud, of a false oath, may bring home a great deal of worldly advantage. They cannot but own that such ill practices are highly dangerous to their souls, that they run a great hazard by them; natural conscience at first startles at such things, but it is for the getting of money, a present gain, and which they think is certain, and not losable. The loss of the soul is future, and they are willing to think it either uncertain or retrievable, and, therefore, they resolve to run the hazard: they flatter themselves with hopes that they may gain the world, and save their souls too; however, if they can but gain the world, let the worst come to the worst, if they do lose their souls, they shall fare as well as their neighbours; and if they alone must bear it, they will bear it as well as they can. Now this is making light of the soul indeed, to hazard its eternal bliss for an inconsiderable trifle of this world's wealth, and then to turn it off with a jest, *If I perish, I perish,* and there is an end of it; no, there is not an end of it, for it is an everlasting destruction; and those who run this venture will see their folly when it is too late, and will be taught by the loss of their souls to know the worth of them, which they had better have considered in time.

How ready are many vain people to pawn their souls for the truth of every idle word they speak; "Upon my soul it is so." Verily they make light of their souls indeed, who will venture them upon the most trifling occasion. Dost thou know what thou pawnest, man, and what the value of it is? Thou wouldst not be so free of a precious stone, if thou hadst it, as thou art of a precious soul. Those play high that, whether in jest or earnest, stake their souls; and do not consider what a subtle gamester the devil is, that souls are the prize he aims at, and that it is them he lies in wait to deceive, and so to devour: and, if we be so foolish as to hazard their ruin,—let him alone, to make sure their ruin.

Let us, therefore, make it appear that we do not despise our own souls, by taking heed to them, and keeping them diligently, keeping them out of harm's way, keeping them that the wicked one toucheth them not;[t] for there is danger, lest if he touch, he take. Let us avoid all occasions of sin, and temptations to it, all appearances of evil, and approaches toward it, and take heed of a bold adventure in any case wherein the soul is concerned, for fear of the worst. In things of value, and that are our all, it is good to be sure, and folly to run a hazard; to hazard a soul for that which a man would be loth to hazard his life.

(3.) Those despise their own souls that neglect them, and though they do not, or think they do not, do themselves and their own souls any harm, yet are not at any care to do them the good they should do them. They think it is well enough if they do not wilfully destroy their souls, though nothing is done towards the salvation of them; whereas starving the child is as surely the murder of it as poisoning it. Those certainly despise their own souls who make no provision for them.

[1.] Who take no care to get the wounds of their souls healed. Sin is a wound to the soul, a bleeding, killing wound, a wound and dishonour: Jesus Christ has made provision for the cure of this wound, there is balm in Gilead, and he himself is the physician there; by his stripes we may be healed; but in vain doth the physician do his part in prescribing, if the patient will not do his in observing the prescriptions. Christ would have healed them, but they would not be healed; and so, as David complains, the *wounds stink and are corrupt,* and all because of the sinner's foolishness.[u] They fester, and are in danger of being gangrened, because no care is taken to get

r 2 Tim. i. 12. s Prov. xxviii. 20. t 1 John v. 18. u Ps. lviii. 5.

them drest: and thus the wound, not looked after in time, proves fatal.

Those who take no care to get their sins pardoned, and their consciences purified, and their corruptions mortified, leave their own souls as the priest and Levite did the wounded man, because (like them) they have no value for them; they care not whether they live or die. They feel not the pain of their wounds in conviction of sin, they fear not the consequences of them in a dread of wrath, and so no application is made to Christ; no inquiry, What shall I do to get my sin pardoned? What method shall I take to escape the death they threaten me with? And so the soul is filled with wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores[v] which are not bound up.

It is certain that those fools who make a mock at sin, and make light of it, are chargeable with this further instance of folly, they make light of their own souls, and are not at all solicitous what becomes of them. By this, therefore, let us all make it appear that we value the lives of our souls, by inquiring, With what will the Lord be pleased? What shall we do to recover his favour? with a readiness to do any thing; to submit to any operation, to go through any course of spiritual physic prescribed, so that we may not die of our wounds. When we are reproved for a fault, and warned against it for the future, and are called to repent of what we have done amiss, if we fly in the face of the reprover, and say, we care not for his help, who would help us up when we are fallen; it is a sign that we do not value our own souls; for we would thank any one that would offer his service to help to cure a wound in our bodies, or if we had missed our way, would put us in the road again. If, therefore, by falling into sin we have showed our neglect of our souls, by hastening our repentance let us show our concern for them.

[2.] Those who take no care to get the wants of their souls supplied, despise them. The soul in its own nature is craving, and has desires which ought to be satisfied; but the soul in its fallen state is needy, it is miserably poor, it is ready to perish for hunger, as the prodigal in the far country. This world has nothing but husks for it: in our Father's house, and there only, there is bread enough. Now those have no value for themselves, who put off their souls with these husks, and think not of applying themselves to the Father of spirits for the food of spirits, the bread of life.

The soul wants knowledge, wants to be acquainted with God its Maker, with Christ its Redeemer, with the employments it is brought up, with the enjoyments it is designed, for; wants to be acquainted with the upper world it is akin to, with the future world it is bound for. The needful knowledge of these things will not be got without care and pains. Now those who will rather let their own souls be destroyed for lack of knowledge, than take that care and pains, show what a small account they make of them. They are in care to furnish themselves with that knowledge which is necessary to their getting a livelihood in this world, but not that which is necessary to their serving, glorifying, and enjoying God; and so in the greatness of their folly wander endlessly.

The soul wants to have communion with God; it is tired with the pursuits of the world, and surfeited with its pleasures, and longs to have fellowship with its own relations, to associate with those of its own kind, to have a correspondence with heaven, wants to hear thence, and send thither. There is a way appointed for such an intercourse as this, which would be its life and joy; but holy ordinances, by which it is to be kept up and maintained, are neglected, and not attended on at all, or not duly attended to; the great things of God's law and gospel are accounted as a strange thing; prayer, by which the supply of our souls' wants should be fetched in from the fulness which is in Jesus Christ, is either omitted or sinks into a formality; and in all this a contempt is put upon the soul, as if it were not worth making provision for.

[3.] Those who take no care to get the watch over their own souls kept up, despise them. There ought to be a constant guard upon our own spirits, a jealous eye, and a careful hand upon them, that the first risings of corruptions in them may be subdued and mortified, stifled and suppressed, and the first risings of any good affections in them cherished and encouraged: we must have an eye upon them, as upon children at their book, and servants at their work, to keep them to it; must have an eye upon these jewels in our hands, that they be not snatched from us. *Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently.*[w] We are intrusted with these talents, and charged to keep that which is committed to our trust. And those who know how to value their souls, will keep them with all diligence, as knowing that out of them, out of souls well kept, are the issues of life.

But how many are there who have precious souls to keep, and never cast an eye upon them, nor make inquiries concerning them, where they are, or what they are doing, or what is likely to become of them; never retire into their hearts, or commune with them; there is no care taken to keep out that which is dangerous and prejudicial to the soul's interests, nor to fetch in or keep up that which is necessary, and will be serviceable to them.

And for want of watchfulness and circumspection, the soul soon becomes like the field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the man void of understanding, which, when the stone wall was broken down, was

[v] Isa. i. 6.

[w] Deut. iv. 9.

all grown over with thorns; and nettles covered the face thereof.[x] There is the picture of a neglected soul; it is all overgrown with vain and foolish thoughts, corrupt and vile affections, like the ground when it was cursed, which brought forth thorns and thistles. By these God is dishonoured, the soul is disgraced, all good fruit is choked, and the earth that brings forth these thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. It is sad to think how many precious souls, that stand fair for heaven, are ruined and undone to all eternity, through mere carelessness.

[4.] Those who take no care to get the welfare, the eternal welfare, of their souls secured; they are hastening into a state where they must be for ever either completely happy, or completely miserable, and never were truly solicitous what they should do to escape that misery, and to lay hold on that happiness: certainly these despise their own souls, they do not think them worth saving; not worth the jailer's inquiry, *What must I do to be saved?* or that young man's, *Good Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?* A thousand impertinences are inquired after, and the great concerns of the soul and eternity not regarded.

This honour God has put upon the soul, that he has not only by its creation made it capable of eternal life, but by its redemption made it a candidate for eternal life: but those despise this honour God has put upon them, who neglect the great salvation, and think it not worth taking any care about, or striving for; they judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, as is said of the unbelieving Jews.[y] It is not from a penitent sense of the sinfulness of their souls, but from a proud contempt of the capacities of their souls, which they do not think worth gratifying with that life, and the joys and glories of it. They are not at all solicitous what will become of them in the other world, so that they can but have their wishes in this world; nor have the wisdom of the unjust steward, who took care of a house to be in when he was turned out of his stewardship. It is to be feared, that even among those who are called Christians, read the Scriptures, and hear sermons, there are many who never yet put the question seriously to themselves, "*What will become of me in the other world?* If I should die to-night, *whither would death bring me?*"

Or if they have asked the question, they have not pursued it, nor brought it to any issue, but the matter is still at uncertainties; and they are content it should be so, and put off the prosecution of this inquiry, as Felix did, to some more convenient season; they know not when. When they come to be sick, or come to be old, then they will begin to think of their souls and eternity, and to prepare for another world, when they find they must stay no longer in this. What low thoughts do these delays speak of their own souls, as if their welfare were to be the last and furthest thing in their thoughts?

And those who seem to be in earnest in inquiring the way to heaven, yet perhaps do not like it when they are showed it, but fly off from the bargain when it comes to be struck; as he did who went away sorrowful from Christ, because he had great possessions. Some value he had for his soul, else he had not gone away sorrowful; but he had a greater value for the world, else he had not gone away at all. Those who have a beloved sin, a Dalilah, an Herodias, a house of Rimmon, which they cannot find in their hearts to part with, no, not to save their souls, show how little they value them; for those who know the worth of them will be glad to accept of Christ upon his own terms, of Christ upon any terms.

(4.) Those despise their own souls, who prefer their bodies before their souls. Man is a creature admirably composed of matter and spirit, that though closely united, have distinct and separate interests and capacities. It is the sinfulness and misery of our fallen state, that the body has got dominion over the soul, and the soul is become carnal; it also is flesh. It will be the felicity of our glorified state, that the soul will have the dominion, and the body itself will become spiritual; but it is the test now, in this state of trial and probation, which of these we will give the preference to, and maintain the dominion of, the soul or the body. Now those may truly be said to despise their own souls comparatively, that prefer their bodies before them, and allow them their principal cares.

[1.] Those who employ their souls only to serve their bodies, and make provision for them, do in effect despise their own souls. The body was made to serve the soul, in serving God, and when it is kept so employed, it is a temple of the Holy Ghost, and upon that account truly honourable: but if, instead of that, the soul be made to serve the body in serving the world, and all its noble powers are kept at constant work to provide for the gratifications of the body and its appetites, this is a great contempt put upon the soul.

Many people live as if they had bodies only to take care of, and not souls; or, as if the reasonable soul were intended only to forecast for the sensitive one; and man had no other prerogative above the beasts, but that, with the use of his reason, he is capable to screw up the delights of sense to a greater degree of pleasure, and make them more nice and delicate; to improve by art the gifts of nature, which the inferior creatures are content to take as they find them; which, after all, does but make the desires of

x Prov. xxiv. 30, 31

y Acts xiii. 46.

sense the more humoursome, and consequently the delights of sense the less pleasing.

But what a disparagement is this to a rational soul, to be wholly taken up in such sordid employments, and to be made a perfect drudge to the body; as if we had souls given us for no other end but to keep our bodies from putrifying; and the powers of reason served for no other purpose, but to be caterers for the desires of sense! This is that sore evil which Solomon saw under the sun, as an error, the servant on horseback, and the prince attending as a servant or lacquey to him.[a] When the wits are set on work to invent satisfactions for the appetites and passions, and the intellectual powers, which should be employed in the noblest speculations, and the most needful conduct of the heart and life, are employed in the meanest projects, here is a soul despised, and making itself truly despicable.

[2.] Those who injure their souls to please their bodies, comparatively despise their own souls, and show they do not value them as they ought.

Those do so who indulge the ease of the flesh to the soul's loss and detriment, who, to spare a little pains to the body, come short of great advantages to the soul, which it might gain to itself either here or hereafter. The sluggard who will not plough by reason of cold, and, therefore, has nothing to gather in at harvest, but is forced to beg in winter, preferred his present ease before his future benefit: so do they, who, by observing the winds and clouds,[a] are hindered from sowing and reaping; and such is the incogitancy of those who, to save a little labour of the body, lose the benefit of the means of grace for their souls: this will be found very improvident husbandry at last, when profit and loss come to be compared.

Those do so who indulge the appetite of the flesh to the soul's hurt and damage; who not only lose the good their souls might reap, because they cannot find in their hearts to exert themselves, but involve themselves in a great deal of mischief, because they cannot find in their hearts to deny themselves, and to cross the cravings of the flesh. The sensual appetite is apt to be carried out inordinately toward excesses, and as far as it is gratified, the soul is prejudiced by it, the heart is overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and rendered unfit for heavenly converse and pursuits: and, therefore, those manifestly prefer their bodies above their souls, who, as Solomon speaks, are given to appetite, and have not learned to put a knife to their throat.[b]

The Israelites in the wilderness coveted quails, they could not live without flesh, and God gave them their request; but at the same time he sent leanness into their souls.[c] He withdrew his grace from them, and those comforts which used to make their souls as a watered garden. Those do not know how to value their own souls, who can be content to have them starved and made lean, so that their bodies may be feasted and fattened, and fed to the full.

There is no sin that does more immediately prejudice the soul to please the body, than drunkenness does, for it deprives men for the time of the use of their reason, and profanes that crown, that glory of the human nature, by casting it to the ground, and levelling men with the beasts that perish. The understanding of the man is darkened when he is drunk, his memory in a manner lost, his thoughts in a tumult, and his passions have got clear of the government of reason, and are all in an uproar; his speech bewrays him to be a fool.

> The drunkard forfeits man, and doth divest
> All worldly right, save what he has by beast.
> HERBERT.

Can a man put a greater contempt than this upon his own soul, thus to trample it in the dirt; not once or twice, but often; to make a practice of it, as many do? And besides the present injury that it does to reason, which a night's sleep does in some measure recover, it does a lasting mischief to conscience and religion; it debauches the mind, hardens the heart, and stupifies it; it alienates the affections from divine things, and has been the ruin of many who were well educated, and began well. Drunkards, to gratify the spark in the throat, as they call it, extinguish the fire from heaven, the fire of holy love and devotion, and kindle a fire of vile affections there, which, if infinite mercy do not prevent, will burn to the lowest hell.

[3.] Those who endanger their souls to secure their bodies, despise their own souls, and give the preference to the inferior part of them. It is natural to us when the head is struck at, to venture the right hand for its preservation, which, though dear, is not so dear. When at any time we are brought to this dilemma, that there is no way of avoiding the sin of the soul, but by suffering in the body, and no way of avoiding suffering in the body, but by the sin of the soul, then it will appear which we give the preference to, the soul or the body: they are both dear we will suppose, but then it will be seen which is most dear.

Those who will deny Christ, rather than die for him, and to escape the fiery furnace, will worship the golden image, plainly show that they despise their own souls; for they will rather throw away their comforts in God, and their hopes of heaven, than their hopes and comforts in this world. When the storm of persecution arises because of the word, they will rather make shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience, than of the world and of a good

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[a] Eccl. x. 5, 6, 7. [a] *Ch.* xi. 4. [b] Prov. xxiii. 1, 2. [c] Ps. cvi. 15.

estate; and, contrary to the common dictates of reason, will rather cast themselves overboard than their wares: and, though all that a man has he will give for his life, but little of what they have will they give for the life of their souls. Our Lord Jesus has expressly told us, that he who will save his life by disowning Christ, the same shall lose it;[d] by saving a transient satisfaction he shall lose an eternal felicity; but whosoever is willing to lose his life, shall find it with infinite advantage in eternal life: but they will not take his word, and, therefore, choose iniquity rather than affliction; a choice which they will certainly repent: it were well if they would repent in time.

But let us show that we value our souls, by making Moses's choice, *Rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*;[e] and theirs, who loved not their lives to the death in the cause of Christ; and that of blessed Paul, who counted not his life dear to himself, so that he might finish his course with joy:[f] and let us reckon our losses for our religion abundantly made up, if we do but secure the salvation of the soul. When that blessed martyr Bishop Hooper was urged to recant, with this consideration, "Life is sweet, and death bitter:" "It is true," said he, "but eternal life is more sweet, and eternal death more bitter." This was the language of one who put a value upon his own soul; as on the contrary, he who in the like case said, "The fire is hot, and nature is frail, and the truth is, I cannot burn," and, therefore, denied Christ, and turned papist; showed that he preferred his body before his soul, as multitudes do, who will rue it at the last.

II. I come next briefly to show the folly of those who thus despise their own souls; and really the thing speaks for itself; men cannot be guilty of a greater absurdity: their folly will shortly be made manifest to all men; and to themselves too, when all these things, for the sake of which they slighted their own souls, are lost and gone, and the soul that despised itself is for ever abandoned by its Maker to a miserable remembrance of its own folly, in forsaking its own mercies, which would have put a crown upon its hopes, for lying vanities, which put a cheat upon them.

To show the folly of those who despise their own souls, let us consider only these five things: The nature of the soul; its nearness to us; the purchase of the soul; the projects that are concerning it; and its perpetual duration.

1. Consider the nature of the soul, which is too noble, too excellent to be despised; they who despise it despise dominions, and speak evil of dignities. *They pursue my soul*, says Job, (*ch.* xxx. 15.) the word in the original signifies *my principal one*; for the soul is the principal part of us. Jacob calls it, *His honour*.[g] David calls it, *His glory*.[h] It is folly therefore to despise that which has such an innate excellency in it, and has so much honour put upon it. The soul of man is no despicable thing, and therefore they are fools who despise it.

The soul is of divine original; it was not made of the dust, as the body was, but it was the breath of the Almighty, had the image of God stamped upon it, and is the master-piece of God's workmanship in this lower world. He who despises the poor, reproaches his Maker, so does he who despises his own soul; he thereby reflects dishonour upon the Father of spirits, as if that work of his hands which he rejoiced in were not worth our regarding.

The soul is of inestimable value; for its powers are great and noble; its apprehensions not bounded by the horizon of sense and time, but reach far beyond it; it is capable of knowing God, and conversing with him, and of receiving a divine revelation in order thereunto; it is capable of being sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God, and employed in praising and blessing God: nay, it is capable of being glorified with God, of seeing him as he is, and enjoying him to eternity; and is this a thing to be despised? The soul is that one talent which they who have received least from their Master are intrusted with; its being a talent speaks it of value, as does the doom past upon the slothful servant who did not improve that one talent, though he was intrusted with no more. The soul is a price in the hand to get wisdom, that principal thing, which is to be laboured for above all gettings.

Self-consciousness is in the nature of the soul; it is capable of reflecting upon itself, and conversing with itself; *Nosce teipsum—Know thyself*, was an ancient dictate of wisdom: and self-ignorance is supposed to be a gross absurdity, when it is asked *Know ye not your own selves?*[i] But those who despise themselves, and are in no concern about their own souls, show that they have no knowledge, no right knowledge, of themselves. This faculty of the soul which is so much its honour, does not do its part the light that is in them is darkness.

2. Consider the nearness of the soul. It is his own soul that the sinner despises, that is, it is himself for the soul is the man, and what is the man but a living soul? Abstract the soul as living, and the body is a lump of clay; abstract the soul as rational and the man is as the beasts that perish. Persons in Scripture are often reckoned by souls; for the body is but the shell, the soul is the kernel.

Now, to the right value of a thing, it must be considered not only what it is in itself, but what interest we have in it. The loan of a thing is not so valuable as the property. Now the world is but len

d Matt. xvi. 25. e Heb. xi. 25. f Acts xx. 24.

g Gen. xlix. 5. h Ps. xvi. 9. i 2 Cor. xiii. 5

us, whatever we have in it, it is not to be called our own; but our souls are our own; we brought them into this world, and shall carry them out. The soul is called *the darling:* [k] in the original it is, *my only one.* We are intrusted with but one soul, and therefore, the greater is the shame if we neglect it, and the greater the loss if we lose it. Our souls being our only ones, should be our darlings, not our drudges; being near to us, they should be dear to us, and our constant care and concern should be about them. This is my vineyard which is mine, (such an emphasis does the spouse lay upon the property,) and therefore should be ever before us.[l]

Our soul is our own, for we are intrusted with it, as committed to our charge, by him whose all souls are, to be employed in his service now, and to be fitted for a happiness in the vision and fruition of him hereafter; and of this trust we must shortly give account: "Man, woman, thou hadst a soul of thy own, what didst thou do with it? It was lodged in thy hand, where is it? It was to be thy peculiar care, has it been so?" O what folly is it to despise our souls, when we are so nearly interested in them, that we really are good or bad, and it is with us well or ill, according as our souls are or are not well looked after. The concerns of our souls are, as our Saviour speaks, the τα ημετερα,—*the things that are our own.* The concerns of the world are the τα αλλοτρια—*another man's;* Luke xvi. 12. Epictetus spoke much the same when he made the conduct and government of our appetites and passions, *abstine* and *sustine*, to be the τα εφ' ημιν—*the duty which is ours*, but the issues of our worldly affairs to be the τα ουκ εφ' ημιν—*the event*, which is God's. The keeping of our hearts is above all keepings, and therefore, they ought to be kept with all diligence, and not to be despised.[m]

3. Consider the purchase of the soul, and the price that was paid for its redemption. If we despise the soul, we despise that, which not only the all-wise Creator dignified, but which the all-wise Redeemer too put yet greater honour upon, and so reflect upon his judgment too. We reckon the value of a thing by that which a wise man will give for it, that knows it, and is under no necessity of purchasing it. Our Lord Jesus knew very well what souls were, and had no need of them, was happy without them, and yet gave himself, his own precious blood, to be a ransom for them; αντλυτρον —*a counter-price.*[n] He made his soul an offering for ours, to teach us how to value them. When God would prove the excellency of his people, and his value for them, he mentions this instance of it, *I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.*[o] What a demonstration is it then of the intrinsic value of souls, as well as of the kindness he had for them, when he gave his own Son out of his bosom for them, the Son of his love to suffer and die for them.

You see how high souls stand in Christ's book of rates, and shall they then stand low in ours? As silver and gold would not satisfy the desires of a soul, nor its capacities, *in puris ejus naturalibus—in its innate purity*, so neither would they satisfy for the sins of the soul, if I may so speak, *in impuris ejus naturalibus—in its innate impurity.* We are not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the blood of Christ, which is of inestimable value; nothing less than that would buy them back out of the hands of divine justice, would save them from ruin, and secure to them their blessedness: shall we then despise that which he paid so dear for, and sell that for a mess of pottage, like profane Esau, which he purchased with his own blood?

And let us further consider, that if Christ paid such a price for the purchase of our souls, he will inquire after them, whether we take any care of them or no; as all wise men do after their purchases. If we carelessly lose our own souls, yet Christ will be no loser by it; for if he be not glorified by our souls in their everlasting happiness, he will be glorified upon them in their everlasting ruin. And if they forget the rock that formed them, and deny the Lord that bought them, let them know, that as he who formed them will show them no favour, so he who bought them will say, *Depart from me, I know you not.*

4. Consider the projects that are laid about souls, and what striving there is for them, and for their love and service. Nothing makes men value themselves so much as being courted and contended about. Sirs, you are fools if you despise your own souls, for you cannot imagine what work there is about them. God and the world, Christ and Satan, are rivals for the throne in them: the good Spirit is striving with men's souls, to sanctify and save them; the evil spirit goes about continually seeking to debauch and destroy them. God cannot have a more acceptable present brought him than your souls, *My son, give me thy heart;* nor Satan a more acceptable prey.

It concerns you then to look about you, and to make such a disposition of your own souls as you are obliged to make, and as will be for your true interest: it concerns you to fortify them against the assaults of the worst of their enemies, and to furnish them for the service of the best of their friends.

Think what projects the love of God has to save souls; with what a peculiar care that God, whose the worlds are, even a world of angels, has been pleased to concern himself for the world of mankind,

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k Ps. xxxv. 17. l Cant. viii. 12. m Prov. iv. 23.

n Matt. xx. 28. o Isa. xliii. 3. 4.

the world of souls. He had thoughts of love to a remnant of the sons of men, of the souls of men, before the worlds were; was devising means that his banished might not be for ever expelled from him.[p] He sent his Son to seek and save lost souls; and says himself to the returning soul, *I am thy salvation.*[q] He has given his Spirit to work upon our spirits, and to witness with them. He has appointed his ministers to watch for your souls;[r] their business is to win souls.[s] So much is done, so much is doing, for souls' salvation.

Think also what projects the malice of Satan has to ruin souls, to ruin your souls; to get to rule them, and then he knows he shall ruin them. What devices, what depths, what wiles he has in hunting for the precious soul! and how all the forces of the powers of darkness are kept continually in arms to war against the soul! The devil's agents trade in the souls of men; so we find, Rev. xviii. 13. Let us not therefore despise our own souls, but have a careful eye upon them, that they may become God's children, and not the devil's slaves.

5. Consider the perpetual duration of souls, and the preparations that are made in the other world to receive them. Did we but live by that faith, which is the *substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*, we should value ourselves and our own souls at another rate than commonly we do: did we look more before us, we should look more carefully and concernedly within us: and, therefore, our care about our souls, and our care about eternity, are very fitly put together.

Things are valued very much by their duration: gold is therefore the most valuable metal, because most durable. Now this is the great thing which speaks the worth of the soul, and shames those who despise it, that it is an immortal spirit, it is to last and live for ever; it is a flame that can never be extinguished; the spirit of a man is that candle of the Lord which will never be blown out, or burn out; it must survive both the little world, when that is turned into dust and ashes, and the great world, when that is become a vast heap of ruins. O! think of thy soul, as that which will not only live and act when it is separated from the body, but as that which must be somewhere for ever, for ever.

It is an awful consideration when a child is born, to think here is the beginning of a being that must outlive all the ages of time, and whose life will run parallel with the endless ages of eternity. Here is a candle lighted that must burn for ever, in flames either of divine love, or of divine wrath. Here is a perpetual motion set on foot that shall know no stop or period. The brute creatures are mortal; it is not of the particular animals, but of the κτισις, the whole creation in general, that there is said to be that earnest expectation, Rom. viii. 19. But man will be immortal in his individuals; and is such a soul as this to be despised then?

But this is not all; there is everlasting happiness or everlasting misery designed for souls in the other world, according to their character in this, and according as they are found when they are fetched hence. Were we all sure that our immortal souls would without fail be immortally happy in the other world, they ought not to be despised, but a great deal of care taken of them, to prepare them for that happiness; but the matter is not so,—we are in danger of falling short of that happiness, and forfeiting our title to it, and of being cast away at last, and then we are undone.

Think what preparations of wrath are made to receive sinful souls; the *Tophet* that is ordained of old, and to which they are reserved; the day of wrath, to which the wicked shall be brought forth; and you will see yourselves concerned for your precious souls, that they may be saved from that wrath to come, and will stir them up as the angel did Lot, *Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, stay not in all the plain, escape to the mountain*, to the holy mountain, *lest thou be consumed*;[t] for souls that are despised may even be despaired of: who will pity thy soul, and snatch it as a brand out of the burning, if thou hast thyself no regard to it?

Think what preparations of glory are made for sanctified souls; such as eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive.[u] Souls must needs be of great value, when there is so much laid out, so much laid up, to make those souls truly happy, whom the King of kings delights to honour. The faculties and capacities of the soul must needs be large, when there goes so much to fill them and bear proportion to them.

Look, therefore, upon the world to come, and then you will see your souls worth taking care of. How lightly soever some people now think of their own souls, I am confident that they will be of another mind shortly, when either the grace of God opens their eyes; for one of the first things that a sinner is convinced of in order to his conversion, is of the worth of his own soul; or, when death having closed the eyes of the body, and so drawn aside the interposing veil of sense, opens the eyes of the mind. When the soul is stript, it will see itself to be no such despicable thing as it now looks upon itself to be. Well, it is good for us always to have such thoughts of ourselves, and of other things, as we shall have shortly when we come to ourselves

III. Let us apply the subject.

1. Let us see and bewail our folly in having had such low thoughts of our own souls, and that we

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p 2 Sam. xiv. 14. q Ps. xxxv. 3. r Heb. xiii. 17. s Prov. xi. 30. t Gen. xix. 17. u 1 Cor. ii. 9.

have forgot their dignity, and put dishonour upon them. Evidences there are too many, and too plain, of the low thoughts we have had of our own souls, while we have thought of our bodies with a pride, and pleasure, and concern more than was meet; as if we had bodies only to take care of, and not souls.

We are apt to take up with a cheap and easy religion, are still asking how much will serve just to bring us to heaven, as if we were afraid of doing too much for our own souls, whereas all the danger is of doing too little. We crowd our religion into a corner, and instead of making a business of it as it requires and deserves, make a by-business of it: we are eager in our worldly pursuits, but very remiss and indifferent in holy duties; and this is a sign that we have low thoughts of our own souls.

We converse little with our own souls; we do not commune with them, nor inquire as we should into their state and temper; we show but little concern about them, as if it were an indifferent thing to us whether they were lost or saved. We take no care to balance the accounts of our souls, but let their affairs lie at large and unsettled, and this is an evidence that we despise our own souls; we make ourselves strangers to them, as if they were not worthy our acquaintance. The face it may be is admired, and therefore is often looked at in the glass, but the soul is despised, and therefore never considered.

We are very prodigal of our time and opportunities, and take no care to improve what we have, or to redeem what we have lost, and that is an evidence against us that we have despised our own souls; for those who value their souls, value their time, as knowing that the eternal welfare of their souls depends upon the due improvement of the days of time. What value do those put upon their souls, who sleep in summer, and play in harvest, when they should be laying in provision for their souls against winter; who idle away sabbath time, and the time of the morning and evening sacrifice every day, when they should be doing some service to their own souls, or, which is equivalent, to God with their souls?

Well, let us be ashamed of our own folly in this matter; say, *So foolish have I been and ignorant; surely I am more brutish than any man.* If Christ had not more care for our souls than we ourselves have had, we had been in hell long since. Let us be humbled before God for our contempt of that which God has given us such a charge of, and which we ought to have had such a concern for. The matter is so bad, that it is not capable of aggravation. We ourselves have suffered so much by our neglect, that we are inexcusable if we be not troubled for it, and lay not that to heart which has been not only so great a sin, but so great a damage to us, that though we have reason to hope that upon our repentance God has forgiven it to us, yet we have reason enough not to forgive ourselves.

2. Let us learn for the future how to put a due value upon our own souls; not to magnify ourselves above our brethren, for they also have understanding as well as we, they are not inferior to us, but to magnify ourselves above the brutes, so as to scorn in any respect to level ourselves with them; and to magnify our souls above our bodies, so as to be more solicitous about our spiritual and eternal concerns, than about any secular affairs whatsoever, even those of the greatest importance.

Let us believe that one soul is more worth than all the world; that this soul of ours is so; and that the gain of all the world, if we could compass it, will not compensate or countervail the loss of it; but the saving of the soul will make us abundant amends for whatever loss we may sustain in providing for our souls, or protecting them.

Let us value our souls, as they have relation to God, whose image they bear, and for whose glory they were made, to show forth his praise, and to qualify us to be the collectors of his praises from the inferior creatures, and to pay them into the treasury above. Let us value them as they have relation to another world, which they were made for, and are hastening to; value them as spiritual, value them as immortal, that they may employ themselves in spiritual work, and entertain themselves with spiritual delights, and may be still aiming high, at glory, honour, and immortality, resolved not to take up short.

Let us not so value ourselves, as to think any good work below us, nor any service we can do to God or our brethren, though it may be the meanest and most despised; but let us always so value ourselves, as to think any evil work below us, and a disparagement to us to do an improper thing, though never so much in fashion and reputation. Let us think our souls too good to be made drudges to the world, and captives to the flesh, and slaves to any base lust. A heathen could say, *Major sum et ad majora natus quam ut corpori sim mancipium—I am superior, and destined to superior privileges than to be the slave of the body.* It is the great soul of man, (so it has been fitly called by some,) that great soul of thine, whose cause we are pleading against thyself, who dost despise it: shall we gain our point, and prevail with you to think more highly and honourably of it, and of its noble powers and faculties?

3. Let us make it appear that we do indeed value our own souls, and do nothing that looks like despising or undervaluing them. You will all say you value your own souls, but what proof do you give of it? Show it me by your works that you have indeed a concern for your precious souls, and prefer them before your bodies, and that you have

nothing so much at heart as their true welfare. Let all who converse with you know, by your constant watchfulness over your words and ways, that you have a true respect for your own souls, and would not do any thing to their prejudice.

Be much in communion with your own hearts, in reflecting upon yourselves, and inquiring what progress you make in the way to heaven; and how you grow in grace, what ground you get of your corruptions, and whether you do not lose ground. Be aware of guilt contracted by your sins of daily infirmity, and renew your repentance daily, and the application of the blood of Christ to your consciences, to cleanse and purify them; and thus make it appear that you value your souls.

Be afraid of sin, of every thing that looks like it and leads to it, and stand upon your guard against every temptation, that you may resist it at the first. Check the risings of corruption, and look diligently, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble and defile you. To sin, is to wrong the soul, and to save that wrong from being its ruin, there is no other way but to repent, and that is to afflict the soul, to be pricked to the heart. To sin, is to make work for repentance, that is the best that can come of it; so that if we have any value for our own souls, we must show it by keeping at a distance from sin, and having not only a dread of it, but an antipathy to it.

We must show that we love our souls by our diligent and constant attendance on the means of grace, by our keeping up secret prayer, and conversing much with the word of God, without which the soul cannot prosper, or be in health. Whatever has a tendency to the good of our souls, and the improving of them in knowledge and grace, and fitness for heaven, we must show our esteem for our souls by improving them, for the directing and quickening, the strengthening and comforting, of our souls, and the renewing of the inward man more and more.

4. Let us value other things as they have relation to our souls, and fix our estimate of them by the value of our souls, and stand affected to them accordingly.

Let us value the Bible as the best book, because it is a book for the soul; it discovers our souls to us as a glass, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.[v] It discovers to our souls the way that leads to their present and future happiness. In the Scriptures we think we have eternal life, life for the soul. It is the excellency of the word of God, that it converteth the soul, it enlightens the mind, it rejoiceth the heart;[w] and for this we should value it, because it makes the soul wise unto salvation, and furnishes it for every thing that is good.

Let us value the sabbath as the best day of the week, because it is a day for the soul, a day that befriends the soul's employments and enjoyments, when the body rests, that it may give the soul the more scope; and, therefore, all who have an honour for their own souls, will call the sabbath *A delight, holy of the Lord, and honourable.*

Let us value those as our best friends who are friends to our souls, and fear those as our worst enemies who are enemies to our souls; too often we do the contrary. It is certain, that those who tempt us to sin are enemies to our souls, who court us to forbidden pleasures, and flatter us in forbidden practices, and tell us that we shall have peace, though we go on; yet such as these, most people are pleased with as their friends, delight in their company, and willingly hearken to all they say. It is certain, that those who reprove us for sin are friends to our souls, who faithfully tell us of our faults, and warn us of our danger, and call us to our duty: yet, such as these most people are displeased with as their enemies; so they reckon them, because they tell them the truth. Would we show that we value our own souls, let us learn to say to a tempter, *Get thee behind me, Satan, thou speakest as one of the foolish people speak;* and to say to a reprover, *Smite me, and it shall be a kindness: and that which I see not teach thou me.*

Let us reckon that condition of life best for us, that is best for our souls; which is most free from temptations, especially, to the sin that most easily besets us; and which gives us the greatest advantage for our souls. Our value for our souls should reconcile us to afflictions, which though grievous to the body, yet, by the grace of God working with them, are beneficial to the soul, and yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby. *Blessed is the man whom God chasteneth;* though it be painful and uneasy to the body, if thereby he teach him out of the law, that will be nourishing to the soul.[x]

But above all, let us value our Lord Jesus Christ as the best friend that ever poor souls had, who died to redeem and save them. The good Shepherd is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls;[y] a good Shepherd indeed, who laid down his life for our souls; who has provided food for our souls, and healing for our souls, and rest for our souls, and an eternal happiness for our souls. O let our souls love him, and prize him, and study what we shall render to him for his love! And what shall we render? All the return he expects is, that since he has approved himself such a good friend to our souls, we should apply ourselves to him accordingly, and make use of him. Let me therefore now, in the close, press this upon you with all earnestness; show the value you have, both for precious Jesus and for your own precious souls, by trusting him with them; commit

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v Heb. iv. 12. w Ps. xix. 7, 8. x Ps. xciv. 12. y 1 Pet. ii. 25.

them to his care, submit them to his conduct and government; observe his orders, follow his prescriptions, and then depend upon his power and goodness to do all that for your souls which their case calls for. What his mother said to the servants at the marriage in Cana, is my charge to you; *Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it*,[z] though displeasing to flesh and blood, and then he will turn water into wine in your souls, and they shall want for nothing. Trust your souls with Jesus Christ, and know whom you have trusted, even one who is able to keep what we have committed to him against that day.

Lastly, If we must not despise our own souls, we must not despise the souls of others; for if ours be precious, so are theirs; and if we ought in love to our own souls to do all we can for their salvation, which is the true self-love, certainly the great commandment, which binds us to love our neighbour as ourselves, binds us to do all we can for the salvation of the souls of others, as for the salvation of our own.

It certainly obliges us to take heed of doing any thing to the prejudice of the souls of others. Those despise their brethren's souls who care not what stumbling-blocks and occasions of sin they lay in the way of their brethren, by their abuse of their Christian liberty; nor how much they contribute to the wickedness of the wicked, and to the grief and trouble of the spirits of good people. Destroy not those souls which are the work of God,[a] and precious work; which are the purchase of Christ, for whom Christ died.[b] Be afraid of doing any thing to discourage those who are weak in their way to heaven; Christ will not quench the smoking flax, do not you then. Be tender of tender consciences, and despise not those who scruple to do that which you are free in, nor insult over them for their weakness.

Nay, it is not enough that we do not put contempt upon our brethren's souls, but we must put a value upon them, and be ready to do them all the service we can. All the children of men who dwell on the face of all the earth have precious souls; Turks and Heathens, Moors and Indians, have so; the Negroes who are bought and sold have so; precious souls, that are capable of knowing, and glorifying, and enjoying God, and must be ever either happy or miserable. O that this were more thought of, and that the souls of such were not despised as they are! In God's hand is the soul of all mankind, and therefore they should be much upon our hearts, and we should concern ourselves for them. This is a good reason why we should pray for all men, that God's name may be sanctified, and his will done, by all men on earth, as it is done by all angels in heaven; because they have all precious souls capable of this honour and work. Thus we must honour all men.

Pity self-destroying sinners, who are damning their own souls, and if you can do any thing, have compassion upon them, and help them. We should justly condemn ourselves, as not having the value we ought to have for human life, if we saw a madman ready to cut his own throat, and did not interpose to prevent it; and may we not justly then charge it upon ourselves that we have not the value we ought to have for human souls, when we see wicked people, who are beside themselves, running headlong upon the destruction of their own souls, and never show any concern about it? Observe what an emphasis the apostle lays upon this, in the encouragement he gives us to do our utmost for the converting of sinners from the error of their ways, that they who do so shall *save a soul from death*.[c] There is a soul in the case, and therefore we should think nothing too much to do to help it.

Pity self-disquieting saints, whose souls are troubled and cast down, who are of a sorrowful spirit, and go mourning from day to day; put your souls into their souls' stead,[d] and then instead of despising them, (as those are apt to do who are themselves wholly at ease and quiet,) try what you can do to strengthen them with your mouth; and let the moving of your lips be, if possible, to assuage their grief, and to help them out of that horrible pit and miry clay, considering yourselves, lest ye also be tempted.

Especially have a tender regard to the souls of those who are under your charge: O do not despise them; let it be not an different thing to you whether the souls of your children and servants be saved or damned; as it plainly is to those who never teach them the *things that belong to their peace*, who never pray with them, or for them, nor take any care to restrain them from doing evil, or quicken them to do well. They forget how precious their souls are, and what an opportunity they have of doing them a kindness. You would think yourselves barbarous and unjust if you did not provide what is necessary for their bodies; and are you not much more so if you provide not what is necessary for their souls? O that the souls of your poor children might be dear to you! They derive corruption through your loins, and, therefore, nothing should be wanting on your part to get that hereditary disease cured. You should travail in birth again, to see Christ formed in them. Let it be much more your care to get them fit to live in heaven, than fit to live in this world; to get their souls enriched and established with grace, than to raise estates for them: and let this be the top of your ambition concerning them, that they may be praising God on earth, when you are praising him in heaven; and, that you and they

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z John ii. 5. a Rom. xiv. 20. b 1 Cor. viii. 11.

c James v. 19, 20. d Job xvi. 4, 5.

may be together for ever praising him. It will be so, if you really have the value you ought to have for their souls, and for your own.

THE FOLLY

OF

DESPISING OUR OWN WAYS.

PROVERBS xix. 16.

But he that despiseth his ways shall die.

WE have here a fair warning to a careless world; a fair warning given, O that it were but taken! There are those by whom it is taken. David speaks of it with comfort, that he had taken the alarms which God's commands gave, and, therefore, hoped for the rewards they proposed; *by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping them there is great reward.* The written word is a word of warning.[a] The work of ministers is to warn sinners, they are set as watchmen for this purpose, and are to hear the word from God's mouth, and to warn them from him, and in his name. And this is that warning which they are to give from him; *O wicked man! thou shalt surely die,*[b] if thou go on still in thy trespasses. O drunkard! O swearer! O sabbath-breaker! O extortioner! O unclean person! Whoever thou art, thou shalt surely die; the God of heaven has said it, and he will never unsay it, nor can all the world gainsay it, *The soul that sinneth it shall die.*

I am here to-day in God's name to warn you, from this text, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, *O thou that despiseth thine own ways, thou shalt die!* if thou persist in this contumacy and contempt, thou shalt surely die. O that I may give the warning so as to deliver my own soul, and that you may all receive it so as to deliver yours!

There are two things in the text:

1. The sinner's fall and ruin, which we are here warned of: *He shall die; the wages of sin is death.* It is that which sin, when it is finished, brings forth. It is the birth from that conception, the harvest from that seedness. The end of all those things is death; that is it which sin has a direct tendency to.

There is a death that is the common lot of mankind; it is appointed to men, to all men, once to die: and that is the general effect of sin; it came in at the same door, at the same time: *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.* And if our breasts were but as susceptible of just resentments as they are of unjust ones, surely mankind would by consent detest and abhor all sin, because that is the mother of all mischief; that was it that introduced all that death which sullies the world's beauty, ruffles its peace, and stains the pride of all its glory.

But there is a death which is the particular lot of impenitent sinners. We lie under a sentence of death for the breach of the original law, but this speaks another death, a much sorer condemnation, which is inflicted for the contempt of the remedial law.

(1.) It is a spiritual death. An impenitent soul dies as a soul can die; it lies under the wrath and curse of God, which is killing to the soul, is its death; it is destitute of spiritual life, and of its principles and powers. It is under the dominion of corruption, which is as killing a sickness to the soul as the curse of God is a killing sentence. When Christ threatens concerning those who believe not in him, that they shall die in their sins,[c] or as it is, *v.* 21. *εν τῃ αμαρτιᾳ ὑμων, in your sin*, in that sin of unbelief; he means not so much that you shall die the death of the body, in an unconverted state, but you shall die spiritually, in the same sense that we are said to be dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. ii. 1. Sinners shall die, that is, their disease shall be incurable, and consequently mortal; they shall languish of it awhile, and die of it at last.

They shall die, that is, they shall be cut off from all communion with God, which is the life of the soul, and from all hope of his loving-kindness, which is better than life. They shall die; that is, they shall be dead to God, and to all good; dead to Christ, as branches in the vine that are withered, which have no communication with the root, nor derive any virtue from it.

This spiritual death is a thousand times worse than the death of the body, and more to be dreaded. The body separated from the soul, which is its life, is only made a just and easy prey to the worms, which feed sweetly on it; but a soul separated from God becomes a just and easy prey to the devils, as tempters, tormentors, or both. The death of the body is not to be called death to any but to those who die in their sins, and to them it is followed by the second death: to the saints it is but a sleep, for they die in Christ, and the toil of their work ceases while the comfort and recompence of them remains. Those are dead indeed who are twice dead; the body dying, and the soul dead. O dread this spiritual death; *Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from* this death, and *Christ shall give thee light and life.*

(2.) It is an eternal death: this is but the perfection of the former, the sinfulness of man and the wrath of God both immutably fastened. He shall die; that is, he shall perish eternally, he shall die

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[a] Ps. xix. 11. [b] Ezek. xxxiii. 7, 8. [c] John viii. 24.

the second death. The learned Mr. Mede observes, that in Solomon's proverbs hell is called the "congregation of the dead," of *Rephaim*, of the *giants*, so some render it,[d] alluding to the sinners of the old world, who were cut off by the deluge, and died together, which was a figure of the eternal punishment of sin in hell,[e] and he supposes that Solomon has an eye to that future state of torment, when he says, of the strange and foolish woman, that her house inclines to death, and her paths to the dead;[f] and, that the dead are there, and her guests are in the depths of hell.[g] Agreeable to which it is here said of the wilful sinner, that he shall die, he shall die eternally, shall go down to the congregation of the dead and damned.

That misery which those inevitably fall into who live and die in their sins, is fitly called death, because, though it is not the extinguishing of their being, yet, which is equivalent, it is the extinguishing of their bliss, and *non est vivere sed valere vita—life consists not in existence but in enjoyment;* they are ever dying, and yet never dead. Death is the most terrible thing we can conceive, especially death by exquisite tortures, when death itself is courted as ease and release;[h] and, therefore, hell is represented by the most killing tortures, to which that period is denied, because it is indeed more terrible than we can conceive. The metaphors are nothing to what the thing itself will be; nothing to what it is represented to us, when it is stript of the metaphors. It is *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, to the soul of man that doeth evil;* it is the wrath of an immortal God, filling the conscience of an immortal soul, that went out of this world unpardoned and unsanctified, and has in that world its faculties vastly enlarged, to receive the impressions of that wrath, and to make bitter reflections upon itself; that has no delights of sense to divert the thoughts of its own misery with, nor any hope of ever having benefit by the rejected Saviour, and the resisted Sanctifier.

This is no pleasing subject, nor is it any pleasure to me to dwell upon it, but we dare not pass by it when it comes in our way. I hope you do not desire we should; that you are not of those who would have only smooth things prophesied to you. You had better hear of it than feel it, especially when you hear of it for no other end but that for which the rich man in hell desired his five brethren might have it testified to them, lest they should also come into this place of torment. They who blame ministers for preaching these terrors of the Lord, and with them persuading men, who turn it to their reproach, that they fill their pulpits with hell and damnation, forget how frequently our Lord Jesus preached upon this subject, of being cast into utter darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; of the destruction both of soul and body in hell; of the furnace of fire into which the wicked shall be cast; of the worm that dies not, and the fire that shall not be quenched, the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels; of those who cannot escape the damnation of hell; and many, very many, the like passages we find in Christ's preaching. Such are the warnings we have received from his mouth, and we should be false to our Master, and false to your souls, if we did not give you this warning; and we should fall under his curse, and yours too, for our unfaithfulness. Give me leave therefore briefly to tell you,

[1.] That this second death, of which we give you warning, is a real thing, and no fancy. It is undoubtedly true, that there is a state of misery and torment in the other world, which will certainly be the portion of all who live and die ungodly. It is not the product of a crazed or terrified imagination, nor an engine of state wherewith to keep the world in awe: no, sirs, what we tell you concerning the torments of hell, as well as concerning the joys of heaven, are the true sayings of God. This branch of God's wrath is plainly revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.[i] It is so far from being inconsistent with the justice of God to punish sin to this degree, that considering the pomp, pleasure, and prosperity of many wicked people in this world, it is necessary to the maintaining and asserting of the divine justice and holiness; for considering how wickedness seems to be connived at and countenanced in this world, how would it appear that God hates it, and as a governor punishes it, if there were not such a place of torment reserved for it: and, therefore, the day of wrath is called the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.[k] And even natural conscience witnesses to the truth of it, when the terrors of the Lord set themselves in array against it. Some have felt such a hell within them, as has been a plain indication of a hell before them.

O that all our hearts were possessed with the firm belief of this truth, that the wrath of God abides, and will eternally abide, upon all those who believe not in Jesus Christ, and submit not to the laws of his holy religion. The devil drew our first parents in to eat the forbidden fruit, by promising them impunity, and facing down the truth of the threatening; though in it he gave the lie to eternal truth. God had said, *In the day ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die;* and has said to us as plainly, *He that believes not shall be damned:* yet, as Satan said then to those who ate of the forbidden tree, *Ye shall not die*, he still says to those who persist in unbelief and impenitence, *Ye shall not be damned.* And shall

d Prov. xxi. 16.
e 2 Pet. ii. 18.
f Prov. ii. 18.
g *Ch.* ix. 18.
h Rev. ix. 5, 6.
i Rom. i. 18.
k Rom. ii. 5.

we suffer ourselves to be imposed upon by the same fallacy, or impudent falsehood rather, which was so fatal to our first parents, and to us in them? Shall we credit the father of lies, who seeks our destruction, rather than the God of truth, who desires our welfare?

You who are young, in this age of infidelity, have need to guard against temptations of this kind. Be firmly established in this truth, and hold it fast. The revelation of it plainly comes from God, and, therefore, every suggestion, how plausible soever, that tends to shake your belief of it, must come from Satan, and must be accordingly rejected with abhorrence. Live not a carnal, sensual, wicked life, for then you will be tempted to wish there were no hell, and so by degrees to believe there is none: but by your belief of it be driven to Christ, be restrained from sin, and kept in the way of your duty, and by such good influence upon your hearts and lives, you will have your belief of it confirmed; and it will be so far from being a terror to you, that it will furnish you with matter of comfort and praise, to think that through grace you are delivered from the wrath to come.

[2.] The second death, as it is a real thing, so it is a fearful thing, inconceivably dreadful; for who knows what is the power of God's anger, either what he can inflict, or what it is possible for a soul to suffer; or what a fearful thing it is for a sinner, who has made himself obnoxious to God's justice, and would not come up to the terms of pardoning mercy offered, and has made himself odious to God's holiness, and would not come under the power of sanctifying grace, offered likewise; to fall into the hands of the living God, when he comes to take vengeance, not only for his injured holiness and justice, but (which will add greatly to the account) for his despised grace and mercy?

The condition of all those will no doubt be very sad and doleful, who shall be shut out from the vision and fruition of God in heaven; as all those will be who are not, by the grace of God, made meet for it: but it is observable, and it is what ought to be observed to you who enjoy the gospel, and profess Christianity, that the extremities of the torments of hell are always spoken of as the portion of those, who either might have had a place and a name in the church of Christ, and would not, or have a place and name in it, and do not live up to it. They are the children of the kingdom, the unbelieving Jews who shall be cast into outer darkness,[l] who were invited into the Christian church, but refused the invitation. They are the tares found in the field of the church, and the bad fish enclosed by the gospel net, who shall be cast into the furnace of fire.[m] And hypocrites, who shall not escape the damnation of hell, even those who come to the wedding-feast without a wedding-garment.[n] It is he who follows Christ, and yet betrays him, whose condition will be so miserable, that it had been better for that man he had never been born.[o] And they are those who had talents but buried them; who had opportunity of relieving Christ's poor, and shut up the bowels of their compassion from them, who shall be most severely reckoned with. So that we, for our parts, are all concerned to fear the worst, and with the utmost diligence to flee from the wrath to come; for if we fall under it, (how charitably soever some may be willing to hope concerning those who never enjoyed the advantages that we enjoy, nor made the profession that we make,) it is certain that our condemnation will be more intolerable than that of Sodom and Gomorrah, (so the Judge himself has told us,) though theirs is no less than the vengeance of eternal fire.[p]

Let our holy faith therefore produce a holy fear, as Noah's did, who by faith being warned of a deluge coming, was moved with fear to prepare an ark.[q] O that the sinners in Sion might hereby be made afraid, because, of all sinners, it will fare worst with the sinners in Sion! O that fearfulness might surprise the hypocrites, whose doom will be the most fearful; that by this fear sinners may be awakened to cast away the filthy rags of their iniquity, and hypocrites to trust no longer to the cloak of their hypocrisy; that sinners may become saints, and hypocrites sincere: for when we preach such terrible doctrine as this, it is not, as we are sometimes told, to frighten you out of your wits, but to frighten you out of your sins.

[3.] This second death is very near to all who are going on still in their trespasses. If Satan cannot prevail to take away the influence of this truth upon men's minds, by denying the reality or eternity of hell-torments, or by diminishing the terror of them, he then endeavours to do it by representing them at a vast distance, that in that view they may appear small and inconsiderable, in comparison with the things that are present and near. When we tell wicked people that they shall surely die, if they go on in sin, they are ready to tell us, perhaps it may prove so at last; but the vision that we see is for many days to come, and we prophesy of the times that are very far off,[r] as the people said to the prophet. If there be such an evil day coming, yet they put it as far off from them as they can, and so it makes no impression upon them.

And is it so indeed? No, certainly; I am to tell thee, sinner, thou who goest on frowardly in the way of thy heart, that there is but a step between thee and this second death, and it may be a short step, and soon taken. There is but one life between thee

l Matt. viii. 12. m Matt. xiii. 42. n Matt. xxii. 13.

o Matt. xxvi. 24. p Jude 7. q Heb. xi. 7. r Ezek. xii. 27.

and hell, and that is thy own, which, perhaps, will be shortly at an end; *Behold the Judge standeth before the door.* As the Saviour of the saints, though he tarry, yet will come, and *will not tarry;* so the judgment of sinners, though it seem to linger, seem to slumber, yet now of a long time it lingers not, it slumbers not.[s]

It would amaze us if we could see it with our bodily eyes, but (which is next door to it to a believer) our Saviour has set it before us in two parables, what a sudden change death makes with a secure worldling, whose soul is promised the enjoyment of goods laid up for many years, and yet is this night required; or with a secure sensualist, who fares sumptuously every day, and the next news that is heard of him is, he is dead and in hell torments.[t] In a moment they go down to the grave, from the height of prosperity to the depth of misery.

O that the nearness of this dreadful doom might awaken sinners to a speedy repentance and return to God! Believe it, sirs, it is not a time to trifle, or to be dilatory, yet a little, little while, and the vail will be rent. The days of your probation will be numbered and finished, and you will enter upon the state of recompence and retribution. O that you would bethink yourselves in time, now, at length, in this your day, that you would know and consider the things that belong to your everlasting peace; for though they are not yet hid from your eyes, thanks be to God they are not, yet you know not how soon they may; when the misery, that might have been in time prevented, must be to eternity rued, but cannot to eternity be remedied.

Those are very awakening words of Mr. Baxter's, in a sermon before the House of Commons, which Dr. Bates quotes in his sermon at his funeral, and which I shall crave leave to transcribe here. "The wretch that is condemned to die to-morrow cannot forget it; and yet poor sinners, that continually are uncertain to live an hour, and certain speedily to see the majesty of the Lord to their inconceivable joy or terror, as sure as they now live on earth, can forget these things, for which they have their memory, and which one would think should drown the matters of this world, as the report of a cannon doth a whisper, or as the sun obscures the poorest glow-worm. O wonderful stupidity of an unrenewed soul! O wonderful folly and distractedness of the ungodly! that ever men can forget, I say again, that they can forget, eternal joy, eternal woe, and the eternal God, and the place of their eternal, unchangeable abodes, when those stand even at the door, and there is but the thin veil of flesh between them and that amazing sight, that eternal gulf, and they are daily dying and stepping in!"

Be convinced of the certainty of these truths; that if we live after the flesh we shall die; that the broad way of sin leads to destruction, and ends in it; that except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish; and then tremble to think how miserable the condition of that man is, who has brought himself to this fearful dilemma, that either God must be false, or he must be damned. But I hope better things of you, my brethren, and things that accompany salvation, though it is needful I should thus speak.

2. Here is the sinner's fault and folly, which brings him to this ruin, and which we are here warned against, and that is, despising his own ways; and the opening of this is what I chiefly aimed at in the choice of this text. Having yesterday in another place, upon a like occasion, showed the folly and danger of despising our own souls, as those do who are careless about their spiritual state, I thought this might fitly follow it, to show the gross absurdity they are guilty of who are careless about their particular actions, and never heed whether what they do be right or wrong; than which nothing can be of more pernicious consequence, especially to young people. And this is that which is here meant by the sinner's despising his own way;—*Qui negligenter instituit vitam et mores—who is careless in the regulation of his life and manners;* so *Piscator: Non curans quo modo vivat—who is heedless how he lives;* so *Mercer.*——The former part of the verse explains it, *He that keepeth the commandment, keepeth his own soul.* Those who walk circumspectly in the way of duty secure all the true interests of their own souls, and will be happy for ever. But those who despise their way, and do not govern themselves according to the commandment, do not keep to that, they ruin their own souls.

So that hence we may gather this doctrine,

That it is a very foolish and dangerous thing for men to despise their own ways. Or thus: Those who despise their own ways are in the high road to utter ruin.

In the prosecution of this, as of the former, I must, I. Show when we may be said to despise our own ways; and, II. The folly and danger of doing so; and then make application.

I. When may we be said to despise our own ways, our conversation, and the particular actions of it, which we ought to have a very tender and careful regard to? You shall see the crime opened in six particulars:

1. When we are altogether unconcerned about the end of our ways, we may then be truly said to despise our own ways. This inconsideration of the end of our way includes two things, which are both fatal.

(1.) Not designing the great end, which in our way we should aim at, nor directing our ways towards that end. We know very well, that the God

[s] 2 Pet. ii. 3.

[t] Luke xvi. 19, 23.

who made us, made us for himself, to show forth his praise; that the Christ who bought us, bought us for himself, that we should not henceforth live to ourselves, but should be a peculiar people to him, should live to him, and be to him for a name and a praise. So that the great end of our being and living is the glory of our Creator and Redeemer; and this end we should at least virtually and habitually aim at in all our ways.

And it is a great honour which the God of heaven has put upon our ways, that he is pleased to reckon himself glorified by them if they be good, and, if in them our light shine before men, glorified by the fruits of our ways.[u] That not only such a favourable, but such an honourable, construction should be put upon any thing we can say or do, that it should be acceptable and serviceable to the great God of heaven and earth, who is infinitely exalted above all blessing and praise! That the worms of the earth should be capable of doing the work of angels! Man's honour, in being made Lord of the inferior creatures, is very great: the Psalmist, when he observes him to have dominion over the works of God's hands, reckons him, in that, crowned with glory and honour.[v] But his honour in being made the mouth of the inferior creatures in praising God is much greater; that whereas they can only minister matter for praise, man is capable of offering up actual adorations and praises to the Creator; and he is pleased to say, that he who offers praise, glorifies him, and to take it among the titles of his honour, that he "inhabiteth the praises of Israel;" for this we have much more reason to say, *Lord, what is man, that thou magnifiest him, and makest such account of him?* In my eye, a man looks more truly great when he is in a right manner worshipping his Creator at the footstool of his throne, and giving glory to him, than when he is domineering over his fellow-creatures, and giving law to them, on the highest of the thrones of the kings of the earth.

Nor is it only in the solemn acts of religious worship that we are to glorify God, but even in our common actions, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we must do it to the glory of God;[w] that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.[x] The general scope and tendency of our conversations must be toward the pleasing and praising of God; his favour must be pursued as our chief good in all we do, and his honour aimed at as our highest end; that we may in all our actions express the honour we have for God, and may excite others to honour him. And when we do thus, to borrow a phrase that commonly passes from man to man, but much more properly from man to God, we do ourselves the greatest honour of subscribing ourselves his "admirers and humble servants."

u Matt. v. 16. John xv. 8. v Ps. viii. 5, 6.
w 1 Cor. x. 31. x 1 Pet. iv. 11.

But if, instead of directing our ways to this great end, we regard not whether we do so or no: nay, if we direct them to a contrary end, and instead of living to God and to his glory, we live to ourselves, we eat to ourselves, and drink to ourselves,[y] as God complains concerning his people, to please ourselves, and gratify the appetites of sense, that we may enjoy bodily ease and pleasure; if, instead of seeking his honour, and the honour that comes from him, we seek our own honour, in the praise and applause of men; if self be the centre in which the lines of all our actions meet; we may then be said to despise our ways, and to disparage them, when we make them subservient to an end so mean and trifling, when they are capable of being made to serve an end so great and noble. Belshazzar is said to have lifted up himself against the Lord of heaven, whereas really he debased and diminished himself to the last degree, when he served his base and brutish lusts with the wealth and honour and power that God had given him, and praised the gods of wood and stone, which neither hear, nor see, nor know; and must stand mute to that high charge, *But the God in whose hand thy breath is, and in whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.*[z]

(2.) Not inquiring what will be the last end, in which our ways will terminate and have their period. That which makes our way considerable, that is, the course and tenor of our conversation well worthy our care,—is, that it is either the broad-way that leads down to death and destruction, or the narrow-way that leads up to life and glory. The path we walk in is either the path of life,[a] or the path of the destroyer.[b] It is not only either a right way that will bring us to the happiness we profess to be journeying toward, or a wrong way that will not; the difference is greater than that, it is a way that will end either in heaven or hell.

And does it not concern us then to put the question seriously to ourselves, Whither will the way that I walk in lead me? where will it lodge me? that if it be the good way that leads to heaven, I may press forward in it; if the bad way that leads to hell, I may hasten back out of it. Whither am I going? what will be in the end hereof? what shall I do in the day of visitation? If I should die to-night, as I am not sure to live till to-morrow morning, whither would death bring me? These are questions which all those who have a concern for their own way will ask themselves frequently; as the pilot who minds his business, often considers what port he is bound for, and then, by inspecting his compass, inquires whether the course he now steers will bring him to it.

But with the most of men this is the last thing in their thoughts; they have not the prudence to foresee the evil, and to hide themselves, but with the

y Zech. vii. 6. z Dan. v. 23.
a Ps. xvi. 11. b Ps. xvii 4.

simple they pass on, and are punished.[e] We earnestly wish, as God did of Israel, that they would be so wise as to consider their latter end; but at the same time, we have reason to complain, as God did of Jerusalem, that *because she remembered not her last end, therefore she came down wonderfully*.[d]

Those despise their way who look not on it with that concern, which a serious prospect of the end of it would fill them with; and therefore it is, that they go on securely in that way of the ungodly which will perish; but they consider not the perdition that it will end in, and, therefore, are drawn into it, and drawn on in it, by the allurements of worldly profit and sensual pleasure. That simple unwary youth, whom Solomon speaks of, was made to yield, and in a manner forced, by the flatteries and fair speeches of the adulterous woman, because he considered not what would follow upon it, that it was the direct way to hell, and to the chambers of death; so that he went as an ox to the slaughter, and as a fool to the correction of the stocks; as a bird that hastens to the snare, and knows not that it is for his life. Men would not be brought, as they are, to believe a lie, by which they will all be damned, if they were not given up to strong delusions.

And are there any here who have lived thus many years in this world, and never yet bestowed one serious thought upon this grand question, What will become of them in the other world? who either never put the question to themselves, or, like Pilate, had not patience or courage to stay for an answer; who never yet judged it a matter worth being resolved in? Know then, that you are of those who despise their own ways: and can it be a thing of small account with you, whether you are going to heaven or hell? Is the difference between them so minute as to justify your indifference in this matter? O that at length you would bring this matter to a trial; and not only so, but bring it to an issue, with all the solicitude that a matter of such importance both deserves and requires. Make it to appear that you value your ways, by being inquisitive, as a careful traveller is, whether the way you are in will bring you to your journey's end if you proceed in it, or not, and proceed accordingly. If ye will inquire, inquire ye; and leave not a matter of such moment at uncertainty.

2. When we are indifferent about the rule of our ways, and the measures by which we govern ourselves in them, we despise our own ways. Men's practices will be guided and ruled by their principles, and those who are loose and unfixed in their principles can never be even and steady in their practices. Those certainly despise their way who walk at all adventures, and live at large when they should walk circumspectly, and live by rule.

(1.) We despise our way, if we set aside the rules which God has honoured us and our way with the prescribing of. God has bid us stand in the way and see. Consider what is the way appointed you to walk in, ask for the old paths, for God has not put us to seek for new rules to go by, such as were never heard of before, but such as were from the beginning, and he has said, *Walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls*, spiritual rest in your way, and eternal rest at the end of it. But they put contempt upon their way, which God had discovered such a concern for; for they said, *We will not walk therein*.[e]

It is a great honour God has put upon our way, [1.] That he has given us the Scriptures to be the guide of our way; has in them showed us what is good, and what the Lord our God requires of us; has here told us what are the by-paths we should carefully avoid, what the stumbling-stones we should take heed of: his word is *a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths*, not only a discovering but a directing light. Could a greater regard have been had to our actions by the God who made us, than to give us a divine revelation exactly suited to our case, and accommodated to all the steps that we have to take, on purpose to be our guide to heaven? What an honour did God put upon Israel in the wilderness, though an undeserving people, and upon their passage through it, in that he gave them a pillar of cloud and fire to go before them, and show the way in which they should go, and to direct all their removals and rests! Such a divine conduct are we under, who have the written word to be our guide and counsellor.

But we despise our way if we make not use of this rule, and conform not our hearts and lives to it; if it be an indifferent thing to us whether we be ruled by the word of God, or no; if we never consult that oracle, never try our ways by that touchstone, nor are in care to walk by the light of the law and the testimony. As presumptuous sinners trample upon the law, and do what they can to make it void, so careless sinners cast the law behind their backs, and keep it as much as they can out of their sight, as if it were not worth while to order their conversation according to it. Those who despise the commandment of the Lord,[f] who despise the word, and fear not the commandment, they despise their own ways, and shall be destroyed:[g] but as many as walk according to this rule, as they put a respect upon it, so they put a respect upon their own way, and peace shall be upon them, and mercy, as it is upon all the Israel of God,[h] who are guided and governed by that rule.

Let young people cleanse their way, and make it pure and pleasant, acceptable to God, comfortable to themselves, and beautiful before men. Let them

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e Prov. xxii. 3. d Lam. i. 9. Jer. vi. 19.

f 2 Sam. xii. 9. g Prov. xiii. 13. h Gal. vi. 16.

direct their way to the right end, and in the right paths, by taking heed thereto with a constant care and concern, according to the word,[i] which we must always have regard to. [See Mr. Nesbit's sermon to *young people* lately, on that text.]

[2.] That he has appointed conscience to be a monitor to us concerning our way, according to the Scriptures. As *the commandment is a lamp*, and *the law a light*, so *the spirit of a man* likewise *is the candle of the Lord*.[k] Conscience, rightly informed, is an excellent guide in subordination to the Scriptures, and God has showed his care of our actions, by appointing us such a tutor and guardian, such an inspector of our manners, to be always with us, to check us when we do amiss, and to direct and encourage us to do well; to be a voice behind us, saying unto us, *This is the way, walk in it*,[l] when we are ready to turn aside.[l] God, by enduing us with a faculty of reflecting upon our actions, which the beasts have not, of accusing and excusing ourselves, has evidenced the concern he has about our ways, that they be straight and good.

But if we have no regard to the admonitions of conscience, and turn a deaf ear to them; if we say to that seer, *See not;* if we smite our hearts for smiting us, or threaten to do so, as the king of Judah did the prophet, *Forbear, why shouldest thou be smitten?*[m] if it be all one to us whether our consciences be pleased or displeased, and no care is taken to keep them void of offence; then we despise our own way, as if it were not worth looking into, or looking after. But however conscience may for a time be slighted and silenced, brow-beaten and run down, first or last it will be heard.

O that young people would betimes manifest their concern for their own way, by paying a respect to their own consciences, getting them rightly informed concerning good and evil, sin and duty; hearkening to their dictates, though they be but whispered; keeping them tender and afraid of sin, and keeping up their dominion over appetite and passion, and all the lusts of the flesh and of the eye. Often call upon conscience to do its office, and not only give it leave to deal faithfully with you, but charge it to do so: maintain the honour of the government in your own souls, and the due course of law, and suffer it not to be insulted, obstructed, or made despicable. Thus order is kept up in the soul, and its peace secured; and it is the greatest honour you can do yourselves, to maintain a value and veneration for your consciences.

(2.) We despise our way if we set up and follow their rules of walking, in opposition to those which God has appointed us; and such rules as are not only pernicious, but unworthy to be regarded in the conduct of our way.

What mean thoughts have those of their own way, [1.] Who are guided and governed by appetite and passion, fancy and imagination, the sight of their own eyes; who will do just what they have a mind to do, whether right or wrong. *Quidquid libet licet—whatever pleases is right*, that is their principle; if it be grateful to sense, it shall be lawful; they will do what is right in their own eyes, and what pleases them, whether it be right in God's eyes, and please him, or no.—*We will certainly do whatsoever thing goes forth out of our own mouth*,[n] is the language of those who *despise their own way*. By this Solomon describes the folly of the young man, That he walks *in the way of his heart*, and *in the sight of his eyes*.[o]

But are those fit to direct a way that leads to eternity? Must the powers that are brutal command a creature that is rational? Must human reason and divine revelation, and the oracles of both, give way to the desires of the flesh, and the more foolish inventions which man has found out since his departure from his God? Nothing is so unseemly as servants on horseback, and princes walking as servants upon the earth:[p] nothing so insufferable as these servants when they reign, these fools when they are pampered.[q] Can we think that man, who was made to be a subject to his Maker, should be allowed a boundless liberty, and sent out free with the wild ass? No; you mistake yourselves, if you think you may do as you please.

[2.] Those, also, who are guided and governed by the course and custom of this vain and foolish world, despise their own way, who think *that* a leader and director wise enough, and good enough, and safe enough for them. Those matter not much what they do, who resolve to do as the most do, and follow the multitude, though it be to do evil; nor whither they go, who resolve to go down the stream, without asking whither it will carry them. Christ says, *Follow me*, and it will be an honour to us and our conversation to have such a leader, and to follow him whithersoever he goes, who is wisdom itself. The world says, *Follow me*, and we cannot do ourselves a greater dishonour, than to put ourselves under the conduct of such a leader; yet, thus the children of disobedience do, they walk according to the course of this world.[r] It is all one to them what they do, so they can but recommend themselves to the gay and the great, or to the worldly-wise, on whom that principle has a greater influence than all the principles of their religion, "*As good be out of the world as out of the fashion.*"

What contempt do those put upon their own ways, who are easily drawn aside from their duty into by-paths, by any one who will put up the finger, and flatter them, and speak a few fair words, and tell them every body else does so! It is with them as

i Ps. cxix. 9. k Prov. xx. 27. l Isa. xxx. 21.
m 2 Chron. xxv. 16. n Jer. xliv. 17.
o Eccl. xi. 9. p Eccl. x. 6, 7.
q Prov. xxx. 22. r Eph. ii. 2.

the apostle says it was with the Gentiles, they were carried away even as they were led.[s] Those make no account of their way, whose hearts are thus weak, thus easy, thus yielding to the suggestions and solicitations of them who lie in wait to deceive, and make them their rule.

3. When we are wavering and unsettled in the course and tenor of our ways, then we despise them. Those who in the course of their lives are of no consistency with themselves, but halt between two, and are continually contradicting themselves, they make nothing of their way, nor bring any thing to pass in it; these are the double-minded men,[t] whose hearts are divided between God and the world, the Spirit and the flesh, as if they had the art of reconciling contraries; and they are accordingly unstable in all their ways, in a continual struggle between their convictions and their corruptions, and sometimes they yield to the one, and sometimes to the other; and thus they go on from time to time, fed with a fancy, as if it would justify the abundance of bad in them, that there is something in them that is good which does condemn it, and witness against it. But this is despising their way, as if it were not worth being entirely submitted to God, but it were enough to be in part so: but those who thus, like Reuben, are as unstable as water, like him shall never excel.[u]

(1.) It is certain that those have not the concern they ought to have for their own ways, who have not resolution enough to persist in good purposes, and to hold to them. You shall have them sometimes in a good mind under the convictions of the word, or the corrections of the rod; or when they are going out into the world, fresh from under the influence of a religious education; they will then promise very fair, *All that the Lord shall say unto us we will do, and be obedient;* and we have reason to think that they mean as they say, and intend no other; but the buds and blossoms are blasted, their good purposes prove to no purpose; and it is for want of resolution, it is because they have not a just value for their own way, otherwise they would stick to a good bargain for it when they have made it.

You who are young, I hope, are ready to engage yourselves to the Lord, to promise that you will walk in his ways, and keep his statutes; but will you adhere to it? will you abide by it? Having sworn, will you perform it? Will you with purpose of heart cleave to the Lord? This would indeed put a value upon your way; if you had indeed one heart and one way to fear God for ever. This was it that Joshua laboured to bring the people of Israel to, when he put it to their choice, whether they would serve other gods, or the true God only, and laid before them what there was in the service of God that was discouraging: all was to bring them to this fixed resolution, and keep them to it, *Nay, but we will serve the Lord.*[v]

(2.) Those who have not constancy enough to proceed and persevere in the good practices wherein they have begun, have not the concern they ought to have for their own ways. Those who did run well, but something hindered them, and drove them off; who had a first love, but have left it, even the kindness of their youth, and the love of their espousals, as if they had found some iniquity in God or in his ways, which yet we challenge them to produce and prove any instance of: those despise their way, who having begun in the spirit, end in the flesh, whose goodness is as the morning cloud and the early dew, which passeth away.[w]

You who now in the days of your youth are mindful of your Creator, it is a good way in which you set out, make it to appear that you have a value for it, by persevering in it; and take heed lest, having escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of Christ, you should through carelessness of your way, be again entangled therein and overcome, and so fall from your own stedfastness.[x] I beseech you, look to yourselves and your own way, and to every step you take in it, lest ye lose the things ye have wrought and gained, that you may receive a full reward.[y] Notice is taken in the character of Jehoshaphat, that he walked in the first ways of his father David:[z] it is a pity but those whose first ways are good ways, should not have such regard to them, as still to improve, that their last ways may be their best ways.

4. If we do not apply ourselves to God in our ways, and acknowledge him, we despise our own ways. This honour has God been pleased to put upon our ways, that he has undertaken to be our guide and guard in them, if we look up to him as we ought. If, therefore, we have not our eye up to him, if we make light of this privilege, as all those do who do not make use of it, we lose this honour.

(1.) God has promised those who seek him, that he will teach them the way in which they should go, that he will teach sinners in the way,[a] will teach them his way, if they will but meekly attend his conduct; that he will teach them in the way that he shall choose, when otherwise they would be apt to turn aside into the way that a vain mind and a corrupt heart shall choose, *v.* 12. He has promised that he will find out some means or other to make their way plain before them, to guide them by his counsel, to guide them with his eye, by some little intimation of his mind, which they with whom his secret is do understand the meaning of; he knows how much depends upon the right ordering of their way, and how much it is his delight when it is a good

s 1 Cor. xii. 2. t James i. 8. u Gen. xlix. 4.
v Josh. xxiv. 21. w Hos. vi. 4.
x 2 Pet. ii. 20. y 2 John 8.
z 2 Chron. xvii. 3. a Ps. xxv. 8, 9.

way, and, therefore, the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord,[b] and we are instructed to pray, *Lord, order my steps in thy word.*[c]

But now, if we do not think this divine conduct worth asking, if we think we do not need it, or can do well enough without it; if in the most difficult and doubtful cases we go on leaning to our own understanding, and ask not counsel at the mouth of the Lord, we despise our way, we put contempt upon it, and bring more contempt. Thus they did who took counsel, but not of God, and covered with a covering but not of his Spirit, Isa. xxx. 1. They who over-value their own wisdom under-value their own way.

(2.) God has promised them that seek him, to bear them up and strengthen them in their way, to fortify them against the temptations of their way, to furnish them for the duties and services of it, and to work all their good works in them and for them. What an honour has God hereby put upon our way and work, that he has promised us grace sufficient for us, that as our day is, so shall our strength be! to enlarge our hearts, that we may run the way of his commandments, and work in us both to will and to do! But if we slight this grace which he has offered us and encouraged us to ask, and instead of committing our way to the Lord, go on in it in our own strength, as if we had no need of the divine aids, we then despise our way, and it is just with God to leave us to ourselves; to leave the youths who are confident of their own abilities, to faint and be weary, and the young men utterly to fail,[d] while by renewed strength from him, the lame man is made to leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing in the ways of the Lord.

5. When we are careless of our past ways, and take not the account we ought to take of them, we then despise our ways. It is our honour that we can look back; it is our concern to look back, because if we have done amiss, there is a way provided to undo it by repentance, and prevent the fatal consequences of it. If we neglect that, we despise our way.

(1.) If we are not willing that others should reprove us for what they see or hear is amiss in us, we have not the care we ought to have for our own way. So many things there are amiss, and so much is it our concern to have them mended, and yet withal so partial are we in favour of ourselves, that we have need of more eyes than our own to discover us to ourselves: and it is a great advantage to us in our way, to have faithful friends about us, to tell us of our faults and of our dangers; This is not well, the other is not safe; this is a blemish to you, and that will be a snare to you.

But there are those who take it as an affront to be thus admonished, are ready to fly in the face of their reprovers, yea, though they be ministers, reprovers in the gate, reprovers by office; yea, though they be their own ministers, who ought to have some care particularly of their souls; though they be their parents and masters, who rebuke with authority; though they be those to whom they have given the right hand of fellowship, with a mutual obligation to watch over one another; yet they are ready to say to them who show them the false steps they have taken, "What is that to you? meddle with your own business, we know what we have to do better than you can teach us:" and it is well if they bear them not a grudge for it. Is not this an evidence that they despise their way, though it be a way that leads either to heaven or to hell? They would not thus despise their way from one part of the city to the other; for there they would thank any one who would show them where they have missed their way, or are in danger of missing it, and would direct them in the right way.

2. If we are not willing to examine ourselves, and to search and try our own ways, and to call ourselves to an account, and correct ourselves for what we have done amiss, we despise our own ways, and do not make that account of them which God does, and which he expects we should do. He looks upon men when they have sinned, to see what they will do next, whether they will make any sorrowful reflections upon it, and whether their spirits will be grieved for that, by which they have grieved his Spirit: and, if there be any who say, *I have sinned, and have perverted that which was right, and it profited me not*,[e] he is pleased with it, and meets such returning souls more than half way with his comforts. But if, on the contrary, when he hearkens and hears they speak not aright;[f] if none of them say, "What have I done? and it is all wrong;" still if they be not brought to that, he is disappointed, and is provoked to say, that his Spirit shall not any more strive with them.

Those despise their way, who never remember against themselves their former iniquities, nor inquire wherein they have erred; who never examine their consciences, nor review the records of them; lie down at night, and never ask what they have done amiss that day; enter upon a sabbath, and never look back upon their week's work; perhaps go to the Lord's table every month, and do not examine themselves how their conversation has been ordered since they were last renewing their covenants with God in that ordinance: and is not this a great contempt put upon their own way? They are willing to take it for granted all has been well, as Ephraim, though he had the balances of deceit in his hand, and loved to oppress, yet flattered himself

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[b] Ps. xxxvii. 23. [c] Ps. cxix. 133. [d] Isa. xl. 30. [e] Job xxxiii. 7. [f] Jer. viii. 6.

with a conceit that they should find no iniquity in him that were sin,[g] nothing very bad, or at least nothing to be seen.

And while they thus neglect to inquire into their own ways, how can they tell what confession of sin to make, and what to pray particularly for the pardon of? and how can they tell what sin to covenant against, and to stand upon their guard against? You that are great dealers in the world, know of what consequence it is to you to keep your accounts even, and often to review them; and those who are shy of looking into their books, it is to be feared, it is because they are not willing to know the worst of their affairs; they suspect they are going behind-hand, and by this means are likely to go more and more so.

And will it not be of dangerous consequence to the prosperity of our souls, if we neglect to look over the books of conscience, that we may renew our repentance, and make our peace with God in Christ? He that is washed needs to wash his feet;[h] the sooner the better, and in order to that to observe what filth he has contracted; if he do not, he despises his way. Consideration of our ways is the first step towards conversion from the errors of them, and, therefore, reckon not that you can safely go forward, till you have first seriously looked back.

6. When we are heedless and inconsiderate as to the way that is before us, and walk at all adventures, we despise our own way. If we think it is all one what we do, that God Almighty is neither pleased nor displeased with any of our thoughts or affections, words or actions, and, therefore, do as we please, and ask no question for conscience sake; if, in doubtful cases, we never consider what is our duty, but what is our inclination and secular interest; if we go on in our callings, and never consider how we may glorify God in the use of them, and keep a good conscience; if, like the men of Laish, we dwell carelessly, never look back with any regret, nor forward with any concern, we despise our way.

(1.) If we are in no care to avoid sin, which mars our path, and is a by-path, then we are careless of our way, as a fool upon the road, that never picks his way, but goes, as we say, through thick and thin. The chief, and indeed the only, thing we have to dread in our way is sin, for nothing but that can hurt or hinder us. The sin that most easily besets us, is the weight that must be laid aside; that is it that defiles our way, that disorders and perplexes it; that is the false way which we are to hate.

But those who are careless of their way, are not aware of their danger of sin, and their danger by sin, and therefore rush into it as the horse into the battle;[i] they consider not that they do evil,[k] nor what a great deal of evil there is in what they do. They have, it may be, deceitful ways of trade, carry it on by a course of lying and fraud, cheating their neighbours, cheating the government, and go on securely in it, not considering what an abomination to the Lord both the lying lips and the false weights and measures are. They keep up drunken clubs, and in them mispend their time, and unfit themselves for the service of God, not considering that drunkenness and revellings, and such like, are works of the flesh, of which we have been told again and again, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.[l]

All the corruptions of our way arise from the corruptions of our hearts, and if we take no care to mortify and subdue them, and to suppress the first risings of them, to get the habits of sin weakened, and to shame ourselves and frighten ourselves out of those inclinations and dispositions which are so hurtful to us; if we do not thus strike at the root, it is a sign that we have not the concern we ought to have for our own way.

Our own corruptions are excited and drawn out by the temptations of Satan. We are told of our danger from that enemy, but are careless of our way if we do not put on the whole armour of God, and in dependence upon divine grace put on resolution to resist him, and repel all his assaults. He has devices and wiles wherewith to beguile the unwary, *latet anguis in herbâ,—there is many a snake under the green grass*, and therefore we have need to look where we tread: and that we may be kept from evil, are concerned to abstain from all the appearances of evil, and to take heed of approaches towards it; if we do not we are careless of our way.

(2.) If we are in no care to do our duty, to be found in the way of it, and to do it as it ought to be done, we are careless of our way. It is not enough to the making of our way good that we cease to do evil, but we must learn to do well, and must learn to do it well, which will not be done without consideration. We must see to it, that in all the duties of the Christian life we *walk circumspectly*, ακριβως, *accurately, exactly*;[m] must do it by rule, and therefore must do it with care.

What we do that is good, must be done from a right principle, for a right end, and in a right manner; and therefore it must be done carefully, because herein it is so easy a thing to miss it; and if we are carried on in a road of religious exercises only by custom, and not by conscience and a due concern, we do but mock God and deceive ourselves, and it will turn to no good account.

Many an opportunity we have of doing good to others, and getting good to our own souls, which, if we do but walk carefully, we might make a good improvement of; but we lose it and let it slip, and it is a sign we despise our way; for the husbandman

g Hos. xii. 8. h John xiii. 10. i Jer. viii. 6. k Eccl. v. 1. l Gal. v. 12. m Eph. v. 15.

that has a respect to his business, and a value for it, will not drop his proper time for sowing and reaping.

What is done in religion without care, is done accordingly. If we go about solemn exercises without solemn preparation, we commonly come off from them without advantage; and if the commandment be not duly observed, it will not be obeyed as it should be. It is charged upon Jehu, that *he took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart.*[n] And it is true of many, that they do not walk surely, are in no care to go upon sure grounds, and to take every step right, which is a sign they do not walk uprightly, nor have any true value for their own way.

II. I am next to show what a foolish and dangerous thing it is for us to despise our own ways, and what an absurdity they are guilty of who do so. Believe it, sirs, the ways we despise are not so despicable as we would make ourselves believe they are; but a great deal of stress ought to be laid upon what we say and do, yea, upon what we think too; and consequently a great deal of care and concern ought to be about it.

This will appear if we consider these five things:

1. That the God of heaven observes and takes particular notice of all our ways; even the ways of our hearts, even their thoughts and intents, are *naked and open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do,*[o] *προς ὀν ἡμιν ὁ λογος—with whom there is for us an account running,* and to whom there must be shortly an account given up. God sees our ways, not only as he sees all things, but with a particular observation, as things that must be judged of, and by which judgment must be given justly.

It is a general truth laid down, and comes in as an argument against all secret sins, and those which are most artfully and industriously concealed; that *the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.*[p] But we should each of us apply it to ourselves, and to our own goings. Job does so: *Doth not he see my ways and count all my steps?*[q] *David* does so: *Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*[r] Now, shall we make a light matter of that which the God of heaven makes such a great matter of, or let that in us pass allowedly unobserved, which he so carefully observes? It is natural to us to have some regard to ourselves, that we observe a due decorum when we are in the presence of our betters, whose eye we observe to be fixed upon us. Therefore we should have a jealous eye upon ourselves, because God has an eye upon us wherever we are, and whatever we are doing.

Therefore we should be very careful and diligent to avoid sin, because all our evil ways are before God; they can none of them be hid from his piercing eye; he sees all the secret wanderings of our hearts from him, and all the secret risings of our hearts against him, and is much displeased with them. And shall our sins be no provocation to us, when they are such a provocation to him? Does he complain of his people's bent to backslide from him, and shall not they complain of it? Is he broken with their unfaithful heart, and shall they make light of it?

And therefore we should be very careful and diligent to do our duty, because God takes notice of all we think, or say, or do well, and is pleased with it, and it shall be owned in the great day, even a cup of cold water given to a disciple; which should engage us to wait all opportunities of doing good, because God observes all the good we do, especially if it be done in secret; for that shall with a particular regard be seen, and openly recompensed. *The Lord knows the way of the righteous,* and, therefore, they should themselves take cognizance of it, of every path, and every step.

2. That Satan is a subtle enemy, who seeks to pervert our ways, and to draw them into his service and interests. If we despise our ways, yet he does not, but labours with the utmost subtilty and sedulity to draw us aside out of the good and right way, and to seduce us into the paths that lead to ruin. He is represented, and his agents, by the foolish woman, who calls passengers who go right on their way, to come share in the stolen waters. Now if Satan be so watchful and busy to make us turn out of our way, or trifle in it, and lets slip no opportunity of doing us a mischief in our way, we are fools if we be unconcerned, and slip opportunities of doing ourselves a kindness. Our way is beset, and, therefore, we should be never off our guard.

Especially, because then our way is most endangered when it is most despised: when we least consider what we do, our spiritual enemies gain most advantage against us, and make an easy prey of us. Satan's design is more than half accomplished, when he has brought men to an indifference as to their own actions, and let things go just as they will without either forecast or review.

This is a good reason therefore why we should be sober and vigilant, and make conscience of what we say and do, because our adversary the devil is seeking to devour us. Therefore St. Paul is jealous over the Corinthians, and has a watchful eye upon all their ways, because there is danger, lest they should be beguiled as Eve was through the subtilty of the serpent; and of the Thessalonians, lest by any means the tempter have tempted them, and his labour should be in vain.[s] And for the same reason we should have a jealousy of ourselves and our own way, lest if we sleep, and neglect our way, we lose

n 2 Kings x. 31. o Heb. iv. 13. p Prov. v. 21. q Job xxxi. 4 r Ps. cxxxix. 3. s 1 Thess. iii. 5.

our spear and cruse of water, as Saul did when he slept; nay, and our heads and lives, as Sisera did, when he slept in the tent of one who pretended to be his friend.

3. That we have many eyes upon us, that are witnesses to our way. David prays, *Lord, lead me in a plain path because of mine enemies;*[t] because of them who observe me; so it is in the original. We have need to look about us, for there are many about us who look upon us, to take notice of what we say and do. Let us walk honestly, *ευσχημονως—decently*, and as becomes our character, (so the word signifies,) as *in the day*, when we may be seen, and when we are in the midst of those who will observe us.

Some have their eye upon our way, perhaps, to take pattern by it, and that they may learn to do as we do, and then I am sure we ought not to despise our way, because the example of it may have a great influence upon others; so that if we do amiss, others will do amiss too, and so we shall become accessary to their sin, and shall be to answer not only for our ways, but, as the Scripture speaks, *for the fruit of our doings*, as Jeroboam for his sin, wherewith he made Israel to sin. If it be a good reason why we should not make friendship, nor keep company, with an angry man, lest we learn his ways, much more is it a reason why an angry man should moderate his anger, and put on meekness, lest others should learn his ways, and get a snare to their souls,[u] lest by setting his own house on fire he burn down a whole street. We ought to be very careful what language we speak, whether that of Canaan or that of Ashdod,[v] for those about us will learn our dialect, and be either the better or the worse for it.

Some, perhaps, have their eye upon our way to seek for matter of reproach; they watch for our halting, and if we say or do amiss, religion shall suffer by it, and be evil spoken of; and the enemies of the Lord will have their mouths opened to blasphemy, as in David's case.[w] You who make a greater profession of religion, who attend preaching and catechising more than others, have need to be very strict and regular in your whole conversation; for otherwise, by reason of you the way of truth will be evil spoken of;[x] religion will be struck at, and wounded through your sides. That which, in others, would be winked at as a small fault, will, in you, be magnified and made a great matter of. Take ye therefore good heed to yourselves, that you may cut off occasion from them who desire occasion,[y] to reproach the good ways of the Lord, and prejudice people against them.

Some, perhaps, have their eye upon our way, that on the other hand would rejoice to see us do that which becomes us, would have no greater joy than to see us walk in the truth, our strictness and stedfastness would be their strength and song: *Now we live*, says the apostle, *if ye stand fast.* We have reason to think that the good angels rejoice, as in the conversion of sinners, so in the even and regular walking of the saints; and, therefore, we are charged to behave ourselves very reverently in the worship (a branch of our way which is by no means to be despised) because of the angels. Now, if our way be compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses,[z] it concerns us to have an eye to it ourselves; and to run, and run well, the race that is set before us, especially looking unto Jesus.

4. That we must shortly give an account of all our ways. As there is now an account kept of them all in the book of God's omniscience, and of the sinner's own conscience, because we are here in a state of trial and probation; so there must shortly be an account given of them all, and they must all be reviewed, for God requireth that which is past,[a] and will tell thee, *these things thou hast done.*

It is a folly for us to despise our own ways, and make a light matter of them, and to turn off the errors of them with a jest, when so great a matter will be made of them in the judgment; in the judgment at hand, which follows immediately upon death; in the judgment at last, the public judgment of the great day. Therefore, it concerns us to fear God and keep his commandments, and to see that our matters be right and good, for God shall bring every work into judgment, bring it into the account, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.[b] This was known and pressed by an Old-Testament preacher, but is much more clearly revealed in the New Testament, which tells us, *We must all appear*, one as well as another, all without exception, *before the judgment-seat of Christ*, to give an account of *every thing done in the body*, and to *receive according to it, whether it be good or evil.* Brethren, these are the true sayings of God; all we are doing now will be called over again in the day of judgment; as sure as we see this day, we shall see that day, and it will be to us according as we are found.

O what a concern should this fill us with, to think that what we are now doing, every day, has a reference to that day; which methinks should make every day a great day, a judgment day, with us: for if we would daily judge ourselves concerning our own way, we should not be judged of the Lord.[c] It would awaken us to consider our ways, if we would but consider how they will appear in that day, when we and they must appear undisguised, in true colours; and with what eye we ourselves shall look upon them, an eye of shame, or an eye of satisfaction, and thankfulness to God. This should especially give check to the looses and extravagances

t Ps. v. 8; xxvii. 11. u Prov. xxii. 25. v Neh. xiii. 24. w 2 Sam. xii. 14. x 2 Pet. ii. 2.

y 2 Cor. xi. 12. z 1 Cor. xi. 10. a Eccl. iii. 15. b Eccl. xii. 14. c 1 Cor. xi. 31.

of youth: Thou hast a mind, O young man, to lay the reins on the neck of thine appetites and passions, to indulge thyself in a sensual liberty, to walk in the way of thy heart, and in the sight of thy eyes, and this would be a brave way of living, if thou wast never to hear of it again; *but know thou, for all these things God will bring thee into judgment*;[d] for all thy indulgence of thyself in carnal mirth and sensual pleasure, unbounded and uncontrolled; for all those merry days and merry nights of thine, from which every thing was banished that was serious, and when God was not in all, not in any, of thy thoughts. Let the thoughts of this take young people off from their inordinate pursuits of the pleasures of sense, and deaden their desires towards them, that they may acquaint themselves with the pleasures of religion, which are spiritual and divine, and as much exceed the other as the richest wine does puddle-water.

5. That according as our ways are now, it is likely to be well or ill with us to eternity. It is the greatest folly imaginable to despise our way in this world, for as our way is, so will our end be in that world which has no end. Those who go upon the water only for pleasure care not what course they steer; but they who go upon business must steer the right course, and secure their point.

Believe it, sirs, and I pray consider it, that you are here upon trial for another world, and it will be to you a world of happiness or misery, according as you pass your trials. As you spend your time, you are likely to spend your eternity. If the prevailing temper of your mind now be vain and carnal, selfish and sensual, earthly and worldly, and you go out of the world under the dominion of such a temper, you are utterly unfit for heaven, and so is heaven for you, it would be no heaven to you. If the general course of your conversation be contrary to the rules of Christianity; if, instead of being constant and devout worshippers of God, you slight and neglect religious exercises, and think meanly of them; if, instead of living by faith in Christ, and in a continual dependence upon him for righteousness and grace, you lay him aside, and overlook him in what you have to do with God; if, instead of living a life of self-denial and mortification, you indulge yourselves in all the gratifications of sense, and are in them as in your element; if, instead of bridling your passions, you indulge them upon every provocation, and are impatient of the least instance of contempt and contradiction, as if humility and meekness were no part of the law of Christ, or the livery of Christians; if, instead of loving all men, even your enemies, and forgiving injuries, you have a jealousy of all, an antipathy to some, and bear malice and ill-will to all that you apprehend have been injurious to you, or stand in your light, or in your way; if, instead of being charitable and doing all the good you can to every body, you are selfish, and seek your own things only, and are oppressive and hard with those you have power over or advantage against; if, instead of setting your affections on things above, and having your conversation in heaven, you are wholly intent upon the world, and the things of it; if that be the subject of your most serious cares, and the object of your most vigorous pursuits, and you go on in such a course as this to the end of your way, you cannot inherit eternal life; if the word of God be true, and there be any weight in the reason of the thing itself, you cannot; you cannot but perish, eternally perish. And can it then be an indifferent thing to us what our way is? Can it be all one whether we live a godly or ungodly life, when our everlasting weal or woe does certainly depend upon it? O that we were wise and understood this, that we would consider our latter end! then we durst not despise, durst not but consider, our way.

And those who have good hope through grace that they are in the way that leads to life, are concerned to regard their particular paths, to look well to their goings, and every step they take, because they know not how much their vigorous advances in grace and holiness, and their careful improvement of all opportunities of doing good, may add to the degrees of their glory and joy in heaven; nor how much their remissness, and the unevenness of their walking, may take from them: but this I am sure we all ought to fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into that rest, and we having by faith laid hold on that promise, any of us should so much as seem to come short,[e] should seem either to others or to ourselves, should in the nature of the thing be in danger of it, or should come short of any of that measure to which, if we had been more careful, we might have attained.

Nothing can be more proper to awaken us to put a value upon our own ways, than to lay this to heart, that our present time is seed-time, and as we sow now we shall be reaping to eternity. The husbandman sows his ground with care, because he knows, that when what he sows comes up again, it will appear whether it was sown wisely and well or no, Gal. vi. 7, 8. The matter is brought into a little compass, *If we sow to the flesh* in a carnal, sensual life, *we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we sow to the spirit, we shall of the spirit reap life everlasting*: and then I am sure it is folly for us to despise our own way.

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d Eccl. xi. 9.

e Heb. iv. 1.

The Application.

The application of this plain and practical discourse lies upon yourselves, brethren; the Lord help us all to apply it!

1. Let it be a caution to us not to be rigid and severe in our censures of other people's ways, for that is none of our business; (we are incompetent judges of our brethren, for we know not their hearts;) nor of their works, for we know not the principles they act from, or the ends they aim at, nor the one half of what is requisite to be known in order to the passing a right judgment upon them; we can judge at best but by the outward appearance, and, therefore, it is ten to one but we are deceived in our judgment. And as we have not ability, so we have not authority, to judge concerning them; we step into the throne of God if we do: *What have we to do to judge another man's servant? to his own master he stands or falls.* We are to hope charitably concerning our brethren, and to put the best construction upon their words and actions that they will bear; but as to their way, and the end of it, the Lord only knows that, and to him we must leave it.

And this is another good reason why we should not pretend to judge our brethren and their way, because we have enough to judge ourselves and our own way: and here it becomes us as much to be strict and severe, as in judging of our brethren it becomes us to be candid and charitable, and make the best of every thing.

2. Let it be a charge to us to look well to our own ways. Let others, if they be overtaken in a fault, be restored with a spirit of meekness; and let us not be curious in prying into the fault, and examining all the circumstances of it; nor sharp in upbraiding them with their carelessness; but let every man prove his own work, let him bring that to the *touchstone*, and be very critical in trying it, and earnest with God in prayer, to discover him to himself; and if he find his heart upright with God, then he shall have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.[f]

O that I could prevail with you who are young, betimes to make conscience of what you say and do, and oblige yourselves to live by rule, and not, as most young people, to despise your own way. When you go out into the world, and begin to "be for yourselves," as you say, I beseech you, do well for yourselves. When you are gone from under the influence of your parents and masters, yet still continue under the influence of the good education they gave you, and think not, when you are set at liberty from them, you may live at large. With what grief have I sometimes heard that vain song put into the mouths of young people, which begins, "From grave lessons and restraints." I cannot repeat it, nor desire to do it, but it is designed to teach them to triumph in having shaken off the shackles of virtue, and laid the reins on the neck of lust. It is time *to warm*, my brethren, and to show ourselves zealous for the honour of God and conscience, of virtue and serious piety, for that is it I here, in the name of my great Master, contend for, and not the petty private interests of any party: let them take their lot, despise their way and spare not; the kingdom of God is not meats and drinks, either the imposition or the opposition of those matters of doubtful disputation; but it is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is the great and fundamental law of Christianity, *repentance toward God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ;* it is humility and meekness; it is sobriety and temperance; it is chastity and strict modesty; it is justice and equity; it is universal charity and beneficence; that I am pressing upon you: these are the ways that you must walk in, if ever you hope to find rest to your souls; these ways must be your ways, and in these you must persevere to the end, and in these and all the acts of devotion, and the instituted exercises of religion, you must live a life of communion with God. In urging these, I say again, it is time to be in earnest, when the enemies of serious godliness are not only so subtle as secretly to weaken its principles, and sap its foundations under ground, but so daring as openly to attack all its strong holds; when you are taught by a celebrated poet to say,

> "Conscience and Heaven's fears, religion's rules,
> Are but state-bells to toll in pious fools."

This is instructing you how to despise your own ways; but, *Cease my son to hear the instruction which causeth to err from the words of knowledge:*[g] and the Lord rebuke those who give such destructive instructions, even the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke them, and snatch those as brands out of the burning who incline their ear to such instruction.

That which I am persuading you all to, both young and old, is, to keep yourselves, and all your words and actions, under a strict discipline. Are you your own masters? Be faithful masters then to yourselves, and not careless ones. (1.) Be strict in your inquiries concerning your present way, and herein deal faithfully with yourselves, and do not despise a matter upon which your all depends. Are you in the broad way that leads to destruction, or in the narrow way that leads to life? among the many who walk in the way of their own hearts, or among the few who walk in the way of God's commandments? Christ is the way; are you in Christ? Holiness is the way; and is it the way of holiness that you are

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f Gal. vi. 1, 4.

g Prov. xix. 27.

walking in? Be willing to find out the worst of your case, you need not be afraid to do so, while it may be amended, be it ever so bad: and be concerned to find it out; for if it be bad, and not amended in time, it will shortly be past recovery.

Take heed of deceiving yourselves in a matter of such vast moment as this is. The word of God has plainly told you once and again, *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man*, and he says I shall have peace, though I go on in it, *but the end thereof are the ways of death*;[h] and will you suffer yourselves to be cheated into your own ruin, when you have such fair warning given you? How bitter will the reflection upon it be hereafter, if you thus put a cheat upon your own souls! Self-deceivers will be self-destroyers, and, for that reason, to eternity self-tormentors.

For the Lord's sake, sirs, and for your own precious souls' sake, bring this matter to an issue quickly, by making your calling and your election sure, and so making your salvation sure. You are busy to make other things sure, that neither can be made sure, nor are worth making sure: O that you would make this sure, which may and must be made sure, and leave it no longer in suspense! You cannot but tremble every step you take, as long as your own consciences tell you, if you give them leave to be faithful, that it is a step forward in the way of sin and death; but if you have good ground to hope, that through grace you are walking in the way of good men, that leads to life and happiness, you may go on cheerfully; you may sing in that way. Believe this matter therefore worth settling.

(2.) Be strict and impartial in your reflections upon your past ways, and do not despise them because they are past, for they are not past and gone, not gone out of God's remembrance: *Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways.*[i] Set your hearts to your ways; so the word is; apply your minds seriously to think of them, and lay the concern of them near your hearts. Compare the temper of your minds, and the tenor of your lives, with the rule of God's word, which is right and strait, and therefore of use to show you the crooked ways into which you have turned aside; as far as you have varied and deviated from that, you have gone wrong. Find out the particular obliquities of your thoughts and affections, your words and actions, that you may know what to sorrow for, as the plague of your own heart, and what to get healed; for a disease that is known is half cured. Be particular in your reviews, that you may be so in your penitential acknowledgments; may be able to say not only, "I have done evil," but, "I have done this evil;" and not only so, but, "Thus and thus have I done;" as Aaron, who on the day of atonement, (that day to afflict the soul,) was to confess over the scape-goat all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins,[k] the sins themselves and all the aggravations of them. And usually the more particular we are in the confession of sin, the more comfort we have in the sense of the pardon, and the better fortified against temptations to relapse and return to folly: *Dolus versatur in generalibus—Deceit employs general confessions only.*

It is good to be making penitential reflections, every day, upon our sins of daily infirmity; and the more frequently this work is done, the more easy it will be. "Even reckonings make long friends:" if we daily audit accounts with our own consciences, and examine what we have done each day; if in the close of every week we do as God did, look upon the week's work, and behold all that we have done; if, before we attend on the Lord at his table, we be particular in censuring ourselves for what has been amiss, and renew our repentance, and fetch in fresh assurances of the divine favour in Christ, we shall show that we have indeed a value for our way, and the great day of account will be no terror to us.

3. Be very circumspect and considerate as to the particular paths that are before you. Do nothing rashly, but every thing with due care. Let David's resolution be yours, and stick to it, *I said I will take heed to my ways.*[l] He who walks uprightly, walks surely, will see to it that he goes upon sure grounds, in opposition to walking at all adventures, and going on frowardly in the way of his heart. You put contempt upon your ways if you do not make conscience of them. Dread that wicked notion, that it is all alike what you do; though you be ever so poor and low in this world, and ever so inconsiderable among men, and your way ever so little taken notice of, yet God's eye is upon it, and, therefore, yours should be so. Do nothing rashly, for fear of doing amiss.

As those who value their own souls cannot but think themselves concerned to keep their hearts with all diligence, so those who value their own ways cannot but see themselves as much concerned to ponder the path of their feet; which direction follows the former, and is given in pursuance of it. Whatever you go about, consider diligently what is set before you; stand not gazing about you, and making your remarks upon other people's ways, but let your eyes look right on, and your eyelids look straight before you, for your concern is with your own ways; let not your eyes turn, lest your feet follow them to the right hand or to the left. Let heaven be the fixed end you walk towards, and the Scripture the fixed rule you walk by, and then you will walk steadily and with a holy security.

And as those who value their own souls cannot do

h Prov. xiv. 12; xvi. 25. i Hag. i. 5, 7. k Lev. xvi. 21. l Ps. xxxix. 1.

better for them, than to commit the keeping of them to God, as to a faithful Creator, and to Jesus Christ, the Bishop of souls, who has taken the oversight of them, not of constraint, but willingly; so those who value their own way cannot do better concerning it, than to commit their way, to commit their works, unto the Lord. Having chosen his word for your rule, be led by his Spirit. *I know* (says the prophet) *that the way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man that walketh to direct his steps.*[m] We ought, therefore, in all our ways to acknowledge God, and to depend upon the conduct and support of his grace which he has promised to those who seek him, and refer it to him to choose out their way, and to sit chief; in dependence upon which, every good Christian may promise himself the same satisfaction that the Psalmist pleases himself with, *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.*

And, now, am I leaving you at parting under any serious, solicitous concern about your own way, resolving for the future to walk more circumspectly than you have done, in the strength of divine grace? And is this your resolution? The Lord keep it always in the imagination of the thought of your heart, and thereby establish your way before him.

[m] Jer. x. 23.

SOBER-MINDEDNESS

RECOMMENDED TO

YOUNG PEOPLE,

IN A DISCOURSE ON TITUS II. 6.

To the Reader.

It has been the laudable practice of many good ministers, both in city and country, now about this time of the year, to preach sermons particularly to young people, to awaken them to a sense of their great concern. And it is very seasonable to do it now, not only because in these days of leisure they have more time to attend on such an opportunity, but because in these days of liberty and recess from business, young people are more exposed to temptations, which they have special need to be guarded against. Nor know I how we can better do honour to Christ, than by endeavouring thus to serve the great intentions of his coming into the world, and to bring in to him a seed to serve him, which shall be accounted to him for a generation; that from the womb of the morning he may have the dew of their youth.

Upon such an occasion as this, the substance of the following discourse was preached the other day in London; but I could not have persuaded myself to publish it, had I not been requested to do it by a number of very hopeful promising youths, to whom I have lately become related, for the present, as a Catechist; in which service, though it has been looked upon as one of the lowest branches of the ministerial office, yet it is the top of my ambition to be found, through grace, skilful, faithful, and successful.

To their service I dedicate it, not forgetting my friends in the country, the young ones of whose families I must ever have a deep and tender concern for. My prayer, both for the one and for the other, is, that they may betimes know the God of their fathers, so as to serve him with a perfect heart, and a willing mind; so know him, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, as may be life eternal to them.

Matt. Henry.

Jan. 3, 1712-13.

Titus ii. 6.

Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.

Paul the aged is here directing Titus, a young minister, whom he calls *his own son in the common faith*, what subjects to preach upon; in the choice of which ministers have need of wisdom, should pray for wisdom, and take direction from this and other Scripture directions.

In general, he must speak the things which become sound doctrine, *v.* 1. He must preach the doctrine of Christ, the truth as it is in Jesus, the great mystery of godliness, that is sound, or wholesome, doctrine, which is good for food, spiritual food, with which souls are nourished up, 1 Tim. iv. 6. And good for medicine too; it is healing doctrine, as it speaks pardon of sin to those who complain of the terror of guilt, and promises power against sin to those who complain of the strength of corruption; and, blessed be God, this sound, this healing doctrine is preached to you, in its purity, and I hope in its power, in season and out of season.

But this is not all, he must speak other things which become this sound doctrine, opposed to those Jewish fables and commandments of men, with which they of the circumcision corrupted the doctrine of Christ; *ch.* i. 10, 14. The best way to guard against them, will be to preach the duties of Christianity with the doctrines of it; the truth which is after godliness, *ch.* i. 1. Practical religion, which regulates and governs the heart and life, is that which becomes the doctrine of Christianity; which it becomes the teachers of that doctrine to preach, and both they and the professors of that doctrine to make conscience of. *The grace of God that brings salvation teacheth us*, and, therefore, the ministers of the word of that grace must teach you, and all who hope for that salvation must learn, to *deny ungodliness, and worldly, fleshly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly.* Right notions will

not serve without good morals. Young people saying their catechism, if it were the best catechism in the world, saying it ever so well, and saying nothing against it, will not save them, if the temper of their minds, and the tenor of their conversation, be not agreeable to the sound doctrine they converse with, of a piece with it, and such as becomes it.

Titus is here particularly directed to preach upon the duties required from Christians of each sex, and each age of life. He must teach aged men how they ought to carry themselves, so that their hoary head being found in the way of righteousness, might be a *crown of glory to them*, v. 2. And the aged women likewise, v. 3. that they may teach the young women, v. 4. And here, in my text, he is directed what application to make to young men. Thus particular should ministers be in their preaching, that they may, as far as may be, reach every one's case, which is the likeliest way to reach every one's conscience. Thus ministers must endeavour rightly to divide the word of truth, and as wise and faithful stewards in God's house, to *give every one their portion of meat in due season:* and O that every one would take their portion, and feed upon it, and digest it, and instead of saying, "*This was* for such a one," would learn to say, "*This is for me.*"

In dealing with young men,

1. He is here directed to exhort them; παρακαλει. He must *instruct* them what to do, that they might know their duty; he must put them in mind of it, that they might know it when they had occasion to do it; he must excite and stir them up to it, and urge it upon them with motives and arguments; and he must encourage them in the doing of it, and comfort them, that they might go on in it cheerfully. All this is included in the word here used for *exhorting* them; and there is need of all this, and all little enough; for some are ignorant and need to be taught, others are careless and need to be quickened; some think their duty an indifferent thing, and on such we must press the command which makes it necessary; others think it an impracticable thing, and to such we must preach the grace that makes it easy.

In urging practical godliness, it is hard to say which is more needful, persuasion or direction; and which will be most serviceable to our end, good rules to show us what we should do, or good reasons to convince us that it is our duty and interest to do it: perhaps some stand in more need of the one, others of the other, and the Scripture furnishes us with abundant matter for both, enough to furnish the man of God for every good word of this kind.

The original word παρακαλεω, being a compound of καλεω, *voco*, might properly be rendered, to *call to*, or *call upon*; and that is the work of ministers, to be your monitors. We call to you, we call upon you, frequently, and with importunity, and as we see occasion, to mind your duty, and not to trifle in it, to take heed of sin, and not expose yourselves to it. This is the word behind you, which is promised, (Isa. xxx. 21.) which shall say, *This is the way, walk in it*, and turn not aside to the right hand or to the left.

Titus must exhort them in his public preaching, and in that must choose out words to reason with them. The rulers of the Jewish synagogue, after the reading of the Law and the Prophets in the assembly, on the sabbath, desired of Paul, a word of exhortation for the people, Acts xiii. 15. And public exhortations to those of one age, relation, or condition, may be of use to others, who are not to sit by as unconcerned, but some way or other to accommodate it to themselves, for what we say unto some we say unto all.

Yet this was not enough; he must exhort them in his personal conversation with them, must visit them at their houses, and there give them this admonition; must give it in a particular manner to those that he saw needed it, give it with application, "In this and the other instance you must be of a better spirit, and carry it better." When he was in company with young men he must be giving them good advice, and instead of allowing himself to be vain as they were, endeavour to make them grave as he was. Ministers must preach not only in the pulpit, but out of it, their conversation must be a constant sermon, and, in that, they may be more particular in the application, and descend to persons and cases better than they can in their public ministry. Those ministers who complain that they would do this statedly and solemnly, but cannot bring it to bear, yet can have no excuse for not doing it occasionally, when it comes in their way, nor would seek an excuse if they had but a heart to it.

2. That which he must exhort them to, is to be sober-minded; all the law that concerns them in particular, is summed up in this one word; exhort them σωφρονειν,—*to be sober-minded.* It is a very significant, comprehensive word; and has in it a check to all the ill habits and ill courses that are so mischievous and ruining to young people. The word speaks the duty of young men, but it is likewise twice used in the directory for young women, (v. 4.) *that they may teach* the *young women to be sober*, ινα σωφρονιζωσι τας νεας—*that they may sober the young women*, may give them such instructions and examples as may help to make them sober; and again, (v. 5.) that they may teach them to be σωφρονας—*discreet;* so that it is the duty of young women, as well as young men, to be sober-minded; it is an exhortation proper for both the sexes of that age; and it is my exhortation to all of that age, who are within hearing to-day. I beseech you suffer this word of exhortation, receive it at your peril, for if it come from God it is your utmost peril to refuse it.

Doct. It is the great duty of all young people to be sober-minded.

I shall endeavour to show you, I. What this sober-mindedness is which young people must be exhorted to. And, II. What considerations should engage you who are young to be sober-minded. And then, III. Make application.

I. Let us see what it is that we urge upon you, when we exhort you to be sober-minded. And I shall keep to the original word used in my text, and the various significations of it. It is the same word that is used to set forth the third part of our Christian duty, and is put first of the three lessons which the grace of God teaches us,—to live soberly, σωφρονως, *v.* 12. And in another place it is put last of three excellent Christian graces, God has given us the spirit of power, and of love, and σωφρονισμου—*of a sound mind*, 2 Tim. i. 7. And σωφρονισμος is put by Plutarch, in general, for the education of youth; the sobering of them.

Give this exhortation its full latitude, and it speaks to you who are young these nine things:

1. You must be considerate and thoughtful, and not rash and heedless. To be sober-minded, is to make use of our reason, in reasoning with ourselves, and in communing with our own hearts; to employ those noble powers and capacities, by which we are distinguished from, and dignified above, the beasts, for those great ends for which we were endued with them, that we may not receive the grace of God in them in vain, but being rational creatures, may act rationally, as behoves us, as becomes us.

You learned to talk when you were children; when will you learn to think? to think seriously, to think to the purpose? Floating thoughts your heads are full of, foreign and impertinent ones; when will you be brought to close and fixed thoughts? to think with concern and application of the great things that belong to your everlasting peace and welfare?

Some have recommended the study of the mathematics, as proper to fix the minds of young people, and bring them to think. I wish any thing would do it, but would much rather it were done by a deep concern about the soul and another world, which, if it once prevail, will effectually fix the thoughts, and to the best purpose; for when once you come to see the greatness of that God with whom you have to do, and the weight of that eternity you are standing upon the brink of, you will see it is time to think, high time to look about you.

Learn to think not only of what is just before you, which strikes the senses, and affects the imagination, but of the causes, and consequences, and reasons of things; to discover truths, compare them with one another, argue upon them, and apply them to yourselves, and to bring them to maturity; not to fasten upon that which *comes first* into your minds, but upon that which should come first, and which deserves to be first considered.

Multitudes are undone because they are unthinking; inconsideration is the ruin of thousands, and many a precious soul perishes through mere carelessness; *Now therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways;* retire into your own souls, begin an acquaintance with them; it will be the most profitable acquaintance you can fall into, and will turn to the best account. While you are coveting to see the world, and to be acquainted with it, be not strangers at home.

Take time to think; desire to be alone now and then, and let not solitude and retirement be an uneasiness to you, for you have a heart of your own that you may converse with, and a God nigh unto you, with whom you have a pleasing communion.

Learn to think freely; God invites you to do so: *Come now, and let us reason together.* We desire not that you should take things upon trust, but inquire impartially into them, as the noble Bereans, who searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so, which the apostles told them. Pure Christianity and serious godliness fear not the scrutiny of a free thought, but despise the impotent malice of a prejudiced one.

There are those, I find, who, under the pretence of being free-thinkers, by sly insinuations, endeavour to shake young people's belief of the divine authority of the Scriptures, and undermine all revealed religion, by turning sacred things into jest and ridicule; but they usurp the honourable character of free-thinkers; it does not belong to them; they are as far from the freedom they pretend to, as they are from the sincerity they protest against; for it is certain, that pride and affectation of singularity, and a spirit of opposition and contradiction, do as much enslave the thoughts on the one hand, as an implicit faith and obedience on the other hand. While they promise men liberty, they do but deceive them; and under colour of being sole masters of reason, and ridiculing all who agree not with them, they as arbitrarily impose upon men's credulity, as ever popes and councils did under colour of being sole masters of faith, and anathematizing all who differ from them.

Learn to think for yourselves, to think of yourselves, to think with application. Think what you are, and what you are capable of. Think who made you, and what you were made for; for what end you were endued with the powers of reason, and attended by the inferior creatures. Think what you have been doing since you came into the world; of the great work you were sent into the world about; of the vanity of childhood and youth, and how unavoidably the years of them are past away as a tale that is told; and whether, therefore, it be not time, high time, for the youngest of you to begin to be religious, and to enter in at the strait gate.

And as to your particular actions, do not walk at

ll adventures, as those do who despise their own ways; but consider what you do before you do it, that ou may not have occasion to repent of it afterwards. Do nothing rashly, but always speak and act under ie government of the great law of consideration. Ponder the path of your feet, that it may be a traight path.

Some people take a pride in being careless; tell iem of such and such a thing that they were warned bout, they turn it off with this excuse, that for their arts they never heed; they mind not what is said o them; nor ever thought of it since; and so glory n their shame.

But be not you thus negligent; for then, and not ill then, there begin to be hopes of young people, when they begin to set their hearts to all these hings that are testified unto them, and to think of hem with the reason of men, and the concern they leserve.

2. You must be cautious and prudent, and not vilful and heady. The word in the text is the same hat is rendered, *v.* 5. to be *discreet; prudenter agere —to behave prudently.* You must not only think ationally, but when you have done so, you must act wisely, and so as will be most for your true interest; walk circumspectly; look before you, look about you, look under your feet, and pick your way; not as fools, but as wise.

David's purpose when he set out in the world was, *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way;* and his prayer was, *Lord, when wilt thou come unto me,* Ps. ci. 2. And accordingly we find, (1 Sam. xviii. 14.) his purpose performed, and his prayer answered, *He behaved himself wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him.* Those who govern themselves, God will guide, but will justly leave those who love to wander, to wander endlessly.

Put away childish follies with other childish things, and do not all your days think and speak as children. Espouse principles of wisdom, fix to yourselves rules of wisdom, and be ruled by those rules, and actuated by those principles. It is the wisdom of the prudent to understand his own way, his own business, not to censure other people's; and this wisdom will in all cases be profitable to direct what measures, what steps, to take.

Youth is apt to be bold and venturous, and therefore, resolute and peremptory, to its great prejudice. But be not you so; let reason and conscience, according to the duty of their place, give check to the violence of appetite and passion; let them rectify the mistakes, and overrule the hasty dictates, of humour and fancy, and reduce the arbitrary and exorbitant power of those tyrants.

How often does Solomon press it upon the young man he takes under his tuition; *My son, be wise, wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom, get understanding.* You who are launching out into the world must take wisdom to be your pilot, or you are in danger of splitting upon some rock or other; this must be your pillar of cloud and fire, which you must follow the conduct of through this wilderness.

Be diffident of your own judgments, and jealous of yourselves, that you do not take things right, or not take them entire, and for that reason afraid lest the resolutions, which are the result of your considerations, should prove wrong; and therefore leave room for second thoughts. Say not, "I will do so and so, I am resolved I will walk in the way of my heart, and in the sight of my eyes, whatever it cost me." Never have any will but what is guided by wisdom.

And, therefore, in every case of moment and difficulty, be willing to be advised by your friends, and depend more upon their judgment, who have had longer experience of the world, than upon your own. Consult with those who are wise and good, ask them what they would do, if they were in your case; and you will find that in multitude of counsellors there is safety, and that that oftentimes proves best which was least your own doing; or if it should not prove well, it will be a satisfaction to you, that you did not do it without advice, and mature deliberation; and as the thing appeared then, you did it for the best.

What brighter character can be given to a young man, than to say he is wise? Or what blacker, than to say he is stubborn? See the former,—in Solomon, who calls himself a child, that *knows not how to go out, or to come in,* (1 Kings iii. 7.) and yet his father calls him *a wise man,* who knows what he has to do; see the latter,—in the character of the rebellious son who was to be stoned to death, against whom the indictment runs thus, He is *stubborn,* he *will not obey the voice of his father and mother,* Deut. xxi. 18, 20. Those are the fools whom there is little hopes of, who despise wisdom and instruction, Prov. i. 7. He who will not be counselled cannot be helped.

But would you be wise? Not only be thought so, but really be so. Study the Scriptures; by them you will get more understanding than the *ancients,* than *all your teachers,* Ps. cxix. 99, 100. Make your observations upon the carriage and miscarriage of others, that you may take pattern by those who do well, and take warning by those who do ill, may look upon both and receive instruction. But especially, be earnest with God in prayer for wisdom, as Solomon was, and the prayer was both pleasing and prevailing in heaven. *If any man,* if any young man, *lack wisdom,* and is sensible that he lacks it, he is directed what to do, his way is plain, let him *ask it of God;* and he is encouraged to do it, for *the Lord giveth wisdom,* he has it to give, Prov. ii. 6. He delights to give it, he gives liberally; he has a particular eye to young people in the dispensing

of this gift, for his word was written to give to the young man knowledge and discretion, Prov. i. 4. And because some are willing to be counselled, yet do not care to be chidden, we are told that he gives, and upbraids not; yet, as if this were not encouragement enough to the beggars at Wisdom's gates, there is an express promise to every one who seeks aright, that he shall not seek in vain; it is not a promise with a peradventure, but with the greatest assurance, *It shall be given him*, Jam. i. 5. To all true believers, Christ himself is and shall be made of God Wisdom, 1 Cor. i. 30.

3. You must be humble and modest, and not proud and conceited. The word signifies *modestè se gerere,—to behave one's self modestly.* Σωφροσυνην εκαλεσε την ταπεινοφροσυνην. So Chrysostom, *Hom. ad Rom.—Sober-mindedness is the same with lowly-mindedness.* And Theodoret makes it the same with that poverty of spirit, on which Christ pronounces his first blessing, Matt. v. 3. It is recommended to the younger to be clothed with humility, (1 Pet. v. 5.) that is being sober-minded.

It is an observation that I have made upon the little acquaintance I have had with the world, that I have seen more young people ruined by pride, than perhaps by any one lust whatsoever; and, therefore, let me press this upon you with all earnestness. And it is a caution introduced with more than ordinary solemnity, (Rom. xii. 3.) *I say, through the grace given unto me, unto every man that is among you.* And what is the word that is thus declared to be of divine original, and universal concern? It is this: that *no man think of himself above what he ought to think, but think soberly.* And there is an elegant paronomasia in the original, which, for the sake of the young scholars, I beg leave to take notice of, μη υπερφρονειν παρ' ὁ δει φρονειν, αλλα φρονειν εις το σωφρονειν—let him think *unto sobriety;* the word used in the text; let him think himself into a sober mind, and always keep in that good mind.

Keep up low thoughts of yourselves, of your endowments, both outward and inward; of your attainments and improvements, and all your performances, and all the things you call merits and excellences. Boast not of a false gift, of what you have not, nor be puffed up with what you have. What there is in you that is commendable, wink at it yourselves, as most people do at their own faults, and diminish it, and look much at that in others which is more commendable. Let not the handsome glory in their beauty, nor the ingenious in their wit, for there cannot be a greater allay to the glory than to have it said, such and such are comely, and witty, but they know it. Does your face in any respect shine? Be as Moses was, *He wist not that the skin of his face shone;* and do what Moses did, as soon as he perceived it,—put a veil upon it. Delight more to say and do what is praise-worthy, than to be praised for it; for what hast thou which thou hast not received, and what hast thou received which thou hast not abused? And why then dost thou boast?

Keep up a quick and constant sense of your own manifold defects and infirmities; how much there is in you, and how much is said and done by you every day, which you have reason to be ashamed of, and humbled for; in how many things you come short of others, and in how many more you come short of the rule. You will find no reason to be proud of what you know, when you see how much you are ignorant of; nor of what you do that is good, when you see how much you do amiss. Dwell much upon humbling considerations, and those that tend to take down your high opinion of yourselves; and keep up a humble sense of your necessary and constant dependence upon Christ and his grace, without which you are nothing, and will soon be worse than nothing.

Think not yourselves too wise, too good, too old, to be reproved for what is amiss, and to be taught to do better. When you are double and treble the age you are, yet you will not be too old to learn, and increase in learning. If any man think that he knows any thing, that he knows every thing, so that he needs no more instruction, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know it, 1 Cor. viii. 2. And therefore he who seems to be wise, seems so to himself, seems so to others, let him become a fool, that he may be wise; let him be sensible of his own folly, that he may be quickened to use the means of wisdom, and prepared to receive the grace of wisdom, 1 Cor. iii. 18.

Be not confident of your own judgment, nor look upon those with contempt that do not think as you do. Elihu is a great example of humility and modesty to those of your age; he was swift to hear, and very ambitious to learn, for it is the learning age; *I am young and you are old,* and therefore I *waited for your words, I gave ear to your reasons, I attended unto you,* ready to give what you said its due weight and expecting to hear something that I had not known before: but he was *slow to speak; I was afraid, and durst not show you my opinion, for I said days should speak,* Job xxxii. 6, 7, 11, 12. Be not forward to say, "I hold so and so," for (as a grave divine once told a novice, that was laying down the law with great assurance) "It best becomes you to hold your peace."

Take heed of thinking yourselves above your business. You that are apprentices, think not yourselves above your service; humility will make the yoke you are under easy to you, which will gall the proud and stiff neck. You who are set up for yourselves, think it no disparagement to you to confine yourselves to your business, and to make a business of it, to see to it with your own eyes, no, nor to put your own hands to it. Be ashamed of nothing but sin

It will be yet much worse, if you think yourselves above your religion; above the restraints of it, as if it were a thing below you to be afraid of sin, and to make conscience of your words and actions, whereas there cannot be a greater disgrace to you than loose walking; or above the exercises of religion, as if it were a thing below you to pray, and hear the word, and join in acts of devotion, for it is really the greatest honour that you can do yourselves, thus to honour God.

Let this branch of sober-mindedness appear in your looks and carriage; let the show of your countenance witness for you, that you are not confident and conceited, but that you keep up a due diffidence of yourselves, and a due deference to all about you, especially those above you. Be not pert in your carriage, nor fantastical in your dress. If there be any thing in the garb and carriage, that young people may be innocently proud of, because those about them will be justly pleased with it, it is the gravity of it, when it is an indication of humility and modesty reigning in the heart; for those are the best ornaments, and in the sight of God, and all wise men, of great price. And you will find, that *better it is to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud;* for when *men's pride shall bring them low, honour shall uphold the humble in spirit,* and they shall be upheld, borne up and borne out in that honour.

4. You must be temperate and self-denying, and not indulgent of your appetites. It is the same word in the text, that, v. 2. is translated *temperate,* and is one of the lessons that the aged men must learn; and some think it properly signifies a moderate use of meat and drink: so as to keep the mean, and in the use of them σωειν την φρηνην, or την φρονησιν, to save our mind from being clouded, and our wisdom from being corrupted, that is, our hearts from being *overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness;* we commonly put a "sober man" in opposition to one that is drunk, or addicted to drunkenness.

Let me therefore warn young men to dread the sin of drunkenness, keep at a distance from it, avoid all appearances of it, and approaches towards it. It has slain its thousands, its ten thousands, of young people; has ruined their health, brought diseases upon them, and cut them off in the flower of their days. How many fall unpitied sacrifices to this base lust! It has ruined their estates and trades, at their first setting out; when the time that should have been spent in the shop and warehouse, is spent in the tavern and ale-house. When the money they should buy goods with, and pay their debts with, is thrown away in the gratification of an inordinate love of wine and strong drink, no wonder if they soon break, and run their country.

Take heed of the beginnings of this sin, for the way of it is down hill; and many under pretence of an innocent entertainment, and passing the evening in a pleasant conversation, are drawn in to drink to excess, and to make beasts of themselves. And you should tremble to think how fatal the consequences of it are; how unfit it renders you for the service of God at night, yea, and for your own business the next morning; how many are thus besotted, and sunk into that drowsiness, which clothes a man with rags: and yet that is not the worst, it extinguishes convictions, and sparks of devotion, and provokes the Spirit of grace to withdraw; and it will be the sinner's eternal ruin if it be not repented of, and forsaken in time; for the word of God has said, and it shall not be unsaid, it cannot be gainsaid, *Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Look not then upon the wine when it is red, when it gives its colour in the cup, is charming, is tempting, be not overcome with its allurements, for at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder. If you saw the devil putting the cup of drunkenness into your hand, I dare say you would not take it out of his; you may be sure the temptation to it comes from him, and, therefore, ought to dread it as much as if you saw it. If you saw poison put into the glass you would not drink it; and if it be provoking to God, and ruining to your souls, it is worse than poison: there is worse than death, there is hell, in the cup; and will you not then refuse it?

How many ways may you spend your evening, when you are fatigued with the business of the day, better than in drinking, in immoderate drinking! I am sorry we cannot urge against you, so much as gladly we would, the scandal of it, it is grown so fashionable. But whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, we will insist upon the sin of it, and its prejudice to the soul both here and for ever, and beg of you, in consideration of this, to frighten yourselves from it. We will insist likewise upon the real disgrace, that it is a reasonable creature who is, hereby, spoiled of his crown, and levelled with the brutes; and beg of you, in consideration of this, to shame yourselves out of it before God and your own conscience.

It is a sin that is in a special manner shameful and hurtful to those who profess religion. You who have been well educated, who have been bred up in sober families, have had examples of sobriety set you, and have known what the honours and pleasures of a sober conversation are; if, when you set up for yourselves, you think yourselves happy in getting clear from the restraints of a sober regimen, and take the liberty of the drunkards, what a reproach will it be to you! what a degeneracy! what a fall from your first love! and where will it stop? Perhaps you have given up your names to the Lord Jesus at his table, and dare you partake of the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils? Let Christians, who are made to our God kings and priests, take to

themselves the lesson which Solomon's mother taught him, *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings.* So it is not for Christians to drink wine, but with great moderation, lest they drink and forget the law, forget the gospel, Prov. xxxi. 4, 5.

Yet this is not all I have to warn you against, under this head. Let not young people be nice and curious in their diet, nor solicitous to have all the delights of sense wound up to the height of pleasurableness; be not desirous of dainties, for they are deceitful meat, Prov. xxiii. 3. It is true that the use of them is lawful, but it is as true, that the love of them is dangerous; and the indulging of the appetites of the body to them is often prejudicial to the soul and its true interests. Learn betimes to relish the delights that are rational and spiritual, and then your mouths will be out of taste with those pleasures that are brutal, and belong only to the animal life; and be afraid lest by indulging the body and the lusts of it, you come by degrees to the black character of those that were φιληδονοι μαλλον ἡ φιλοθεοι—*lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,* 2 Tim. iii. 4.

The body is made to be a servant to the soul, and it must be treated accordingly; we must give it, as we must to our servants, that which is just and equal, let it have what is fitting; but let it not be suffered to domineer, for nothing is so insufferable as a servant when he reigneth, (Prov. xxx. 22.) nor let it be pampered, for he who *delicately brings up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son at the length,* Prov. xxix. 21. Be dead, therefore, to the delights of sense; mortify the love of ease and pleasure; learn betimes to endure hardness; use yourselves to deny yourselves, and so you will make it easy to yourselves, and will the better bear the common calamities of human life, as well as sufferings for righteousness sake. Those who would approve themselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ, must endure hardness, must inure themselves to it, 2 Tim. ii. 3.

5. You must be mild and gentle, and not indulgent of your passions. The word here used signifies moderation, such a soundness of mind as is opposed to frenzy and violence. We have need of sobriety to restrain and repress, not only our inordinate appetites toward those things that are pleasing to sense, but our irregular resentment of those things that are displeasing; for such a vexatious knowledge of good and evil has mankind got by eating of the forbidden tree.

Young people are especially apt to be hot and furious, to resent injuries, and to study revenge, like Simeon and Levi, whose anger was cursed, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel; and, therefore, the passion is ungoverned, because the pride is unmortified. They are fond of liberty, and therefore cannot bear control, and wedded to their own opinion, and therefore cannot bear contradiction, but are all in flame presently, if any one cross them; and reckon that an honour, which is really their shame, to lay the reins on the neck of their passions, not caring what indecencies they are transported into by them, nor considering how mischievous the consequences may be.

Learn betimes to bridle your anger; to guard against the sparks of provocation, that they may not fall into the tinder; or if the fire be kindled, put it out presently, by commanding the peace in your own souls, and setting a watch before the door of your lips. And when, at any time, you are affronted, or think yourselves so, aim not at the wit of a sharp answer, which will stir up anger, but at the wisdom and grace of a soft answer, which will turn away wrath, Prov. xv. 1.

You are setting out in the world, and would have your passage through it comfortable. Now, there is nothing will contribute more to that than a quiet spirit: *The meek shall inherit the earth,* was God's promise, by David first, (Ps. xxxvii. 11.) and afterwards by the Son of David, (Matt. v. 5.) that if they possess not an abundance of wealth, yet they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. By the good government of your passions, you will make yourselves easy, and easy to those about you; and a great deal of mischief both to others and to yourselves will be prevented.

The moral philosophers valued themselves very much upon the power which their instructions had upon young people, to soften and sweeten their temper, and teach them to govern their passions, and keep a strict hand upon them. And shall Christianity, which, to all the arguments which reason suggests for meekness, adds the authority of the God who made us, forbidding rash anger, as heart-murder,—the example of the Lord Jesus Christ who bought us, and bid us learn of him to be meek and lowly in heart,—and the consolations of the Spirit, which have a direct tendency to make us pleasant to ourselves and others,—and our experience of God's mercy and grace, in forbearing and forgiving us; shall this divine and heavenly institution come short of their instructions, in plucking up this root of bitterness which bears gall and wormwood, and making us peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, which are the bright and blessed characters of the wisdom from above, Jam. iii. 17.

If you suffer your passions to get head now you are young, they will be in danger of growing more and more headstrong, and of making you perpetually uneasy; but if you get dominion over them now you will easily keep dominion, and so keep the peace in your hearts and houses; and through the grace of God, it will not be in the power even of sickness or old age to make you peevish, to sour your temper, or imbitter your spirits. Put on therefore

among the ornaments of your youth, *as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, and long-suffering.* Your age is made for love; let holy love therefore be a law to you.

6. You must be chaste and reserved, and not wanton and impure. Both the Greek fathers and philosophers use the word σωφροσυνη for chastity; *Continentiam et castitatem significat—It signifies continence and chastity.* Isidore Pelus. And when it is here made the particular duty of young men, this signification of the word must certainly be taken in; for the lusts of the flesh, which are manifest, *adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,* (Gal. v. 19.) are particularly called youthful lusts.

And against those, in Christ's name, I am here to warn all you who are young; for God's sake, and for your own precious souls' sake, flee these youthful lusts; dread them as you would a devouring fire, or a destroying plague, and keep at a distance from them; abstain from all appearances of these sins; hating even the garment spotted with the flesh, even the attire of an harlot. Covet not to know these depths of Satan, but take a pride in being ignorant of the way of the adulterous woman. See all temptations to uncleanness coming from the unclean spirit, that roaring lion who goes about continually, thus seeking to devour young people. O that you would betimes conceive a detestation and abhorrence of this sin, as much below you, and more against you; and put on a firm and steady resolution, in the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ, never to defile yourselves with it; remembering what the apostle prescribes, as that which ought to be the constant care of the unmarried, to be holy both in body and spirit, and so to please the Lord, 1 Cor. vii. 34.

Take heed of the beginnings of this sin, lest Satan in any thing get advantage against you, and the little thief, stolen in insensibly at the window, open the door to the great one. How earnestly does Solomon warn his young man to take heed of the baits, lest he be taken in the snares, of the evil woman. *Remove thy way far from her,* says he, for he that would be kept from harm, must keep out of harm's way; *Come not nigh the door of her house,* but go on the other side of the street, as thou wouldst, if it were a house infected; *lest thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof,* Prov. v. 8. 11, 12.

Pray earnestly to God for his grace to keep you from this sin, and that it may be sufficient for you; so that be the temptation ever so sudden, it may find you awake, and aware of it, that you may not be surprised into it; and be it ever so strong, it may find you armed against it, with the whole armour of God, that you may not be overpowered, and overcome by it.

Get your hearts purified by the word of God, and sanctified by divine love, for how else shall young people cleanse their way, but by taking heed thereto, according to the word. Keep up the authority of conscience, and keep it always tender, and void of offence. Make a covenant with your eyes, that they may not be the inlets of any impure thoughts, or the outlet of any impure desires; and pray David's prayer, *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity;* that you may never look and lust.

Modesty is the hedge of chastity, and it is the ornament of your age, therefore, be sure to keep that up. Let your dress and carriage be very modest, and such as denotes a chaste conversation coupled with fear. Make it to appear that you know how to be pleasant and cheerful, without transgressing even the strictest rules of modesty; nay, that you know not how to be so, when any thing is said or done against those rules.

I would especially charge you who are young, to take heed that no corrupt filthy communication proceed out of your mouth. Never dare to speak, nor delight to hear, any thing that is immodest; *Fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you;* it is foolish talking and jesting, which is not convenient, which is very unbecoming the professors of such a pure and undefiled religion as Christianity is; it is that evil communication which corrupts good manners; it is, as some think, that idle word, for which our Saviour says we must give account in the great day. Think what a great dishonour lascivious talk is to God, what a reproach to yourselves, and what mischief it does to those you converse with; how great a matter a spark of this fire from hell may kindle; and how much of the sin and ruin of souls you may hereby have to answer for. God turns those to a pure language, whom he brings to call upon his name.

7. You must be steady and composed, and not giddy and unsettled. This we commonly take to be signified by a sober mind, a mind that acts and moves steadily, and is one with itself; in opposition to a roving, wandering heart, a heart divided, which cannot but be found faulty. Be *sober-minded,* that is, let your hearts be *fixed,* Ps. cviii. 1. Establish your hearts, and be not like Reuben, unstable as water, for those who are so will never *excel.*

Fix now, in the days of your youth, for God and Christ, and serious godliness; fix for heaven as your end, and holiness as your way. Halt no longer, hover no longer, between two, but be at a point; you have often been bid to choose whom you will serve, stand no longer deliberating, but bring this matter at length to the issue you will abide by, and abide by it, *Nay, but we will serve the Lord.*

Fix to that, whatever it is, that you are designed for in the world; fix to your business, fix to your book, if that is to be your business. *Dum quid sis*

dubitas, jam potes esse nihil—While you are doubting what to be, you can do nothing. Whatever it is that you are employed in, let your application to it be close and constant, and do not upon every slight and trivial pretence start aside from it, and say you are weary of it, or you hope to mend yourselves, when the same volatile humour that makes you uneasy in the place and work you are in, will soon make you so in another.

Learn to fix your thoughts, and be not wandering; let them not run from one thing to another, as the bird in wandering, and the swallow in flying, for thus they run at length with the fool's eyes into the ends of the earth; but what thy hand finds to do, and thy heart to think of, which is to the purpose, do it and think of it with all thy might, and pursue it close, till thou bring it to an issue, and then it is done and thought to purpose indeed; whatever thou doest, *hoc age—do this*, mind thy business.

Learn to fix your aims, and act with a single eye; for the double-minded man, who is far from being sober-minded, cannot but be unstable in all his ways, and turns himself as the wind turns, and *he that wavers is as a wave of the sea*, Jam. i. 6, 8. Act considerately, that is, consistently with yourselves; and as those who understand your own ways; and have not your ear open to every whisper and suggestion that would turn you out of it. Be no more children, tossed to and fro with every wind, enticed to and fro with every bait, Eph. iv. 14. But in understanding be ye men, be ye fixed; let your foot stand in an even place, and then let your hearts be established, be not moved, be not removed.

8. You must be content and easy, and not ambitious and aspiring. Some make the word to signify, *animi demissio—the bringing of the mind down to the condition*, when the condition will not in every thing be brought up to the mind. A sober mind is that which accommodates itself to every estate of life, and every event of Providence, so that whatever changes happen, it preserves the possession and enjoyment of itself.

You who are young must learn betimes to reconcile yourselves to your lot, and make the best of that which is, because it is the will of God it should be as it is, and what pleases him ought to please us; for he knows what is fit to be done, and fit for us to have, better than we do. Let this check all disquieting discontented thoughts. *Should it be according to thy mind?* Shalt thou who art but of yesterday control him, quarrel with him, or prescribe to him, whose counsels were of old from everlasting? It is folly to direct the divine disposals, but wisdom to acquiesce in them.

He who *determineth the times before appointed, and the bounds of men's habitation*, ordered what our rank and station should be in the world, what parents we should be born of, what lot we should be born to, and what our make and capacity of mind and body should be; and in these respects there is a great variety ordained by Providence between some and others, who yet are made of one blood; some are born to wealth and honour, others to poverty and obscurity. Some seem made and marked by nature (that is, the God of nature) to be great and considerable, while others seem doomed to be all their days little and low; you see many above you, who make a figure in the world, and are likely to do so yet more, while you are but as cyphers; yet do not envy them, nor fret at the place God's providence has put you in, but make yourselves easy in it, and make the best of it, as those who are satisfied—not only in general, that all is well that God does; but in particular, all is well that he does with you.

Possess your minds, now you are young, with a reverence for the divine Providence, its sovereignty, wisdom, and goodness; and bring your minds unto a cheerful reference of yourselves to all its arbitrations; *Here I am, let the Lord do with me*, and all my affairs, *as seemeth good in his sight.* This would have a mighty influence upon the conduct of your affairs, and the evenness of your spirits, all your days. Whatever you are dispossessed of, or disturbed in the enjoyment of, resolve to be easy, not because you cannot help it, "This is an evil, and I must bear it," that is but a poor reason; but because it is the will of God, whose will is his wisdom, "This is an evil, but it is designed for my good, and I will bear it."

Lay your expectations low from this world, and promise not yourselves great matters in it. It is God's command, (Rom. xii. 16.) *Mind not high things*, set not your eyes and hearts upon them, as if they were the best things, and as if they would make you happy, and you could not be happy without them; but condescend to them of low estate, and take as much pleasure in conversation with them, as if they were company for princes and peers; or, as the margin reads it, *Be content with mean things*, with a mean habitation, mean diet, mean clothes, mean employments, if such be your lot, and instead of blaming it, bless God for it, that it is not worse, and believe that it is fittest for you.

Not that I would have young people mean-spirited, or cramped in their aims and endeavours; whatever your business is, strive to be excellent and eminent in it; whatever your substance is, be diligent, that by the blessing of God upon it, it may, like Job's be *increased in the land.* A good man leaves an inheritance, honestly got, to his children's children But I would not have you ambitious of great things covet not by taking thought to add cubits to your stature; let it suffice to thrive by inches, with the increases of the sober-minded; who do not make haste to be rich, for "Soft and fair goes far."

We commonly say of you who are young, that you

are upon your preferment; shall I persuade you to reckon it your best preferment to be eminently pious, and serviceable to the glory of God, and the interests of his kingdom in the world? That is the way to have the best reputation among men, which wise men reckon no despicable preferment, for *A good name is better than precious ointment.* Aim at advancing yourselves, not that you may live in so much the more pomp and ease, but that you may be in so much the better capacity to do good, and that is true preferment.

We commonly say of you who are young, that now is your time to make your fortune; it is a heathenish expression, for it is not blind fortune, but an all-seeing Providence, that we are governed by; but that is not all; it is not in your power to make your own lot; *Every man's judgment proceedeth from the Lord,* every creature is that to you, and no more, than he makes it to be; and, therefore, you must seek his favour; and reckon your lot best made when you have the Lord to be the portion of your inheritance and your cup, and then say, *The lines are fallen to you in pleasant places;* that is best for you, which is best for your souls, and in that you must soberly rest satisfied.

Jacob was setting out in the world, and going to take him a wife, when all he desired and aimed at, and, if I may so say, indented for in his marriage articles, was bread to eat, and raiment to put on, to be kept in his way, and brought at length to his father's house in peace; and why should any of the spiritual seed of Jacob look higher in this world, who knows and hopes he has eternal riches in reversion after *one* life? Let young people be modest and moderate, and sober-minded, in their desires and expectations of temporal good things, as becomes those who see through them, and look above and beyond them, to the things not seen, that are eternal.

9. You must be grave and serious, and not frothy and vain. This signification we commonly give to the word here used. Him that is serious we call a sober man; and I put this last, of the ingredients of this sober-mindedness, because it will have a very great influence upon all the rest; we should gain our point entirely with young people, if we could but prevail with them to be serious. It is serious piety we would bring them to, and to live in good earnest.

Not that we would oblige young people never to be merry, or have any ill-natured design upon them to make them melancholy. No, religion allows them to be cheerful; it is your time, make your best of it. Evil days will come, of which you will say *you have no pleasure in them,* when the cares and sorrows of this world increase upon you, and we would not have you to anticipate those evil days. It is mentioned as an instance of the promised prosperity, and flourishing state, of Jerusalem, that *the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof,* Zech. viii. 5. Nay, religion prescribes cheerfulness to all those who are sincere and hearty in it; *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works,* Eccl. ix. 7. God expects to be served by us with joyfulness and gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things, Deut. xxviii. 47.

And it is certain, that none have such good reason to be cheerful as godly people have, none can be so upon better grounds, or with a better grace; so justly or so safely. I have often said, and I must take all occasions to repeat it, that a holy, heavenly life, spent in the service of God, and in communion with him, is without doubt the most pleasant, comfortable life, that any one can live in this world.

But that which I would caution you against under this head, is vain and carnal mirth, that mirth, that laughter of the fool, of which Solomon says, *It is mad,* and *What doeth it?* Innocent mirth is of good use in its time, and place, it will revive the spirit, and fit you for business, a merry heart does good like a medicine; but then it must be used like a medicine, must be taken physically, only when there is occasion for it, and not constantly, like our daily bread; and like physic, it must be taken *sub regimene—by rule;* as not too often, so not too much at a time, like opiates, which are taken by drops, and with great caution. When you make use of these medicines, it must be with due correctives, and you must take great care of yourselves, lest that turn to your prejudice, and become a snare and a trap, which was intended for your health and welfare.

Allow yourselves in mirth as far as will consist with sober-mindedness, and no further; be merry and wise; never let your mirth transgress the laws of piety, charity, or modesty, nor intrench upon your time for devotion and the service of God. Wise men will always reckon him over-fond of his mirth, who will rather lose his friend than his jest; much more may he be reckoned so, who will rather lose his God and a good conscience. Never make sport with the Scripture and sacred things, but let that which is serious always be spoken of with seriousness; for it is dangerous playing with *edge-tools.*

Take heed lest your mirth exceed due bounds, and transport you into any indecencies; that you give not yourselves too great a liberty, and then think to excuse it by saying, *Am not I in sport?* Prov. xxvi. 19. Set a double guard at such a time before the door of your lips, lest you offend with your tongues; and especially keep your hearts with all diligence. Let the inward thought still be serious; and in the midst of your greatest mirth, retain a disposition habitually serious, and a reigning affection to spiritual and divine things; such as will make you indifferent to all vain mirth and pleasure,

and set you above it, and enable you to look upon that with a holy contempt, which many spend so much of their time in with so great a complacency. A serious Christian, though, to relax himself and entertain his friends, he may allow himself a little mirth and recreation, yet he will make it to appear that he is not in his element, that he knows better pleasures, and has given them the preference. A believing foretaste of the milk and honey of Canaan, is enough to put the mouth quite out of taste with the garlic and onions of Egypt.

But while I am pressing you who are young to be always serious, habitually so, always well affected to serious work, what shall we think of those who are never serious? who are always merry, always jesting, always bantering, so that you never know when they speak in earnest; who are always in pursuit of some sensual pleasure or other, and never know what it is to be one quarter of an hour serious, from the beginning of the year to the end of it? Certainly they forget, that *for all these things God shall bring them into judgment*, and they know not how soon. O that this laughter might be turned into the mourning of true penitents, and this joy into the heaviness of sincere converts, that it may not be turned, as otherwise it certainly will be, into the weeping and wailing of damned sinners! The same Jesus who said, *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*, has said also, *Woe unto you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep*, Luke vi. 25.

Shall I now prevail with you who are young, to value wisdom above wit, and that which helps to make you serious above that which helps to make you merry; and to take as much pleasure in gravity, as others do in vanity? It will be the honour of your youth, will arm you against the temptations you are surrounded with, and will not only mark you for something considerable in this world, but for something infinitely more so in the other world. And, if you understand yourselves aright, I dare say, one hour spent in the employments and enjoyments of a sober, serious mind, will afford you more true comfort in the reflection, than many spent in mirth and gaiety, because it will certainly pass so much better in the account another day.

If you take the world for your guide, you will be bid to "laugh and be fat;" will be told that "an ounce of mirth is worth a pound of sorrow;" but if you will attend to the dictates of the word of God, (and it is fit that the word that must judge us hereafter should rule us now,) that will tell you, that *sorrow is better than laughter*; and that it is *better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better*; it is made *serious*.

And thus you see what it is to be sober-minded, and how much of your duty it takes in; but are you content that it should take in all this? Can you say, that though in many things you come short, yet you esteem all these precepts, and all the things contained in them, to be right, and, therefore, hate every false way? You will then be very willing to have this sober-mindedness further pressed upon you.

II. Let us see what considerations are proper, and may be powerful, to make young people in all these respects sober-minded: and will you who are young, apply your minds a little to these things?

1. You are all reasonable creatures, and therefore ought to be sober-minded. Consider how noble and excellent that rank of beings is that you are of; how far advanced above that of the beasts, and consequently how unjust you are both to God and to yourselves, if by incogitancy, inconsideration, or the indulgence of any brutish appetite or passion, you level yourselves with the beasts that perish.

What have you your reason for, if you do not make use of it? your mind, if you do not take care to keep yourselves of a sound mind? or, if you mind not that for the sake of which you had your minds given you? *Shew yourselves men*, therefore, by *bringing to mind, O ye transgressors*, Isa. xlvi. 8. Sinners would become saints, if they would but show themselves men, for the service of Christ is a reasonable service, and those who are wicked are unreasonable men: be persuaded therefore to act rationally; and to save the nobler powers of reason from being tied up and overpowered by this and the other rebellious lust and passion.

You brought rational souls with you into the world; but think how long the seeds of reason lay buried under the clods before they began to spring up; how long those sparks of a divine fire seemed lost in the embers, during the years of infancy, when you were not capable of the consideration we are persuading you to. Yet then God took care of you, provided for you, and did you good, when you were not able to do him any service. Study, therefore, now you are come to the use of reason, what honours and what dignities shall be done to him, who was then careful for you with all that care. Study how you shall redeem the time that was then unavoidably lost, by making so much the more use of your reason now.

Think likewise how much time runs to waste in sleep, how many hours pass every day, during which the operations of reason are suspended, and fancy is all that while busy at work in a thousand foolish dreams; yet then God preserves us, and gives his angels a charge over us. Let us, therefore, when we are awake, set reason on work, find it employment, and support its authority by sober-mindedness; and let not the conversation of the day be as idle and impertinent as the dreams of the night are; as I fear with many it is, both young and old.

Think, likewise, how piteous the case of those is who are deprived of the use of their reason, who are

born idiots, or are fallen into deep melancholy, or into distraction and frenzy; who are incapable of thinking, speaking, and acting rationally, and are put out of the possession, government, and enjoyment of themselves. This might have been your case; it is God's great mercy to you that it is not so; nor can you be secure, but that some time or other it may be so. You would dread it as the greatest affliction, not to be able to use your reason, and will you not dread it as a great sin, not to use it well, and as it should be used, now you are able.

When St. Paul would prove to the most noble Festus, that he was not beside himself, that he was not mad, his plea is, *I speak the words of truth and soberness;* as if those that do not speak the words of truth and soberness, all whose talk is banter and vanity, were no better than mad, and beside themselves. O that such young people as are thus taken in the snare of carnal mirth, and are in effect made delirious by it, as you may perceive by the rambles of their talk, would at length recover their senses, return to their wits, and be sober-minded! That they would, like the prodigal son, come to themselves, and come to a resolution to stay no longer in the devil's fields, to feed the swine of their own sinful lusts——but to return to their Father's house, where they will be happy and shall be welcome.

When Christ was here upon earth, healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, there was no one sort of patients that he had greater numbers of than such as were lunatic, and their lunacy was the effect of their being possessed with the devil. It was the miserable case of many young people; we find parents making complaints of this kind concerning their children; one has a daughter, another has a son, grievously vexed with the devil; but Christ healed them all, dispossessed Satan, and so restored them to the possession of their own souls; and it is said of some whom he thus relieved, that they sat at the feet of Jesus clothed, and in their right mind; it is the word used in the text, Luke viii. 35. As far as sin reigns in you, Satan reigns, and your souls are in his possession; Christ by casting out devils, gave a specimen and indication of the great design of his gospel and grace, which was to cure men of their spiritual frenzy, by breaking the power of Satan in them. O that you would therefore apply yourselves to him! Submit to the word of his grace, pray for the Spirit of his grace; and by this it will appear, that both these have had their due influence upon you, if you sit at the feet of Jesus in your right mind; in a sober mind. And, indeed, you never come to your right mind, till you do sit down at the feet of Jesus, to learn of him, and be ruled by him; you never are truly rational creatures, till in Christ you become new creatures.

2. You are all sinners, and guilty before God; conceived in iniquity, born in sin, you are by nature children of disobedience, and children of wrath; whether you have ever thought of it, or no, certainly it is so, the Scripture hath concluded you all under sin, and consequently under a sentence of death, like that of a physician upon his patient, when he pronounces his disease mortal; nay, like that of a judge upon the prisoner, when he pronounces his crime capital, so that both ways your danger is imminent and extreme. And shall not the consideration of this prevail to make you sober.

Were your bodies under some threatening disease, which, in all probability, would in a little time cut off the thread of your life, I believe that would make you serious, that would make you look solemn; were you condemned to die shortly by the hand of justice, that would sober you: and is not the death and ruin of an immortal soul more to be dreaded than that of a mortal body? and should not the danger of that give a louder alarm to the most secure, and cast a greater damp upon the most jovial, than of the other?

And when you are told, that though the disease is mortal, it is not incurable, though the crime is capital, it is not unpardonable, how should that yet further prevail to make you serious, to make you very solicitous, very industrious, to get the disease healed, and the crime forgiven! Your case will not allow any of your time or thoughts to run waste, or to be trifled away, but you have need, by sobermindedness, to employ both in a due attendance to the things that belong to your everlasting peace.

You are sinners, and, therefore, have reason to think very meanly and humbly of yourselves; not to expect applauses, or resent contempts, nor to aim at great things in the world. What have such vile wretches as we are to be proud of, or to promise ourselves in this world, who owe our lives, which we have a thousand times forfeited, to the divine patience?

You are sinners, and if yet you are in a state of sin, in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, the misery of your state is enough to give an effectual check to your vain mirth, and would do it if you knew and considered it. *Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people, for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God*, Hos. ix. 1. Joy is forbidden fruit to wicked people. There cannot be a more monstrous absurdity, than that which they are guilty of, who say to the Almighty, *Depart from us*, who set him at a distance, set him at defiance, and yet *take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ*, and *spend their days in mirth*, Job xxi. 12—14.

If, through grace, the power of sin is broken in you, and you are delivered from the wrath to come, and being in Christ, there is no condemnation to you, yet the very remembrance of the misery and danger you were in, and are delivered from, how near you were to the pit's brink, and how you were

snatched as brands out of the burning, should make you serious. You still carry a body of death about with you, which should make you cry out, *O wretched creatures that we are!* You are compassed about with enemies, who war against your souls; you have not yet put off the harness, but have reason still to fear, lest a promise being left you of entering into rest, any of you should seem to come short, and this is enough to make you considerate and cautious, and sober-minded.

In short, till you have by faith in Christ made your peace with God, and are become sincere Christians, you have no reason to rejoice at all; and when you have done it, and have some comfortable evidence of a blessed change, through grace, wrought in you, you will then have better things to rejoice in, than this world can furnish you with; and having tasted spiritual pleasures, will be dead to all the delights of sense; and you will say, offer them to those who know no better.

3. You are setting out in a world of sorrows and snares, of troubles and temptations, and therefore are concerned to be sober-minded, that you may be armed accordingly, so that the troubles of the world may not rob you of your peace, nor the temptations of it rob you of your purity. Your way lies through a wilderness, a land of darkness and drought, and nothing but sober-mindedness will carry you safe through it to Canaan.

Now you are young, and have the world before you, you are apt to flatter yourselves with a conceit that every thing will be safe and pleasant, your mountain you think stands so strong, that it cannot be moved; that nothing can shake either your integrity, or your prosperity; but you little know what this world is, and what snares there are in every condition of life, and every company; in all employments, in all enjoyments. And if you be careless and vain, and live at large, you make yourselves an easy prey to the tempter, and are in danger of being carried away by the course of this world: you have need therefore to take heed to yourselves, and to keep your souls diligently, that is, to be sober-minded; for considering the corruption that is in the world through lust, and the corruption that is in your own hearts, what may we not fear when they come together?

When the restraints of education are taken off, and you begin to find yourselves at liberty, you will meet with so many enticing sins and sinners, that you will be in danger of falling into licentiousness, and being undone, unless the impressions of your education still abide, unless by this sober-mindedness you still be your own parents, your own masters, your own tutors, and by an established virtue, through the grace of God, a *law to yourselves*.

You know not what trials and troubles you may be reserved for, but you know that man who is born of a woman, is but of few days, and full of trouble; his crosses certain, more or less; a cross to be taken up daily; his comforts uncertain; and should not this make you sober, that when afflictions come, they may not be so terrible as they are to those, who by indulging themselves in mirth and pleasure, have made themselves like the tender and delicate woman, that would not set so much as the sole of her foot to the ground, for tenderness and delicacy, Deut. xxviii. 56. Even the common calamities of human life press hard upon such, and wound deep; whereas, those who live a sober, serious, self-denying life, are, like Christ, acquainted with grief, have made it familiar to them, and can the easier reconcile themselves to it.

Some of you, perhaps, are sickly, and often out of health; you carry distempers about with you, which tell you what you are, and you are inexcusable if you be not thereby made sober; if they do not deaden you to the delights of sense, and lower your expectations from the creature, and dispose you to serious work. By the sickness of the body the heart should be made better,—many a one's has been; the uncertainty of whose bodily health has conduced very much to the health of their souls. Those do indeed walk contrary to God who allow themselves in vanity, while they carry about with them sensible tokens of their mortality.

But even the most strong and healthful may die in their full strength, and must die at last; we are all dying daily, death is working in us, and we are walking toward it, and shall not that make us sober? Theirs was an unpardonable crime who said, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*, Isa. xxii. 13, 14. Who when they were minded by the prophet of the near approach of death, as a reason why they should repent and reform speedily, turned it quite a contrary way, and argued, if we must have a short life let it be a merry one; surely, says God, *this iniquity shall not be purged from you.*

The end of all things is at hand, is near at hand with us, be ye therefore sober; that whenever our Lord shall come, we may be in a good frame to meet him. When we consider what our bodies will be shortly, how near akin they are to corruption and the worms, we shall see little reason to pamper them, and to bring them up delicately, for we are hastening to the house of darkness, where the voice of mirth is no more heard.

> "When th' hair grows sweet with pride and lust
> The powder doth forget the dust."—*Mr. Herbert*

You see many young people about you ruined and undone, and it was for want of being sober-minded. Many, perhaps, you have known or might have observed, who were born of good parents, had a religious education, set out well, were for some time hopeful, and promised fair with buds and blossoms

but ended in the flesh, after they had begun in the spirit, and it was for want of consideration; they could not be persuaded to think soberly; they were drawn away of their own lust and enticed; and those enticements were hearkened to, when a deaf ear was turned to Wisdom's calls, and to all the dictates of reason and conscience; they would not hearken to the voice of these charmers, charming ever so wisely.

Some have outrun their apprenticeships, others have foolishly thrown themselves away in marriage, others have set up and made a flourish awhile, but have soon broke and become bankrupts, either by living high, or by grasping at more business than they could secure; some have been carried away by atheistical and profane notions, and others by a loose and vain conversation, all which would have been happily prevented, if they had been humble and discreet, and duly governed their appetites and passions.

Others' harms should be your warnings, to take heed of the rocks they split upon. Sir Richard Blackmore, in his Heroic Poem of Job, thus gives the reason of Job's pious care concerning his sons, after the days of their feasting were gone about.

"For he with mournful eyes had often spied,
Scatter'd on pleasure's smooth but treach'rous tide,
The spoils of virtue overpower'd by sense,
And floating wrecks of ruin'd innocence."

5. You are here in this world upon your trial for heaven. O that you would firmly believe this, not only that you are hastening apace into eternity, but that it will certainly be to you a comfortable or a miserable eternity, according to what you are and do, while you are in the body; and this consideration, one would think, should make you sober.

Eternal life is set before you, eternal happiness in the vision and fruition of God; you may make it sure, if it be not your own fault; may lay hold on it, if you look about you now. There are substantial honours, satisfying pleasures, and true riches, in comparison with which all the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world are empty names and shadows; these may be your portion for ever, they shall be so, if by a patient continuance in well-doing, through Christ, you seek for this glory, honour, and immortality. You are here probationers for the best preferment, for a place in the New Jerusalem; you stand candidates for a crown, a kingdom, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, you stand fair for it; and is it not time to think then? to think seriously, and soberly to apply yourselves to that business for which you were sent into this world, and from which, if it be done faithfully, you may remove with comfort to another world, but if not, your removal to that world will be terrible? You ought to be serious and circumspect now, because as you spend your time, so you are likely to spend your eternity; and a great deal of work you have to do, and but little time to do it in.

Let me put the case to you, as to this world. If a wise and wealthy man should take one of you who had but little, and tell you that you should come into his family, and he would provide food and clothing for you for one year, and if you carried yourself well for that year, would submit to the prudent discipline of his family, would be observant of him, and take care to please him, that then at the year's end he would give you ten thousand pounds; but if you were rude and ungovernable, he would turn you out of doors; would not this put you upon considering? Would it not make you sober? Would you not deny yourselves in the gratification of many a desire, for fear of displeasing such a benefactor? If he were ever so humorsome you would humour him, when it were so much your interest. This is your case; the time of your probation is but short; the terms are easy and reasonable; the God you are to please is not hard to be pleased, nor will impose any thing upon you but what becomes you, and will be pleasant to you; the happiness he proposes is infinitely more worth than thousands of gold and silver, and the security he gives, is the inviolable promise of one who cannot lie nor deceive; the misery, if you come short of it, is worse than being turned out of doors, it is to be cast into utter darkness. Life and death, good and evil, the blessing and the curse, are set before you; and will you not then set your hearts to all the words which we testify unto you; will you not think soberly, that you may make sure work in a matter of such vast importance, on which your lives, and the lives of your souls, depend? You are here upon your good behaviour, and therefore are concerned to behave yourselves well; for if you do not, *Son, remember*, will be a dreadful peal rung in your ears shortly, remember how fair thou stoodest for happiness, and what the morsel of meat was, for which, like profane Esau, thou soldest that birthright.

Lastly, You must shortly go to judgment; with the consideration of this, Solomon endeavours to make his young man sober, that is for walking in the way of his heart, and in the sight of his eyes; *Know thou, that for all these things God shall bring thee into judgment.* And thou who makest a jest of every thing, shalt not be able to turn that off with a jest hereafter, however thou mayst think to do it now, Eccl. xi. 9. This likewise he urges upon his pupil in the close of that book, as a reason why he should be religious; *By these, my son, be admonished, to fear God and keep his commandments, for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing*, Eccl. xii. 12—14.

Young men who have strict masters, who will call them to an account how they spend their time, and how they go on with their business, are thereby

obliged to be industrious and careful; whereas, if the master be careless, the servant is in temptation to be so too. But you know that you have a Master in heaven, whose eye is always upon you, and follows you closer than the eye of any master on earth can; he knows and observes all you do, all you say, all you think, and an account is kept of it in the book of his omniscience, and your own conscience. These books will shortly be opened, and not only all reviewed, but you will be judged accordingly; and are you not then concerned to think, and speak, and act accordingly? When you are vain and frothy, and your conversation loose and profane, should not this be a check upon you, and make you sober, to think, How will this look, when it comes to be looked over again? How will it pass, when I pass my trials for eternity?

Your bodies are mortal, your souls are immortal, therefore, let not sin reign either in the one or in the other; you are dying, are dying daily; "In the midst of life," nay, in the beginning of it, "we are in death;" you may die this day; may die in youth, and the number of your months be cut off in the midst; and you know, that after death is the judgment; and as your state is fixed in the particular judgment at death, so it will be found in the general judgment at the end of time, and so it will remain to eternity. How awful, how dreadful, the appearance of the Judge will be in the great day, the word of God has again and again told us; *Knowing therefore those terrors of the Lord*, the terrors of that day, *we persuade men*, we persuade young men, to be sober-minded, and, therefore, to let their moderation, that is, their sober-mindedness, their good government and management of themselves, be known unto all men, because the Lord is at hand. *The Judge standeth before the door.*

The Application.

You see now what is expected from you who are young, and how justly it is expected; you see both from the Word of God: and now shall I entreat you to make use of what I have said, to make it useful to yourselves, that this discourse may not be lost upon you.

1. Shall I desire you to examine yourselves, that you may know your own selves; and take heed of being mistaken in your judgment concerning yourselves. Can your hearts witness for you, that through the grace of God, by remembering yourselves and your Creator in the days of your youth, you are become in some measure sober-minded, and answer this beautiful character of young people? I hope I speak to many such; and the misery is, that those who most need these instructions and warnings, come least in the way of them; they will not hear them, will not read them, because they resolve they will not heed them, or be ruled by them.

But to you who are sober-minded, I say as Christ did to the faithful ones in Thyatira, *I will lay upon you no other burthen, but that which you have already*, and I am sure you will agree to call it a light burthen. Hold fast till Christ comes; hold fast your integrity, hold fast your sober-mindedness.

Some are more inclined to soberness in their natural temper than others are, to them these laws of sober-mindedness will be easier than to others; but to them who are not so, though it be more difficult, yet it is withal more necessary. Wisdom, and grace, and consideration, are intended for the checking of the disorders of the natural temper.

But take heed lest you deceive yourselves, and be more forward, than there is cause, to rank yourselves among the sober-minded, and to think that you need not these admonitions. It is not a sober look that will serve, though that is graceful enough, if it be not affected and forced; but it is the sober mind that we are pressing earnestly upon you; examine that now, for God will examine that, and judge of you by it; when you shall find that to be *carnally minded is death*, but to be *spiritually minded is life and peace.*

2. Shall I desire you to exhort yourselves; so some read that which we translate, *Exhort one another;* preach to your own hearts, preach over this sermon to them. Let all young people charge, and admonish, and encourage themselves to be sober-minded.

Let those who have loose notions in religion, and are fond of suggestions, though ever so absurd, which derogate from the authority and honour of the Scriptures and revealed religion, exhort themselves to be sober-minded, and not to be carried about with every wind, nor carried away from the great principles of Christianity, by the craft of them who lie in wait to deceive, and bring them to downright atheism.

Let those who are drawn in, or are in danger of being drawn into the ruining sins of drunkenness or uncleanness, which have been so fatal to multitudes of young people, exhort themselves to be sober-minded, to sit down and consider seriously what will be in the end thereof, and how dreadful that destruction is which these vicious courses certainly lead to. Except you repent and reform, you must perish, must eternally perish; if the word of God be true, you must; and how miserable will your case be if you bring it to this dilemma, that either God must be false, or you must be damned!

Let those who spend their time in carnal mirth, and sensual pleasures, whose business is nothing but sport and pastime, and their conversation nothing but banter and buffoonery, exhort themselves to be sober-minded; sometimes to be serious, and consider themselves; and try if they can make it as pleasant to themselves to think in earnest, as it is now to talk in jest; for I am sure it will be abundantly more profitable.

Let those young people who are addicted to gaming, and flatter themselves with hopes of getting that easily and quickly, which they love above any thing, but are not willing to be at the pains of getting honestly, exhort themselves to be sober-minded, and to consider what a sinful way this is of trading with what they have, and which they cannot in faith pray to God to bless and prosper them in; to consider, that whether they win or lose they can have no true comfort; no joy of their gains, for it is wealth gotten by vanity, that has a curse attending it; nor any support under their losses, for they are owing to their own sin and folly. How many apprentices have been brought by their love of gaming to rob their masters, and so to ruin themselves! And how many young gentlemen have sunk their estates, and young tradesmen their stocks and business, by it; and will you for want of one sober thought, split upon the same rock? Let those who are allured into this snare, into the beginning of it, dread it, and keep at the utmost distance from it; and let those who are taken in it break out of it immediately, with resolution: *Do this now, my son, deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter.*

Let young dealers in the world, who are entering into business, exhort themselves to be sober-minded, to set out under the conduct of religion and true wisdom; to love their business, to apply themselves, and accommodate themselves, to it. Let them learn betimes to take care; for nothing will be done to purpose without it; to attend the work of their callings with diligence, and order the affairs of them with discretion, and in all their ways to acknowledge God, then are they likely to prosper, and to have good success.

Let young professors of religion, who by the grace of God have escaped the corruption that is in the world, and given up their names to Jesus Christ, exhort themselves to be sober-minded in their profession. Let them take heed of conceitedness and spiritual pride, of confidence in themselves, and their own judgment and ability; let them aim to be best, rather than to be greatest, in the kingdom of God among men. Let them take heed of running into extremes, and of falling into bigotry, and censoriousness; let them be sober in their opinions of truth and falsehood, good and evil, of others and of themselves; expecting that age and experience will rectify many of their present mistakes.

Let young scholars, whose genius leads to books and learning, exhort themselves to be sober-minded. You soon find that you must be serious, must be much so, must learn to think, and to think closely, or you will never make any thing of it; it is not enough to read, but you must study and digest what you read. But that is not all; in your pursuits of knowledge you must be sober, not exercising yourselves in things too high for you, nor boasting yourselves of your attainments; be humble in the use of what you do know, using it for edification, not for ostentation; it is but unprofitable knowledge that *puffeth up*, that only is good for something that doeth good, 1 Cor. viii. 1. Be humble likewise in your inquiries after what you would know; not coveting to be wise above what is written, or to intrude into those things which you have not seen, as many, who are vainly puffed up with a fleshly mind; but be wise unto sobriety. Be willing to be in the dark about that which God has not thought fit to reveal, and in doubt about that which he has not thought fit to determine. This is very well expressed by the learned Grotius, in a poem of his:

Nescire velle quæ Magister Maximus,
Docere non vult, erudita inscitia est.—

Where Revelation ends, to check rash thought,
Were shade illum'd, and ignorance well-taught.

To recommend this sober-mindedness to all of you who are young: This seriousness and sedateness of spirit, and an aptness to consider, are so much the more necessary, if you consider of what great advantage they will be to you every way.

(1.) Thus you will escape the vanity that childhood and youth is subject to, and rescue those precious years from it. It will keep them from running waste, as commonly they do, like water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again, and will do much towards the filling up of the empty spaces, even of those years. When Solomon had observed that *childhood and youth is vanity*, he immediately adds for the cure of that vanity, *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth*, that is, in one word, "*Be serious.*"

By using yourselves to consideration, you will come to be aware of the snares that your spiritual enemies lay for you, of the snake under the green grass, and will not be imposed upon so easily as many are by the wiles of Satan; and by habituating yourselves to self-denial and mortification of the flesh, and a holy contempt of this world, you will wrest the most dangerous weapons out of the hand of the strong man armed, and will take from him that part of his armour in which he most trusted, for it is by the world and the flesh that he mostly fights against us: nay, and this sober-mindedness will put upon you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand in the evil day; and so to resist the devil, that he may flee from you.

This sober-mindedness will prevent many a temptation which a vain mind invites, and courts, and throws men into the way of; and will shut and lock the door against the tempter, who when he finds it so will give it up; and his agents will be apt to do so too; concluding it in vain to tempt the sober mind; they will do as Naomi, who, when she saw that Ruth was *stedfastly minded*, left off speaking to her.

(2.) Thus you will recommend yourselves to the favour of God, and of all wise and good men; will obtain that good name which is better than precious ointment, and more fragrant; a name for good things with God and good people.

God will love those who love him and seek him early; and will never forget this *kindness of your youth* for serious godliness. If you thus give him the first of your first-fruits, it will be an acceptable offering to him. The beloved disciple was the youngest. And it is said of that young man, who asked that serious question, and asked it soberly, *Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life;* that *Jesus beholding him loved him*, Mark x. 21. And as he was likewise well pleased with another, that answered *discreetly*, νηφως, like one who had a *sober mind*, Mark xii. 34. And that humility and quietness of spirit, which is one branch of this sober mind, is an ornament, which, wherever it is found, especially in young people, *is in the sight of God of great price;* and that is valuable indeed which he values, and by it we ought to value ourselves.

Nor is it an argument to be despised by you, that all sober people who know you, will love you, and will have no greater joy than to see you live soberly; but it is an argument the rather to be insisted upon by us, because young people are commonly very much influenced by reputation, and have an eye to that more than any thing in the government of themselves, and the choice of their way; now it is certain that reputation is on religion's side, and if the matter be rightly understood, will help to turn the scale for sober-mindedness. It is true there are some, there are many, to whom a young man will recommend himself by being loose and extravagant, and talking at random against that which is serious; but what kind of people are they? Are they not the *fools in Israel?* Are they not sots or fops, whose valuation of persons and things is not at all to be regarded? But do not all discreet and considerate people esteem a young man who is sober, and show him respect, and converse with him, and put a confidence in him? It is the character of a citizen of Zion, that *in his eyes a vile person is contemned;* though he set up for a wit, or a beau, yet if he be loose and profane, he despises him as a fool, and a flash, but he honours them who fear the Lord, and live conscientiously. Now to which of these would you recommend yourselves? Whose opinion would you covet to stand right in, to stand high in? Would you not choose to have credit with men of virtue and probity, and who are themselves in reputation for wisdom and honour, and to be laid in their bosoms, rather than to be hugged, and caressed, and cried up by those who, being slaves to their pleasures, can never be masters of true reason? Especially considering, that these young people who are truly sober, serious, and conscientious, provided they take care to avoid affectation and superciliousness, will be loved and respected even by those who are themselves loose and vain; and will be manifested in their consciences one time or other, that they are the most valuable young men. And I think it is worth considering, and would bear a debate, whether ordinarily sober, serious people do not love their friends and companions better than vain, loose people do theirs, and are not more ready to do them true service?

(3.) Thus you will prepare for a useful life, if it please God you live long, and for a comfortable one. Those who are sober-minded when they are young, as they are thereby fortified against every evil word and work, so they are furnished for every good word and work, and are likely to be in their day vessels of honour fit for our Master's use, while the ludicrous and unthinking live to be at the best the unprofitable burthens of the earth, and good for nothing.

Young people who are sober, are likely to be good, and to do good in every relation and condition of life; who are sober when they are children and servants; who do the duties, and improve the advantages, of their learning age, and behave themselves prudently then, are preparing hereafter to have the charge of families themselves, to which they are likely to be great blessings, and to the places in which they live. They will not only be the joy of their parents' hearts while they live, but an honour to their memories when they are gone, and thus the children will rise up and call the discreet and virtuous mother blessed, by treading in her steps, and producing the good fruits of their prudent and religious education.

Young men who are sober-minded, are likely to be in time serviceable to the communities they are members of, civil or sacred, in a higher or lower sphere. They may be called to the magistracy or ministry, to serve the state, or to serve the church, but few ever come to do real service or credit to either, or to be of account in either of those posts of honour, unless they be sober-minded when they are young. Lose the morning, and you lose the day. But though they may not arrive to such a public station, yet they may, in a private capacity, be eminently useful to their neighbours, in the things of the world, and to their fellow-Christians in divine things, and so be instruments of glory to God They who are sober-minded when they are young, if they go on as they begin, what will the wisdom be which the multitude of their years will teach? Obadiah, who feared the Lord from his youth, came to *fear him greatly.* Young saints, we hope, will be eminent ones.

(4.) Thus you will prepare for a happy death, if it please God you should die quickly, and may then die cheerfully. O that young people were so wise as to consider their latter end, not only as sure, but

as near; for it is folly for the youngest, and strongest, and most healthful, to put far from them the day of death, when death is every day working in us.

Now the best preparation you can make for it, if you should die in youth, is to live soberly. Then the sting of it will be taken out, through Christ, and consequently the terror of it taken off; and therefore, though you may pray with the Psalmist, *O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days*, yet if the cup may not pass away you need not dread it, you know the worst that death can do you, if it shorten your life on earth, that will be abundantly made up in a better life. Abijah, that sober youth, in whom was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam, dies in the flower of his age, but there is no harm done him, he *comes to his grave in peace*, and goes to heaven triumphantly, 1 Kings xiv. 13. Whereas those who are loose and extravagant, if they die in youth, (as Elihu speaks, Job xxxvi. 14.) *their soul dieth*, so it is in the original, they are spiritually dead, *twice dead;* while they lived in pleasure, they were dead though they lived; and therefore when they die in sin they are *twice dead*, and their life, their life on the other side death, *is among the unclean*, among the Sodomites, (so the margin reads it,) who *suffer the vengeance of eternal fire*, Jude 7, 12.

Let me now close with some general directions to young people, which may be of use to them, in order to the making of them sober-minded.

[1.] Espouse sober principles; for men are, as their principles are. In these avoid extremes, and in the less weighty matters of the law, keep the mean, that you may reserve your zeal for the great things of God, the things that belong to your everlasting peace. Take heed on the one hand of bigotry in the circumstantials of religion, and on the other hand of lukewarmness and indifference in the essentials of it.

Fix such principles as these to yourselves with reference to the main matter: That God's favour is better than life, and his displeasure worse than death. That sin is the greatest evil. That the soul is the man, and that that is best for us, that is best for our souls. That Jesus Christ is all in all to us, and we are undone without an interest in him. That it is as much our wisdom, as it is our duty, to be religious. That the world has not that in it, which will make us happy. That time, and the things of time, are nothing in comparison with eternity, and the things of eternity These, and such as these, are principles of eternal truth, and our firm belief of them, and adherence to them, will be to us of eternal consequence. And as to other things, let your principle be, that *God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that fears God, and works righteousness, is accepted of him*, and therefore ought to be so of us; that *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God and approved of men.* By such principles as these keep up moderation and sober-mindedness in your profession of religion, which will contribute much to the promoting of it in every thing else.

[2.] Dwell much upon such considerations as are proper to make you sober-minded. Be frequent in meditation upon serious things, the great things of the law and gospel, and let not them be looked upon as foreign things. As you think in your hearts, so you are. If the imagination of the thought of the heart be vain and corrupt, if that eye be evil, the whole man will be accordingly; but if that be serious, the affections and aims will be sober too. However you may allow the outward thoughts to be sometimes diverting, the inward thoughts must be reserved for that which is directing.

Think much of the eye of God, which is always upon you, that you may be careful to approve yourselves to him in every thing; of the glory of God, which you ought always to have your eye upon, that you may answer the end of your creation; think much of the many sins you have committed against God, that you may give diligence to make sure the pardon of them, and of the many mercies you have received from God, that you may study what returns you shall make for his favour; think much of the opportunities you enjoy, that you may be busy to improve them, and of the spiritual enemies you are compassed about with, that you may be sober and vigilant in guarding against them.

The four last things, death and judgment, heaven and hell, are commonly recommended as proper subjects of meditation, in order to the making of the mind serious. Because the end of all things is at hand, and that end an entrance upon a state without end, be ye therefore sober; and check vanity with that consideration.

I have somewhere read of one who had been a great courtier and statesman in Queen Elizabeth's time, I think it was Secretary Walsingham, who in his advanced years retired into privacy in the country, whither some of his pleasant companions came to see him, and told him he was melancholy. "No," says he, "I am serious, and it is fit I should be so; for all are serious round about me, and why then should not you and I be serious?" God is serious in observing us, Christ is serious in interceding for us, the Spirit is serious in striving with us; the truths of God are serious truths, his laws, his promises, his threatenings, all serious; angels are serious in their administrations to us, and our spiritual enemies serious in their attempts against us; glorified saints are serious in the embraces of divine love; poor damned sinners cannot but be serious

under the pourings-out of divine wrath; and we ourselves shall be serious shortly.

[3.] Choose sober company. Nothing is of greater consequence to young people than what company they keep, for we insensibly grow like those with whom we converse, especially with whom we delight to converse. Many who were thought to be very soberly inclined, have had their good inclinations turned the contrary way, by keeping vain and loose company, which, perhaps, at first they were not aware of any danger by, but thought their conversation innocent enough. Though bad company, perhaps, bears more blame sometimes than it deserves, from those who think to excuse themselves by laying the fault on their companions, yet it is agreed to have been of most pernicious consequence to multitudes that set out well.

If, therefore, you would be wise and good, choose such for your associates and bosom-friends as will give you good advice, and set you good examples. He who walketh with wise men, is wise, or would be wise; and he shall be wise, when a companion of fools is deceived, and shall be destroyed. Keep at a distance from loose and vain company; for who can touch pitch and not be defiled? Who can converse familiarly with those who are wicked and profane, and not contract guilt, or grief, or both? If you resolve, as David did, to keep the commandments of your God, you must say to evil-doers, as he did, *Depart from me*, (Ps. cxix. 115.) and be, as he was, the companion of all those that fear God, (*v.* 63.) and let your delight be in the excellent ones of the earth, the sober ones.

[4.] Read sober books. Those who are given to reading, are as much under the influence of the books they read, as of the persons they converse with, and therefore in the choice of them you need to be very cautious, and take advice. Nothing more promotes vanity, especially among the refined part of mankind, than romances, and plays, and loose poems; and thus even their solitude and retirement, which we hope might contribute to their seriousness, are lost, and make them more vain, and more ingeniously so.

Let us, therefore, take the same method to make us sober, more sober; converse with those books which are substantial and judicious, out of which we may learn wisdom. The book of God is given us on purpose to make us wise to salvation; make it familiar to you, and let it dwell in you richly. Let it lead you, let it talk with you, and do you follow it, and talk with it, Prov. vi. 22. And many other good books we have, to help us to understand and apply the Scripture, which we should be conversant with. Inquire not for merry books, songs, and jests, but serious books, which will help to put you into, and keep you in, a serious frame.

[5.] Abound much in sober work. Habits are contracted by frequent acts; if therefore you would have a sober mind, employ yourselves much in meditation and prayer, and other devout and holy exercises. And in these let your hearts be fixed, and let all that is within you be employed. Be much in secret worship, as well as diligent and constant in your attendance on public ordinances; those who neglect these cannot but lose their seriousness.

And see to it that you be very serious when you are about serious work, that you profane not the holy things. I look upon it to be in young people as happy an indication of a serious mind, and as hopeful an omen of a serious life, as any other, to be reverent and serious in the worship of God. For it is a sign that the vanity of the mind runs high and strong indeed, when even there it will not be restrained from indecencies; and he is loose indeed, that is *almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly*, Prov. v. 14. The greatness of the God with whom you have to do, and the greatness of the concern you have to do with him in, when you are engaged in his worship, should strike an awe upon you, and make you serious.

And have this in your eye in all religious exercises, that by them you may be made more serious; and that the impressions of other holy exercises may be the deeper, and take the faster hold, let me advise young people who are sober-minded, to come betimes to the ordinance of the Lord's supper. Let me press it upon them, not only as a duty they owe to Christ, but as that which will be of great advantage to themselves, to strengthen their resolutions, with purpose of heart to cleave to the Lord.

Those who keep off from it, it is either because they know they are not sober-minded, or because they are not determined to continue so; but none of you will own either of those reasons. Delay not therefore, by that most sacred, solemn bond, to join yourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten.

And how do you like this sober, serious work you have now been about in hearing or reading this discourse? Have you been in it as in your element? or as a fish upon dry ground? Have you suffered this word of exhortation, and bidden it welcome? Shall I leave you all resolved, in the strength of God's grace, that now in the days of your youth you will be sober-minded? If so, *The Lord keep it always in the imagination of the thought of your heart*, and by writing the law of sobriety there, *establish your way before him!*

A SERMON

CONCERNING THE

RIGHT MANAGEMENT OF FRIENDLY VISITS.

PREACHED IN LONDON, APRIL 14, 1704.

Acts xv. 36.

Let us go again, and visit our brethren, in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

This was a good motion which St. Paul made to Barnabas, his brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, inviting his company and assistance in watering those churches among the Gentiles which they had together lately planted. Blessed Paul, that prime minister of state in Christ's kingdom, was not only thoroughly furnished for every good word and work, but was always forward to put forth himself to both; not only a *chief speaker*, (Acts xiv. 12.) but a *chief doer*. Many will be content to follow, who do not care to lead in those services that are difficult and hazardous; but those who by the grace of God are spirited προισασθαι, to *go before in good works*, as the word is, (Tit. iii. 8.) are worthy of double honour: such a one was Paul; witness this instance here.

Though Paul and Barnabas had an extraordinary call to preach the gospel among the Gentiles at first, the Holy Ghost by special designation, separating them to that great work, (Acts xiii. 2.) yet in the prosecution of that service, they were not to expect immediate direction from heaven at every turn, but much was left to their own prudence and zeal, that their example might be the more imitable, in after-times; and this, particularly, of visiting those to whom they had preached.

Antioch was now a safe and quiet harbour, into which Paul and Barnabas, after a troublesome but successful voyage, were lately retired to refresh themselves a little: there they were easy, and yet not idle; for while they continued there (though not many days) they were teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, Acts xv. 35. And they had reason to say, It is good to be here; better be here than in those cities, where bonds and afflictions continually awaited them. But St. Paul's active spirit could not long be reconciled to rest; and, therefore, he has soon thoughts of putting to sea again; he is not unmindful of, nor will he be disobedient to, that heavenly vision which appointed him his work *afar off among the Gentiles*, Acts xxi. 21. Among them, therefore, he is here meditating a second expedition. Against this it was easy to object, as the disciples did against Christ's going into Judea, (John xii. 8.) *Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?* The Gentiles had of late actually stoned Paul, (*ch.* xiv. 19.) and yet like a stout soldier of Jesus Christ, that he might make full proof of his ministry, he resolves to go thither again.

Those who have obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful, will prefer the service of God and their generation before their own ease and safety; and will consult the honour of Christ, and the good of souls, more than any secular interest or satisfaction of their own. If we would approve ourselves the servants of Christ, we must be willing both to labour for him, for this is the day of our work, it will be time enough to rest when we come to heaven; and to venture for him, for this is the day of our combat, and we must not expect our crown, till our warfare is accomplished. Nay, and those who have laboured much, and ventured far, must be willing, with St. Paul here, to labour more, and venture further; Let us go again to do the same work, and encounter the same difficulties. If we would finish our course with joy, we must, like the sun, be constant to it, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race, according as our work is renewed upon our hands, and as the duty of every day requires.

That which St. Paul here designs is a visit, a circular visit; and as one who neither presumed that he was able himself alone for the work that was to be done, nor was ambitious himself alone to receive the respects that would be paid, he urges Barnabas to go along with him, as a sharer in both: for we are members one of another, and the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee. Christ sent forth his disciples two and two.

Now observe in this project of Paul's,

1. Who they were whom he designed a visit to: *Let us visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord.* Note here,

(1.) That he called them *brethren;* not only *the brethren;* he means not only the ministers, the elders they had ordained in every church, (*ch.* xiv. 23.) but all the believers. Though St. Paul was an eminent apostle, the greatest favourite of heaven, and the greatest blessing to this earth, that (for ought I know) ever any mere man was, yet he styles himself brother to the least and meanest of the disciples of Christ; so setting us a copy of humility and condescension, and giving us an example to Christ's rule, with an eye to its reason, (Matt. xxiii. 8.) *Be not ye called Rabbi, for all ye are brethren.* If our Master be not ashamed to call us all brethren, we must not be ashamed to call one another so; not in formality, but in sincerity, and in token of brotherly love.

(2.) That he takes it for granted, that they had brethren in every city where they had preached the word of the Lord; for the word of the gospel, though in every place it met with a fierce opposition from some, yet others gave it a kind reception; though to some it was a savour of death unto death, to others it was a savour of life unto life. In *every* city where the gospel was preached, there was some good done; some lost sheep brought home, some lost silver found. This caused the apostles always to triumph, that by them Christ made manifest the savour of his knowledge in every place, 2 Cor. ii. 14. Even in those cities out of which the apostles were driven in seeming weakness and disgrace, yet they left behind them some lasting trophies of the Redeemer's victories, and seed under the clods, which sprung up and grew by degrees to a plentiful harvest.

They who are acquainted with the true principles and pleasures of the communion of saints, have a kind and tender concern, not only for their brethren in their own city, but for their brethren in every city, even those whom they never saw, nor are ever likely to see in this world; they love, esteem, and pray for, and are one with, all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours, and have room for them all in their enlarged hearts; and when perhaps not many serious Christians fall within the lines of their own communication, which occasions them some melancholy thoughts, they comfort themselves with this, that they have brethren in every city; who all belong to that one city of the living God, the Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and is the mother of us all.

(3.) That he speaks with a particular concern for their brethren, in those cities where they had preached the word of the Lord. Those whom he had preached to, were in a special manner dear to him, dearer than others. To them he had imparted the gospel of Christ, and was ready to impart even *his own soul* also, as he speaks, 1 Thess. ii. 8. They who truly love Christ and his gospel, cannot but dearly love those to whom they preach Christ and his gospel, especially those who, through grace, have by their ministry received them. Spiritual fathers naturally care for the state of those who are born again by the word they have preached to them; and it is a pity that there should be any love lost between them.

These were they whom St. Paul would visit, though they lay remote and scattered: he did not think it enough to send some of his attendants to wait upon them, and bring him an account of their state, much less did he summon them to come and attend him with their several reports, but he undertook a perilous and expensive journey to visit them, for he was in journeying often; and yet all the toil and fatigue of them was nothing compared with that which put him upon them, even that which came upon him daily, the *care of all the churches,* 2 Cor. xi. 26, 28.

2. On what errand he would visit them. Let us *see how they do,* πως εχουσι—*how it is with them; quid faciunt—what they do;* so some: *quid facti sunt—what they have done;* so others; and both from the Syriac. It was not merely a compliment that he designed, nor did he take such a journey with a bare "How do ye?" No, he made this visit to his brethren, that he might acquaint himself with their case, and impart unto them such spiritual gifts as were suited to it. He visited them as the physician visits his recovering patient, that he may prescribe what is proper for him, for the perfecting of his cure, and the preventing of a relapse.

Let us see how they do; that is, Let us see what spirit they are of, and what state they are in.

(1.) Let us see what their temper and conversation are; how they stand affected, and how they behave themselves. They received the word of the Lord, which we preached to them, with all readiness of mind; let us see whether they hold fast that which they received, or no, and what is become of the blessedness they then spake of: a good work was begun among them; let us see how it goes on, and what advances are made in the building which we laid the foundation of. They embraced the gospel of Christ, and professed a subjection to it; let us see whether they stand firm or are shaken, whether they get ground or lose it, whether they are an orna-

nent to that worthy name by which they are called, or a reproach to it.

This inquiry was the fruit of his godly jealousy over them, which he expresses in many of his epistles with a great deal of tenderness, and true affection: he was afraid concerning those among whom he had laboured, lest he had bestowed upon them labour in vain, and lest Satan's emissaries had disordered and undone that good work which had been done with so much care and pains by Christ's ambassadors. See 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3. *I fear lest your minds should be corrupted.*—Gal. iv. 11. *I am afraid of you.*—1 Thess. iii. 5. *Lest by some means the tempter have tempted you.* This was the language, not of his ill opinion of them, but of his good affection to them: and from this jealousy proceeded a diligent endeavour to recall them if he found them straying, to confirm them if he found them wavering, and to comfort them if he found them stedfast. Let those suspicions which are the bane of friendship be banished, and then let not those jealousies, which are the fruits of friendship, be misinterpreted.

(2.) Let us see what condition they are in, and what their present circumstances are; whether the churches have rest and liberty, and their door of opportunity open, or whether they are not in trouble and distress, scattered and broken up. When they had last taken leave of them, they gave them notice of approaching trouble, (*ch.* xiv. 22.) that *through much tribulation they must enter into the kingdom of God.* Now, says he, let us go see whether the clouds which were then gathering are dispersed, or no; whether the wrath of their enemies be cooled and restrained, or no. Come, let us go see how it is with them, that however it is, we may be some way helpful to them; that we may rejoice with them if they rejoice, and caution them against security; that we may mourn with them if they mourn, and comfort them under the cross.

Now this visit here designed may be considered two ways; either,

1. As an apostolical visit to the churches; or

2. As a friendly visit to their friends.

1. This visit was an apostolical visit to the churches, those particularly to whom they themselves had preached the word of the Lord; not building upon another man's foundation, as St. Paul speaks, (Rom. xv. 20.) but cultivating their own husbandry. The persons visited must be considered as those who had been within hearing of the joyful sound of the gospel, and to whom the word of this salvation was sent, as St. Paul had told them, Acts xiii. 26. Now he would go and see *how they do.* Whence we may observe,

That it is needful to inquire into the spiritual state of those to whom the word of the Lord is preached.

I know I speak to those who have the word of the Lord preached to them in as much purity and power, as, perhaps, any people under the sun; you have precept upon precept, and line upon line, in season and out of season. Now I would, as a friend to your souls, suggest to you a necessary inquiry, whether the intention of all this good preaching you have here be answered, and the ends of it in some measure attained, or whether it be not lost upon you, and the grace of God therein received in vain.

(1.) Every man is most concerned to inquire into the state of his own soul, while he sits under the ministry of the gospel. It is the work and office of conscience to visit the soul with this interrogation, and to give in a true answer to it. O that I could prevail with you to deal faithfully with yourselves in this matter, and to try and judge yourselves, because the day is coming when the righteous God will try and judge us all.

So long the word of the Lord has been preached to me, "How do I do" with it? It is a word of life; has it quickened me? or am not I to this day dead in trespasses and sins? It is light; has it enlightened me, or am not I still sitting in darkness? It is spiritual food; has it nourished me? It is spiritual physic; has it healed me? What am I the better for all the sermons I have heard, and all the acquaintance I have got with the Holy Scriptures? What state am I in, a state of sin, or a state of grace? What frame am I in? am I habitually serious and heavenly, or vain and worldly? Is my soul in health? Does not some spiritual disease hang upon me, which is both weakening and threatening? What appetite have I to spiritual delights? What digestion of spiritual food? What strength for spiritual labour? How do I breathe in prayer? How do I walk in a religious conversation? Does my soul prosper, as the soul of Gaius did, 3 John 2? Do I thrive in my spiritual merchandise, and increase my stock of wisdom, grace and comfort, or do I decline and go behind-hand? Am I getting nearer to God, and fitter for heaven, or am I not cleaving to this earth, and setting my heart upon it as much as ever?

According as we find the case to be upon inquiry, let us proceed in dealing with ourselves; if we find no improvement by the word, we ought to take the shame of it; if our profiting does through grace appear, we ought to take the comfort of it.

(2.) Every minister is next concerned, to inquire into the state of his own hearers; they who dispense God's words and sacraments should sometimes, with Paul and Barnabas here, visit those to whom they dispense them, and see *how they do*, how their souls do. These are the visits which the text would in a special manner lead us to discourse of.

Ministers should not think it enough to preach sound doctrine to their congregations in the lump, which is like the shepherd's turning all his flock together into a good pasture, but they must search

the particular sheep, and seek them out, (as it is expressed, (Ezek. xxxiv. 11.) that they may strengthen the diseased, heal the sick, bind up that which is broken, and bring again that which is driven away, v. 4, 16. As we must look after our prayers, to hear what answer God gives to them, (Hab. ii. 1.) so we must look after our preaching, to see what success it has among those we preach to, that we may return answer to him who sent us, (2 Sam. xxiv. 13.) and like the servant who invited the guests, may show our Lord all these things, (Luke xiv. 21.) Blessed Paul, that prince and pattern of preachers, taught not only publicly, but from house to house; *warning every one night and day with tears*, (Acts xx. 20, 31.) *exhorting, comforting*, and *charging every one, as a father doth his children*, 1 Thess. ii. 11. Let us go and do likewise, as those who naturally care for the state of souls.

In the most humble, tender, and obliging manner that may be, let us visit our brethren to whom we have preached the word of the Lord, and inquire what improvements they have made in knowledge by the means of knowledge, that where we find them defective, we may instruct them, mistaken, we may rectify their mistakes. Inquire also what progress they make in practical godliness, that what is amiss may be amended, and what is good may be encouraged; that their doubts may be removed, and they may be helped over their difficulties and discouragements. "Come, (my friend) you are a constant hearer of the word of the Lord, and you seem to heed it, and to be attentive to it, I am come to ask you *how you do?* The soul is the man; if it be well with the soul it is well with the man. How does your soul? Have you understood all these things? If any of the sayings you have heard be hard sayings, let me know, and I will endeavour to make them more easy. Are you affected with what you hear? And does your heart burn within you while we reason with you? Do you relish good truths, and experience the power and influence of them upon your heart? If so, it is well, go on and prosper, the Lord is with you while you be with him: that is a good sermon indeed that does you good; that convinces you of sin, and humbles you for it; shows you your duty, and quickens you to it. But if you find yourself cold and unaffected with the things of God, dull and inactive in the work of God, dark and unacquainted with the life of God, inquire into the cause of it; whence it is that the things which remain are ready to die. It may be there is some secret sin indulged and harboured, the love of the world perhaps, or some lust of the flesh; and this is the worm at the root of your profession, which withers its leaves, and dries up all its fruit; if you love your soul, whatever it is, mortify it, crucify it, and suppress the first risings of it. It may be that you are not so close and constant to your secret devotions as you should be, or careless and lifeless in them, and the soul cannot prosper while that work of the Lord is neglected, or done deceitfully. Perhaps family worship is not kept up as it should be, and therefore God has withholden the dews of his grace from you. You let your place be empty perhaps at the table of the Lord, and deprive yourself of the benefit of that ordinance; the communion of saints is slighted, and it is well if the society of evil-doers be not chosen rather. Come, let me beg of you, as a friend who wishes well to your soul, that you will walk more circumspectly, and keep more close to God and your duty, and you will soon find the comfort of it in your own breast."

How to adapt the inquiries and counsels to the case of each person visited, young and old, rich and poor, weak and strong, careless and careful, I cannot undertake here to give particular rules; but *wisdom is profitable to direct.* And many excellent books we are furnished with, both ancient and modern, for our assistance herein. Mr. Baxter's *Gildas Salvianus, or Reformed Pastor*, will either quicken us or shame us. And cause for shame, I doubt, we all have, for our woful neglect of this part of our duty. God by his grace revive this good work!

But if ministers have not the opportunity they would have to visit their brethen, it would come all to one if their brethren would sometimes visit them, as their spiritual physicians, to consult them, and converse with them about their spiritual state. If the *priest's lips should keep knowledge*, the people should *seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts*, Mal. ii. 7. And the spiritual help thus sought is likely to be given most cheerfully, and received most thankfully.

2. This visit may be considered as a friendly visit made to their friends, with a pious design, and to very good purposes. The brethren they speak of were such as they had some knowledge of, and concern for, and whose welfare they were desirous of; Let us go, (says St. Paul,) and visit them, thereby to testify the kindness we retain for them, now we are at a distance, and that though they are out of sight, they are not out of mind. And let us see *how they do*, that we may sympathize with them according as their condition is, and contribute what we can to their holiness and comfort. This was that which St. Paul had in his eye, and thought worth his while, in undertaking this circuit. Hence observe,

That friendly visits, and kind inquiries into each others' state, are very good things, if they be managed in a right manner, and intended for good purposes.

There are two sorts of commendable visits to be made to our brethren.

(1.) There are visits, that are properly called Christian visits, I mean visits of pure charity, designed for the succour, help, and comfort of those

who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. Few consider what stress the Scripture lays on this part of our duty. When the apostle undertakes to give a description of religion, and to show wherein it consists, this is the first thing he describes it by, Jam. i. 27. *Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this;* one would think it should follow,—It is wholly to retire from the world and all communication with it, and to spend the whole time in acts of devotion, in prayer and pious contemplations, or at least to fast twice in the week, and to attend all the public performances of divine service; sure, this is the principal part of pure religion, and which must stand first in its description: No, *it is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction;* that by owning them and sympathizing with them, we may comfort and encourage them; and by inquiring into their state, may learn which way we may show them real kindness.

Nor does this act of charity make a less figure in our Saviour's description of the processes of the judgment-day, wherein this will be published to the praise, and honour, and glory of the saved remnant, *I was sick, and ye visited me, I was in prison, and ye came unto me,* (Matt. xxv. 36.) therefore, *Come inherit the kingdom,* (*v.* 34.) as if all the happiness of heaven were not too much to be the return of these visits. Probably St. Paul had an eye of faith to that word of Christ, when upon the mention of the kind visits which Onesiphorus had made to him in his bonds at Rome, he prayed, *The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day,* (2 Tim. i. 18.) that day when such visits shall be remembered, and abundantly recompensed, and accounted as visits made to Christ himself.

Among all your visits therefore, I pray, let not these charitable ones be omitted: the poor, the sick, the prisoners, you have always with you; the widows and the fatherless you have always with you; and whenever you will, you may thus do them good, Mark xiv. 7. You do not want objects of this charity, if you do not want a heart to it. Look after your poor neighbours, visit them, either yourselves or by your servants, and *see how they do.* Inquire into the necessities of those who are not themselves forward to make them known. *Deep poverty,* (as the apostle calls it, 2 Cor. viii. 2.) like deep waters, commonly makes the least noise, while counterfeit poverty is clamorous. What our Saviour directs in making feasts, (Luke xiv. 12—14.) may be applied to the making of visits, visit not thy friends and thy rich neighbours, not them only who will visit thee again, and so a recompence will be made thee; but visit *the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind,* who *cannot recompense thee,* and *thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.* The liberal should devise liberal things; and since by works of charity we sow upon the best soil, let out what we have to the best interest, and upon the best securities, and send our effects upon the most advantageous voyages, contrivances of doing good will turn to a better account at last, than the most celebrated projects of worldly wisdom. God presents us with the blessings of his goodness, gives before we ask, and is found of those who seek him not: therefore, we must be merciful, *as our Father in heaven is merciful.* We must seek opportunities of doing good, by visiting our poor brethren, and inquiring into their wants. If our proud hearts be sometimes ready to ask, What are such and such poor people, that we should visit them and regard them? we may soon answer them with another question, What is man, then, that God should visit him? Man who is a worm, and the son of man who is a worm? What are we that he should visit us, so visit and regard us? That he should regard us, who are so mean and vile, *according to the estate of a man of high degree,* 1 Chron. xvii. 17. If we think much to visit the sick and poor often, and to be liberal to them in our visits, let us remember that God visits us *every morning,* (Job vii. 18.) and that his *visitation preserves our spirits,* Job x. 12.

(2.) Our common visits, which we make to our relations, friends, and neighbours, as such, should be so managed that they may be truly Christian visits. These and the like—polite actions of life, as well as natural ones—are in themselves, morally, neither good nor evil, but according to the principle we are actuated by, and the rule we are governed by in the doing of them. Whatever we do, even in our calling and common conversation, we must do it to the glory of God; and then it is sanctified, it is dignified, *Holiness to the Lord* is written upon it, and it will be fruit abounding to our account. It is a common piece of civility to bring our friends forward on their journey, and few look further therein than the obliging of their friends, and the diverting of themselves; and yet, even this is capable of being done *after a godly sort,* as we find, 3 John 6. *Whom if thou bring forward on their journey, after a godly sort,* ἀξίως τῦ Θεῦ, as becomes one that belongs to God to respect those who belong to him likewise, *thou shalt do well.* And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, wherein lies much of its life and power, the doing of common actions after a godly sort, with an eye to God's honour as our end, his word as our rule, and his providence as our guide and disposer. Believe it, Christians, religion is not a thing to be confined to our churches and closets; no, wherever we are we must have it with us: *Bind it continually upon thine heart, tie it about thy neck: When thou goest, let it lead thee; when thou sleepest, let it keep thee; when thou wakest, let it talk with thee,* Prov. vi. 21, 22. Let it sit down with thee at thy table, lie down with thee in thy bed, go out with

thee about thy business, come in with thee to thy repose; let it be at thy right hand in buying and selling, in reading and writing, alone and in company. *As the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man*, so let it cleave to thee: by this let it appear that religion has renewed thy heart, let it regulate thy life; and abide always under the commanding power and influence of it.

Among other common actions of life, let this of visiting our friends be done after a godly sort. To assist you herein is what I principally designed in the choice of this text, and what will take up the remainder of our time. And I shall offer something by way of caution against those things which corrupt our visits, and turn them into sin to us; and by way of direction to those things which will sanctify our visits, and make them to turn to a very good purpose.

I. Suffer, I beseech you, a word of caution; and take heed that your visits of your friends, and your inquiries into their state, be not so mismanaged, as to turn to some ill purpose. This we must not judge of by the common sentiment or fashion of a vain world; for our Saviour has told us, that there is *that which is highly esteemed among men*, perhaps as a mighty accomplishment, and a piece of very good breeding, which yet *is an abomination in the sight of God*, Luke xvi. 15. Let us, therefore, have recourse to the law and to the testimony, and take admonition thence in this case.

1. Let us take heed, that our friendly visits be not the waste and consumption of our precious time. We are intrusted with time as a talent to be traded with for eternity: as we spend our time well or ill, so will our eternity be spent, comfortably or miserably. Every good Christian will therefore endeavour to approve himself a good husband of his time; and that is a piece of *good husbandry*, which is indeed *good divinity*. It is not only necessary that some part of our time be spent in actual preparation for another world, but all our time must be spent with an habitual regard to it. Every hour of the hireling's day must be at the disposal of him who hired him into his vineyard. Our time is not our own, for we know in whose hands our times are, and must always live to him, by whom we always live.

The wisdom which is from above will therefore direct us what proportion of time is to be allotted to every service, both of our general and particular calling, so that the several duties we have to perform, and the several enjoyments we have to take the comfort of, may not interfere with or intrench upon one another. *Every thing is beautiful in its season, and to every purpose there is a time*, which the *wise man's heart discerns*. Now if that time be spent in visits, which should be spent in any needful duties relating to life or godliness, then they are not Christian visits. If, under colour of visiting our friends, and seeing how they do, we indulge ourselves in sloth and laziness, and the careless neglect of business and labour, we shall give but a bad account of so many of our hours mispent. We may justly say to many, as Pharaoh unjustly said to Moses and the Israelites, *Ye are idle, ye are idle, therefore ye say, Let us go* and visit our brethren; nay, it is perhaps pretended, *Let us go and do sacrifice*, Exod. v. 17. Such as these the apostle describes, (1 Tim. v. 13.) who *learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house*, under pretence of friendly visits; and not only idle, (for few who are idle are only idle, usually they have other faults; when they have nothing to do, the devil will find them something to do,) they are tattlers also and busy-bodies; idle in good, but busy in evil. But what will they do when God rises up, and shall bring them into judgment, for all their idle visits, and idle frolics, and every idle word?

Learn, therefore, to adjust and limit the expense of your time, and be not prodigal of such a talent. When you say that you will go and visit a friend, ask, Can I afford time for it? Is there not some greater good to be done at the same time, which cannot so well be deferred till another time? Will not the calling be neglected, or some religious duties be prevented by it? And let that be done first, which, all things considered, is most needful,—and every thing in its own order. And where a visit, which must be made, we fear intrenches too much upon some more necessary business, it will be our wisdom to improve it the more carefully for some very good purpose, that so at least we may effectually save it from being an idle visit.

2. Let us take heed that our friendly visits be not the gratifications of pride and vain curiosity. They who desire to make a fair show in the flesh, (as the apostle speaks, Gal. vi. 12.) visit their friends only that they may see and be seen; that they may show themselves in their best ornaments and accomplishments, and that they may observe what figure other people make, and what they set themselves off by. They go abroad only to learn fashions, and to see how the world goes; like the Athenians, who spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or hear some new thing, (Acts xvii. 21.) or like Dinah, who went out *to see the daughters of the land*, (Gen. xxxiv. 1.) to see how they were dressed, what entertainments they gave, and how they lived, only that she might have something to talk of when she came home, either by way of praise or censure. This was all her business; and the sequel of the story shows, that the journey was not for her honour. Yet it is to be feared that many of our visits are made from no better a principle.

Decency indeed is duty; civility must be paid and returned in that which is the current coin of our

country. Religion was never intended to destroy good manners, or to make men rude and unfashionable; in matters of common conversation, it is a rule of direction, not a rule of contraries. But in our compliances with the customs and usages of the place we live in, and the persons we converse with, we have need to look well to our spirits, and to keep our hearts with all diligence, lest that which is not only innocent but commendable in itself, arise from a corrupt principle, and so become sin to us. Hezekiah's showing his house and furniture, his armoury and jewels, to the king of Babylon's ambassadors, seemed but a piece of common respect, and what is usually done among friends; and yet, because he did it in the pride of his heart, wrath came upon him, and on Judah and Jerusalem, for it, (2 Chron. xxxii. 25.) and it is upon record for warning to all, even to those who have escaped the grosser corruptions that are in the world through lust, to take heed lest foolish pride, that root of bitterness, which bears so much gall and wormwood, make their visits, dress, and compliments, a snare to them. Pride is a subtle sin, a sin that most easily besets us, a sin that is apt to mingle itself with our best actions, and like a dead fly it spoils many a pot of precious ointment; we have therefore need to keep a jealous eye, and a strict hand, upon the motions of our own souls, as in other instances, so in this of making and receiving visits, *lest being lifted up with pride we fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

If in our common conversation we are more solicitous to approve ourselves to men, by appearing gay and agreeable, than to approve ourselves to God, either by doing or getting good, surely we forget that fundamental law of our Christianity, *not to live to ourselves, but to him that died for us, and rose again.* That common principle, (which too many govern themselves by more than by the principles of religion,) "As good be out of the world as out of the fashion," ought to be of no force with them who know that they are called out of the world, and are not to be conformed to it, nor to walk according to the course of it.

Let us always endeavour, while we accommodate ourselves to the fashions of our country, and of our place in it, yet to be *dead to them,* and observe them with a holy indifference, as those who seek a better country, that is, a heavenly, and belong to it: so we may do what others do, and yet not as the most do it. Let the visits we make daily to our God by prayer, be more our care, and more our delight, than any visits we have to make to our friends.

3. Let us take heed that our friendly visits be not the cloak and cover of hypocrisy; that they be not such visits as David's enemies made to him, (Ps. xli. 6.) *If he come to see me he speaketh vanity,* that is, what he says by way of compassion and condolence is all counterfeit and pretended: *His heart gathereth iniquity to itself, when he goeth abroad he telleth it.* A base practice, and that which all, who have any sense of virtue and honour, will cry out shame on. Next to hypocrisy in religion, nothing is worse than hypocrisy in friendship.

It is bad enough if kindness be not designed in our visits, and if we do not duly respect those whom we thus profess a respect for; for love ought to be without dissimulation, (Rom. xii. 9.) but it is much worse if mischief and unkindness be intended to those whom we pretend to make visits of friendship to; and we go to see them, that we may find some occasion against them, and pick up something to make the matter of their reproach in the next company. Thus to make the shows and ceremonies of friendship serve the designs of malice and ill-will, is to involve ourselves in a double guilt, both the want of charity, and the want of sincerity.

Not that therefore, when we have conceived a displeasure against any, whom upon the account of relation, communion, neighbourhood, or former acquaintance, we owe respect to, we must presently break off all intercourse and conversation with them, and deny due civilities to them, for fear of hypocrisy in paying them; no, that is to make ill, worse: but we must mortify that corrupt passion which is working in us; *not let the sun go down upon our wrath;* forgive the injury, whether real or imaginary; be reconciled to our friend, cordially reconciled, and then come and offer our gift to God, and our respects to our friend. We ought carefully to avoid every thing that tends to the alienating of the affections of Christians one from another, and the cooling of love; and to devise all means possible for the preserving of true friendship where it is, and the reparation and retrieval of it where it is withering and ready to die.

4. Let us take heed that our friendly visits be not made the opportunities of slandering and talebearing. Our rule is, *Speak evil of no man,* not only that evil which is false and altogether groundless; but not that which is true, when our speaking of it will do more hurt than good. If we have not wherewithal to speak well of those we speak of, we had better not say any thing of them than say ill. The general law of justice obliges to do as we would be done by: we would not have our own faults and follies, our own miscarriages and mismanagements, proclaimed in all companies, and made the subject of discourse and remark; let us then treat other people's good name with the same tenderness that we expect and desire our own should be treated with. There is also a particular law of charity, which obliges us to cover even a multitude of sins; to keep that secret which is secret, for we need not make scandals, by divulging that which might be concealed: and to speak of that which cannot be hid, as those who mourn, and not as those who are puffed up; as those who are willing to make the best, and hope

the best, of every person, and every action, and not as if we were of counsel against the delinquent, and thought ourselves obliged to aggravate the crime, and press for judgment against the criminal.

Nothing is more destructive to love and friendship than tale-bearing is: we have in the Scripture laws against it, (Lev. xix. 16.) *Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people.* The word רכיל here and elsewhere used for a tale-bearer, properly signifies a pedlar or petty chapman, who buys goods (stolen ones it may be) at one place, and sells them at another, taking care to make his own markets of them; so a tale-bearer makes his visits, to pick up at one place, and utter at another, that which he thinks will lessen his neighbour's reputation, that he may build his own upon the ruin of it. Another law to the same effect we have, (Exod. xxiii. 1.) *Thou shalt not raise a false report.* The margin reads it, *Thou shalt not receive a false report:* for, many times, the receiver in this case is as bad as the thief. We have also proverbs against it, (Prov. xx. 19.) *He that goes about* (making visits suppose) *as a tale-bearer, revealeth secrets;* and (Prov. xxvi. 20, 22.) *Where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth*—and *the words of a tale-bearer are as wounds.* They who make it their business in their visits to carry peevish, ill-natured stories and characters from place to place, to the wounding of their neighbours' good name secretly, the propagating of contempts and jealousies, and the sowing of discord, do the devil's work, and serve his interests, more than they are aware of. That great and good man, St. Austin, ordered the law of his house to be written over his table, which forbad all tale-bearers any room there;

Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere famam,
Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi.—

Be it known that this table is forbidden the man, who delights in injuring the reputation of absent persons.

As a greater than he had done before him, (Ps. ci. 5.) *Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off;* and I heartily wish that not the persons but the thing might be cut off from all conversation.

You will do me the justice (my brethren) to think that what I say in these cautions is intended not as an accusation of any, I know the faces of but few of you, much less do I know your faults; but as an admonition to you all, to take heed of those sins, which I know most easily beset us: for *as in water face answers face, so doth the heart of man to man.*

II. Suffer, I beseech you, a word of counsel, and direction; and let us all endeavour that our visits of our friends, and our inquiries into their state, may be made to serve some good purpose; that they may not only be rectified, and made innocent, but sanctified, and made excellent; and may be so managed as to rescue that from being lost time, which we cannot but be sensible has been too much so, and to make it pass well in our account. Even acts of civility may be so improved as to become acts of piety; and the common salutation of a "How do you," may, by a good intention, be advanced to the rank of those good words, which they that fear the Lord speak often one to another, and which the Lord hearkens and hears, and of which he writes a book of remembrance, Mal. iii. 16. As the sincere, sacred words of "God be with you," and "God bless you," when they are used carelessly and lightly, degenerate, and turn into the sin of taking the name of the Lord our God in vain; so this common word, "How do you do?" and, "How does your family?" may be consecrated by a principle of Christian friendship, and we may even therein glorify God.

This, which I say concerning the personal visits of our friends, may also be much of it accommodated to paper visits, by letter. The keeping up of our friendly correspondences, which is the chief intention of most of the letters which we write, who are not men of business in the world, ought to arise from a good principle, and to be managed by us as becomes Christians, that we may not have to answer for waste paper, as well as lost time.

Let us then be governed in this matter by the following directions:

1. Let our friendly visits be the proofs and preservatives of brotherly love. Brotherly love is the law of Christ's kingdom, the livery of his family, the great lesson to be learned in his school; nothing is more the beauty and strength of the Christian church, nor a brighter ornament to that holy religion which we make profession of: it is maintained and kept up by reciprocal kindnesses, and particularly by mutual visits. This, therefore, we must intend both in giving and receiving them, and manage them accordingly, to testify our affection to those whom we are obliged by nature, providence, or grace, in particular manner to respect; and so to show the proof of our love, as the apostle speaks, (2 Cor. vii 24.) and thereby to confirm and improve that unit wherein brethren ought to dwell together. We mu therefore visit one another, that we may the bett love one another, with a pure heart and more fe vently.

Mutual strangeness and affected distance, is bo the effect and the cause of the decay of love; it an evidence that it is cooled, and it cools it yet mor and perhaps by degrees kills it, and gives Sat room to sow his tares. When relations and neig bours, and those who are under some particular ti of friendship, yet are as shy one of another, and much on the reserve, as if they never had seen o another before in this world, and never expected see one another in a better world, it is easy to sa contrary to what was said of the primitive Chri

tians, *See how* little these people *love one another;* but when they visit each other with mutual freeness and openness, embrace each other with a cordial endearedness, and concern themselves for each other with all possible tenderness, by this it will appear that they are taught of God to love one another; and hereby the holy fire is kept burning upon the altar.

Now since our lot is cast in those latter days, wherein it is foretold, that iniquity should abound, and the love of many wax cold, (Matt. xxiv. 12.) those perilous times in which men shall be lovers of their own selves only, (2 Tim. iii. 1, 2.) it is a good service to the public, by all means possible to cultivate true and hearty friendship, and bring it into reputation. Why should we be strange one to another, who hope to be together for ever with the Lord?

But if the diseases of selfishness and deceit should prove still obstinate to the methods of cure among most people; yet if we approve ourselves warm and cordial in our love, we shall have the comfort of having done our duty, and delivered our souls: and perhaps they who are more loving than others, will have the further comfort of being better beloved than others; for he who watereth shall be watered also himself.

2. Let our friendly visits be the helps and occasions of Christian sympathy. Christian sympathy is one branch of Christian love. As it is in the natural body, it ought to be in the mystical body, *If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it,* and *if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it,* 1 Cor. xii. 26. What is love but a union of souls, and a twisting of interests? And where these are, there will be sympathy, according to that law of our religion, *Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep,* Rom. xii. 15.

We must therefore visit our friends, and *see how they do,* that we may rejoice with them in those things which are the matter of their rejoicing; that when we find them and their families in health and peace, their employments successful, their substance increased, their relations agreeable, the vine by the side of the house fruitful, and the olive plants round about the table green and flourishing, we may be comforted in their comfort, as the apostle speaks, 2 Cor. vii. 13. God takes pleasure in the prosperity of his servants, and so should we, Ps. xxxv. 27. And we should be the more studious to show ourselves pleased in the prosperity of our friends, because most seek their own, and few another's weal; and thence arise envy, and emulation, and mutual jealousies.

We must likewise desire to know the state of our friends, that we may mourn with them for their afflictions, and mingle our tears with theirs; that if the hand of the Lord be gone out against them, and breaches are made on them and their comforts, we may give them some relief, by putting a respect upon them in their sorrows, and assuring them of our continued friendship, when they are most apt to be discouraged, and to think themselves slighted; also by giving them an opportunity of making their complaints to such as will hear them, not only with patience, but with tenderness and compassion, and this is some ease to a burthened spirit. And perhaps we may then speak some word in season, which God may bless for the strengthening of the weak hands, and confirming the feeble knees.

On this errand Job's friends came to visit him, when they heard of all the evil that was come upon him, that they might *mourn with him,* and *comfort him,* (Job ii. 11.) and it is some comfort to the mourners to have their friends mourn with them. Thus Nehemiah inquired after the condition of his friends with a tender concern; as appears by his deep resentment of the evil tidings brought him; *He sat down and wept, and mourned certain days,* Neh. i. 3, 4. Let us learn in this manner to bear one another's burthens, by a compassionate sorrow for others' griefs; and this suffering at second-hand, will either prevent our own afflictions, or prepare us for them.

3. Let our friendly visits furnish us with matter for prayer and praise. Besides the plain intimation which our Master has given us, in teaching us to address ourselves to God as *our Father,* we have an express command, *Pray one for another,* (James v. 16.) which supposes it our duty likewise to give thanks for one another; for whatever mercy we pray for, when it is given, we ought to return thanks for it. We find St. Paul, in most of his Epistles, both to churches and particular friends, speaking of the prayers and thanksgivings he offered up to God daily upon their account. And it could not but be an unspeakable comfort to them, to think of the interest they had in the prayers of so great an intercessor as he was. It is written also for our learning, that we may in like manner give thanks to God for our friends, making mention of them always in our prayers; that thus we may testify our affection to them, and may be really serviceable to their comfort, when perhaps we are not in a capacity of being so any other way; and that we may thus keep up the communion of saints in faith, hope, and love.

Now, that we may do this the more particularly, and the more sensibly, it is of good use to visit our brethren, and to *see how they do;* that, whatever is the matter of their rejoicing, and ours with them, we may make the matter of our thanksgiving to God; and whatever just complaint they make to us, we may with them spread it before the Lord, and beg relief and comfort for them. When we visit our friends, we have an opportunity of praying with them, and I heartily wish it were more practised,

especially by ministers; this would indeed sanctify our visits, and turn them to a very good account. When you are sick and in trouble, you desire us to pray with you; and why should you not desire us to pray with you when you are in health and peace? that your prosperity may be continued and sanctified; and that you may be kept from the snares and temptations of it. Help likewise in returning thanks, is as necessary as help in prayer; and they who know how to value aright the privilege of communion with God, will reckon this as good an entertainment as they can either give or receive.

But besides the opportunity it gives of praying together, it gives us much assistance in praying for one another when we are alone. When we have seen our friends, and talked with them, or heard from them, we can pray the more affectionately for them. And perhaps we shall find it a furtherance to us in this part of our work, if we would make it a rule to ourselves, (not to *bind* conscience, but to *mind* it,) that those friends whom in the day we have visited, or have visited us, whom we have written to, or heard from, we will at night in our closets particularly pray for, and give thanks for, as there is occasion. I know not why we may not as well spread the letter of a friend before the Lord, as Hezekiah did the letter of an enemy. And some have observed, that they have had most comfort in those relations and friends which they have prayed most for: or if herein we should be disappointed, as holy David was, and those we pray for should prove unkind to us, it will be our satisfaction, as it was his, that our prayers will return into our own bosom, and we ourselves shall have the comfort of them, Ps. xxxv. 13.

It is a pious request which serious Christians commonly make one to another, both by word and letter, "Pray remember me in your prayers;" and it is good to use it, provided it do not degenerate into a formality, and that we request this kindness from a deep sense of our own wants and unworthiness, and a real value both for the duty of prayer in general, and for our friends, and their prayers in particular, whom we suppose to have an interest in heaven. And being separated from each other in this scattering world, a world we cannot expect to be always together in, by those mutual requests for a share in each other's prayers, we make appointments of meeting often at the same throne of grace, in hopes of meeting shortly at the right hand of the throne of glory to part no more.

4. Let our friendly visits be improved as opportunities of doing good to the souls of our friends. Spiritual charity, though it must begin at home in teaching ourselves and our families, yet it must not end there; we must contribute what we can to the edification of others in knowledge, faith, holiness, and joy. This is mutual duty to be studied and done, in giving and receiving visits; that *as iron sharpens iron*, so our pious affections and resolutions may be sharpened by conversation with one another, Prov. xxvii. 17. We are often commanded to exhort one another, admonish one another, teach one another, comfort one another, and stir up one another to that which is good, Heb. iii. 13; x. 25. 1 Thess. v. 11. And when can this be better done than when we come together for mutual society? Then we have a price put into our hands, if we have but a heart to it, that is,—skill, and will, and courage to improve it, Prov. xvii. 16.

Much has been said, and much written, to promote pious discourse among Christians, but I fear to little purpose. We have all reason to lament it, that so much corrupt communication proceeds out of our mouths, and so little of that which is good, and to the use of edifying; which might either manifest grace in him who speaks, or minister grace to them who hear. *And shall vain words never have an end?* Job xvi. 3. *Shall we reason always with unprofitable talk, and with speeches wherewith we can do no good,* but are in danger of doing hurt? Job xv. 3. Shall we never learn the art of introducing and keeping up profitable discourse in our conversation with our friends, such as we may hear of with comfort in that day, when by our words we must be justified, and by our words we must be condemned? Matt. xii. 37. A visit thus improved will be fruit abounding to a good account: *What knowest thou,* but that thou mayest thus *save a soul from death,* eternal death, or at least further a soul toward life, eternal life? Thus we must confess Christ before men, as those who are not ashamed of him or of his words: reproach for it we must not fear, but say, *If this be to be vile, I will be yet more vile;* nay, we need not fear it, for perhaps even of them whose reproach we fear, if we manage it with meekness and humility, and without affectation, we may be had in honour. Serious godliness is an awful thing, and will command respect.

We grant, that our discourses with our friends cannot be turned entirely into this channel; allowance must be made for a great deal of common talk, yet even upon that there should appear an air of religion and godliness. Though a foreigner may speak English, yet ordinarily we can discern by his pronunciation, that he is a foreigner; so, though a good Christian, who belongs to another world, while he is here cannot avoid speaking much of the things of this world, yet he ought to do it in such a manner, that those he converses with may take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus, (Acts iv. 13.) and may say unto him, *Thou art a Christian, and thy speech bewrays thee.*

If it appear that we make conscience of our words, and are afraid of offending with our lips; if in our tongue be the law of kindness; if we always speak

of God and his providence with reverence and a holy awe, like the great Mr. Boyle, who, in discourse, was observed never to mention the name of God without a discerning pause, or stop, leaving room for a pious thought; if we speak of common things after a godly sort, as those who accustom themselves to the language of Canaan, and not the language of Ashdod; God will hereby be honoured, our profession will be beautified, those we converse with will be edified, and say that God is with us of a truth. Our speech, though it be not always of grace, should be always with grace, seasoned with it as with salt, which gives it its own relish and savour, Col. iv. 6.

5. Let our friendly visits be improved as opportunities of getting good to our own souls. By doing good, we do indeed get good; our own lamp will burn the brighter for its lighting others; but those who are not in a capacity of doing much good in conversation, and can say little to edify others, may yet hear that which will edify themselves. They who cannot be teachers, must be glad to be learners; and should visit those who are knowing and gracious with this design, that they may improve themselves in knowledge and grace by conversation with them, and that by walking with wise men they may be wise. When St. Paul designed a visit to his friends at Rome, he aimed both at their spiritual benefit, and at his own, Rom. i. 11, 12. *I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift,*— and, *that I may be comforted together with you.*

What we hear from our friends we visit that is instructive, and what we see in them that is exemplary and praise-worthy, we should take notice of and treasure up, that it may be ready for our use when there is occasion. By conversing with those who are wise and good, we should strive to be made wiser and better. Some rules either of prudence, or piety, or both, we should gather up for our own use out of every visit, that in every thing we may order our conversation aright. As vain people make visits chiefly to see fashions, so serious people should make visits chiefly to learn wisdom. *A wise man will thus hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will* by this means *attain to wise counsels*, Prov. i. 5.

Nay, even from what we hear and see, which is foolish and blame-worthy, we may learn that which will be profitable to us. Solomon received instruction, even from the field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the man void of understanding. What we observe indecent in others, we must learn to avoid; and take warning by others' harms. Thus out of the eater may come forth meat, and out of the strong sweetness.

But it is now time to conclude, with a word or two of exhortation, upon the whole matter.

1. Let us all remember our faults this day, and be humbled before God for the guilt we have contracted by our mismanaged visits of our friends. In our common conversation, as well as in our common business, it is hard to keep ourselves unspotted. Think, how much time we have lost in needless and unprofitable visits, which might have been better bestowed, and cannot now be recalled! What mean and low ends we have proposed to ourselves in making our visits, and how we have in them walked after the course of a vain and foolish world, and not after the conduct of the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus! *Are we not carnal, and do we not walk as men?* as the apostle speaks, (1 Cor. iii. 3.) far short of the spirit of Christianity, that high and holy calling wherewith we are called.

Think, how little good we have done in the visits we have made and received! How few have been the better for us! It is well if many have not been the worse for us, and for our corrupt communication. When the company has fallen into vain discourse, that foolish talking and jesting which the word of God expressly condemns, (Eph. v. 4.) have we not been as forward as any to promote it and keep it up, and showed ourselves well pleased with it? Have we not provoked one another's lusts and passions, instead of provoking one another to love and to good works? Have we not given offence, and put an occasion of stumbling in our brother's way, by taking too great a liberty of speech in our conversation with our friends, encouraging the hearts of the licentious in their looseness, and grieving the hearts of those who are serious themselves, and expect we should be so too? Let us for these things *judge ourselves* this day, that we *may not be judged of the Lord.*

2. Let us be so wise as to choose those for our intimate friends, who will concur with us in a serious endeavour to get this matter mended. For the truth is, in this, as in a trade, we have the making but of one side of the bargain; we can do but little toward the rectifying of what is ordinarily amiss in conversation, and the improving of it to some good purposes, unless those we converse with will do their part: those therefore we should desire to associate ourselves with, who will edify us, and be edified by us, whom we may either do good to, or get good by, or both.

It is our wisdom to avoid that company which we find corrupts our minds, and makes them vain, and indisposes them for serious exercises: what good there is in us is apt enough to dwindle and decay of itself, we need not the help of others to quench it. Therefore take Solomon's counsel, *Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge*, Prov. xiv. 7.

But since the communion of saints is intended to be the furtherance of our holiness and comfort, and the earnest of our future bliss, and we are taught by the pattern of that truly primitive church (Acts

ii. 42.) to continue stedfast, not only in the Apostle's doctrine, but in fellowship, let us acquaint ourselves with some who appear to be serious Christians, without distinction of parties, and converse with them; let such only be our bosom-friends: and let us say to them, as the neighbour nations did to God's Israel, (Zech. viii. 23.) *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* Let God's people be our people, and David's resolution ours, (Ps. cxix. 63.) *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.*

3. Let us all resolve, by the grace of God, to look well to ourselves, and to the frame of our own spirits, in giving and receiving visits. If we cannot reform the world, yet I hope we may reform our own hearts and lives, and every man prove his own work, so shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, though perhaps not in another; so shall his praise be of God, though perhaps not of men.

Christians, I am not persuading you to any thing that is rude or morose, or looks like an affectation of singularity; nor am I declaiming against the innocent diversions and entertainments of conversation, which make it pleasant to yourselves and your friends, and are a relief to the fatigue of business: but I am only to remind you, that you be very careful not to lose your religion in them. Remember that you are Christians, and you must speak and act in every thing as becomes saints, Eph. v. 3. Remember that you are hastening into eternity, the days of your probation will shortly be numbered and finished: you are therefore concerned to spend your time on earth as those who are candidates and probationers for heaven, so that you may not *seem to come short.* Converse with this world of sense, as those who know you must shortly remove to the world of spirits; and let this thought give a check to every thing that is vain and frothy, and put you upon considering, seeing you look for such things, *what manner of persons you ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness,* 2 Pet. iii. 11.

Lay before you (my brethren) the example of the Lord Jesus, and as he was so let us be in this world; walking as he walked,—as in other things, so in this: let us make visits as he did, with a design to do good, according as the sphere of our activity is. His lips dropt as a honey-comb, and fed many; let ours do so too, as we are able. Wherever he was, still he was about his Father's business; and let us, though unworthy such an honour, still endeavour to be so employed. When he visited his friends, he sympathized with them in their griefs, comforted them under their afflictions, reproved them for what was amiss, and entertained them with edifying and instructive discourse, taking rise for it usually by an admirable yet imitable art, from common occurrences; and these things are written for our learning: *Go thou and do likewise.*

And that we may be thoroughly furnished, like the good householder, who brings out of his treasury things new and old, let us daily pray to God for that wisdom of the prudent, which is to understand his way in every thing. There is no one grace that we are more particularly directed and encouraged to pray for than this; (Jam. i. 5.) *If any man lack wisdom* (and which of us is there that does not?) *let him ask it of God,* who *gives liberally,* and *upbraids us not* with our former follies, our present necessity, or the frequency of our addresses and applications to him. Solomon, who in his youth made wisdom his choice, wisdom his request, had that granted him, and abundance of other good things added thereto. In putting up this petition, let us, therefore, be not only constant and earnest, but very particular: Lord, give me wisdom to direct me in such a case that is difficult and doubtful! Lord, enable me to behave myself wisely in a perfect way towards my family, and my friends and neighbours whom I visit, and to walk in wisdom also toward them that are without, that my profession of religion and relation to Christ may never suffer damage or reproach through any imprudence or indiscretion of mine, in any visit, given or received.

And lest this wisdom should degenerate into that which is worldly, and err by an excess of caution, let us pray to God for a spirit of holy boldness and courage also, that we may be enabled to appear and act for God and godliness in all companies, and upon all occasions, with that pious zeal which becomes the good soldiers of Jesus Christ, that all we converse with may see, that we serve a Master whom we are neither ashamed nor afraid to own; and that we have ventured all our credit with men, upon the security of that promise of God, *Them that honour me I will honour.*

A CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

A

SERMON

CONCERNING

FAMILY RELIGION.

PREACHED IN LONDON, APRIL 16, 1704.

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1 Cor. xvi. 19.

——*With the church that is in their house.*

Some very good interpreters (I know) understand this of a settled, stated, solemn meeting of Christians at the house of Aquila and Priscilla, for public worship; and they were glad of *houses* to meet in, where they wanted those better conveniences, which the church was afterwards, in her prosperous days, accommodated with. When they had not such places as they could wish, they thankfully made use of such as they could get.

But others think it is meant only of their own family, and the strangers within their gates, among whom there was so much piety and devotion, that it might well be called a church, or religious house. Thus the ancients generally understood it. Nor was it only Aquila and Priscilla, whose house was thus celebrated for religion, (here and Rom. xvi. 5.) but Nymphas also had a church in his house, (Col. iv. 15.) and Philemon, *v.* 2. Not but that others, to whom and from whom salutations are sent in St. Paul's epistles, made conscience of keeping up religion in their families; but these are mentioned, probably because their families were more numerous than most of those other families were; which made their family devotions more solemn, and consequently more taken notice of.

In this sense I shall choose to take it; hence to recommend family religion to you, under a notion of a church in the house. When we see your public assemblies so well filled, so well frequented, we cannot but thank God, and take courage; your diligent attendance on the ministry of the word and prayers, is your praise, and I trust, through grace, it redounds to your spiritual comfort and benefit. But my subject at this time will lead me to inquire into the state of religion in your private houses, whether it flourish or wither there? whether it be on the throne, or under foot there? Herein I desire to deal plainly and faithfully with your consciences, and I beg you will give them leave to deal so with you.

The pious and zealous endeavours both of magistrates and ministers for the reformation of manners, and the suppression of vice and profaneness, are the joy and encouragement of all good people in the land, and a happy indication that God has yet mercy in store for us: *If the Lord had been pleased to kill us, he would not have shewed us such things as these.* Now I know not any thing that will contribute more to the furtherance of this good work than the bringing of family-religion more into practice and reputation. Here the reformation must begin. Other methods may check the disease we complain of, but this, if it might universally obtain, would cure it. Salt must be cast into these springs, and then the waters would be healed.

Many a time, no doubt, you have been urged to this part of your duty; many a good sermon perhaps you have heard, and many a good book has been put into your hands with this design, to persuade you to keep up religion in your families, and to assist you therein: but I hope a further attempt to advance this good work, by one who is a hearty wellwisher to it, and to the prosperity of your souls and families, will not be thought altogether needless, and that by the grace of God it will not be wholly fruitless: at least it will serve to remind you of what you have received and heard to this purpose, that you may hold fast what is good, and repent of what is amiss, Rev. iii. 3.

The lesson then which I would recommend to you from this text, is this;

That the families of Christians should be little churches; or thus, *That wherever we have a house, God should have a church in it.*

Unhappy contests there have been, and still are, among wise and good men about the constitution, order, and government of churches. God by his grace heal these breaches, lead us into all truth, and dispose our minds to love and peace; that while we endeavour herein to walk according to the light God has given us, we may charitably believe that others do so too; longing to be there where we shall be all of a mind.

But I am now speaking of churches, concerning which there is no controversy. All agree that masters of families who profess religion, and the fear of God themselves, should, according to the talents they are intrusted with, maintain and keep up religion and the fear of God in their families, as those who must give account; and that families, as such, should contribute to the support of Christianity in a nation, whose honour and happiness it is to be a Christian nation. As nature makes families little kingdoms, (and perhaps economics were the first and most ancient politics,) so grace makes families little churches; and those were the primitive churches of the Old Testament, before *men began to call upon the name of the Lord* in solemn assemblies, and *the sons of God came together to present themselves* before him.

Not that I would have these family churches set up and kept up in competition with, much less in contradiction to, public religious assemblies, which ought always to have the preference: *The Lord loves the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob,* (Ps. lxxxvii. 2.) and so must we; and must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, under colour of exhorting one another daily at home. Far be it from us to offer any thing that may countenance the invading of the office of the ministry, or laying it in common, and the usurping or superseding of the administration of sacraments. No, but these family churches, (which are but figuratively so,) must be erected and maintained in subordination to those more sacred and solemn establishments.

Now, that I may the more distinctly open to you, and press upon you, this great duty of family religion, from the example of this and other texts, of a "church in the house," I shall endeavour, I. To show what this church in the house is, and when our families may be called churches. And, II. To persuade you by some motives, thus to turn your families into churches. And then, III. To address you upon the whole matter by way of application.

I. I am in the first place to tell you what that family religion is which will be as a church in the house, and wherein it consists, that you may see what it is we are persuading you to.

Churches are sacred societies, incorporated for the honour and service of God in Christ, devoted to God, and employed for him: so should our families be.

1. Churches are societies devoted to God, called out of the world, taken in out of the common to be enclosures for God; he has set them apart for himself; and because he hath chosen them, they also have chosen him, and set themselves apart for him. The Jewish church was separated to God for a *peculiar people,* a *kingdom of priests.*

Thus our houses must be churches; with ourselves we must give up our houses to the Lord, to be to him for a name and a people. All the interest we have, both in our relations, and in our possessions, must be consecrated to God; as under the law all that the servant had was his master's for ever, after he had consented to have his ear bored to the door-post. When God effectually called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees, his family assumed the appearance of a particular church; for in obedience to God's precept, and in dependence on God's promise, they took all the substance they had gathered, and the souls they had gotten, and put themselves and their all under a divine conduct and government, Gen. xii. 5. His was a great family, not only numerous, but very considerable; the father of it was the father of all them that believe; but even little families, jointly and entirely given up to God, so become churches. When all the members of the family yield themselves to God, subscribe with their hands to be the Lord's, and surname themselves by the name of Israel,—and the master of the family, with himself, gives up all his right, title, and interest, in his house, and all that belongs to it, unto God, to be used for him, and disposed of by him; here is a church in the house.

Baptism was ordained for the discipline of nations, (Matt. xxviii. 19.) that the kingdoms of the world, as such, might, by their conversion of the people to the faith of Christ, and the consecration of their powers and governments to the honour of Christ, become his kingdoms, Rev. xi. 15. Thus by baptism households likewise are discipled, as Lydia's and the jailer's, (Acts xvi. 15, 33.) and in their family capacity are given up to him, who is in a particular manner the God of all the families of Israel, Jer. xxxi. 1. Circumcision was at first a family ordinance, and in that particular, as well as others, baptism somewhat symbolizes with it. When the children of Christian parents are by baptism admitted members of the universal church, as their right to baptism is grounded upon, so their communion with the universal church is, during their infancy, maintained and kept up chiefly by, their immediate relation to these "churches in the house;" to them, therefore, they are, first, given back, and in them they are deposited,—under the tuition of them, to be trained up till they become capable of a place and a name in particular churches of larger figure and

extent. So that baptized families, who own their baptism, and adhere to it, and in their joint and relative capacity make profession of the Christian faith, may so far be called little churches.

More than once in the Old Testament we read of the dedication of private houses. It is spoken of as a common practice, (Deut. xx. 5.) *What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it?* that is, taken possession of it; in the doing of which it was usual to dedicate it to God by some solemn acts of religious worship. The 30th Psalm is entitled, *A Psalm or Song at the Dedication of the House of David.* It is a good thing when a man has a house of his own, thus to convert it into a church, by dedicating it to the service and honour of God, that it may be a Bethel, a house of God, and not a Bethaven, a house of vanity and iniquity. Every good Christian who is a householder, no doubt does this habitually and virtually; having first given his ownself to the Lord, he freely surrenders all he has to him: but it may be of good use to do it actually and expressly, and often to repeat this act of resignation; *This stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house*, Gen. xxviii. 22. Let all I have in my house, and all I do in it, be for the glory of God; I own him to be my great Landlord, and I hold all from and under him: to him I promise to pay the rents (the quit-rents) of daily praises and thanksgivings; and to do the services, the easy services, of gospel obedience. Let *Holiness to the Lord* be written upon the house, and all the furniture of it, according to the word which God has spoken, (Zech. xiv. 20, 21.) That *every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be Holiness to the Lord of hosts.* Let God by his providence dispose of the affairs of my family, and by his grace dispose the affections of all in my family, according to his will, to his own praise. Let me and mine be only, wholly, and for ever his.

Be persuaded (brethren) thus to dedicate your houses to God, and beg of him to come and take possession of them. If you never did it, do it to-night with all possible seriousness and sincerity. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.* Bring the ark of the Lord into the tent you have pitched, and oblige yourselves, and all yours, to attend it. Look upon your houses as temples for God, places for worship, and all your possessions as dedicated things, to be used for God's honour, and not to be alienated or profaned.

2. Churches are societies employed for God, pursuant to the true intent and meaning of this dedication.

There are three things necessary to the well-being of a church, and which are most considerable in the constitution of it. Those are doctrine, worship, and discipline. Where the truths of Christ are professed and taught, the ordinances of Christ administered and observed, and due care taken to put the laws of Christ in execution among all who profess themselves his subjects, and this under the conduct and inspection of a gospel ministry; there is a church. And something answerable hereunto there must be in our families, to denominate them little churches.

Masters of families, who preside in the other affairs of the house, must go before their households in the things of God. They must be as prophets, priests, and kings, in their own families; and as such they must keep up family doctrine, family worship, and family discipline; then is there a church in the house, and this is the family religion that I am persuading you to.

(1.) Keep up family doctrine. It is not enough that you and yours are baptized into the Christian faith, and profess to own the truth as it is in Jesus, but care must be taken, and means used, that you and yours be well acquainted with that truth, and that you grow in that acquaintance, to the honour of Christ and his holy religion, and the improvement of your own minds, and theirs who are under your charge. You must deal with your families *as men of knowledge*, (1 Pet. iii. 7.) that is, as men who desire to grow in knowledge yourselves, and to communicate your knowledge for the benefit of others, which are the two good properties of those who deserve to be called *men of knowledge.*

That you may keep up family doctrine,

[1.] You must read the Scriptures to your families, in a solemn manner, requiring their attendance on your reading, and their attention to it; and inquiring sometimes whether they understand what you read. I hope you are none of you without Bibles in your houses, store of Bibles, every one a Bible. Thanks be to God, we have them cheap and common in a language that we understand. The book of the law is not such a rarity with us as it was in Josiah's time. We need not fetch this knowledge from afar, nor send from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth, to seek the word of God; no, the Word is nigh us. When popery reigned in our land, English Bibles were scarce things; a load of hay (it is said) was once given for one torn leaf of a Bible. But now Bibles are every one's money. You know where to buy them; or if not able to do that, perhaps in this charitable city you may know where to beg them. It is better to be without bread in your houses than without Bibles, for the words of God's mouth are and should be to you more than your necessary food.

But what will it avail you to have Bibles in your houses, if you do not use them? to have the great things of God's law and gospel written to you, if you count them as a *strange thing?* You look daily into your shop-books, and perhaps converse much with the news-books, and shall your Bibles be thrown

by as an almanack out of date? It is not now penal to read the Scriptures in your families, as it was in the dawning of the day of reformation from popery when there were those who were accused and prosecuted for reading in a certain great heretical book, called an English bible. The Philistines do not now stop up these wells, (as Gen. xxvi. 18.) nor do the shepherds drive away your flocks from them, (as Exod. ii. 17.) nor are they as a spring shut up, or a fountain sealed; but the gifts given to men have been happily employed in rolling away the stone from the mouth of these wells. You have great encouragements to read the Scripture; for notwithstanding the malicious endeavours of atheists to vilify sacred things, the knowledge of the Scripture is still in reputation with all wise and good men. You have also a variety of excellent helps to understand the Scripture, and to improve your reading of it; so that if you or yours perish for lack of this knowledge, as you certainly will if you persist in the neglect of it, you may thank yourselves, the guilt will lie wholly at your own doors.

Let me, therefore, with all earnestness press it upon you to make the solemn reading of the Scripture a part of your daily worship in your families. When you speak to God by prayer, be willing to hear him speak to you in his word, that there may be a complete communion between you and God. This will add much to the solemnity of your family worship, and will make the transaction the more awful and serious, if it be done in a right manner; which will conduce much to the honour of God, and your own and your family's edification. It will help to make the word of God familiar to yourselves, and your children and servants, that you may be ready and mighty in the Scriptures, and may thence be thoroughly furnished for every good word and work. It will likewise furnish you with matter and words for prayer, and so be helpful to you in other parts of the service. If some parts of Scripture seem less edifying, let those be most frequently read that are most so. David's Psalms are of daily use in devotion, and Solomon's proverbs in conversation; it will be greatly to your advantage to be well versed in them. And I hope I need not press any Christian to the study of the New Testament, nor any Christian parents to the frequent instructing of their children in the pleasant and profitable histories of the Old Testament. When *you* only hear your children read the Bible, they are tempted to look upon it as no more than a school-book; but when *they* hear you read it to them in a solemn, religious manner, it comes, as it ought, with more authority. Those masters of families who make conscience of doing this daily, morning and evening, reckoning it part of that which the duty of every day requires, I am sure they have comfort and satisfaction in so doing, and find it contributes much to their own improvement in Christian knowledge, and the edification of those who dwell under their shadow; and the more, if those who are ministers expound, themselves, and other masters of families read some plain and profitable exposition of what is read, or of some part of it.

It is easy to add under this head, that the seasonable reading of other good books will contribute very much to family instruction. In helps of this kind we are as happy as any people under the sun, if we have but hearts to use the helps we have, as those who must give an account shortly of them among other talents which we are intrusted with.

[2.] You must also catechise your children and servants, so long as they continue in that age of life which needs this *milk*. Oblige them to learn some good catechism by heart, and to keep it in remembrance; and by familiar discourse with them help them to understand it, as they become capable. It is an excellent method of catechising, which God himself directs us to, (Deut. vi. 7.) to teach our children the things of God, by talking of them as we sit in the house, and go by the way, when we lie down, and when we rise up. It is good to keep up stated times for this service, and be constant to them, as those who know how industrious the enemy is to sow tares while men sleep. If this good work be not kept going forward, it will of itself go backward. Wisdom also will direct you to manage your catechising, as well as the other branches of family religion, so as not to make it a task and burthen, but as much as may be a pleasure to those under your charge, that the blame may lie wholly upon their own impiety, and not at all upon your imprudence, if they should say, *Behold what a weariness is it!*

This way of instruction by catechising does in a special manner belong to the "church in the house;" for that is the nursery in which the trees of righteousness are reared, that afterwards are planted in the courts of our God. Public catechising will turn to little account without family catechising. The labour of ministers in instructing youth, and feeding the lambs of the flock, therefore proves to many labour in vain, because masters of families do not do their duty, in preparing them for public instruction, and examining their improvement by it. As mothers are children's best nurses, so parents are, or should be, their best teachers. Solomon's father was his tutor, (Prov. iv. 3, 4.) and he never forgot the lessons his mother taught him, Prov. xxxi. 1.

The baptism of your children, as it laid a strong and lasting obligation upon them to live in the fear of God, so it brought you under the most powerful engagements imaginable to bring them up in that fear. The child you gave up to God to be dedicated to him, and admitted a member of Christ's visible church, was in God's name given back to you, with

the same charge that Pharaoh's daughter gave to Moses's mother, *Take this child and nurse it for me;* and in nursing it for God, you nurse it for better preferment than that of being called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. It is worth observing, that he to whom God first did the honour of entailing the seal of the covenant upon his seed, was eminent for this part of family religion: *I know Abraham,* (says God,) *that he will command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord,* Gen. xviii. 19. Those, therefore, who would have the comfort of God's covenant with them and their seed, and would share in that blessing of Abraham which comes upon the Gentiles, must herein follow the example of faithful Abraham. The entail of the covenant of grace is forfeited and cut off, if care be not taken, with it, to transmit the means of grace. To what purpose were they discipled if they be not taught? Why did you give them a Christian name, if you will not give them the knowledge of Christ and Christianity? God has owned them as his children, and born unto him, (Ezek. xvi. 20.) and therefore he expects that they should be brought up for him; you are unjust to your God, unkind to your children, and unfaithful to your trust, if, having by baptism entered your children in Christ's school, and enlisted them under his banner, you do not make conscience of training them up in the learning of Christ's scholars, and under the discipline of his soldiers.

Consider what your children are now capable of, even in the days of their childhood. They are capable of receiving impressions now which may abide upon them while they live; they are turned as clay to the seal, and now is the time to apply to them the seal of the living God. They are capable of honouring God now, if they be well taught; and by their joining, as they can, in religious services with so much reverence and application as their age will admit, God is honoured, and you in them present to him living sacrifices, holy and acceptable. The Hosannas even of children well taught will be the perfecting of praise, and highly pleasing to the Lord Jesus.

Consider what your children are designed for (we hope) in this world; they must be a seed to serve the Lord, which shall be accounted to him for a generation. They are to bear up the name of Christ in their day, and into their hands must be transmitted that good thing which is committed to us. They are to be praising God on earth, when we are praising him in heaven. Let them then be brought up accordingly, that they may answer the end of their birth and being. They are designed for the service of their generation, and to do good in their day. Consult the public welfare then, and let nothing be wanting on your parts to qualify them for usefulness, according as their place and capacity is.

Consider especially what they are designed for in another world: they are made for eternity. Every child thou hast has a precious and immortal soul, that must be for ever either in heaven or hell, according as it is prepared in this present state; and, perhaps, it must remove to that world of spirits very shortly: and will it not be very mournful, if through your carelessness and neglect, your children should learn the ways of sin, and perish eternally in those ways? Give them warning, that, if possible, you may deliver their souls, at least, that you may deliver your own, and may not bring their curse and God's too, their blood and your own too, upon your heads.

I know you cannot give grace to your children, nor is a religious conversation the constant consequent of a religious education; *The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong:* but if you make conscience of doing your duty, by keeping up family doctrine; if you teach them the good and the right way, and warn them of by-paths; if you reprove, exhort, and encourage them as there is occasion; if you pray with them, and for them, and set them a good example, and at last consult their soul's welfare in the disposal of them, you have done your part, and may comfortably leave the issue and success with God.

(2.) Keep up family worship. You must not only as prophets teach your families, but as priests must go before them, in offering the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise. Herein likewise you must tread in the steps of faithful Abraham; (whose sons you are while thus you do dwell;) you must not only like him instruct your household, but like him you must with them call on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God, Gen. xxi. 33. Wherever he pitched his tent, there he built an altar unto the Lord, (Gen. xii. 7, 8; xiii. 4, 18.) though he was yet in an unsettled state, but a stranger and a sojourner; though he was among jealous and envious neighbours, for the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land, yet, wherever Abraham had a tent God had an altar in it, and he himself served at that altar. Herein he has left us an example.

Families, as such, have many errands at the throne of grace, which furnish them with matter and occasion for family prayer every day; errands which cannot be done so well in secret, or public, but are fittest to be done by the family, in consort, and apart from other families. And it is good for those who go before the rest in family devotions, ordinarily to dwell most upon the concerns of those who join in their family capacity, that it may be indeed a family prayer, not only offered up in and by the family, but suited to it. In this and other services we should endeavour not only to say something, but something to the purpose.

Five things especially you should have upon your

heart in your family prayer, and should endeavour to bring something of each, more or less, into every prayer with your families.

[1.] You ought to make family acknowledgments of your dependence upon God and his providence, as you are a family. Our great business in all acts of religious worship, is to give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; and this we must do in our family worship. Give honour to God as the founder of families by his ordinance, because "it was not good for man to be alone;" as the founder of your families by his providence, for he it is "who buildeth the house, and setteth the solitary in families." Give honour to him as the Owner and Ruler of families; acknowledge that you and yours are his, under his government, and at his disposal, "as the sheep of his pasture." Especially adore him as the "God of all the families of Israel," in covenant relation to them, and having a particular concern for them above others, Jer. xxxi. 1. Give honour to the great Redeemer as the head of all the churches, even those in your houses; call him the Master of the family, and the great upholder and benefactor of it; for he it is in whom all the families of the earth are blessed, Gen. xii. 3. All family blessings are owing to Christ, and come to us through his hand by his blood. Own your dependence upon God, and your obligations to Christ, for all good things pertaining both to life and godliness; and make conscience of paying homage to your chief Lord, and never set up a title to any of your enjoyments in competition with his.

[2.] You ought to make family confessions of your sins against God; those sins you have contracted the guilt of in your family capacity. We read in Scripture of the *iniquity of the house*, as of Eli's, 1 Sam. iii. 13, 14. Iniquity visited upon the children; sins that bring wrath upon families, and a curse that enters into the house to consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof, Zech. v. 4. How sad is the condition of those families who *sin together*, and never *pray together!* who, by concurring in frauds, quarrels, and excesses, by strengthening one another's hands in impiety and profaneness, fill the measure of family guilt, and never agree together to do any think to empty it!

And even religious families, that are not polluted with gross and scandalous sins, yet have need to join every day in solemn acts and expressions of repentance before God for their sins of daily infirmity. Their vain words and unprofitable conversation among themselves; their manifold defects in relative duties, provoking one another's lusts and passions, instead of provoking one another to love and to good works: these ought to be confessed and bewailed by the family together, that God may be glorified, and what has been amiss may be amended for the future. It was not only in a time of great and extraordinary repentance that families mourned apart, (Zech. xii. 11.) but in the stated returns of the day of expiation the priest was particularly to make atonement for his household, Lev. xvi. 17. In many things we, all, offend God, and one another; and a penitent confession of it in prayer together, will be the most effectual way of reconciling ourselves both to God, and to one another. The best families, and those in which piety and love prevail most, yet in many things come short, and do enough every day to bring them upon their knees at night.

[3.] You ought to offer up family thanksgivings for the blessings which you, with your families, receive from God. Many are the mercies which you enjoy the sweetness and benefit of in common; which, if wanting to one, all the family would be sensible of it. Has not God made a hedge of protection about you and your houses, and all that you have? Job i. 10. Has he not created a defence upon every "dwelling place" of Mount Zion, as well as upon her assemblies? Isa. iv. 5. The dreadful alarms of a storm, and the desolations made, as by a fire, once in an age, should make us sensible of our obligations to the Divine Providence for our preservation from tempests and fire every day and every night. *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed*, and buried in the ruins of our houses. When the whole family comes together safe in the morning from their respective retirements, and when they return safe at night from their respective employments, there having been no disaster, no "adversary," no evil occurrence,—it is so reasonable, and (as I may say) so natural, for them to join together in solemn thanksgivings to their great Protector, that I wonder how any who believe in a God, and a providence, can omit it. Have you not health in your family, sickness kept or taken from the midst of you? Does not God bring plentifully into your hands, and increase your substance? Have you not your table spread, and your cup running over, and manna rained about your tents? and does not the whole family share in the comfort of all this? Shall not then the voice of thanksgiving be in those tabernacles where the voice of rejoicing is? Ps. cxviii. 15. Is the vine by the house-side fruitful and flourishing, and the olive plants round the table green and growing? Are family relations comfortable and agreeable, not broken nor imbittered, and shall not that God be acknowledged herein who makes every creature to be that to us that it is? Shall not the God of your mercies, your family mercies, be the God of your praises, your family praises, and that daily?

The benefit and honour of your being Christian families, your having in God's house, and within his walls, a place and a name better than that of sons and daughters, and the salvation this brings to your house, furnishes you with abundant matter for joint thanksgivings. *You hath he known above all the*

families of the earth, and, therefore, he expects in a special manner to be owned by you. Of all houses, the house of Israel, the house of Aaron, and the house of Levi, have most reason to bless the Lord, and to say, *His mercy endureth for ever.*

[4.] You ought to present your family petitions for the mercy and grace which your families stand in need of. Daily bread is received by families together, and we are taught not only to pray for it every day, but to pray together for it, saying, *Our Father*, give it *us*. There are affairs and employments which the family is jointly concerned in the success of, and, therefore, should jointly ask of God wisdom for the management of them, and prosperity therein. There are family cares to be cast upon God by prayer, family comforts to be sought for, and family crosses which they should together beg for the sanctification and removal of. Hereby your children will be more effectually possessed with a belief of, and regard to, the Divine Providence, than by all the instructions you can give them; which will look best in their eye, when thus reduced to practice by your daily acknowledging God in all your ways.

You desire that God will give wisdom and grace to your children, you *travail in birth again till you see Christ formed in them*, you pray for them; it is well, but it is not enough; you must pray with them; let them hear you pray to God for a blessing upon the good instructions and counsels you give them; it may perhaps put them upon praying for themselves, and increase their esteem both of you, and of the good lessons you teach them. You would have your servants diligent and faithful, and this perhaps would help to make them so. Masters do not give to their servants that which is just and equal, if they do not continue in prayer with them. They are put together, Col. iv. 1, 2.

There are some temptations which families, as such, lie open to. Busy families are in temptation to worldliness, and neglect of religious duties; mixed families are in temptation to discord, and mutual jealousies; decaying families are in temptation to distrust, discontent, and indirect courses to help themselves; they should therefore not only watch, but pray together, that they be not overcome by the temptations they are exposed to.

There are family blessings which God has promised, and for which he will be sought unto, such as those on the house of Obed-edom for *the ark's sake*; or the mercy which St. Paul begs for the house of Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. i. 16. These joint blessings must be sued out by joint prayers. There is a special blessing which God commands upon families that dwell together in unity, (Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 3.) which they must seek for by prayer, and come together to seek for it, in token of that unity which qualifies for it. Where God commands the blessing, we must beg the blessing. God by promise blesses David's house, and, therefore, David by prayer blesses it too, 2 Sam. vi. 20.

[5.] You ought to make family intercessions for others also. There are families you stand related to, or which by neighbourhood, friendship, or acquaintance, you become interested in and concerned for; and these you should recommend in your prayers to the grace of God, and your family that are joined with you in the alliances should join with you in those prayers. Evil tidings perhaps are received from relations at a distance, which are the grief of the family; God must then be sought unto by the family for succour and deliverance. Some of the branches of the family are, perhaps, in distant countries, and in dangerous circumstances, and you are solicitous about them; it will be a comfort to yourselves, and perhaps of advantage to them, to make mention of them daily in your family prayers. The benefit of prayer will reach far, because he who hears prayer can extend his hand of power and mercy to the utmost corners of the earth, and to them that are afar off upon the sea.

In the public peace likewise we and our families have peace; and therefore, if we forget thee, O Jerusalem, we are unworthy ever to stand in thy courts, or dwell within thy walls. Our families should be witnesses for us that we pray daily for the land of our nativity, and the prosperity of all its interests; that praying every where we make supplication for the Queen, and all in authority, 1 Tim. ii. 2, 8. That we bear upon our hearts the concerns of God's church abroad, especially the suffering parts of it. Thus keeping up a spiritual communion with all the families that in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus.

In a word, let us go by this rule in our family devotions; whatever is the matter of our care, let it be the matter of our prayer; and let us allow no care which we cannot in faith spread before God. And whatever is the matter of our rejoicing, let it be the matter of our thanksgiving; and let us withhold our hearts from all those joys which do not dispose us for the duty of praise.

Under this head of family worship, I must not omit to recommend to you the singing of psalms in your families, as a part of daily worship, especially sabbath worship. This is a part of religious worship, which participates both of the word and prayer; for therein we are not only to give glory to God, but to teach and admonish one another; it is, therefore, very proper to make it a transition from the one to the other. It will warm and quicken you, refresh and comfort you; and, perhaps, if you have little children in your houses, they will sooner take notice of it than of any other part of your family devotion; and some good impressions may thereby be fastened upon them insensibly.

(3.) Keep up family discipline, that so you may have a complete church in your house, though in little. Reason teaches us that every man should bear rule in his own house, Esth. i. 22. And since that as well as other power is of God, it ought to be employed for God; and they who so rule must be just, ruling in his fear. Joshua looked further than the acts of religious worship, when he made that pious resolution, *As for me and my house we will serve the Lord*, Josh. xxiv. 16. For we do not serve him in sincerity and truth, (which is the service he there speaks of, *v.* 14.) if we and ours serve him only on our knees, and do not take care to serve him in all the instances of a religious conversation. Those only who have clean hands, and a pure heart, are accounted the generation of them that seek God, Ps. xxiv. 4, 6. And without this those who pretend to seek God daily, do but mock him, Isa. lviii. 2.

The authority God has given you over your children and servants is principally designed for this end, that you may thereby engage them for God and godliness. If you use it only to oblige them to do your will, and so to serve your pride; and to do your business, and so to serve your worldliness; you do not answer the great end of your being invested with it; you must use it for God's honour, by it to engage them, as far as you can, to do the will of God, and mind the business of religion. Holy David not only blessed his household, but took care to keep good order in it, as appears by that plan of his family discipline, which we have in the 101st Psalm, a psalm which Mr. Fox tells us that blessed martyr Bishop Ridley often read to his family, as the rule by which he resolved to govern it.

You are made keepers of the vineyard, be faithful to your trust, and carefully watch over those who are under your charge, knowing you must give account.

[1.] Countenance every thing that is good and praise-worthy in your children and servants. It is as much your duty to commend and encourage those in your family who do well, as to reprove and admonish those who do amiss; and if you take delight only in blaming that which is culpable, and are backward to praise that which is laudable, you give occasion to suspect something of an ill nature, not becoming a good man, much less a good Christian. It should be a trouble to us when we have a reproof to give, but a pleasure to us to say, with the apostle, (1 Cor. xi. 2.) *Now I praise you.*

Most people will be easier led than driven, and we all love to be spoken fair to: when you see any thing that is hopeful and promising in your inferiors, any thing of a towardly and tractable disposition, much more any thing of a pious affection to the things of God, you should contrive to encourage it. Smile upon them when you see them set their faces heavenwards, and take the first opportunity to let them know you observe it, and are well pleased with it, and do not despise the day of small things. This will quicken them to continue and abound in that which is good, it will hearten them against the difficulties they see in their way; and, perhaps, may turn the wavering, trembling scale the right way, and effectually determine their resolutions to cleave to the Lord. When you see them forward to come to family worship, attentive to the word, devout in prayer, industrious to get knowledge, afraid of sin, and careful to do their duty, let them have the praise of it, for you have the comfort of it, and God must have all the glory. Draw them with the cords of a man, hold them with the bands of love; so shall your rebukes, when they are necessary, be the more acceptable and effectual. The great Shepherd gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom, and gently leads them; and so should you.

[2.] Discountenance every thing that is evil in your children and servants. Use your authority for the preventing of sin, and the suppressing of every root of bitterness, lest it spring up, and trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Frown upon every thing that brings sin into your families, and introduces any ill words, or ill practices. Pride and passion, strife and contention, idleness and intemperance, lying and slandering, these are sins which you must not connive at, nor suffer to go without a rebuke. If you return to the Almighty, this among other things is required of you, that you *put away iniquity*, all iniquity, these and other the like iniquities, *far from your tabernacle*, Job xxii. 23. Make it to appear, that in the government of your families you are more jealous for God's honour, than for your own authority and interest; and show yourselves more displeased at that which is an offence to God, than at that which is only an affront or damage to yourselves.

You must indeed be careful not to provoke your children to wrath, lest they be discouraged; and as to your servants, it is your duty to "forbear, or moderate, threatening:" yet you must also, with holy zeal and resolution, and the meekness of wisdom, keep good order in your families, and set no wicked thing before their eyes, but witness against it. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.* Be afraid of having wicked servants in your houses, lest your children learn their way, and get a snare to their souls. Drive away with an angry countenance all that evil communication which corrupt good manners, that your houses may be habitations of righteousness, and sin may never find shelter in them.

I come now, II. To offer some motives to persuade you thus to turn your families into little churches. And O that I could find out acceptable words, with which to reason with you, so as to prevail! *Suffe*

me a little, and I will show you what is to be said *on God's behalf*, which is worth your consideration.

1. If your families be little churches, God will come to you, and dwell with you in them; for he has said concerning the church, *This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell.* It is a very desirable thing to have the gracious presence of God with us in our families, that presence which is promised where two or three are gathered together in his name. This was it that David was so desirous of, (Ps. ci. 2.) *O when wilt thou come unto me!* His palace, his court, would be as a prison, as a dungeon to him, if God did not come to him, and dwell with him in it; and cannot your hearts witness to this desire, you who have houses of your own, would you not have God come to you, and dwell with you in them? Invite him, then, beg his presence, court his stay. Nay, he invites himself to your houses by the offers of his favour and grace; *Behold, he stands at your door and knocks:* it is the voice of your beloved, open to him, and bid him welcome; meet him with your "Hosannas, blessed is he that cometh." He comes peaceably, he brings a blessing with him, a blessing which he will cause to rest upon the habitations of the righteous, Ezek. xliv. 30. He will command a blessing, which shall amount to no less than *life for evermore*, Ps. cxxxiii. 3. This presence and blessing of God will make your relations comfortable, your affairs successful, your enjoyments sweet; and behold, by it all things are made clean to you. This will make your family comforts double comforts, and your family crosses but half crosses; it will turn a tent into a temple, a cottage into a palace. *Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth*, are the houses in which God dwells.

Now the way to have God's presence with you in your houses, is to furnish them for his entertainment. Thus the good Shunammite invited the prophet Elisha to the chamber she had prepared for him, by accommodating him there with a bed and a table, a stool and a candlestick, 2 Kings iv. 10. Would you furnish your houses for the presence of God, it is not expected that you furnish them as his tabernacle was of old furnished, with blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, but set up and keep up for him a throne and an altar, that from the altar you and yours may give glory to him, and from the throne he may give law to you and yours; and then you may be sure of his presence and blessing, and may solace yourselves from day to day in the comfort of it. God will be with you in a way of mercy while you are with him in a way of duty; *If you seek him he will be found of you.* The secret of God shall be in your tabernacle, as it was in Job's, (*ch.* xxix. 4.) as it is with the righteous, Ps. xxv. 14. Prov. iii. 32, 33.

2. If you make your houses little churches, God will make them little sanctuaries; nay, he will himself be to you as a little sanctuary, Ezek. xi. 16. The way to be safe in your houses, is to keep up religion and the fear of God in your houses; so shall you dwell on high, and *the place of your defence shall be the munition of rocks*, Isa. xxxiii. 16. The law looks upon a man's house as his castle, religion makes it truly so. If God's grace be the "glory in the midst" of the house, his providence will make a wall of fire round about it, Zech. ii. 5. Satan found it to his confusion, that God made a hedge about pious Job, about his house, and about all that he had on every side, so that he could not find one gap by which to break in upon him, Job i. 10. Every dwelling place of mount Sion shall be protected as the tabernacle was in the wilderness, for God has promised to create upon it a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, which shall be a defence upon all the glory, Isa. iv. 5. If we thus dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our life, by making *our* houses *his* houses, we shall be hid in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide us, Ps. xxvii. 4, 5.

Wherever we encamp, under the banner of Christ, the angels of God will encamp round about us, and pitch their tents where we pitch ours; and we little think how much we owe to the ministration of the good angels, that we and ours are preserved from the malice of evil angels, who are continually seeking to do mischief to good people. There are terrors that fly by night and by day, which they only who abide under the shadow of the Almighty can promise themselves to be safe from, Ps. xci. 1, 5. Would you insure your houses by the best policy of insurance, turn them into churches, and then they shall be taken under the special protection of him who keeps Israel, and neither slumbers nor sleeps; and if any damage come to them, it shall be made up in grace and glory. The way of duty is without doubt the way of safety.

Praying families are kept from more mischiefs than they themselves are aware of. They are not always sensible of the distinction which a kind Providence makes between them and others; though God is pleased sometimes to make it remarkable, as in the story which is credibly related of a certain village in the Canton of Bern in Switzerland, consisting of ninety houses, which in the year 1584, were all destroyed by an earthquake, except one house, in which the good man and his family were at that time together praying. That promise is sure to all the seed of faithful Abraham, *Fear not, I am thy shield*, Gen. xv. 1. Wisdom herself has past her word for it, (Prov. i. 33.) *Whoso hearkeneth to me*, wherever he dwells, he *shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from* all real evil itself, and from the amazing, tormenting *fear of evil.* Nothing can hurt, nothing needs frighten, those whom God protects.

3. If you have not a church in your house, it is to be feared that Satan will have a seat there. If religion do not rule in your families, sin and wickedness

will rule there. *I know where thou dwellest*, (says Christ to the angel of the church of Pergamos, Rev. ii. 13.) *even where Satan's seat is;* that was his affliction: but there are many whose sin it is; by their irreligion and immorality they allow Satan a seat in their houses, and that seat a throne. They are very willing that the strong man armed should keep his palace there, and that his goods should be at peace; and the surest way to prevent this, is by setting up a church in the house. It is commonly said, that where God has a church, the devil will have his chapel: but it may more truly be said in this case, where God has not a church, the devil will have his chapel. If the unclean spirit find the house in this sense empty, empty of good, though it be swept and garnished, he *taketh to himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there.*

Terrible stories have been told of houses haunted by the devil, and of the fear people have had of dwelling in such houses; verily those houses in which rioting and drunkenness reign, in which swearing and cursing are the language of the house, or in which the more spiritual wickednesses of pride, malice, covetousness, and deceit have the ascendancy, may truly be said to be haunted by the devil, and they are most uncomfortable houses for any man to live in; they are holds of foul spirits, and cages of unclean and hateful birds, even as Babylon the great will be when it is fallen, Rev. xviii. 2.

Now the way to keep sin out of the house, is to keep up religion in the house, which will be the most effectual antidote against Satan's poison. When Abraham thought concerning Abimelech's house, *Surely the fear of God is not in this place*, he concluded no less but *they will slay me for my wife's sake*, Gen. xx. 11. Where no fear of God is, no reading, no praying, no devotion, what can one expect but all that is bad? Where there is impiety there will be immorality; they who restrain prayer, cast off fear, Job xv. 4. But if religious worship have its place in the house, it may be hoped that vice will not have a place there. There is much of truth in that saying of good Mr. Dod, "Either praying will make a man give over sinning, or sinning will make a man give over praying." There remains some hope concerning those who are otherwise bad, as long as they keep up prayer. Though there be a struggle between Christ and Belial in your houses, and the insults of sin and Satan are daring and threatening, yet as long as religion keeps the field, and the weapons of its warfare are made use of, we may hope the enemy will lose ground.

4. A church in the house will make it very comfortable to yourselves. Nothing more agreeable to a gracious soul than constant communion with a gracious God; it is the *one thing* it desires, to *dwell in the house of the Lord;* here it is as in its element, it is its rest for ever. If, therefore, our houses be houses of the Lord, we shall for that reason love home, reckoning our daily devotion the sweetest of our daily delights, and our family worship the most valuable of our family comforts. This will sanctify to us all the conveniences of our houses, and reconcile us to the inconveniences of it. What are Solomon's gardens, and orchards, and pools of water, and other delights of the sons of men, (Eccl. ii. 5, 6, 8.) in comparison with these delights of the children of God?

Family religion will help to make our family relations comfortable to us, by promoting love, preventing quarrels, and extinguishing heats that may at any time happen. A family living in the fear of God, and joining daily in religious worship, truly enjoys itself; *Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren* thus to *dwell together;* it is not only like ointment and perfume which rejoice the heart, but like the holy ointment, the holy perfume, wherewith Aaron the saint of the Lord was consecrated; not only like the common dew to the grass, but like the dew which descends upon the mountains of Sion, the holy mountains, Ps. cxxxiii. 1—3. The communion of saints in that which is the work of saints, is without doubt the most pleasant communion here on earth, and the liveliest representation, and surest pledge, of those everlasting joys which are the happiness of the spirits of just men made perfect, and the hopes of holy souls in this imperfect state.

Family religion will make the affairs of the family successful; and though they may not in every thing issue to our mind, yet we may by faith foresee that they will at last issue to our good. If this beauty of the Lord our God be upon us and our families, it will prosper the work of our hands unto us, yea, the work of our hands it will establish; or however, it will establish our hearts in that comfort which makes every thing that occurs easy, Ps. xc. 17; cxii. 8.

We cannot suppose our mountain to stand so strong but that it will be moved; trouble in the flesh we must expect, and affliction in that from which we promise ourselves most comfort; and when the Divine Providence makes our houses houses of mourning, then it will be comfortable to have them houses of prayer, and to have had them so before. When sickness, and sorrow, and death come into our families, (and sooner or later they will come,) it is good that they should find the wheels of prayer going, and the family accustomed to seek God; for if we are then to begin this good work when distress forces us to it, we shall drive heavily in it. They who pray constantly when they are well, may pray comfortably when they are sick.

5. A church in the house will be a good legacy nay, it will be a good inheritance, to be left to your children after you. Reason directs us to consult the welfare of posterity, and to lay up in store a good

foundation for those who shall come after us to build upon; and we cannot do this better than by keeping up religion in our houses. A family altar will be the best entail; your children will for this rise up, and call you blessed, and it may be hoped they will be praising God for you, and praising God like you, here on earth, when you are praising him in heaven.

You will hereby leave your children the benefit of many prayers put up to heaven for them, which will be kept (as it were) upon the file there, to be answered to their comfort, when you are silent in the dust. It is true of prayer, what we say of winter, "It never rots in the skies." The seed of Jacob know they do not seek in vain, though perhaps they live not to see their prayers answered. Some good Christians, who have made conscience of praying daily with and for their children, have been encouraged to hope that the children of so many prayers should not miscarry at last: and thus encouraged, Joseph's dying word has been the language of many a dying Christian's faith, *I die, but God will surely visit you*, Gen. l. 24. I have heard of a hopeful son, who said he valued his interest in his pious father's prayer far more than his interest in his estate, though a considerable one.

You will likewise hereby leave your children a good example, which you may hope they will follow when they come into houses of their own. The usage and practice of your families is commonly transmitted from one generation to another; bad customs are many times thus entailed. They who burnt incense to the queen of heaven, learnt it of their fathers, Jer. xliv. 17. And a vain conversation was thus received by tradition, 1 Pet. i. 18. And why may not good customs be in like manner handed down to posterity? Thus we should make known the ways of God to our children, that they may arise and declare them to their children, (Ps. lxxviii. 6.) and religion may become an heir-loom in our families. Let your children be able to say, when they are tempted to sit loose to religion, That it was the way of their family, the good old way, in which their fathers walked, and in which they themselves were educated and trained up; and with this they may answer him who reproaches them. Let family worship, besides all its other pleas for itself, be able in your houses to plead prescription. And though to the acceptableness of the service, it is requisite that it be done from a higher and better principle than purely to keep up the custom of the family, yet better so than not at all: and the form of godliness may by the grace of God at length prove the happy vehicle of its power; and dry bones, whilst unburied, may be made to live. Thus *a good man leaves an inheritance to his children*; and *the generation of the upright shall be blessed.*

6. A church in the house will contribute very much to the prosperity of the church of God in the nation. Family religion, if that prevail, will put a face of religion upon the land, and very much advance the beauty and peace of our English Jerusalem. This is that which I hope we are all hearty well-wishers to; setting aside the consideration of parties, and separate interests, and burying all names of distinction in the grave of Christian charity, we earnestly desire to see true catholic Christianity, and serious godliness in the power of it, prevailing and flourishing in our land; to see knowledge filling the land, as the waters cover the sea; to see holiness and love giving law, and triumphing over sin and strife: we would see cause to call your city, *A city of righteousness, a faithful city*, its *walls salvation, and its gates praise.* Now all this would be effected, if family religion were generally set up and kept up.

When the wall was to be built about Jerusalem, it was presently done by this expedient, every one undertook to repair over against his own house. See Neh. iii. 10, &c. And if ever the decayed walls of the gospel Jerusalem be built up, it must be by the same method. Every one must sweep before his own door, and then the street will be clean. If there were a church in every house, there would be such a church in our land as would make it a praise throughout the whole earth. We cannot better serve our country than by keeping up religion in our families.

Let families be well catechised, and then the public preaching of the word will be the more profitable, and the more successful. For want of this, when we speak ever so plainly of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, to the most we do but speak parables. *The book* of the Lord is delivered to them who are not catechised, saying, *Read this*, and they say, *We are not learned*; learned enough in other things, but not in the one thing needful, Isa. xxix. 12. But our work is easy with those who from their childhood have known the Holy Scriptures.

If every family were a praying family, public prayers would be the better joined in, more intelligently, and more affectionately; for the more we are used to prayer, the more expert we shall be in that holy and divine art of "entering into the holiest" in that duty. And public reproofs and admonitions would be as a *nail in a sure place*, if masters of families would second them with their family discipline, and so clench those nails.

Religious families are blessings to the neighbourhood they live in, at least by their prayers. A good man thus becomes a public good, and it is his ambition to be so. Though he see his children's children, he has small joy of that if he do not see peace upon Israel, Ps. cxxviii. 5, 6. And therefore postponing all his own interests, and satisfactions, he sets himself to seek the good of Jerusalem all the days of his life. Happy were we if we had many such. That which now remains, is to address myself

to you upon the whole matter by way of exhortation; and I pray you let my counsel be acceptable to you; and while I endeavour to give every one his portion, let your consciences assist me herein, and take to yourselves that which belongs to you.

III. The Application.

1. Let those masters of families who have hitherto lived in the neglect of family religion be persuaded now to set it up, and henceforward to make conscience of it. I know it is hard to persuade people to begin even a good work that they have not been used to; yet, if God by his grace apply this word, who can tell but some may be wrought upon to comply with the design of it? We have no ill design in urging you to this part of your duty: we aim not at the advantage of a party, but purely at the prosperity of your families. We are sure we have reason on our side, and if you will but suffer that to rule you, we shall gain our point; and you will all go home firmly resolved, as Joshua was, that whatever others do themselves, and whatever they say of you, *You and your houses will serve the Lord.* God put it into, and keep it in, the imagination of the thought of your heart, and establish your way therein before him!

Proceed in the right method; first set up Christ upon the throne in your hearts, and then set up a church for Christ in your house. Let Christ dwell in your hearts by faith, and then let him dwell in your houses; you do not begin at the right end of your work, if you do not first give your own selves unto the Lord; God had respect first to Abel, and then to his offering. Let the fear and love of God rule in your hearts, and have a commanding sway and empire there, and then set up an altar for God in your tents; for you cannot do that acceptably till you have first consecrated yourselves as spiritual priests to God, to serve at that altar.

And when your hearts, like Lydia's, are opened to Christ, let your house, like hers, be opened to him too, Acts xvi. 14, 15. Let there be churches in all your houses; let those who have the stateliest, richest, and best furnished houses, reckon a church in them to be their best ornament: let those who have houses of the greatest care and business, reckon family religion their best employment; and not neglect the one thing needful, while they are careful and cumbered about many things: nor let those who have close and mean habitations be discouraged; the ark of God long dwelt in curtains. Your dwelling is not so strait, but you may find room for a church in it. Church work is often chargeable, but you may do this church work cheap: you need not make silver shrines, as they did for Diana, nor lavish gold out of the bag, as idolaters did in the service of their gods, (Isa. xlvi. 6.) no, *An altar of earth shall you make to your God*, (Exod. xx. 24.) and he will accept it. Church work is accustomed to be slow work, but you may do this quickly. Put on resolution, and you may set up this tabernacle to-night, before to-morrow.

Would you keep up your authority in your family? You cannot do it better than by keeping up religion in your family. If ever a master of a family looks great, truly great, it is when he is going before his house in the service of God, and presiding among them in holy things. Then he shows himself worthy of double honour, when he teaches them the good knowledge of the Lord, and is their mouth to God in prayer, blessing them in the name of God.

Would you have your family relations comfortable, your affairs successful, and give an evidence of your professed subjection to the gospel of Christ? Would you live in God's fear, and die in his favour, and escape that curse which is entailed upon prayerless families? Let religion in the power of it have its due place, that is, the uppermost place in your houses.

Many objections your own corrupt hearts will make against building these churches, but they will all appear frivolous and trifling to a pious mind, that is stedfastly resolved for God and godliness: you will never go on in your way to heaven, if you will be frightened by lions in the street. Whatever is the difficulty you dread, the discouragement you apprehend, in it, I am confident it is not insuperable, it is not unanswerable. But *he that observes the wind shall not sow, and he that regards the clouds shall not reap.*

Be not loth to begin a new custom, if it be a good custom, especially if it be a duty, (as certainly this is,) which, while you continue in the neglect of, you live in sin; for omissions are sins, and must come into judgment. It may be, that you have been convinced that you ought to worship God in your families, and that it is a good thing to do so; but you have put it off to some more convenient season. Will you now at last take occasion from this sermon to begin it? And do not defer so good a work any longer. The present season is without doubt the most convenient season. Begin this day; let this be the day of your laying the foundation of the Lord's temple in your house; and then consider, from this day and upward—as God by the prophet reasons with the people who neglected to build the temple, Hag. ii. 18, 19. take notice—whether God do not from this day remarkably bless you in all that you have and do.

Plead not your own weakness and inability to perform family worship; make use of the helps that are provided for you; do as well as you can when you cannot do so well as you would, and God will accept of you. You willingly write what is neces-

sary for the carrying on of your trade, though you cannot write so fine a hand as some others can; and will you not be as wise in the work of your Christian calling, to do your best, though it be far short of the best, rather than not do it at all? To him who has but one talent, and trades with that, more shall be given; but from him who buries it, it shall be taken away. Be at some pains to make the Scriptures familiar to you, especially David's Psalms, and then you cannot be to seek for a variety of apt expressions proper to be used in prayer, for they will be always at your right hand. *Take with you* those *words, words which the Holy Ghost teaches,* for you cannot find more acceptable words.

And now shall I prevail with you in this matter? I am loth to leave you unresolved, or but almost persuaded; I beg of you, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, for your own precious souls' sake, and for the children's sake of your own bodies, that you will live no longer in the neglect of so great, and necessary, and comfortable a duty as this of family worship is. When we press upon you the more inward duties of faith and love, and the fear of God, it cannot be so evident that we succeed in our errand as it may be in this. It is certain that you get no good by this sermon—but it is wholly lost upon you—if after you have heard it, or read it, you continue in the neglect of family religion; and if still you "cast off fear, and restrain prayer before God." Your families will be witnesses against you that this work was undone; and this sermon will witness against you, that it was not for want of being called to do it, but for want of a heart to do it when you were called. But I hope better things of you, my brethren, and things that accompany salvation, though I thus speak.

2. Let those who have kept up family worship formerly, but of late have left it off, be persuaded to revive it. This, perhaps, is the case of some of you; you remember the kindness of your youth, and the love of your espousals; time was when you sought God daily, and delighted to know his ways, as families who did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of your God; but now it is otherwise. The altar of the Lord is broken down and neglected, the daily sacrifice is ceased; and God has kept an account how many days it has ceased, whether you have or no, (Dan. viii. 13, 14.) Now God comes into your houses seeking fruit, but he finds none, or next to none: you are so eager in your worldly pursuits, that you have neither hearts nor time for religious exercises. You began at first frequently to omit the service, and a small matter served for an excuse to put it by, and so by degrees it came to nothing.

O that those who have thus left their first love, would now remember whence they are fallen, and repent, and do their first works! Inquire how this good work came to be neglected; was it not because your love to God cooled, and the love of the world prevailed? Have you not found a manifest decay in the prosperity of your souls since you let fall this good work? Has not sin got ground in your hearts and in your houses? And though, when you dropt your family worship, you promised yourselves that you would make it up in secret worship, because you were not willing to allow yourselves time for both, yet have you not declined in that also? Are you not grown less frequent, and less fervent, in your closet devotions too? Where is now the blessedness you have formerly spoken of? I beseech you to lay out yourselves to retrieve it in time. Say as that penitent adulteress, (Hos. ii. 7.) *I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now.* Cleanse the sanctuary, and put away the strange god. Is money the god, or the belly the god, that has gained possession of thy heart and house? Whatever it is, cast it out. Repair the altar of the Lord, and begin again the daily sacrifice and oblation. Light the lamps again, and burn the incense. Rear up the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, lengthen its cords, and strengthen its stakes, and resolve it shall never be neglected again as it has been. Perhaps you and your families have been manifestly under the rebukes of Providence, since you left off your duty,—and Jacob was, while he neglected to pay his vow; I beseech you, hear at length the voice of the rod, and of him who has appointed it, for it reminds you of your forgotten vows, saying, *Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there,* Gen. xxxv. 1. Let the place thou dwellest in ever be a Bethel, so shall God dwell with thee there.

3. Let those who are remiss and negligent in their family worship be awakened to more zeal and constancy. Some of you perhaps have a church in your house, but it is not a flourishing church; it is like the church of Laodicea, neither cold nor hot; or like the church of Sardis, in which the things that remain are ready to die; so that it hath little more than a name to live. Something of this work of the Lord is done for fashion sake, but it is done deceitfully: you have in your flock a male, but you vow and sacrifice unto the Lord a corrupt thing; you grow "customary" in your accustomed services, and bring the torn and the blind, the lame and the sick, for sacrifice; and you offer that to your God which you would scorn to offer to your governor; and though it is but little you do for the church in your house, you think that too much, and say, *Behold what a weariness is it!* You put it off with a small and inconsiderable scantling of your day, and that the dregs and refuse of it. You can spare no time at all for it in the morning, nor any in the evening, till you are half asleep. It is thrust into a corner, and almost lost in a crowd of worldly business and carnal conversation. When it is done, it is done so slightly, in so much haste, and with so little rever-

ence, that it makes no impression upon yourselves or your families. The Bible lies ready, but you have no time to read; your servants are otherwise employed, and you think it is no matter for calling them in; you yourselves can take up with a "word or two of prayer," or rest in a lifeless, heartless tale of words. Thus it is every day, and perhaps little better on the Lord's day; no repetition, no catechising, no singing of psalms, or none to any purpose.

Is it thus with any of your families? Is this the present state of the church in your house? My brethren, *These things ought not to be so.* It is not enough that you do that which is good, but you must do it well. God and religion have in effect no place in your hearts or houses, if they have not the innermost and uppermost place. Christ will come no whither to be an underling; he is not a guest to be set behind the door. What comfort, what benefit can you promise to yourselves from such trifling services as these; from an empty form of godliness without the power of it?

I beseech you, sirs, make a business of your family religion, and not a by-business. Let it be your pleasure and delight, and not a task and drudgery. Contrive your affairs so that the most convenient time may be allotted both morning and evening for your family worship, so that you may not be unfit for it, or disturbed and straitened in it; herein wisdom is profitable to direct. Address yourselves to it with reverence and seriousness, and a solemn pause; that those who join with you may see and say, that God is with you of a truth, and may be struck thereby into a like holy awe. You need not be long in the service, but you ought to be lively in it; not slothful in this business, because it is the business for God and your souls, but *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.*

4. Let those who have a church in their house, be very careful to adorn and beautify it in their conversation. If you pray in your families, and read the Scriptures, and sing psalms, and yet are passionate and froward with your relations, quarrelsome and contentious with your neighbours, unjust and deceitful in your dealings, intemperate and given to tippling, or allow yourselves in any other sinful way, you pull down with one hand what you build up with the other. Your prayers will be an abomination to God, and to good men too, if they be thus polluted. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.*

See that you be universal in your religion, that it may appear that you are sincere in it. Show that you believe a reality in it, by acting always under the commanding power and influence of it. Be not Christians upon your knees, and Jews in your shops. While you seem saints in your devotions, prove not yourselves sinners in your conversations. Having begun the day in the fear of God, be in that fear all the day long. Let the example you set your families be throughout good, and by it teach them not only to read and pray, for that is but half their work, but by it teach them to be meek and humble, sober and temperate, loving and peaceable, just and honest; so shall you adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour; and those who will not be won by the word, shall be won by your conversation. Your family worship is an honour to you, see to it that neither you nor yours be in any thing a disgrace to it.

5. Let those who are setting out in the world set up a church in their house at first, and not defer it. Plead not youth and bashfulness; if you have confidence enough to rule a family, I hope you have confidence enough to pray with a family. Say not, *The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built,* as they did who *dwelt in their ceiled houses,* while God's house lay waste, Hag. i. 2, 4. It ought to be built immediately; and the longer you put it off, the more difficulty there will be in the doing of it, and the more danger that it will never be done.

Now you are beginning the world, (as you call it,) is it not your wisdom as well as duty to begin with God? Can you begin better? or can you expect to prosper if you do not begin thus? The fuller your heads are of care about setting up house, and setting up shop, and settling in both, the more need you have of daily prayer, that by it you may cast your care on God, and fetch in wisdom and direction from on high.

6. In all your removals be sure you take the "church in your house" along with you. Abraham often removed his tent, but wherever he pitched it, there the first thing he did was to build an altar. It is observable concerning Aquila and Priscilla, of whose pious family my text speaks, that when St. Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans they were at Rome; for he sends salutations to them thither, and there it is said they had a church in their house, Rom. xvi. 5. But now, when he wrote this epistle to the Corinthians they were at Ephesus, for thence it should seem this epistle bore date, and here he sends salutations from them; and at Ephesus also they had a church in their house. As wherever we go ourselves we must take our religion with us; so wherever we take our families, or part of them, we must take our family religion with us; for in all places we need divine protection, and experience divine goodness. *I will therefore that men pray every where.*

When you are in your city-houses, let not the business of them crowd out your family religion; nor let the diversions of your country-houses indispose your minds to these serious exercises. That care and that pleasure are unseasonable and inordinate, which leave you not both heart and time to attend the service of the church in your house.

Let me here be an advocate also for those families

whose masters are often absent from them, for their health or pleasure, especially on the Lord's day, or long absent upon business. And let me beg these absent masters to consider, with whom they leave those few sheep in the wilderness, (1 Sam. xvii. 28.) and whether they do not leave them neglected and exposed. Perhaps there is not a just cause for your absence so much, nor can you give a good answer to that question, *What dost thou here, Elijah?* But if there be a just cause, you ought to take care that the church in your house be not neglected when you are abroad, but that the work be done when you are not at home to do it.

7. Let inferior relatives help to promote religion in the families where they are. If family worship be not kept up in the houses where you live, let so much the more be done in your closets for God and your souls: if it be, yet think not that will excuse you from secret worship. All is little enough to keep up the life of religion in your hearts, and help you forward toward heaven.

Let the children of praying parents, and the servants of praying masters, account it a great privilege to live in houses that have churches in them, and be careful to improve that privilege. Be you also ready to every good work; make the religious exercises of your family easy and pleasant to those who perform them, by showing yourselves forward to attend on them, and careful to attend to them; for your backwardness and carelessness will be their greatest discouragement. Let your lives also be a credit to good education, and make it appear to all with whom you converse, that you are every way the better for living in religious families.

8. Let solitary people, who are not engaged in families, have churches in their chambers, churches in their closets. When every man repaired the wall of Jerusalem over against his own house, we read of one that repaired over against his chamber, Neh. iii. 30. Those who live alone, out of the way of family worship, ought to take so much the more time for their secret worship, and, if possible, add the more solemnity to it. You have not families to read the Scriptures to, read them so much the more to yourselves. You have not children and servants to catechise, nor parents or masters to be catechised by; catechise yourselves then, that you may hold fast the form of sound words, which you have received. *Exhort one another;* so we read it, (Heb. iii. 13.) παρακαλειτε εαυτες—*exhort yourselves*, so it might as well be read. You are not made keepers of the vineyards, and therefore the greater is your shame if your own vineyard you do not keep. When you are alone, yet you are not alone, for the Father is with you, to observe what you do, and to own and accept you, if you do well.

9. Let those who are to choose a settlement, consult the welfare of their souls in the choice. If a church in the house be so necessary, so comfortable, then be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers, who will have no inclination for the church in the house, nor assist in the support of it, but instead of building this house, pluck it down with their hands, Prov. xiv. 1. Let apprenticeships and other services be chosen by this rule, that "that is best for us which is best for our souls;" and therefore it is our interest to go with those, and be with those, with whom God is, Zech. viii. 23. When Lot was to choose a habitation, he was determined therein purely by secular advantages, (Gen. xiii. 11, 13.) and God justly corrected his sensual choice, for he never had a quiet day in the Sodom he chose, till he was fired out of it. The Jewish writers tell of one of their devout rabbins, who being courted to dwell in a place which was otherwise well accommodated, but had no synagogue near, he utterly refused to accept the invitation, and gave that text for his reason, (Ps. cxix. 72.) *The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver.*

10. Let religious families keep up friendship and fellowship with each other, and as they have opportunity assist one another in doing good. The communion of churches has always been accounted their beauty, strength, and comfort, and so is the communion of these domestic churches. We find here, and in other of St. Paul's epistles, kind salutations sent to and from the houses that had churches in them. Religious families should greet one another, visit one another, love one another, pray for one another, and as becomes households of faith, do all the good they can one to another; forasmuch as they all meet daily at the same throne of grace, and hope to meet shortly at the same throne of glory, to be no more, as they are now, divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel.

Lastly, Let those houses that have churches in them, flourishing churches, have comfort in them. Is religion in the power of it uppermost in your houses? And are you and yours serving the Lord, serving him daily? Go on and prosper, for the Lord is with you while you be with him. See your houses under the protection and blessing of heaven, and be assured that all things shall work together for good to you. Make it to appear by your holy cheerfulness that you find God a good master, Wisdom's ways pleasantness, and her paths peace; and that you see no reason to envy those who spend their days in carnal mirth, for you are acquainted with better pleasures than any they can pretend to.

Are your houses on earth God's houses? Are they dedicated to him, and employed for him? Be of good comfort, his house in heaven shall be yours shortly: *In my Father's house there are many mansions;* and there is one, you may be sure, for each of you, who thus *by a patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality.*

A SERMON

PREACHED TO THE

SOCIETIES FOR REFORMATION OF MANNERS,

AT SALTERS HALL, ON MONDAY, JUNE 30, 1712.

PSALM vii. 9.

O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just.

IN all your religious assemblies, it is as much the business of your ministers, who preside in them, to pray with you, as to preach to you; to be your mouth to God, as to be God's mouth to you. *He is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee*,[a] is as natural an inference as, he is a prophet, and he shall teach thee: and in these two the apostles themselves summed up the business of their apostolical office, *We will give ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word*:[b] and those, who herein obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful, are their most genuine sons and successors. And it is as much your business in your attendance on religious assemblies, seriously to join in the errands they go upon to the throne of God's grace, as dutifully to receive the messages they bring from the throne of God's government; always remembering that God speaks to us, and we to him, by his Son.

In this religious assembly of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, we having now, by solemn prayer, committed them and their pious undertaking to God, having humbly begged the continuance of his presence with them, and his favour to them, to carry them on and succeed them in it, and make it a means of great good to our land, I look upon it that the work of the day is more than half done; for I am sure God's grace can do wonders without any services of ours; but the best of our services can do nothing without his grace; which we have as necessary and constant a dependence upon for all the good that is to be done by us, and all the good effect of it upon others, as we have upon the providence of God, for the actions of the natural life; and that grace must be fetched in by prayer. If, therefore, the God of Israel grant us the things we have now requested of him, our point is gained; your work goes on successfully.

And, therefore, I see not how I can better befriend the Societies, nor do more to serve their pious design, in what remains of my work at this time, than by doing what I can to engage the continuance of the prayers of all who hear me this day, for the prosperity of them and it; and that is what I aim at in the choice of this text.

The undertaking is bold and great, and one in which the spirit of a truly Christian hero appears, as much as in any thing,—a catholic spirit; the spirit of one who seeks the things of Christ more than his own things. It has a direct tendency to the advancing of the honour of God, and of his kingdom among men, and the interests of that holy religion which we make a profession of, and the weakening of the devil's kingdom; it aims at the good of the souls of men, and the welfare of the public: and, therefore, *Men of Israel, help*;[c] help, *by your prayers*,[d] to forward this good work. From this part of the service I am sure there is none can excuse, can exempt, themselves; you are all therefore, in this way, summoned "to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty;" it is at your peril if you disobey the summons.

I hope I speak to a praying people; who make conscience of prayer, who make a business of prayer, who dare not live without prayer, (for those who do, live without God in the world,) who would not live without prayer, for it is their delight to approach unto God. I hope I speak to those who pray for the

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a Gen. xx. 7. b Acts vi. 4. c Acts xxi. 28. d 2 Cor. i. 11.

peace of Jerusalem, preferring it before their chief joy; you are not Israelites indeed, if you are not of the generation of them that seek God, and wrestle with him; if you do not seek him, and wrestle with him for the welfare and prosperity of Israel: let me therefore press it upon you with all earnestness, to take this concern of the "reformation of manners" into your daily prayers—alone, and in your families—as those who have sincerely espoused this righteous cause, have laid it near your hearts, and who keep it there, and have an entire dependance upon the almighty grace of God to make it successful.

My text is a prayer, and will be of use to direct us herein; it puts words into our mouths; not many, to burthen our memories, but very proper and suited to our purpose, for we are here taught to pray against all sin, and for all saints.

1. We are here taught to pray against all sin, to pray it down; to pray it, if possible, out of the world: *O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end!* And in praying against the sin, we pray for the sinners; for whatever makes against the disease, makes for the patient.

Observe with what a pathetic strain of devotion the Psalmist breathes out this petition, and teaches us to do so; *Oh! let it come to an end! when shall it once be?* In prayer, as there should be a fixedness of thought, and a firmness of faith, so there should be a flame and fervour of pious and devout affections. Cold desires do but beg denials; and lifeless wishes are fruitless ones; but it is the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man that avails much. When Jacob wrestles with God he commences "Israel, a prince with God." The original word אנא here used to express the emphasis laid upon this request, is sometimes translated *now*; O that the wickedness of the wickedness might speedily come to an end; the sooner the better. Sometimes it is translated *obsecro—I pray thee*, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; this is that for which I would be very importunate; O that I might have my request, and that God would grant me this thing which I long for!

Some of the critics read it, *Evil shall consume the wicked*; and so it is a prediction of the gradual and final destruction of all impenitent sinners: they who will not be reclaimed shall be consumed; *Evil shall slay the wicked.*[e] Their sin will be their ruin, if they repent not. The man of sin, that wicked one, shall be consumed;[f] and we are to pray for the hastening of the day when God will do this, as the day of the revelation of his righteous judgment.

But it is rather to be taken as we read it; it is a prayer, not that the wicked may come to an end, but that their wickedness may; that that may be consumed; let it not only be restrained and curbed, and driven into corners, but let it be utterly abolished, that we may not see it, or hear it, or hear of it, any more. God is calling to mankind from heaven by his word, *O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end.* O that sinners would *cease to do evil*, and *learn to do well! Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.* He says to the fools, *Deal not foolishly*; let *him that stole, steal no more.* This is the burthen of every song, *Turn ye, turn ye.* Now we must, by our prayers, concur with him herein; as those who are of God's mind; *Amen*, so be it; *O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end.* God commands that men forsake their sins; we pray, that he would by his grace turn them from it, as those who are of his mind, and say in sincerity, *Thy will be done.*

2. We are here taught to pray for all saints, for all good people; *But establish the just.* Lord, let not those who are filthy be filthy still, but let those who are holy be holy still; let the bad be made good, and the good be kept so, and made better; let the same grace that first made them just, and wrought righteousness in them, secure and carry on that good work in their souls; as the same word of power that first made the world still upholds it.

The conversion of sinners, and the confirmation and edification of saints, are the two great things ministers are to aim at in their praying and preaching; to bring souls to Christ, which will effectually bring their wickedness to an end; and then to build them up in him, which will be an effectual establishment of the just.

Or, by the "just" here, we may understand those who are not only just themselves, but, like Phineas, execute judgment and justice upon daring criminals, for the staying of the plague. Lord, establish them in their good purposes, and strengthen their hands.

This is the prayer which we at a distance in the country have many a time put up to God for you here, and those in other places, who have set their hands to this good work. St. Paul, in his epistles, often tells his friends what it was which he asked of God for them, making mention of them always in his prayers, that they might know what to ask for themselves, and might be encouraged to hope for all that grace from God, which one who had so great an interest at the throne of grace, as Paul had, prayed for, for them; this is that which we desire of God for you, that God would spirit you for your work, by establishing your hearts; and that he would succeed you in it, by bringing the wickedness of the wicked to an end. And we desire that all praying people would frequently put up this prayer to God for you.

It is easy to gather from these words,

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[e] Ps. xxxiv. 21.

[f] 2 Thess. ii. 8.

That it is, and ought to be, the desire and prayer of all good people, that God by his grace would put an end to the wickedness of the wicked, and establish the just.

Now, 1. This supposes that there are two contrary contesting interests in the world, visibly appearing in most places; that of the wicked, and that of the just; the children of God, who bear his image, and do his will, and the children of the devil, in whom he works, and who are led captive by him, as all the children of disobedience are. This is a distinction which is as old as Cain and Abel, and will last as long as heaven and hell.

Look abroad into the world, and you will see persons of very different characters, the reverse to each other; one would wonder how those of the same nature, education, and conversation, should be so unlike one another. When Solomon is observing, that in the course of providence there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, yet at the same time he industriously and very particularly shows, that notwithstanding that, there is a vast difference between them, in the temper of their minds, and the tenor of their lives; for one is clean, and the other unclean; one sacrifices, and the other sacrifices not; one swears, and the other fears an oath.[g] Some make conscience of what they say and do, are in care to do right, and afraid of doing amiss; while others live at large, and walk at all adventures. Some are sober and temperate, and keep their appetites in subjection to religion and right reason, while others run to an excess of riot, and wallow in all manner of uncleanness. Some are honest and just in their dealings, while others are false and deceitful, and there is no confidence to be put in them. Some speak the language of Canaan, others the language of Ashdod. Some take time every day to call upon God, and converse with him, and sanctify the Lord's day to his honour, while others cast off fear, and restrain prayer, and make no difference between sabbath time and other time. Now which of these two will we recommend ourselves to, herd ourselves with, and cast in our lot among? Which of these will we take for our people, will we associate with of choice, and will we study to conform ourselves to? As our choice is, so will our doom be; and to them whom we take for our people, death will gather us, which if we duly consider, it will be our prayer, *Gather not my soul with sinners.*[h]

Abundance of wicked people there are in this world: it is therefore said to lie in wickedness; the whole world does so.[i] It is strange, it is sad, it is very sad, it is very strange, that among men, who are reasonable creatures, and depending upon their Creator, that there should be so many wicked, who act in a constant contradiction to the right reason of man, and a constant rebellion against the rightful authority of God: but as says the proverb of the ancients, so says the observation and experience of the moderns, *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked; for do men gather grapes of thorns?* or do they expect good things in the life, from an evil treasure in the heart? No; though *some men's* sins are so artfully concealed and disguised, that it must be left to the day to declare them; and it is only the heart-searching God who can say, *It is iniquity*, it is hypocrisy, even the solemn meeting;[k] and to him the judgment of such sins must be left; yet there are others whose sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment;[l] of which any one may say, as the angel to the prophet, *This is wickedness*;[m] and wickedness of this kind we may and must in our places witness against. Do I need to tell you what that wickedness of the wicked is, which we must endeavour in our places to put a stop to? Your own hearts will tell you; some of the instances of it even the heathen were convinced of by natural conscience. You know it is wickedness for men to profane the holy name of God, and by their ludicrous or passionate appeals to him, to make him altogether such a one as themselves; or to abuse themselves, their own bodies, and the gifts of God's providence, and by their drunkenness and uncleanness to make themselves altogether such as the beasts, and more vile. Do I need to tell you who the just are? Your own hearts tell you. They are not those of this or that dividing name or party: no, far be it from us to monopolize the character; for *in every nation*, and under every denomination of Christians, those who *fear God*, and *work righteousness, are accepted of him*,[n] and must be so of us. The just are they who live in the fear of God, and make conscience of rendering what is due to him, to themselves, to all with whom they have to do: these are they whose establishment we should seek.

2. This directs us which of these two interests to espouse, and side with, and make our own; as those who are convinced which is in the right, and which in the wrong, which will make us happy, and which will ruin us; particularly we are directed which of these to serve with our prayers. If we would be found on the Lord's side, in the day of inquiry, we must by our prayers act in concert with the just, and in communion with them, and help to establish them; and in contradiction to the wicked, and their wickedness, which we must do all we can to bring to an end.

For the opening of this I shall endeavour to show, I. What it is we are directed in the text to desire and pray for. II. Why it is, and ought to be, the desire and prayer of all good Christians. And then make the application.

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g Eccl. ix. 2. h Ps. xxvi. 9. i 1 John v. 19. k Isa. i. 13.

l 1 Tim. v. 24. m Zech. v. 8. n Acts x. 35.

I. That which we are to desire and pray for, is in short this, That wickedness, that root of bitterness, may be rooted out of this world, and that righteousness, that plant of renown, may be planted and rooted in it. This I say we must desire and pray for; it is not enough in word and tongue to pray for it, but we must sincerely and in heart desire it; nor is it enough in heart to desire it, but we must by prayer offer up our desires to God, in the name of Christ, for the plentiful effusions and powerful operations of that grace upon the minds and spirits of men, which are necessary to the effecting of these good works, and the attaining of these good ends; that that grace may be sufficient.

1. We must desire and pray, that God by his grace would bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end, to a full end; that, by his Spirit, he would counter-work and overrule that evil spirit, which works and rules in the children of disobedience.

This charity must begin at home; we must in the first place pray, that God by his grace would bring the wickedness that is in our own wicked hearts to an end; that our corruptions may be mortified and subdued, and the power of our inordinate appetites and passions crushed and broken, and that we may be kept from every evil work and way.

But though it must begin at home, it must not end there; we must pray that the wickedness of other wicked people may come to an end, in the places where we live, in the city, in the nation, all the world over.

It must be our heart's desire and prayer,

(1.) That wicked principles may be exploded and abandoned, and that men may be set right in their judgments concerning good and evil, right and wrong, God and themselves, this world and the other; that the beast may be wounded in the head, and that will be a *deadly wound*;[o] that a blow may be given to the root of wickedness, by rectifying the mistakes of the understanding; that salt may be cast into the springs, and so the waters may be healed; for this is God's way of gaining the will and affections, by opening the understanding; and it is the regular way, it is coming in by the door. Till the peccant humours in the blood be purged out, in vain is application made to the external eruptions of the disease. Those who are bad, are so upon some bad principles, with which the god of this world has blinded their minds, and till those are conquered and laid aside, the wickedness of the heart and life will not be brought to an end.

O that men may be made to see the folly and falsehood of those atheistical notions and schemes, by which their fear of God, and their dread of sin, and the fatal consequences of it, are abated, and by degrees worn off, that they may no longer, as they have done, call good evil, and evil good, put darkness for light, and light for darkness. O that sinners may be convinced of the absurdity of that with which they support themselves in their sinful ways, and are encouraged to say, *They shall have peace though they go on*, and that they may see their mistake before it is too late to have it rectified! O that God's grace would open men's eyes before the flames of hell do it! That the fallacy of that which pretends to wit may be discovered, and made contemptible by that which is real wisdom. The word of God, which is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, has intimated to us what the principles are that sinners go upon; they say in their heart, *There is no God*;[p] or, *The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it*;[q] He *hideth his face*, and *he will not require it*.[r] Nay, they have the impudence to say, *Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord*;[s] or, *Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?*[t] O that men might be beaten off from these strong holds, and that the hail might sweep away this refuge of lies; and these high thoughts might be captivated and brought into obedience to the power of divine truth. These corrupt principles are commonly concealed, and those who are fond of them are ashamed to own them; I wish the sinners you deal with, could be brought to discover them, and to confess what the tempter suggested to them, when he drew them into his snares; that some course might be taken to inform them better; to give them right thoughts of the differences between good and evil, of the holiness and justice of God, the strictness of his law, and to convince them, that for all these things God will bring them into judgment.[u] O that men were brought to shake off the loose thoughts they have of the Scriptures, the low thoughts they have of religion and godliness, and the slight thoughts they have of sin, and to receive the truth in the light and love of it.

O that popery, which is so great a friend to sin, might be known to be, what really it is, a mystery of iniquity, sin in disguise, which when it is revealed and set in a true light, is soon consumed by the breath of Christ's mouth, his word, and Spirit, and the brightness of the coming[v] of his truth into the soul. Idolatry was always an inlet to immorality and all impiety; and, therefore, it is necessary to the reformation of manners, that the principles upon which we reformed from popery, be closely and faithfully adhered to, by which the honour of Christ, the authority of the Scriptures, and the strictness of the divine law, are supported. These will help to reform the manners of the nation; and in return thereof, the more the manners of the nation are reformed, the better fortified it will be against popery; for the mystery of faith is best held in a pure con-

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o Rev. xiii. 3. p Ps. xiv. 1. q Ps. xciv. 7. r Ps. x. 11, 13.

s Mal. ii. 17. t Rom. ix. 19. u Eccl. xi. 9. v 2 Thess. ii. 8.

science;[w] our enemies know, that profaneness paves the way to popery.

(2.) We must desire and pray, that wicked persons may be converted and changed, by the grace of God. Has God given us his grace, and have we experienced the benefit of it? O let us be earnest with him to give it to those who are yet in sin; that thus the wickedness of the wicked might be brought to an end, by the teaching of transgressors the ways of God, and the conversion of sinners unto him;[x] that the public preaching of the word may be effectual for this purpose, and mighty through God for the turning of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; that in the chariot of the everlasting gospel, the great Redeemer may ride forth conquering and to conquer.

O let us be humbly earnest with God in prayer, that the eyes of the blind may be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; that wandering sheep may be sought and saved, and prodigal sons brought to themselves first, and then to their father's house; that God would translate those into the kingdom of his dear Son, who have been long subjects in the kingdom of darkness. O that they who are Satan's slaves may be the Lord's freemen, and that God would bring their souls out of prison. O that the sea might fly, and Jordan might be driven back, and the rock turned into a fountain of waters at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.[y] O that the Ethiopian might be made to change his skin, and the leopard his spots, and that they might yet at last be brought to do good, who have been accustomed to do evil.[z]

We must not despair concerning the worst; for while there is life, there is hope, and room for prayer: the repentance of Manasseh, and the conversion of Paul, tell us that nothing is too hard for the almighty grace of God to do. The Corinthians were many of them as bad as the worst, and as vile as the vilest; such were some of you, and yet ye are washed, and sanctified, and justified.[a] Let us, therefore, apply ourselves to Christ, for those who have been long under the power of sin and Satan, as the father of the possessed child in the gospel, *If thou canst do any thing, have compassion upon them, and help them*,[b] O snatch them as brands out of everlasting burnings! O that drunkards and harlots might be made sober and chaste; that those who so passionately curse and swear, may be brought as affectionately to pray and praise; that sabbath breakers might be sabbath sanctifiers. O that Satan may be dispossessed of his strong holds, that the prey may be taken from that mighty one, and the unlawful captive may be delivered; that Christ's throne may be set up where the usurper's seat has long been: *With men, this is impossible, but with God all things are possible*, even this. Nay, the worse any are, the more earnestly we should desire and pray for their conversion, not only because otherwise their ruin will be the greater, but because there will be so much the greater joy in heaven for their repentance, more for one of them than for ninety-nine just persons who comparatively need no repentance.[c] How earnest should we be herein, did we consider that the converting of a soul from sin is the saving of a soul from death.[d]

Those whom you reprove and inform against for their wickedness, it should be with a strong desire for their conversion, and that the trouble you give them may contribute to it; that the uneasiness you put them to, may make them weary and heavy laden under the burthen of sin, and willing to get clear of it by coming to Christ. O that the punishing of them might prevent their perishing, and that when they are holden in the cords of affliction, their ear may be open to discipline: let your prayers always accompany your endeavours to reclaim and reform them, that while you are making them examples of your justice, God by his grace may make them monuments of his mercy. When you prosecute them, pray that God would pardon them: *Father, forgive them*, and qualify them for forgiveness. And if God forgive them, and let them know that he has forgiven them by a saving change wrought in them, they will not only forgive you this wrong, but will thank you, and thank God for you, as David for Abigail, and for the seasonable stop you gave them, when they were hastening apace to their own ruin.

(3.) We must desire and pray, that wicked practices may be prevented and restrained; that though the root of bitterness be not plucked up, yet that it may not spring up to trouble us, and thereby many should be defiled; and that whatever may lie hid, yet there may not appear any fornicator or profane person among us, as Esau.[e] Let us pray, that if the stream be not turned, yet it may be checked and dammed up, and may not become an overflowing deluge; that though the lion be not turned into a lamb, yet he may be chained up and kept within grates; that though the unclean spirit be not cast out, yet he may be silenced, and not suffered to speak, not suffered to tear. *Est aliquid prodire tenus, si non datur ultra—To this degree he may proceed, but not beyond.* O that God by his grace would restrain the remainder of the wickedness of the wicked, would set bounds to the breaking out of it, as he does to the waves of the sea, *hitherto shall it come, and no further*; that though Balaam be still the same he was, yet he may not be suffered to curse Israel; that though Sennacherib has still an inveterate rage against God, yet he may be made to feel that God has a hook in his nose, and a bridle

w 1 Tim. iii. 9. x Ps. li. 13.
y Ps. cxiv. 3, 7, 8. z Jer. xiii. 23.

a 1 Cor. vi. 10, 11. b Mark ix. 22. c Luke xv. 7.
d James v. 20. e Heb. xii. 15, 16.

in his jaws.[f] And O that the magistrate who bears the sword might be, as the Scripture calls him, *An heir of restraint*,[g] *a terror to evil doers*, and that the proper means used for the suppression of vice and profaneness, may attain the end; so that though sin has blossomed and budded, yet it may not rise up into a rod of wickedness, to oppress the lot of the righteous.[h]

We should desire and pray, that thus far at least the wickedness of the wicked may come to an end, that it may not be committed openly, and that the infection may not spread.

[1.] O let not wickedness be committed publicly and openly, and in the face of the sun, as it were by licence, and with allowance. Let those who will not be persuaded to hate sin, and who cannot blush for it, yet be compelled to forbear it before men; and since they will be as the horse and the mule that have no understanding, let them be held in, as they are, with bit and bridle.[i] Let those who will not by fair reasoning be made ashamed of the sin they have committed, by a due correction be made afraid to commit it again; and if they will not tremble at the wrath of God revealed from heaven against them, let them be afraid of the civil powers, which bear not the sword in vain.[k] Let all iniquity be made at least to hide her head, and stop her mouth,[l] that if men will not be wrought upon, by ministers' preaching, to break off their sins, yet by the magistrates' acting they may be driven into corners, and if they do things that are not right, they may do them secretly, and so the nation may not bear the guilt and blame of it.[m]

If the laws of God and religion prevail not to be obeyed and submitted to, yet let them not be impudently affronted and bid defiance to. If the wicked will still do wickedly, and will not be made to understand,[n] yet let them not pass without rebuke, and a testimony borne against their wicked ways; let them not be able to make their sin fashionable, nor to bring it into reputation; but let it be made to appear, as it is, odious and scandalous, and that which all wise and good men have a dislike of. If the idols of iniquity be not driven out of the world, and quite abolished, yet let them be cast to the moles and to the bats.[o] If men will be drunk, let them be drunk in the night,[p] and let the works of darkness know and keep their place, but let those who are of the day be sober, and walk honestly, and as becomes them. O that the wickedness of the wicked might thus far at least come to an end, that they may not dare to declare it as Sodom,[q] so as to vex the righteous souls of those about them from day to day, with their filthy conversation.[r] Let the sin be the ruin of the sinner, as certainly it will be, if it be not repented of; but let it not, by going bare-faced and undisturbed, be the reproach of the nation. Let not the fathers of our country be such as Eli was to his family, whose sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not;[s] but let it ever be said, to the honour of our land, to the honour of your city, that though there be found those who boldly bend their tongues like their bow for lies, yet there are found those likewise who are valiant for the truth in the earth.[t] And though there are *horns*, *four horns*, that attempt to scatter Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem, to run down all that is sacred and just, yet there are those who lift up the head against them, there are *four carpenters* who come to break these horns, and to cast them out;[u] that the horns of the wicked being cut off (though their heads be not) the horns of the righteous may be exalted.[v]

[2.] O let not the wickedness of the wicked be propagated, so as to infect others. Let this plague die with those who are dying of it, because they will die; but O let the contagion be kept from spreading. Though multitudes drop into the pit daily, yet let not the bills of this mortality rise; though things are bad let them not grow worse. If the sinners themselves will not be persuaded to leave, yet let not those about them be persuaded to learn their pernicious ways. They have erred, but let their error remain with themselves, and let not others be tainted with it, nor carried away by it. O let not this leprosy overspread the whole body; let it never be said, that *from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is no soundness, nothing but wounds and bruises*.

We know that sinners are enticing: the wise man supposes this, *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not*. They who have the plague are willing to infect others. The devil was no sooner an apostate himself, but he became a tempter to man; and they who are of that wicked one thus do his lusts. Those who are bad, I fear are more industrious to debauch others, and to make them as bad as themselves, than those who are good are to invite others to the ways of religion and virtue, and to make them as good as themselves.

We know also by sad experience, that sin is an enticing thing; it has its baits with which it allures the unthinking and unstable into the net; and there is in the corrupt nature of man a proneness to follow bad examples, and to go into the measures of those who take their measures from the world and the flesh; and to follow them straightway, without any consideration, as an ox goes to the slaughter.[w] We should therefore earnestly desire and pray, as we are taught to do every day, that God would not lead either us or others into temptation, but out of it,

[f] Isa. xxxvii. 28, 29. [g] Judg. xviii. 7. *Marg.* [h] Ezek. vii. 10, 11.
[i] Ps. xxxii. 2. [k] Rom. xiii. 4. [l] Ps. cvii. 42.
[m] 2 Kings xvii. 9. [n] Dan. xii. 10. [o] Isa. ii. 20.
[p] 1 Thess. v. 7. [q] Isa. iii. 9. [r] 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8, 9.
[s] 1 Sam. iii. 13. [t] Jer. ix. 3. [u] Zech. i. 19, 21.
[v] Ps. lxxv. 10. [w] Prov. vii. 22.

and would deliver us and them from evil. O pray that the tongue of the tempters may be tied, and they may be ashamed to do the devil's work, and that the force of the temptation may be broken; pray that the ear of the tempted may be stopped, and that they may be enabled, with the shield of faith, to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. Let us stand with our censer, like Aaron, between the living and the dead, between the sick and the sound, and endeavour, by our intercessions, to stay the plague. Let us desire and pray, that in wicked families the entail of sin may be cut off, that there may not rise up in the fathers' stead an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord, the thing Moses dreaded, Numb. xxxii. 14. But that the son, when he sees all his father's sins, may consider, and not do like him,[x] nor tread in his steps, that so the next generation, at least, may be better than this. Pray, that in wicked places, where there are many sinners, there may be no more; that men may be so wise for themselves, as well as just to the cause of virtue and serious godliness, as not to make friendship, or keep company, with the vicious and profane, lest they learn their way, and get a snare to their souls.

O let us be earnest with God in prayer, that he would give more, and yet more, of that grace which is necessary in order to the putting of this full stop to the course of sin. Pray for grace for those who do not yet desire it, or pray for it for themselves; it might do well, when we are alone with God, to be particular herein; Lord give grace to such a sinner, who is very provoking both to God and good men, preventing grace, restraining grace, renewing grace, victorious grace. Let Saul become Paul, that it may appear, that that pattern of divine mercy, which was of old set forth to them which should afterwards believe,[y] may yet be copied out again, in answer to prayer, as that was in answer to Stephen's prayer; God's arm is not shortened that it cannot save the greatest sinner, nor is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear the weakest prayer, that is offered up in faith, the prayer of the destitute.

2. We must desire and pray, that God by his grace would establish the just; that religion and godliness may get ground, as vice and profaneness lose ground. Let us pray,

(1.) That the just may be established in their integrity, and may ever retain it. It is the duty of the watchmen to warn not only the wicked, that they go not a step further in their wicked ways, but the righteous also, that they turn not a step back from their righteous ways, that they do not so much as look back,[z] and our desire and prayer must be accordingly, as those who are afraid, lest a promise being left us of entering into rest, not only we ourselves, but any others of us, should so much as seem to come short.[a] O that good people may be established in their good principles and good resolutions, and may faithfully adhere to them; that the righteous may still hold on their way, and those who have clean hands may be stronger and stronger. O that, though the stream be strong, the righteous may be enabled to swim against it, and may never be carried down by it; but that, like Job, in difficult, trying times, they may still hold fast their integrity; may keep themselves pure in times of common iniquity, and may, like fish, be fresh in salt water; as Noah, in the old world. Nay, we should desire and pray, that the just may be like springs of water, which, by antiperistasis, are warmest when the air is coldest; that the worse others are, the better they may be; that the more others profane the name of God, the more they may abound in praising it; the more loose others are in their conversation, the more circumspect they may be; as Noah and Lot, who were both better in the midst of temptation, than when they were out of the way of it.

We should especially be earnest with God in prayer for young people, who are setting out in the world, that by the grace of God they may be preserved from the corruption that is in the world through lust; that that may not be a spark to the tinder of the corruption that is in their hearts. Commit them to the conduct and custody of the divine grace. *Keep, holy Father, keep through thy name those that we commit unto thee, keep them from the evil* of this *present world*, keep them to the end.[b] Those who have been blest with a good education, who have begun well, and promise fair, and are numbered among the just, O that they may be confirmed in the choice they have made, and may always abide by it; that when they come to the turning time of life such a right turn may be given to their thoughts, a that they may be stedfastly resolved for heaven, a their end, and Christ and holiness as their way Satan and his agents have a particular spite at such and are industrious to draw them aside; O let u help them by our prayers, that they may be fortifie against the temptations the world is full of, and ma never lose the things they have wrought, the thing they have gained; but may obtain a full reward That the holy seed may be the substance of ou land,[d] and never the shame of it, by mingling them selves with the people of these abominations; th they may appear to be a seed which the Lord h blessed in answer to prayer, and which we sha bless him for; that the branches of the families God's people may continue branches of righteou ness.

(2.) That they may be established in their co fort and hope. In troublesome, threatening tim

x Ezek. xviii. 14. y 1 Tim. i. 16. z Ezek. iii. 19, 21. a Heb. iv. 1.

b John xvii. 11. c 2 John 8. d Isa. vi. 13.

good men are apt to be shaken in mind, and to fear lest the cause and interest of religion should be sunk and run down; when they see how iniquity abounds, and how cold the love of many is, how bold the factors for hell are grown, and how bashful the advocates for Christ and his gospel are, they are ready to give up all for gone; ready to say, when they see the ungodly prosper in the world, that they have cleansed their hearts and hands in vain.[e] We have, therefore, need to pray for them, that they may be established in the belief of the promise, that the gates of hell shall never prevail against the church, and may encourage themselves and one another with it, and may never cast away their confidence in it. O that the just may be established in the assurance of this, that God will plead his own cause, will own his own interests, will do his own work, and will be exalted in his own strength. Though his truths be opposed and ridiculed, yet they are great, and shall prevail. Though his name be profaned, yet he has glorified it, and will glorify it yet again; he will magnify his law, and make it honourable,[f] though men vilify it, and make it contemptible. *These are the true sayings of God.*

Now, Lord, give to the just to believe in the Lord their God, that so they may be established,[g] and not be afraid of evil tidings, nor despair of their cause, no, nor so much as distrust it; for it is not the cause of a party that they espouse and embark in, but that of catholic Christianity, pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, which we are sure will keep its ground, and carry the day; it is the kingdom of God among men, which cannot be destroyed. O that the just may rejoice and glory in this; that this may keep their resolutions firm, and their hopes flourishing, in the worst of times; that they may rejoice in God, and glory in him, and their feet being set upon this rock, they may have a new song put into their mouths.

(3.) That they may be established in their undertaking to do what they can to bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end; Lord, by thy grace, strengthen their hands in their opposition to the interests of sin and Satan in the world. O that they may be confirmed in the principles they go upon therein, and may not be shaken by any doubts or jealousies, concerning the equity and goodness of the cause they are engaged in, but may be abundantly satisfied in their own minds, that in bearing their testimony against, and giving a check to, immorality and profaneness, in their places, they are doing a good work, and if they sincerely aim at the honour of God in it, he will graciously accept it, as honour done to him.

O that they may not be shaken by any discouragements they meet with, any difficulties they find in their way, but that their zeal and resolution may be rather the more animated thereby; that they may not be driven off from it, or made to drive on heavily in it, either by the heat of those who own themselves enemies to it, or by the coldness of those who yet own themselves friends to it; pray for them, that God by his grace would help them over these discouragements, that when upright men cannot but be astonished at this,[h] astonished that so good a work should be so much opposed and so little furthered, yet they may not sit down astonished, as Ezra, in a like case, despairing to bring any thing to pass; but that the innocent may stir up himself so much the more against the hypocrite, because, as Ezra was then told, *There is yet hope in Israel concerning this thing*;[i] the case is bad, but not desperate.

We ought to pray for magistrates, for the Queen, and all in authority, for the judges, and the justices of peace in the several counties and corporations, that they may be established in a holy zeal against vice and profaneness, and a resolution to do the utmost they can in their places to suppress it; that God would give them his judgment and his righteousness,[k] that, according to the trust reposed in them, they may be for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them who do well.[l] We are doing our own work when we are praying for kings and all in authority, for if they be established in their duty, we shall live quiet and peaceable lives under them in all godliness and honesty;[m] the restraint of the vicious will be the repose of the virtuous, and a defence of their virtues.

We ought to pray for ministers, for all the ministers of the word of God, that they may be full of power, by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, may have both wisdom and courage to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin;[n] that they may set their face as a flint, in a holy zeal against profaneness; and that the Spirit of God may work with them, and by them, to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.[o] Pray that ministers may be established, and their hands strengthened, in their work, though they are sometimes tempted to say, "We have laboured in vain."

We ought to pray for masters of families, that their endeavours may be blessed in the education of their children and servants, and they may be established in Joshua's resolution, that they and their houses will serve the Lord; pray that they may be reformers in their own families, may prevail to drive out the foolishness that is bound up in the heart of those under their charge, and to principle them with an antipathy to that which is evil, betimes, and then the work of magistrates and ministers would be very easy.

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e Ps. lxxiii. 12, 13. f Isa. xlii. 21. g 2 Chron. xx. 20. h Job xvii. 8. i Ezra x. 2.

k Ps. lxxii. 1. l 1 Pet. ii. 14. m 1 Tim. ii. 2. n Mic. iii. 8. o John xvi. 8.

And for all who in their places are striving against sin, let us strive in our prayers, that they may be established in their resolution not to draw back their hand, wherewith they have stretched out the spear against those vices that are the common enemies of our Israel, (as is said of Joshua in his battle with the men of Ai,) till they have utterly destroyed[p] and suppressed them, or at least done their utmost toward it; that having an eye to him, who, in striving against sin endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, they may not be weary, nor faint in their minds.[q] And, in order to this establishment of the just, and the progress and success of that righteous cause wherein they are engaged, the great thing, and indeed the one thing needful, we have to ask of God, is, that the Spirit may be poured out upon us from on high, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, and then the wilderness shall become a fruitful field;[r] then the work will go on and prosper, till there shall be no more occasion for it. And there is no petition we can present at the throne of grace with more hope of speeding than this, "for the pouring out of the Spirit;" for if earthly *parents, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto their children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him!*[s]

II. I come next to show why it is, and ought to be, the desire and prayer of all good people, that the wickedness of the wicked may come to an end, and the just may be established in their opposition to it.

1. All good people have a holy concern for the name and honour of God, and the Lord Jesus, and for the reputation of that holy religion which we make profession of; and therefore they cannot but desire, that that may come to an end, by which God is dishonoured, his name is profaned, the Lord Jesus crucified afresh, and religion wounded in the house of her friends. All the children of God having his glory in their eyes, as their highest end, have it upon their hearts as their chief care, and it is dearer to them than any interests of their own; nothing grieves them so much as the injury done to the honour of God, by the wickedness of the wicked, and the great occasion thereby given his enemies to blaspheme. *Horror takes hold of their hearts*, and *rivers of tears run down their eyes*, because of this.[t] Every good man should be able to say, as David, *The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.*[u] I take them as cast upon myself, and therefore *the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up*, has made me forget myself, and all interests and concerns of my own, that I might be wholly swallowed up with the resentments of the dishonour to God, and that worthy name by which I am called.

Let that therefore come to an end, let it be wholly extirpated, which is such a daring affront to God's majesty, such an impudent contempt of his sovereignty, such a direct contradiction to his truth, and such an open violation of his law; which grieves the Spirit of his grace, and bids defiance to his strivings; which supports the kingdom of Satan, that kingdom of darkness and malignity, and is in constant opposition to that kingdom of light, holiness, and love, which the Lord Jesus came to set up in the world. Will not all those then who rightly understand the thing, and lay it to heart, earnestly pray that that may come to an end, which has all this mischief in it; and that those may be established, who are doing what they can to bring it to an end. And we may come the more boldly to the throne of grace on this errand, because we can plead God's interest in the case; *Lord, thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory*, and, therefore, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, that thy kingdom may be advanced, thy power submitted to, and that glory given to thee, which thou hast by it been robbed of. How may we wrestle with God, and hope to speed, when our prayer is, *Arise, O God, plead thine own cause*,[v] and our plea is, *Lord, what wilt thou do unto thy great name?*[w]

2. All good people have a tender love to the souls of men, and a true desire of their welfare here and for ever, and, therefore, they cannot but desire and pray that that may come to an end, which is the only thing that ruins souls. Brethren, I hope you are convinced of the worth of souls; you know what they were made for, and in whose image they were made; what they were bought for, and with what price they were bought; what service for God they are capable of doing, what happiness in God they are capable of enjoying. You have made your conviction of this to appear by the concern you have for your own souls, and will you not make it further to appear by your concern for the souls of others? Shall it not be your desire, and care, and prayer that none of those may perish for whom Christ died. Did Christ shed his blood for them, and shall we think much to drop a tear over them?

When you a see a poor sinner running to an excess of riot, think with yourselves, Here is a precious soul, more worth than all the world, alienated from its rightful Lord, and sold for a mess of pottage, for the gratifications of a base lust, into the hands of its sworn enemy, and made a prey to the roaring lion. Here is one made a cage of unclean and filthy birds, who is capable of being made a temple of the Holy Ghost; a drudge to Satan, who might have been a servant of God; an instrument of unrighteousness, who might have been a vessel of honour. O that the opposing interest may be overturned in

p Josh. viii. 26. q Heb. xii. 3.
r Isa. xxxii. 15. s Luke xi. 13.
t Ps. cxix. 53, 136. u Ps. lxix. 9.
v Ps. lxxiv. 22. w Josh. vii. 9. x 1 Cor. viii. 11.

this soul, and that he may come whose right it is, and it may be given him.[y] Here is a miserable creature running headlong into everlasting burnings, upon the brink of ruin, and not aware of the danger: O that the grace of God would snatch this brand out of the burning, for it is yet capable of being made use of in the building. Though it is spoken of but with a "peradventure that God will give them repentance," yet that is encouragement to pray for it, and we should be earnest for it, because it is the only way of their being recovered out of the snare of the devil.[z] If you saw any of those about you that you have the least concern for, thus destroying their own bodies, you would interpose, and do what you could to prevent it; and are not their souls of unspeakably more value than their bodies? Is not eternal death more dreadful than temporal death? If, therefore, you can do nothing else toward their recovery, pray for them; O pray that their sins may come to an end before their lives do.

3. All good people have a great value for the grace of God, and are convinced of the sovereignty and power, the necessity and efficacy, of that grace; and therefore, they pray for that grace, both for the reformation of sinners, and for the establishment of the just. They know how much they are themselves indebted to that grace, what favours, what wonders have been done for them by it; that it is purely by that grace that they are what they are that is good; and it is that grace that made them to differ from the wicked; that begun the good work in them, and carries it on. They know there is a fulness of grace in Christ, enough for all, though ever so many, enough for each, though ever so bad; and, therefore, they are still for having recourse to that grace, and fetching it in for themselves and others. They know that nothing can be done without it, not a good thought started or pursued, not a good word spoken, or a good work done, by themselves, or any other; and therefore whatever good they wish may be effected, either upon sinners or saints, they depend upon that grace for it, and its powerful influences.

They know also that this grace is promised to the church, this clean water to cleanse it from all its filthiness, and from all its idols,[a] yet God will for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them: we must ask, and then we shall receive. Having therefore such an esteem for God's grace to do the work, and for the duty of prayer to obtain that grace, this is their petition, this is their request, *Lord, bring thou the wickedness of the wicked to an end.* After all the pains we have taken to prophesy upon the dead and dry bones, they are *dead and dry* still, and therefore we look upwards: *Come, O breath,*[b] *and breathe upon these slain,* and then they shall live. They know that the filth of Zion and Jerusalem can never be washed away, unless God himself do it by the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of burning;[c] and therefore to him they apply themselves: Lord, take the work into thy own hands; be thou exalted in thy own strength, the strength of thy own grace, and thou shalt have the glory.

4. All good people are hearty well-wishers to the land of their nativity, and are in care for the prosperity of it, because it is a Christian nation, it is their own, and in the peace thereof they shall have peace, and in the setting up and keeping up of religion among them they have joy and satisfaction, and, therefore, they seek the good of Jerusalem for their brethren and companions' sake,[d] as well as because of the house of the Lord their God, and the interests of it.

It cannot but grieve them to see this pleasant land polluted, and all its beauty sullied and stained by the filthiness of its inhabitants, so that it is become odious in the eyes of him who cannot endure to look upon iniquity; to see a land, that God has dealt favourably with, exposed to his judgments, and ready to be made as like to Sodom and Gomorrah in ruin, as it has been in sin; *Shall not God visit for these things,* which are to be found among us? *Shall not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this?* Do we not see how fast the measure of the nation's sin fills? how near full it is, and how ready to overflow in a deluge of wrath? Do we not see our plenty forfeited by the abuse of it? Nay, the word of God, and the means of grace, which are more than our necessary food, forfeited by the contempt cast on them; the blessings of the government forfeited by the inefficacy of the endeavours used by it to suppress profaneness; and the honours and advantages of our religion ready to be taken from us by the sworn enemies of it abroad, because they have been so tamely yielded to the destroyers of its powers and vitals at home?

And is it not the concern of all good people then to stand in the gap, to turn away the wrath of God, and by their prayers to empty the measure, which so many are filling by their sins? to be earnest with God to bring that to an end, which, otherwise, will bring our nation to an end, and deprive it of all its glory, and to establish and strengthen those whose piety and zeal is the strength and stability of our times? When there was a general corruption of manners, transgressions were multiplied, truth failed, and there was no judgment; it was such a presage of destruction coming, that God *wondered there was no intercessor*;[e] but I trust there are and will be many intercessors that cry day and night to God, not only against the threatened calamities, but against the threatening iniquities, the provoking cause of

y Ezek. xxi. 27. z 2 Tim ii. 25, 26. a Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 37. b Ezek. xxxvii. 9. c Isa. iv. 4. d Ps. cxxii. 8, 9. e Isa. lix. 16.

them, that those may be brought to an end; for as queen Esther pleaded with herself, *How can we endure to see the evil that shall come upon our people, and the destruction of our kindred?*

III. And now that which remains is, to make application of what has been said; it is what we are all concerned in, and therefore should each of us apply to ourselves.

1. Let us address ourselves by earnest prayer and supplication to God, for his grace, to promote and advance the reformation of manners in our land, and particularly in this city, the reformation of which would have a good influence upon the nation. You will all say, it is a desirable thing that the manners of the nation should be reformed, now that which I am pressing you to contribute towards it, is, that which I am sure no one can except against in others, no, nor plead that they are excused and exempted from themselves. It will be no expense to you, the poorest of the flock of Christ may do as much in this part of the service as the rich. It will not expose you to any hazard—to weep in secret for the wickedness of the wicked, and to pray against it; and I hope we shall not again see the day when it will be penal to pray publicly against it: nor will it expose you to any blame or censure, as some of your endeavours for reformation perhaps may: in this I am sure you can never be charged with going out of your sphere, or meddling with that which does not belong to you. So that the most timorous, the most cautious, may thus help forward this good work; all who have any interest at the throne of grace, (and miserable is the case of those who have not,) all who know how to pray, (and those who do not are concerned to learn,) are this day in God's name summoned to this part of the service. The daughters of my people, though we cannot expect they should—do Deborah's part against this Sisera, this common enemy—lead the forces into the field against him; (yet, blessed be God, we have a Deborah, that by her pious proclamation does that;) though we cannot expect they should do Jael's part, who laid her hand to the workman's hammer, to nail this Sisera to the earth; yet we expect and require that they do the part of Anna the prophetess, who *served God with fastings and prayers night and day*,[f] and let them make this the matter of their daily prayers; that in such a day of distress, such an hour of temptation as this, they do the part of Esther and her maids.[g] And when there are daughters of Belial, daughters of Moab, who contribute to the debauching of the nation, let the daughters of Israel, the daughters of Sarah, be glad that they can any way contribute to the reforming of it. Let masters of families take this matter into their family prayers, that they may bring down a blessing not only on their own houses, but on the houses of their neighbours, and thus may be themselves blessings to the places where they live.

Let me recommend it especially to my brethren in the ministry, whose business it is to give themselves to prayer; let them lead those they pray with to the throne of grace on this errand: *O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the just.* We are as Moses upon the mount, it is our work to lift up our prayers against Amalek with the rod of God in our hand, whilst others in the valley are doing Joshua's work. Ours is the safer and easier province; it is a shame for us then if we be wanting in our work, and it may be of ill consequence, for when Moses lifted up his hands, and kept them steady, Israel prevailed. If we continue instant and constant in prayer, the attempts for reformation, it may be hoped, will be the more successful; but when Moses let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.[h] If we grow cold and remiss in prayer, the work is in danger of going back and losing ground. We pray for the success of our own endeavours, for the conversion of sinners, and the confirmation of saints; I hope we dare not omit it; and should we not pray also for their success, who, in a different way, are pursuing the same design?

Let those who are engaged in the societies for reformation, look upon themselves as bound to further their own undertaking by their prayers, for others must strive, together with you, in their prayers to God for you.[i] Your associating in this good work obliges you in this way, as well as in other instances, to give mutual assistance, and to strengthen the hands one of another. You cannot but find what need you have of the continual supply of the grace of God, to furnish you for this good work, and to fortify you against the temptations and difficulties you meet with in it; let that therefore drive you to the throne of grace, for grace sufficient. You lack wisdom for it, that wisdom which in the critical cases that often occur is *profitable to direct*; you must therefore ask it of God in Christ's name, and you may expect, that if you sincerely aim at his glory in it, he will give it you, will give liberally and will not upbraid;[k] will give a mouth and wisdom, such as all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. Let your prayers go before all your undertakings in this work, and accompany your consultations about it; and let your prayers follow what you do, that it may answer the end, the reformation of the offenders themselves to convict, and the deterring of others from doing the like. You would prosper the better in this good work, if you had it more upon your hearts in prayer, and it would be a token for good that you shall carry your point; for when God *seeks to destroy*

f Luke ii. 37. g Est. iv. 16. h Exod. xvii. 11.

i Rom. xv. 30. k Jam. i. 5.

the nations that come against Jerusalem, as a preface and introduction to it, he *pours out a spirit of prayer and supplication.*[l]

To stir you up all to be earnest with God in prayer for the success of all pious designs, to suppress profaneness and debauchery, consider,

(1.) How much depends upon the carrying on of this good work. If there were a general reformation of manners in our land, what a happy turn would it give to all our affairs! what a blessed change would it produce! what a beauty would it put upon the nation, upon this city, and render them amiable in the eyes of God and all good men! What a security would it be against the judgments that threaten us, and what a preparative for the blessings we wait for! How would the Lord then delight to do us good, and to dwell among us!

Nay, though the desired reformation should not be effected, yet while it is endeavoured, it turns to us for a testimony, and helps to save the guilt of the sin of sinners from being national. The reigns of the reforming kings of Judah were blessed of God though none of them made a complete reformation.

But if the work should now be let fall, if the forces that have for many years past been drawn into the field, and have acted successfully against vice and profaneness, should now be withdrawn, you not only lose all the points you have gained, but, it is to be feared, all iniquity will take encouragement to be so much the more daring; as when the dam which stopped the current for a while is broken through, the stream runs so much more violently. We are therefore concerned to pray the more earnestly, that the wheels of this good work may be kept a-going, and that though it should not get ground, it may not lose ground. A good man said long since, "He feared the sins of the land more than the French." If iniquity were subdued, how soon would all our other enemies be subdued! Would you therefore help to save a sinful nation from ruin, be intercessors for it now, that the unclean spirit that has met with a rebuke for some time may not recover possession; for if he do, it is to be feared it will be with seven other *more wicked than himself*, then will our *last state be worse than the first.*

(2.) Consider, what difficulties yet lie in the way of this good work, which nothing less than the power of almighty grace can help us over, and that grace must be obtained by prayer. I doubt you find the work goes on heavily, and meets with many rubs, many things retard it, and clog its wheels; and perhaps the reason is, because it wants praying hands to help it forward. Our complaint is the same with Hezekiah's, *This day is a day of rebuke and blasphemy, for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth*; we must therefore take the course he then took, *lift up our prayers for the remnant that is left*, the little remnant.[m] We may plead, as Jehoshaphat did, *Lord, we have no might against this great company that* fights *against us*, these troops, these legions of iniquities that invade our land, *neither know we what to do*, but *our eyes are up unto thee*,[n] and on thee do we depend.

When you meet with any difficulties in this work, follow the example of Nehemiah, that great reformer, who did such eminent service to the church of God in his day, and was famous for this, that upon every occasion he had recourse to God by prayer, made himself easy, and carried his point by lifting up an ejaculation to heaven. When he was waiting at table, afraid to ask what he hoped to have, and the king bid him speak his mind, he prayed to the God of heaven,[o] spoke to God in the silent language of the heart before he ventured to speak to the king. When the enemies of the work he was about, ridiculed it, as a foolish attempt, and made a jest of these feeble Jews, he appealed to God, went and told him of the contempt put upon them: *Hear, O our God, for we are despised.* When he set a watch against them, he first made his prayer to God, and then set a watch.[p] When, to drive him off from his undertaking, it was suggested to him, that the government would take umbrage at it, and he would be taken up as a disaffected person, that thereby his hands might be weakened, he addressed himself to prayer immediately, *Now therefore O God, strengthen my hands.*[q] And if we thus, like Nehemiah, look up to God by prayer for strength and grace to do our work, we may, in faith, like him, look up to God for his gracious acceptance of us in it; *Remember me, O my God, for good:*[r] for what is done by divine assistance, will be owned and favoured; what comes from God will come to him.

Let me now briefly tell you what further we must do in our prayers for reformation.

[1.] We must sadly lament the wickedness of the wicked, which we pray for the removal of; we must complain of it to God, as those who do indeed lay it to heart, and look upon it with inward trouble. Can we each of us say, as David, *I beheld the transgressors and was grieved?* Do as Joseph did then, concerning his brethren, bring to your father, your heavenly Father, their evil report.[s] It will better become us to weep in secret for the sins of sinners, than openly to exclaim against them. The character of those who are marked for preservation, and whom the destroying angel must not touch, is, that they *sigh and cry for the abominations* that are found among us,[t] that is the spirit of a Christian; not

l Zech. xii. 9, 10. m Isa. xxxvii. 3, 4. n 2 Chron. xx. 12.
o Neh. ii 4. p Neh. iv. 8, 9.
q Neh. vi. 9. r Neh. xiii. 14, 22, 29, 31.
s Gen. xxxvii. 2. t Ezek. ix. 4.

that they are satirical in their invectives against them, so far a Pharisee may go. We are then fit to pray against sin when we truly bewail it.

[2.] We must bless God for what is done towards the bringing of the wickedness of the wicked to an end in our land. We have reason to be thankful to God for the national testimonies that are borne against vice and profaneness, that it does not go without a check; that good and wholesome laws are made against drunkenness, swearing, and sabbath-breaking; that the Queen's proclamation against immorality is read in all our courts of justice; that here, in this great city, and in some other places, societies are formed, and yet kept up, for the assistance of the magistrates in turning the edge of the sword of justice against the most notorious delinquents. This standard the spirit of the Lord has lifted up against the enemy who was coming in upon us like a flood,[u] this banner God has given to them that fear him, to be displayed because of the truth;[v] a banner for them to triumph in, and list themselves under.

[3.] We must in these prayers for grace to reform our land, act faith upon the mediation of Christ, and the promise of God, and make them our plea. Let us take our encouragement in these prayers from this, that Jesus Christ ever lives to make intercession for the same thing; that he came into the world to destroy the works of the devil;[w] was manifested to take away sin: and we are sure that he will gain his point, and that *him the Father heareth always.* And through him we have precious promises to plead, on which we are caused to hope, that God will *remove the iniquity of the land in one day;*[x] that the *Redeemer shall come to Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from* Jacob;[y] and shall *sit as a refiner.* So that we shall not pray in vain, for faithful is he that has promised, who also will do it.

2. Let us follow our prayers with our serious and sincere endeavours; and let us act as those who are in good earnest, when we pray that God would bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end, and establish the just. When I press you thus to pray for it, it is not as if I thought there were nothing else to be done, and that prayers and tears were all the weapons that the cause of reformation would admit of,—as if no means were to be used, but we must sit down, and leave it to God to do all; or as if I thought the case so deplorable, that it were to no purpose to attempt any thing for the relief of it; I do not come upon this errand to you to-day, as Luther's friend did to him, with his *Abi in cellam, et dic, Miserere mei Domine—Away to thy closet, and say, Lord, have mercy on me;* bidding him content himself with praying for reformation, for it would be in vain for him to think of doing any thing toward it. No, my brethren, both God's promises and our prayers are intended to quicken and encourage, not to supersede or slacken, our endeavours. When in answer to prayer you do, like David, hear the sound of a going upon the tops of the mulberry trees, and you perceive that God goes before you, that God is with you of a truth, then you must bestir yourselves; then up and be doing.[z]

(1.) You, especially, who are engaged in these societies for reformation, now you have this day set me upon your watch-tower, you must give me leave to be your monitor in God's name, as one who desires to be found faithful, and that you be found so too. Be mindful of the obligations you laid upon yourselves when you entered into these societies, in a sense of your duty to God, as well as in love to your country, to do all you could in your places for the suppression of vice and profaneness. You have not discharged yourselves from these obligations, make conscience, therefore, of fulfilling them; you have opened your mouth unto the Lord, and you cannot go back; go forward, then; go on, and prosper. Though the endeavours of your societies should prove unsuccessful, yet let not the title of them be insignificant, and an empty name. You are called "Societies for Reformation of Manners," and therefore are concerned to inquire, what you are doing towards it? Your warfare, I am sure, is not accomplished, for the Canaanites are yet in our land, and are as snares to us, and as thorns in our eyes.[a] The exorbitant power of vice and profaneness is not reduced. The house of Saul, though we hope it grows weaker and weaker, yet is still in being, and its forces thereatening; and therefore you must resolve, with meekness and fear, vigorously to carry on this holy war, and to act offensively, not for the destruction, but for the salvation, and spiritual benefit, of those you appear against.

I understand you have societies of two sorts, that have different provinces assigned them. Some made up of persons of a lower rank, who are as the hand and feet of this body; others of a higher rank, who are to them (as Moses said to Jethro) instead o eyes; and both these have need of, and are service able to one another. Shall I speak particularly t each?

[1.] You who have engaged yourselves in th more active part of this undertaking, be active i it; not as lords over your brethren, but as servant to God and the government, in a good work. L those of you who grow remiss, and indifferent, b excited by the good example of those who y retain their zeal; and let their care and courage i this matter flourish again; and return with a doub vigour to the relief of those who have long born

u Isa. lix. 19. v Ps lx. 4. w 1 John iii. 8. x Zech. iii. 9. y Rom. xi. 26. z 2 Sam. v. 24. a Josh. xxiii. 13.

the burthen and heat of the day, that you may strengthen the hands which you have weakened. Complain not that the drudgery lies upon you, for in such good work as this, nothing is to be called drudgery; but rather say, *If this be to be vile, I will be yet more vile.*[b] Be not frightened with winds and clouds from sowing and reaping; nor excuse yourselves with a sluggard's fancy of *A lion in the way, A lion in the streets.* The God whom you serve is able to protect you, and to bear you out, however you may be threatened, and abundantly to recompense you, whatever charge you are at, and whatever damage you may sustain. You know whom you have trusted, even one who will be faithful to you while you are so to him; and though you may be losers for him, you shall not be losers by him, in the end.

[2.] You who have undertaken the directive part, I beseech you do your part. What you also contribute toward the necessary charges of this work, continue to do it, increase it if there be occasion, do it liberally, do it cheerfully and without grudging; how can you bestow what you have better, than in thus honouring God with it? And what a pity it is that such a good cause as this should be starved! And there is another thing which may be justly expected from you, gentlemen, and that is, that you be forward to appear in person, when there is occasion, for the keeping up of the reputation of this pious undertaking. The figure you make in the world, gives you an opportunity to do it, your education and conversation enable you to do it with a good grace; and these are talents which put you into a capacity of serving God and your generation, and which must be accounted for. A frown from you may daunt a daring transgressor, and put him out of countenance, more than a reproof or an information from an inferior person. A smile from you may hearten an honest reprover, and keep him in countenance when he is insulted, as Lot was, with *Who made thee a judge?* It will be your honour, gentlemen, to patronize those who are busy in this service, and to stand by them, while there are those who censure them, and run them down as over-busy. Be ready to give your advice before-hand to the most regular, prudent, and inoffensive methods for carrying on this work; and what is done conscientiously and zealously, appear in the defence of it, and think not to excuse yourselves, by saying it might have been done with more caution and discretion in some little circumstance or other, which it is an easy thing for those who seek an excuse, and have a mind to be critical, to spy out; but that will no more justify you in an inglorious retreat from them, than it would justify David in the orders he gave to desert Uriah the Hittite, to say, *Why went he so near the wall?* I know nothing can excuse your drawing back, unless you be conscious to yourselves of the beam in your own eye; and if that be the reason that you are ashamed to appear, it is your own fault, and you cannot but be ashamed of your reason. But I hope better things of you, gentlemen, that your hearts condemn you not, and then you may have confidence in this cause of God, and shall have confidence in the day of God. Be bold, therefore, and act like yourselves, like men of honour: let it not be said of you, as it was of the nobles of Tekoa,[c] that they *put not their necks to the work of the Lord;* nay, we ask you not to put your necks to it, only to show your faces in it. Honour God thus with your honour, and you shall find him true to his word, that those who honour him he will honour, while those that despise and desert him shall be lightly esteemed.

(2.) We are all obliged in our places to do our utmost for the carrying on of this work, something more than by our prayers.

[1.] Let us do what we can to bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end. Let our conversation in every thing be such as becomes the gospel of Christ, strict, and universally conscientious, that they who will not be won either by the word of the ministers, or the rod of the magistrates, may be won by that.[d] We must study to be not only blameless and harmless, and without rebuke, but exemplary in every thing that is virtuous and praise-worthy. Let our light shine before men, that they may be brought to glorify that name of God, which they have reproached and dishonoured. Let those who are masters of families keep up religion there, and put away iniquity far from their tabernacles. In all our conversation, let us witness against sin, and drive it away (if we cannot use any other means) by an angry countenance. It is our duty to tell our neighbours of their faults, between us and them alone, in any wise to rebuke them, and not to suffer sin upon them, lest we bear sin for them, and make ourselves sharers in their guilt. Let us do what we can to make sinners ashamed of their sin; were they brought to that, it would be an ingenuous and prevailing principle of their reformation. Let us have no fellowship with the works of darkness, but reprove them. Let us have as little fellowship as possible with the workers of those works, and so reprove them.

[2.] Let us do what we can to establish the just, to confirm those who are good in their goodness. Let those who fear the Lord speak often one to another for their mutual instruction, quickening, and encouragement; for the sharpening of one another's countenance, and the strengthening of one another's hands. Those who are not themselves engaged with

b Eccl. xi. 4.

c Neh. iii. 5.

d 1 Pet. iii. 1.

the societies for reformation, yet should do what they can to establish them; if they have not your hand, let them have your good word; speak well of them as it comes in your way: the city ought to be made sensible of its obligation to them; were it so, what an establishment would it be to them! As occasion offers, let them have your help, and be ready to say, *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*

To conclude, it will, I hope, be some encouragement to you—to be on the Lord's side, and to assist, by your prayers and endeavours, for the bringing of the wickedness of the wicked to an end, and the establishing of the just—if I tell you from the word of God, what will be, at least, the issue of this struggle between Jacob and Esau, between the pious and the profane. You may assure yourselves, brethren, the cause of religion and serious piety is the cause of God, and it will, in the end, be a victorious cause: it will be so in the day of decision; when the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.[e] The Lord Jesus will then, and not till then, gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity. Then will the wickedness of the wicked come to a perpetual end, when into the New Jerusalem there shall not enter any unclean thing; and then shall the just be for ever established, when they shall shine as the sun in the firmament of our Father; when he who is holy shall be holy still, shall be for ever holy. Then shall the great Redeemer have put down all the opposing rule, principality, and power of sin and Satan, which are now so daring, so threatening, which we are sometimes ready to fear will bear down all before them, and carry the day. It shall all be crushed and sunk; and the kingdom shall be delivered up to God, even the Father, that that God whom sinners now despise and make light of, may be "all in all" to eternity.

[e] Ps. i. 5.

POPERY, A SPIRITUAL TYRANNY;

SHOWED IN

A SERMON

PREACHED ON THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER, 1712.

ISAIAH li. 23.

——Which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over.

THE haughtiness and insolence of the proud oppressors of God's church and people, are here described, as the ground of the controversy God had with them, and of the kind designs he had concerning his oppressed people. Jerusalem was afflicted,[a] her sons fainted;[b] go, says God to the prophet, and encourage them, lay up cordials in store for them, against this time of need; tell them the Lord Jehovah, the God of all power and grace, is their Lord and their God; tell them he owns them for his people still, and will undoubtedly plead their cause; tell them he will take, nay, he has taken, the cup of trembling, that bitter cup, out of their hands, which during their captivity they have been daily drinking of, and they shall no more drink it again,[c] shall know no more of the hardships and terrors they have so long suffered; nay, tell them withal, that though they must forgive their enemies and oppressors, and not meditate revenge, yet God will reckon with them; tell them that the cup of trembling shall be put into the hands of them who have afflicted them,[d] who have trampled upon them, and tyrannized over them, who said to their souls, *Bow down, that we may go over:* so the text comes in. The Babylonians, their cruel task-masters in their captivity, shall be called to an account for the violence done to Sion;[e] and Babylon's destruction by the Persians, shall be more terrible than Jerusalem's was by the Babylonians.[f]

Now observe here for encouragement,

1. That there is a people in the world who are God's own people. Such there have been, are, and will be to the end of time; they are his by choice, his by covenant, called out of the world, and distinguished from it, such as approve themselves obedient subjects, and faithful friends and well-wishers to his kingdom among men. To them he still says, as here to Israel, (let them take the comfort of it,) *I am thy Lord, the LORD, and thy God.* They have taken the Lord for their Lord, to rule and govern them, and he will be their God, to make them happy. All that he is in himself, and in his promises, is made over to them, and settled on them. *God himself shall be with them, and be their God.* Let this people then be our people, and this God our God.

2. There is a cause depending between the people of God and their enemies, and has been so ever since the enmity was put between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent.[g] The children of God, who are born after the spirit, have been hated, and envied, and persecuted by the children of this world, the children of the wicked one, who are born after the flesh.[h] And we are not to think it strange; the servant is not better than his Lord, nor can expect better treatment.

3. While this cause is depending, the people of God may have a cup of trembling put into their hands; may be in great frights and confusions, and ready to give up all for gone; fearing continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy;[i] as it is described herebefore in this chapter. Providence gives them some cause to fear, and then their fears prevail more than there is cause for, so far as to bear down their faith and hope in God; and it is "their infirmity," perhaps too much the infirmity of some at this day. When Zion said, *The Lord has forsaken me, my God has forgotten me;*[k] *My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God,*[l] she drank

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a Isa. li. 21. b *V.* 20. c *V.* 22. d *V.* 23.
e Jer. li. 35. f Jer. li. 49.

g Gen. iii. 15. h Gal. iv. 29. i Isa. li. 13.
k Isa. xlix. 14. l Isa. xl. 27.

deeper than she need of the cup of trembling. When the *Lord roars like a lion*, it becomes the children to tremble[m] before him. But when the enemies roar in the sanctuary of God, we should take sanctuary in God, by a holy trust and triumph in him; and not conclude our case desperate, though it be very sad.[n] We some of us remember what a cup of trembling was in our hands before the Revolution; what black and dismal apprehensions we then had of things, how ready we were to say, *Our bones are dried, our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts*;[o] but cannot forget how much better God was to us than our fears, and are therefore very unworthy and ungrateful, if again we distrust him, and despair of relief from him.

4. God will plead his people's cause in due time, their just but injured cause, and take the cup of trembling out of their hands; and will put into their hands a cup of salvation, and with it a cup of blessing. God always espouses the cause of his church and people; and in the proper time he will plead it with jealousy. His cause is theirs, and they plead for his truths, ordinances, and laws, and reckon the reproaches cast on him to fall on them; and therefore their cause shall be his, and he will plead for their rights and liberties; those of the human nature, which they are entitled to as children of men, and much more those of the divine nature, which they are entitled to as God's children. The clouds they are under shall blow over; and they shall not always drink of the cup of trembling, though they cannot be sure they shall no more drink of it again, till they come to heaven.

5. Sometimes God is pleased when he takes the cup of trembling out of the hands of his oppressed people, to put it into the hands of their oppressors that afflicted them; that they may themselves know what it is to be terrified, who have taken a pride and pleasure in terrifying others. *When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled.*[p] Thus *the wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous*,[q] when *the righteous is delivered out of trouble*, and *the wicked cometh in his stead.*[r] And the Lord is righteous in it.—*Nec lex est justior ulla—nor is there any law more just*; he who leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity,[s] and Babylon's doom is, *Reward her even as she rewarded you.*[t]

This was fulfilled in the glorious deliverances which we this day celebrate the memorial of. What a cup of trembling was put into the hands of our popish adversaries, when the Gunpowder Treason was discovered, and those who made the pit, and digged it, fell into the ditch which they made,[u] and it proved an occasion of putting an edge both upon the laws and upon the spirits of the nation against popery. And no less upon the Revolution, when the enemies of our peace and holy religion, who sought our ruin, were seized with a panic fear, and melted before our great deliverer, as wax before the fire, both counsels and armies did so; *The speech of the trusty* was *removed, and the understanding of the aged, the strength of the mighty weakened, and the heart of the chief of the people of the earth*;[v] then,—as it was foretold upon a much greater Revolution, the empire becoming Christian,—the great men, and the mighty men, hid themselves.[w] Thus when God took off Pharaoh's chariot wheels, put his hook into Sennacherib's nose, made Belshazzar's knees smite one against another by the hand-writing on the wall, and smote Herod by an angel's hand, he made them drink the cup of trembling, who had been the oppressors of his people, and made himself a terror to them who had made themselves the terror of the mighty, of the godly, in the land of the living.

6. The reason why God thus terrifies and brings down his church's enemies, and lays their power in the dust, is, because when they had power they abused it, and abused the people of God with it; who being conquered and taken captive, tamely yielded to them all their temporal interests, they *laid their body as the ground, and as the street to them that went over*; (as it follows here in the latter part of the verse;) whatever was theirs *jure belli—by the right of war*, let them take it. But this did not satisfy these proud tyrants; they grew upon their concessions, as Benhadad upon Ahab's,[x] and they demand the submission of the soul too; they *have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over*; they have ridiculed their religion, and so have grieved their spirits; they have attempted to force them from their religion, and to bring them to worship the golden image which they have set up. Now this comes in here,

(1.) To justify God's quarrel with the oppressors of his people, for he will be justified in every thing he says and does. If God bring down the mighty men of Babylon, and put a cup of trembling into their hands, all the world shall be made to see, and say, that he is righteous in contending with them. For,

[1.] They have usurped his authority, and have assumed to themselves that power over his people which belongs to him only, as Pharaoh did, who would not let God's people go, that they might serve him. God is the Sovereign of the heart, it is his prerogative to command the conscience; he has said, *All souls are mine*; and he is jealous of all invasions made upon his sovereignty, by those who are vexatious to his people, in the matters of their God, as Darius's edict was to Daniel.[y]

[2.] They have wronged his people's liberties, and have been injurious to them in their most sacred in-

m Hos. xi. 10. n Ps. lxxiv. 3, 4. o Ezek. xxxvii. 11.
p Isa. xxxiii. 1. q Prov. xxi. 18. r Prov. xi. 8. s Rev. xiii. 10.
t Rev. xviii. 6. u Ps. vii. 15. v Job xii. 20, 21, 24.
w Rev. vi. 15. x 1 Kings xx. 6. y Dan. vi. 5.

terests. God sends his people into captivity, for their good, and the temporal afflictions they are under are sanctified to them; but if the enemies say to their souls, *Bow down,—Now will I arise*, saith the Lord; this affects a tender part indeed. If the rod of the wicked on the lot of the righteous, force them to put forth their hands unto iniquity,[z] it shall rest no longer there, but be returned on the oppressors. He who touches the souls of God's people, touches the apple of his eye,[a] and it were better they were thrown into the sea with a millstone about their neck, than that they should thus offend one of these little ones.[b] When the Philistines took the ark prisoner, and that glory fell into the enemies' hands, then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep,[c] and put a cup of trembling into their hand.

(2.) It serves also to magnify the mercy of God's delivering his people from them. Let them see what kind of enemies they were, out of whose hands God had saved them, that they might welcome the salvation with so much the greater enlargements in joy and thankfulness, and improve it for so much the stronger engagements to duty and obedience. This is that which God expects from us upon such days as this, when we are celebrating the memorial of the great deliverances God has wrought for our land, both in our own age, and in the days of our fathers.

To be delivered from those who said to their souls, *Bow down, that we may go over*, must needs be valued as an inestimable mercy, by those who had any honour for their God, or love for their own souls.

[1.] Such as had a concern for God's glory, and a true desire to approve themselves faithful to him, and to his kingdom and interest, could not but magnify such a deliverance as this; for when these proud oppressors bore sway, and carried all before them, God's oppressed ones were more grieved for the dishonour done to God, than for any damage done to themselves; this was their great petition, *Arise, O Lord, plead thine own cause*,[d] whatever becomes of ours; and whatever disgrace we may lie under, O *do not disgrace the throne of thy glory*.[e] And this was their great plea, *What wilt thou do unto thy great name*.[f] As for our little names, it is no matter, though they be written in the dust, and buried there; but let not thy name suffer, which is, and ought to be, above every name. When, therefore, God humbles the proud invaders of his right, and asserts his own dominion, this is the burthen of their praising songs, *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty*, not so much because thou hast given us our liberty, as because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned, though the nations were angry.[g]

[2.] Such as had a concern for souls, their own and others, and were in care about them, and tender of their interests, and would not have them wronged, would greatly rejoice in a deliverance which set them at liberty from serving the lusts of men, which is perfect slavery, to keep a feast to the Lord, and to receive his law, (as Israel, when they were brought out of Egypt,) which is perfect freedom. The more the soul is concerned in any redemption, the nearer related it is to the great redemption wrought out for us by the Lord Jesus, and consequently the more to be valued are the deliverances that we are this day called to give thanks for; and that is what I desire to make myself and you sensible of, and God by his grace make us so!

Doct. It is an unspeakable mercy, and must so be accounted, to be delivered from those who usurp a dominion, and exercise a tyranny, over the souls and consciences of men.

The adversary and enemy that the text speaks of is Babylon; Babylon in the New Testament is Rome; that is, it is the papacy, and the papal kingdom. There are many things said of Babylon in the Old Testament, which are plainly referred to in those predictions, which we have in the Revelations, of the rise, reign, and ruin of that usurped power; and this of Babylon's saying to the soul, *Bow down*, seems to be alluded to, in that article of the trading of the New-Testament Babylon, where her merchandise is said to be in slaves and souls of men;[h] it is put last, as that which all the other particulars had a tendency to. And that by the souls of men there, is not meant in general only the persons of men, as we trade in negroes, but the souls taken strictly, as the seats of reason and conscience, is plain,—because they are there distinguished from slaves, or as it is in the margin, bodies; nay, and that they may not be confounded, it is in the original put in a different case; και σωματων και ψυχας ανθρωπων—*it is the merchandise of bodies*, but it is *the soul* they aim at.

We are this day giving God thanks for the deliverance of our land from popery; its first deliverance at the Reformation, when popish errors and delusions were discovered, disowned, and protested against, popish powers shaken off and broken, and popish idolatries and superstitions rooted up and purged out; its many deliverances since, from the restless attempts of those inveterate hereditary enemies of our peace, to bring us back into Egypt again; particularly, its deliverance from that base and barbarous design of blowing up the parliament house with gunpowder this day, 107 years ago; a deliverance never to be forgotten by a people who to this day reap the blessed fruits of it, inasmuch as we should to this day have been groaning under the dismal fatal consequences of the plot, if it had taken effect. How deep the design was laid, and how

z Ps. cxxv. 3. a Zech. ii. 8. b Matt. xviii. 6.
c Ps. lxxviii. 61, 65. d Ps. lxxiv. 22.
e Jer. 14, 21. f Josh. vii. 9.
g Rev. xi. 17. h Rev. xviii. 13.

high the hopes of our enemies grounded upon it were raised, and how near to be put in execution, when the discovery of it was its effectual defeat, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have told us; and a more full account of some particulars, relative to that happy deliverance, was published but last week, by an unknown but very judicious pen, entitled, "A Memorial to Protestants on the Fifth of November," and dated Oct. 25, 1712.

We are likewise to call to mind that glorious deliverance of our land from another more dangerous attempt upon our religion, when that, with our civil liberties, lay ready to be sacrificed to a popish and arbitrary government; but God interposed, and our extremity was his opportunity to appear so much the more glorious for us: this was the Lord's doing, it was then, and ought still to be, marvellous in our eyes, for it was done, not by might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts.[i] To that happy revolution we owe all that liberty and quietness we have enjoyed these twenty-four years past, all the blessings of the present reign, and the provision that is made for the preserving of that good thing which is committed to us, and the transmitting of it to posterity, by the entail of the crown upon the illustrious house of Hanover: besides all the advantages, which not only foreign churches, but foreign nations, gained by the check it gave to the growing, threatening greatness of the French king.

Now what is it that is the ground of our rejoicing in these great deliverances? It is the preservation of our religion, the protestant religion, owned and professed among us; it is the keeping out of popery, which at the Reformation was driven out, and which our popish enemies, both at home and abroad, have been very industrious to bring in, and to re-establish among us by force and violence.

It is proper, therefore, upon this occasion, to inquire what that thing called popery is; that mischievous, dangerous thing, from which we are delivered; what evil there is in it, and what harm it would do us, if it should get the mastery; that we may see what reason we have to be thankful, to be greatly thankful, to God for our deliverance from it; and still to dread all its assaults upon us, and to pray against it: and this among many other bad things we have to charge it with, that if the pope and Romish clergy might have their will, they would say to our souls, *Bow down, that we may go over.*

If popery had carried its point in these and other attempts, we have reason to hope that many in our land would have borne their testimony against it, even to the death, and by the grace of God would have overcome it[k] for themselves, and it would have been their honour (and the honour of our religion) to *die martyrs*, or *live confessors*, in so good a cause. What multitudes of the most precious and valuable lives, besides liberties, families and estates, must inevitably have been sacrificed to that Moloch, if it had been set up, is easy to imagine; for the spirit of popery is a spirit of inhuman cruelty to all who oppose it, as appears not only by the martyrologies of former times, but by the late and present bloody and barbarous persecution of the poor French protestants, many of whom died martyrs, and many still live confessors in prisons, in the galleys, and in foreign countries; and there are, of them, ministers, aged ministers, in the extremes of poverty; monuments of the tender mercies of the wicked, which are cruelty, that we may see what we were saved from when we were saved from popery. Yet this effect of the prevalence of popery, though very dreadful, is capable of a more pleasing aspect—from the crown of glory and life, which they are as sure of who are faithful unto death in the service of Christ, as if it were already upon their heads.

But we have reason to fear, that in case of the prevalence of popery, far the greater part of the nation would have yielded to it, and have gone down the stream; those who are under the power of infidelity and impiety, and are indeed of no religion, will readily be of any religion, especially of that which will indulge them in their lusts. And the tyranny of popery over the souls of sinners, is a much greater mischief, and of more fatal consequence, than its tyranny over the bodies of saints, and will appear so, if we look forward to the future state. And that is it which I would at this time open to you.

The Romish clergy show themselves not to be the *followers of Christ*, by their affecting a worldly dominion, and the pomp and grandeur that attend it. Christ has said, *My kingdom is not of this world;*[l] and gave that as a reason why his servants did not draw the sword in his defence. The kings of the earth, and those commissioned by them, exercise Lordship, but the disciples of Christ "shall not be so,"[m] the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, it is the sword of the Spirit that is put into their hands, which is the word of God, and with that they are to fight his battles. Those, therefore, who propagate the faith, and suppress heresy, by croisades, and inquisitions, and massacres, and assassinations, and writs *de hæretico comburendo—of burning a heretic*, are certainly destitute of the Spirit of Christ and his gospel. *Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who are these?*

Yet this is not all; they show themselves to be enemies of Christ, and rebels against him, by affecting a spiritual dominion over the souls and consciences of men; and that is the dominion, which (whatever they pretend) they thus violently contend

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i Zech. iv. 6. k Rev. xii. 11. l John xviii. 36. m Luke xxii. 26.

for, and are so zealous for the maintenance and support of. It is not the faith of Christ, or the power of godliness, that they thus lay out themselves for the propagation of, but the advancement of their own wealth and power.

It has been commonly said, that popery and tyranny go together, and mutually befriend each other. I remember it was said by a great man at the time of the popish plot in King Charles the II.'s time, that he apprehended the project to be thus laid, "That in England popery was to bring in slavery, and in Scotland slavery was to bring in popery."* But with this I meddle not. As to our civil rights and liberties, we have great reason to thank God for our present enjoyment of them under a good government, and to pray to God for the continuance of them; but as to the claiming and adjusting of them, and contending for them, it must be left to the proper persons, to lawyers, parliaments, and diets; the original contracts and *pacta conventa —agreed covenants* of the nations—to states and statesmen, *Tractent fabrilia fabri—The engineers manage the machines.* But that which I have now to say against popery is, that it is itself the worst of tyrannies; it is a spiritual tyranny, and usurpation; it is a traitorous confederacy against the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ—and that is the kingdom of God, which we are in the first place to seek, and to value ourselves upon our relation to.

Now I shall endeavour to make out, I. That popery is an invasion upon the prerogatives of Christ, the Prince; and, II. Upon the rights and liberties of Christians, the subjects of this kingdom; and so it is a direct and daring violation of the everlasting gospel, the magna charta by which this kingdom is incorporated, and an impudent oppression of the souls of men, saying to them, *Bow down, that we may go over.*

I. The papal power usurps the prerogatives of our Lord Jesus, plucks the flowers of his crown, plunders the jewels of it, nay, it profanes his crown, by casting it to the ground, and, which is worse, putting it upon the head of a man of sin; and therefore, when our Lord appears against this bold but base usurpation, for the bringing of it to ruin, his manifesto, by which he justifies his declaration of war, is included in the name written on his vesture, and on his thigh, *King of kings, and lord of Lords.*[n]

Christ is the Sovereign of the heart, the rightful Sovereign; for him the throne is to be reserved. Conscience is his deputy; by him it is to be commanded, and to him it is accountable; it is the "word of Christ" that is to dwell in the soul, and to rule there, and to him only every thought is to be brought into obedience, into a blessed captivity;[o] *The kingdom of God is within you.*

Christ is the King of the church, the political head of that body; to him all judgment is committed, both the legislative and the judicial power, for he has all power given him both in heaven and in earth; in the treaty of peace between God and man, he is the sole plenipotentiary, for *the Father loveth the Son, and has given all things into his hand.*[p] It is proclaimed before him, as it was before Joseph, *Bow the knee; bow the soul; every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.*[q] Now this indisputable right which Christ alone has to say to souls, *Bow down,* is usurped in the church of Rome.

For, 1. The pope is made to be the sovereign of the heart, and the head of the church, and to him they ascribe such a supremacy as is no way consistent with the honour of our Lord Jesus, and his just demands. Jesus Christ is our Lord and our God, but it is frequent with them to call the pope, *Dominus Deus noster Papa,—Our Lord God the Pope.*† This was not a hasty word slipt from them, but some of their writers undertake to make out that he ought to be called so.

Christ is the great Law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy; but they lodge in the pope a power to make laws immediately to bind conscience, though there be neither Scripture nor reason for them; nay, though they be directly contrary both to Scripture and reason; and it is a principle of their canon law, *that the pope has all rights and all laws in his breast,* and *papa judicatur a nemine—is accountable to none.*‡

It is one of the new articles of Pope Pius the 4th's Creed, that the bishop of Rome, as successor of St. Peter there, *is the supreme and universal pastor of Christ's church by divine appointment,*§ and that all churches, all Christians, all souls, are bound to yield an implicit obedience to his commands. The papists will not allow the Scriptures to have any authority but what is derived from the pope, and *their church;* and whereas it is Christ's prerogative to have the keys of hell and death, they put these into the hands of the bishop of Rome. Christ is the chief Shepherd, but they make the pope to be *pastor pastorum—the chief shepherd;* and though they pretend to make him only Christ's vicar, they really make him a rival with Christ for the throne. It is by Christ that kings reign, and princes decree justice,[r] and it is his law that every soul should be subject to the higher powers; but the church of Rome not only exempts its clergy from the jurisdiction of princes and civil powers, but subjects kings and emperors to the pope, and gives him a power to dispose of their kingdoms.

Thus is the kingly office of our Lord Jesus invaded by that *man of sin,* who exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;[s] and if

* See the Bishop of Clogher's Sermon, Oct. 23, 1712.

n Rev. xix. 16. o 2 Cor. x. 5. p Phil. ii. 9, 10. q V. 11.

† Gloss. Extravag. ‡ Gratian, Decr. § Decret. i. 2. tit. 23.

r Prov. viii. 15. s 2 Thess. ii. 4.

he have such a power as he pretends to, it will follow of course, that he may say to men's souls at his pleasure, *Bow down, that we may go over.*

2. They make the pope an infallible director and judge, in matters of faith; and as one lie must be called in to maintain another, so this of the pope's infallibility must be advanced to support his supremacy. They maintain that their church never erred, nor can err, that the pope, when he is in *cathedrâ—the pontifical chair*, is an oracle. One of their most celebrated doctors has plainly said, *If the pope should err in commanding vices, and forbidding virtues, yet the church is bound to believe vices to be good, and virtues to be evil, or else she sins against conscience.** It is a great slavery to be bound to an implicit obedience, but it is worse, and a greater reproach, to be bound to an implicit faith.

Our Lord Jesus has forbidden his disciples to be themselves called "Rabbi," because "One is our master, even Christ," and his dictates alone are to be subscribed to as infallible; he has forbidden us to call any man Father upon earth, because *one is our Father in heaven*,[t] on whom we depend for our education and direction; yet the pope will have all to call him Father, *most holy Father*, and to follow him blindfold as their guide. The apostles pretended not to have dominion over the faith [u] of Christians; but the church of Rome undertakes to frame new creeds; witness that of Trent. Blessed Paul anathematized himself if he should preach any other gospel to Christians than what they had received;[v] but the church of Rome anathematizes all who adhere to the gospel they had received, and will not embrace that which they add to it, and sentences them to the pit of hell. We are directed to take heed to the Scriptures, as to a *light shining in a dark place*,[w] and to have recourse to *the law and the testimony*,[x] and try by that touchstone; and to that we must bow our understanding: no, say they, you must refer yourselves to the pope's infallibility, and to him your understandings must be captivated.

And what sort of men do you think these bishops of Rome have been, who have been intrusted with this pretended infallibility? Were they holy men, such as they were who were moved by the Holy Ghost to write the Scriptures? No; one of themselves, even an historian of their own, confesses that many of them were *hominum portenta—monsters of men*; and that there were eighteen popes successively, one after another, who were magicians, and in league with the devil.† And another eminent writer among them owns, *There were scarce any sins, except that of heresy, which the bishops of Rome were not guilty of.*

And what use have they made of their infallibility? Have they with the help of it expounded the dark places of Scripture, or accommodated differences among Christians? No, but only have supported with it their own secular pomp and power, and the dominion they claim over the consciences of men in competition with, and therefore in opposition to, the prophetical office of Jesus Christ, in whom alone we are to believe.

3. They give the pope a power to forgive sin, and to absolve from the punishment of it; and this is another invasion upon the prerogatives of Christ, who has *the power on earth to forgive sins*; and herein they are worse than the Scribes and Pharisees, whose principle it was, *none can forgive sins but God only.*[y]

They have a groundless notion that the spare merits of good men, by their works of supererogation, or superfluous satisfactions, which they had no occasion to make use of themselves, are laid up in the treasures of the church, which the pope has the key of, and grants the benefit of, for a sum of money, to such as he thinks qualified for it, by the fulness of his apostolical power. This is as daring a usurpation upon the royalties of the Lord Jesus, as it would be upon the prerogative of the sovereign for any subject, and especially one who is himself a criminal, to undertake to pardon crimes committed against the majesty of the prince, or to remit any part of the punishment; which would be so far from being pleadable in any court of justice, that to pretend to it would be a heinous crime.

The selling of the pope's indulgences was the first thing that Luther witnessed against, of all the delusions of the church of Rome, in the year 1517, and it broke the ice of the reformation; for his sister having a mind to purchase a pardon, he dissuaded her from it, which displeased the priest who had the selling of them, who complained that Luther marred his markets; which gave him occasion to study the point, and that led him to a further discovery of that great and complicated mystery of iniquity.

But their doctrine of indulgences is so miserably patched up by themselves, that it plainly appears to be a mere artifice for the magnifying of the power of the pope, and the amusing of people into a blind veneration for him, and subjection to him; and the filling of his coffers with vast sums of money, which have enabled him to support his tyranny.

4. They make all this power to extend to the universal church; nay, and to all the world, declaring it by their canon law absolutely necessary to salvation, for every human creature to be subject to the bishop of Rome; and not only all the reformed churches, but all the Greek churches, are cut off from the catholic church by their sentence, because they own not the pope for their supreme head.

It is Christ's prerogative to have power over a

* Bellarm. Lib. 4. De sum. Pontif. Cap. 5.
† Platina in Pool.
s Matt. xxiii. 8, 9. u 1 Cor. ii. 5. v Gal. i. 8. w 2 Pet. i. 19. x Isa. viii. 20. y Mark ii. 7.

flesh;[z] his the kingdom is, and he is the governor among the nations;[a] he is the only universal monarch, to whom every tongue must swear;[b] he is the centre of the church's unity, to whom are gathered together all the children of God who were scattered abroad.[c] This honour the pope usurps, though he knows not a great part of the world, nor can have any correspondence with it, or be any way of use to it; yet he will have all power derived from him, and depend upon him; and all churches to meet in him. And herein he is a genuine king of Babylon, a son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar, that son of pride, who affected to have all people, nations, and languages, to tremble and fear before him.[d]

Thus is popery an impious usurpation of the powers and prerogatives of the Lord Jesus, and therefore ought to be looked upon with a jealous eye, by all who know themselves obliged—to *honour the Son as they honour the Father*;[e] and therefore to be as far from other Christs, as from other Gods; and to call them Anti-gods, and Anti-christs, however they pretend to be Vice-christs and Vice-gods.

II. The papal power invades the rights and liberties of the subjects of Christ's kingdom, enslaves them, oppresses them, and tyrannizes over them, and says to their souls, *Bow down*, and worship the image of the beast, that golden image of paganism, the first beast, which they have set up;[f] *Bow down, that we may go over*. As one of the popes made the emperor bow down, and then set his foot upon his neck, impiously applying that promise to it, *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder*. And thus have the Romish priests gloried in their triumphs over the souls of men: one of them said, "If Luther had not appeared when he did, they should have brought the people to eat grass like oxen."

Let us observe some of the many instances that might be given of the tyranny of the church of Rome over the souls of men.

1. They oblige people to believe as true, whatever their church requires them to believe, though never so contrary to sense and reason; and not only so, but to curse and condemn as heretical, whatever the council of Trent has adjudged to be so. They do in effect require men to give up their understandings, and to pin their faith upon the pope's sleeve, though they know not whither he will carry it, and suffer him to put out their eyes, and lead them whithersoever he pleases. All freedom of thought, and with it all the dignities and privileges of the human soul, as rational and intelligent, are surrendered and betrayed; no liberty left for the use of reason when a man is tied *jurare in verba magistri*—*to swear every thing that their church says*, though it should be that black is white, and white black. The Collier's faith, "I believe as the church believes, and the church believes as I believe," which all wise men make a jest of, they make the foundation of their faith, and a sovereign antidote against infidelity.

A grosser instance of this cannot be given, than the belief of the doctrine of transubstantiation, which was introduced for no other end but to magnify the priests, and make poor people admire them, and give up themselves to their conduct, though they were ever so ignorant and scandalous. Was ever such a tyranny over the souls of men, as making them believe that that which they see and feel, and smell and taste, to be bread, is not bread, but the body of a man; and that which they see, and smell, and taste to be wine, is not wine, but the blood of a man; and this prodigious imaginary change to be wrought by the priest's pronouncing five words over it, *Hoc est enim corpus meum—for this is my body*. Our Saviour appealed to men's senses: for the proof of his miracles, *Go tell John what ye hear and see;* and of his resurrection, *Handle me, and see me*. This is dealing with men as men, and putting an honour upon their nature; but the church of Rome demands the belief of that which bids defiance to four of our five senses at once, and is directly contradicted by them. So that, as the excellent Archbishop Tillotson speaks, "The business of transubstantiation is not a controversy of Scripture against Scripture, or of reason against reason, but of downright impudence against the plain meaning of Scripture, and all the sense and reason of mankind. It is a most self-evident falsehood, and there is no doctrine or proposition in the world that is of itself more evidently true, than transubstantiation is evidently false." And yet the papists as firmly believe it as that there is a God; nor do they leave it to be a matter of doubtful disputation in the schools, but have reduced it to practice; for if they do not believe it, they must own themselves to be the most gross idolaters, in worshipping the bread they suppose to be thus metamorphosed; and the most barbarous murderers, in putting those to death with inhuman cruelty who will not believe it too. For (as Fuller observes) this was in Queen Mary's time "The *burning doctrine*, the test by which the martyrs were tried; and the popish persecutors then were so perfectly lost to all sense of reason and honour, as to condemn the most valuable lives to so great a death as being burnt at a stake, only because they could not believe this monstrous absurdity. Were ever the powers and faculties of the human soul so trampled upon, and trodden into the dirt? Yet those who receive popery must receive this.

And when the soul is brought to *bow down* to this, they are ready to *go over it* with troops of strong delusions, and make it believe a thousand lies, when

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z John xvii. 2. a Ps. xxii. 28. b Isa. xlv. 23. c John xi. 52. d Dan. v. 18. e John v. 23. f Rev. xiii. 15.

once it is persuaded to believe this. For as conscience, so faith, when it is thoroughly debauched in one instance, lies exposed in any other. Those who have once swallowed transubstantiation, will never be choked with any of the forgeries of their lying legends, or the impostures of their miracles and relics, which some of themselves have the honesty to own to be frauds, but the wickedness to call pious frauds. And to say, "If people will be deceived, let them be deceived," though it may serve them to laugh in their sleeves with now, will prove but a miserable excuse for their impiety and villany in the great day.

2. They oblige people to obey all the commands of their church, though ever so contrary to the divine commands. I remember, in a little catechism published here by the Romish emissaries in King James the II.'s time, the answer to that question, "What is sin?" was, "Sin is the transgression of the law of God, or of the church;" so making the laws of their church equally binding with the laws of God: nay, they make them to be of a superior obligation; and if men make conscience of observing the law of God, they say to such consciences, *Bow down, that we may go over;* you are to obey the church, and not God.

A plain proof of this is their worship of images. God has expressly forbidden it, and frequently, in his word, has given many reasons for that prohibition; there is no sin which has been more severely punished by the righteous God, nor more courageously witnessed against by righteous men; and yet the church of Rome commands and compels all its members to fall down and worship images of God, Christ, and the saints; to pray before them, and burn incense to them; to adore the consecrated host with the same worship that they would give to Christ himself. And to show that they command this in contempt and defiance of the law of God, and in pursuance of their own authority over the souls of men, they leave the second commandment out of the ten, in all their catechisms and books of devotion, and have done so for many ages, and so they call the third commandment the second, the fourth the third, and so on; but because people had heard that there were ten, lest they should miss that precious jewel which they have stolen, they divide the tenth into two; and the ninth commandment with them is, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house*, and the tenth, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.* You will scarce believe that men could be guilty of such impudence and impiety, and imposition upon souls, but I assure you it is true.

It is the express command of God, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;* but contrary to this command, they require people to pray to saints and angels, which is expressly forbidden to St. John by an angel himself, *See thou do it not;*[g] *but worship God.*[h] They require I know not what higher degree of worship to be paid to the Virgin Mary, than to other saints, and desire her to command her Son to help them; and give no reason for this and many other such impositions, but *sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas—thus I will, thus I command, my will stands for reason.* Now how miserably must the souls of men be racked and torn by this usurped power, when their own reason and conscience tell them, they must worship God and Christ only, but their priests tell them, in obedience to the church they must pray to this and the other saint. *No man indeed can serve two masters*, when their commands thus contradict one another; and, therefore, they must certainly disown God for their master, who take their church for their mistress; and a miserable choice they make, for God says to the soul, *Lift it up*, that he may receive and embrace it; they say to the soul, *Bow down*, that they may *go over it*, and trample upon it.

3. They forbid the use of the Scriptures to the common people, and oblige them (as the heathen persecutors of old forced the Christians) to surrender their Bibles; because they could not enslave them, if they did not first put out their eyes, and disarm them of the sword of the Spirit.

It is the privilege of reasonable creatures to judge for themselves, and therefore, in all matters of concern, to be furnished with the proper rule they are to judge by; but papists resign this privilege to their priests, who bid them leave it to them to choose for them. It is the privilege of Christians, as formerly of the Jews, that to them are committed the oracles of God,[i] the sure word of prophecy; they have Moses and the prophets,[k] and are commanded to hear them. The Bereans are commended, because they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so which the apostles themselves preached to them. But the church of Rome will not allow Christians to consult this oracle, forbids what Christ has commanded, not only as in other things to show her authority, but because she cannot otherwise support her authority; for if people might but have liberty to look with an unprejudiced eye into the word of God, they would not suffer themselves to be thus enslaved by the craft of men. But they who impose on their customers with counterfeit goods, find it their interest to keep their shops dark. The Philistines could never have made Samson grind in their prison-house, if they had not first blinded him.

This is not only an imperious piece of tyranny, but a barbarous piece of cruelty to the souls of men; for they who take away the key of knowledge from

g Rev. xix. 10. h Rev. xxii. 9.

i John v. 39. k Luke xvi. *ult.*

men, shut up the kingdom of heaven against them. And "it is a very hard case" (says Archbishop Tillotson) "to which the church of Rome has reduced men, that it will neither allow them salvation out of their church, nor the best and most effectual means of salvation when they are in it.[1]

4. They take away the cup in the Lord's supper from the laity, and will allow them to communicate but in one kind. This is a great affront to our Lord Jesus, who, in the institution of this ordinance, appointed his disciples, all of them to drink of the cup, as well as to eat of the bread; and that decree of the Romish Church, which forbids the people the use of the cup, did it with an express *non obstante—notwithstanding* opposed to the divine institution. So said the council of Constance, "Though Christ did administer this sacrament under both kinds, yet *notwithstanding this*, the custom of communicating under one kind only, is now to be taken for a law;" that is, you who make conscience of conforming to the will of Christ, must quit that principle, and must *bow down, that we may go over.*

But this is not all: as it is an affront to Christ, so it is a great wrong and injury to Christians, and deprives them of part of the legacy which their Redeemer left them; in denying them the cup of blessings, they do, as far as they can, deny them the blessings themselves. And as those are reckoned to tyrannize over the bodies of men, who take away their goods which they are legally entitled to; so they certainly tyrannize over men's souls, who deprive them of a privilege they are evangelically entitled to: for, as an excellent pen well expresses it, "Look what benefit a man would be robbed of, in being deprived of Christ's blood; that comfort he is robbed of, who is deprived of this cup."

5. They make the validity and virtue of the sacraments, to depend upon the intention of the priest or minister.* So the council of Trent has decreed; and hence it will follow, that if the priest either be carelessly thinking of something else, or wilfully and wickedly design something else, when he baptizes, or consecrates the bread and wine, it is no sacrament at all, nor has any virtue in it to the receiver; the person so baptized is no member of the church; the host so consecrated is not the body of Christ, and therefore it is idolatry to worship it.

Now can any thing tyrannize more over the souls of men than this? or put it more into the power of every profane, ignorant, drunken priest, to tyrannize over them,—when they lie at his mercy, and in a thing too which they can never be sure of, whether they shall have any benefit by the sacraments? "So that when a man has done all he can to work out his own salvation, he shall be never the nearer, only for want of that which is wholly out of his power;† the right intention of the priest."

6. They offer up their public prayers and praises in a language, which the generality of the people do not understand. The mass is all in Latin, which is not at this day the vulgar tongue in any nation; so are their psalms, and other devotions. And this is designed to support the reputation of their priests, that they may be thought to have more learning than their neighbours; and to train people up in that blind devotion of their church, which they boast that ignorance is the mother of.

This is a great dishonour to God, it is taking his name in vain, and bringing the blind for sacrifice; it is directly contrary to the law of Christ, who has commanded us to pray and praise with understanding; and so full and plain is the apostle's discourse against it, (1 Cor. xiv.) that a papist happening to read that chapter, which he had been kept in ignorance of before, professed he thought St. Paul was a Lutheran.

But that which I now condemn it for is, its tyranny over the souls of men; it deprives them of the comfort and benefit of prayer; utterly disables them to pray in faith, and in the Spirit; and puts it in the power of the priest (and that is it which by all means possible must be supported) to make the people say Amen to the most direful imprecations, or execrations, which a wicked priest, by the change of a word or two, unobserved, and undiscovered, may turn the prayers into. Thus as in believing and obeying, so in praying, the souls of men, considered as rational, are tyrannized over, and are put under the priests' girdles.

7. They oblige all people at some certain times to confess all their sins privately to a priest, in order to their receiving absolution from him. This is as mischievous an engine of papal tyranny as any other, and is as perfect a rack to the consciences of men. Thus men are made to stand in awe of, and are brought into subjection to, their priests, as the fathers of their spirits, as having it in their power to admit them into, or shut them out of the kingdom of heaven. By this artifice they let themselves into the secrets of men's lives and affairs, which makes it every man's interest to please them, and upon any terms to keep in with them.

Scire volunt secreta domûs atque inde timeri.‡—
They wish to know the secrets of the house, that thus they may be feared.

This province therefore, of receiving confessions, of all the orders of the Romish clergy, the Jesuits have most applied themselves to, who are most slaves to the pope, enemies to the protestants, and lords over the souls of men; and with the help of this

[1] Compare Matt. xxiii. 13. with Luke xi. 52. * Can. 11.

† See Archbishop Tillotson's Sermons, Vol. I. ‡ Juv. Sat.

carry on their great design to aggrandize and enrich themselves, and enslave and impoverish those about them.

8. They impose what penances they please upon those who come to them to receive absolution, and force them to submit to them, by denying them absolution unless they do. Never did any prince pretend to such an authority over a subject, any parent over a child, or master over his servant, as the confessor claims over his penitent, which he is told he is bound in conscience to submit to, though the services enjoined be never so absurd, and the injunction never so arbitrary. Judges must give sentence according to law, but confessors according to humour, whether a gay humour, which makes the penance like children's play, or an imperious malicious one, which makes it worse than bridewell. These things are industriously kept private; but I have been told of some, who, by pilgrimages to, and penances in, St. Winifred's well, in my country, imposed upon them by their priests, have ruined their health, and lost their lives, and it is easy to say at whose hands their blood will be required, for God never required these things at their hands.

And that which in this matter is the greatest imposition of all is, that they are made to believe, that these corporal austerities (or barbarities rather) make satisfaction to God's justice for their sins; which is a great indignity done to Christ, as if his satisfaction were deficient, and needed to be thus helped out, and a great cheat put upon the souls of men. But thus do they triumph over conscience, and take a pride in making that a duty and debt to God, which is done in pure obedience to them.

Even crowned heads, by bringing conscience into the case, have been made to submit to this tyranny; witness our king Henry II. who, because he complained, and very justly, of the insolent and traitorous carriage of Thomas a Becket, then bishop of Canterbury, whence some ruffians who heard him, took occasion, utterly unknown to him, to go and kill the bishop, was obliged to go to Canterbury, and when he came within sight of Becket's church, he alighted from his horse, put off his shoes and stockings, and walked bare-foot to Becket's tomb, and there suffered himself to be whipped on the naked back, by the monks of Canterbury.* This is popery, this is tyranny, this is saying to men's souls, *Bow down that we may go over.*

9. They undertake to absolve men from their lawful oaths, and to dissolve and dispense with the most solemn and sacred obligations; and thus triumph over conscience as much by the looses they give it, contrary to the law of God, as by the bonds they lay upon it, contrary to that law.

There is nothing which the light of nature, and consent of nations, teach men to have more a veneration for, and a deeper sense of the obligation of, than the ordinances of marriage, and an oath, which men who have any thing of conscience left, will make conscience of being true to; and yet the church of Rome has ways of breaking these bonds in sunder.

As in the case of marriage, they exercise their tyranny in forbidding marriage to ministers at all times, and forbidding it to all people at some certain seasons of the year; so they do in dissolving marriages, when the parties enter into religion, (as they call it,) and are professed.

And if a prince disoblige the pope so far, that he adjudged him a heretic, his subjects are absolved from their oath of allegiance to him; though he be ever so able and willing to protect them, and govern them according to law, they ought not to defend him, or stand by him; and if any think themselves bound by their oath, they shall be told, that the pope has dispensed with that; and thus does he say to men's souls, *Bow down.*

10. By the fear of purgatory, and the hope of advantage which men's souls may have by masses said for them after they are dead, they amass to themselves vast riches, to the ruin of families, and the civil interests of the nations; and this is another instance of the tyranny of popery.

When men have thoughts of death, and see it at the door, then, if ever, conscience is awake, and then it is seasonable to take hold of it, that in consideration of it, the soul may be effectually brought to repentance and faith, and resignation to God, and a holy heavenly temper; and they who are so influenced by it, may go comfortably under the conduct of our Lord Jesus into another world: but here the Romish clergy put in for a dominion over men's consciences; they possess even good men with a dreadful apprehension of the pains of purgatory, which they must endure for a great while before they can go to heaven, in order to their cleansing, that they may enter pure into eternal life; it is fire, it is a prison; and after all, it is a fancy, a mere chimera, an invention of their own, that has no foundation in the word of God. But they have a way to lighten and shorten these pains; leave the church, the priest, or the convent, a good legacy, leave them a part of your estates, and by masses you shall soon have a discharge procured for you. Thus they frighten people with an imaginary evil, which Christ never threatened, to seek for an imaginary deliverance, which Christ never promised by endowing monasteries, and maintaining priests in superstition and idolatry, a service which Chris never required.

"Purgatory pick-purse," so it has been called fo

* Fuller's Ch. Hist. Lib. 3.

this reason; the locusts of the Romish clergy have been wont to swarm about the beds of dying men, to gain from them—or about their graves, to gain from their surviving friends—grants of lands, or sums of money, to pray them out of purgatory; and thus, by tyrannizing over men's souls, they vastly enrich themselves and their church, and so become capable of tyrannizing over men in every thing else.

In the dark times of popery, grants to the religious, as they called them, and the religious houses, were become so many, and so rich, that the wisdom of the state saw fit to restrain them by the statute of Mortmain, in the third year of Edward I. which made it necessary to have the royal licence for such endowments; otherwise, says our historian, all England would in a short time have become one entire continued monastery.* The like laws for limiting men's liberality to the church, had been made a little before in France and Spain; which could never have been done at that time, if the fatal consequences of it had not been most apparently clear; and if the guardians of the public peace and welfare had not plainly seen what they were aiming at, who said to their souls, *Bow down, that we may go over;* nothing less than enslaving the kingdom too.

11. The greatest instance of the tyranny of the church of Rome over the souls of men, is their making princes and magistrates, and others, the conscientious tools of their persecuting rage, against those who will not receive the mark of the beast in their foreheads or their right hands.

When princes make bloody laws against their own subjects, who willingly pay them tribute, are ready to serve them, pray for them, and live quiet and peaceable lives under them, and contribute their share to the nations' wealth and strength, rendering in every thing to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, only desiring to reserve their consciences for God, because they are his; when edicts made for their protection, and solemnly ratified, are most perfidiously and ungratefully repealed after a thousand direct violations of them, and troops of dragoons, those booted apostles, are commissioned (by the most barbarous and inhuman outrages and tortures that ever the malice of hell invented) to force men's consciences, or destroy their lives and families; when those who might be the profitable members of a state, are thrown into bonds or banishment, against all the true politics of a nation; when courts of inquisition are kept up, their proceedings countenanced against all the established rules of justice and equity, and their most unrighteous sentences executed blindfold by the secular arm; when all the bowels of humanity are put off, and all the bonds of relation, friendship, and neighbourhood, are broken through, and those who are both harmless and resistless are massacred in their beds and houses in cold blood, as many thousands of protestants were in Paris, and other parts of France, in 1572, and in Ireland in 1641;—and lastly, when princes, whose persons are taken under the particular protection of the laws of God and man, are barbarously assassinated by their own subjects, as Henry IV. of France was by Ravillac;—it is natural to inquire, how it is possible that men should act so contrary to the dictates of nature and reason, and interest, how one man could be such a bear, such a beast, to another; and it will be found upon inquiry, that the power of the church of Rome over misguided consciences is at the bottom of all this; the bigoted clergy said to their souls, *Bow down, that we may go over*, and then they are at their service, not only to do the greatest drudgery, and think it no dishonour to themselves, but to perpetrate the greatest villany, and to think it no dishonour to God, as long as they are made to believe it is for the advantage of the church, the propagating of the faith, and the extirpation of heresy. A zeal for that which they call the catholic cause is thought sufficient, not only to justify, but even to sanctify, murder, treason, perjury, and all manner of wickedness.

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.—

To so much evil could their religion persuade them.

In them is fulfilled what Christ said to his disciples, that those who killed them would think they did God service;[m] and what God of old said by the prophet concerning his people, that those who hated them, and cast them out, would say, *Let the Lord be glorified.*[n] But what an insult is this upon conscience! what a tyranny over it! what a force put upon it! Such a dominion could never have been gained over it, but by the power of strong delusions. Surely never were kings and kingdoms so ridden, never were princes so intoxicated,[o] as those are who have given their power and honour to the beast.

Many more instances might be given for the proof of this charge, that popery is a spiritual tyranny, but these shall suffice.

The Application.

1. Let this confirm and increase our pious zeal against popery, and a holy indignation at the pride and tyranny of the church and court of Rome. We may now be tempted to cry out, "O Jesus, are these thy Christians?" Are these the followers of the meek and lowly Saviour, who did not strive or cry; who came into the world not to be ministered unto, but to minister;[p] not to destroy men's lives, but to save them?[q] Are these professors of that gospel, which makes these two of its first precepts, humility

* Fuller's Ch. Hist. Lib. 3. 127.

m John xvi. 2.

n Isa. lxvi. 5. o Rev. xvii. 2. p Matt. xx. 28. q Luke x. 56.

and charity? Can those be ever owned as friends of Christ, who ride over the heads,[r] and set their feet upon the necks, and, which is worst of all, trample upon the consciences, of the free-born subjects of God's kingdom in the world?

Is it possible that under the umbrage of Christ's name—and that particularly by such, as from his saving, healing name Jesus call themselves Jesuits—so much opposition should be given, and so much mischief done, to pure Christianity? But therefore popery is called a mystery of iniquity,[s] because it has a show of piety and devotion. It is that beast that has horns like a lamb, and yet speaks as a dragon;[t] that enemy that sits in the temple of God, and yet there tramples on all that is sacred.

Far be it from me to possess you with hatred against the persons of any; no, we ought to love our enemies, and do them good; but it is the way of popery, as it is contrary to the way of Christianity, that I think we all ought to conceive and retain a dislike of, and an antipathy to.

Our Lord Jesus, in his preaching, was never so severe upon any sort of sinners as he was upon the Scribes and Pharisees, who buoying themselves up with the traditions of the elders, bound heavy burthens upon men's consciences, and grievous to be borne;[u] nor is there any thing more contrary to the temper and constitution of the gospel, than ministers' lording it over God's heritage,[v] for it is by the power of truth, and reason, and holiness, and love, that they are to rule; nor than Christians making themselves the servants of men[w] in things pertaining unto God, for *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*[x]

It may justly be wondered at, that such a spiritual tyranny as this has continued so long in the church, that God has so long suffered it, and men have so long submitted to it; but God has wise and holy ends in permitting it, *It must needs be that such offences come, that they which are perfect may be made manifest;* and it ought not to be a stumbling-block to us, for we are told before that the holy city must be trodden under foot forty and two months;[y] and as for those who submit to it, we have reason to fear that God has herein given them up to a judicial infatuation, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.[z] They who shake off the easy gentle yoke of God's government, it is just with him to leave them to submit to the iron yoke of the king of Babylon. *They shall be his servants,* (says God,) *that they may know* the difference between *my service and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.*[a] Because Israel had despised God's statutes, therefore he gave them statutes that were not good,[b] he left them to be subject to the imposition of their proud oppressors. But though this usurped, abused dominion has continued long, we may hope it will not continue always; its day shall come to fall, for the Lord whose name is jealous, is a jealous God, and will fulfil every word that he has spoken.

2. Let us pity and pray for those nations of the earth who are under the yoke of this tyranny and oppression, and I wish I could say were groaning under it. It is sad to think how many there are who have a zeal for God, but it is not according to knowledge,[c] for they are kept in ignorance of the Scripture, and so are easily led into idolatry and false worship, and their devotion is misplaced. We ought to look upon them with compassion, and to pray that God would send the light of the gospel among them, and open their eyes to receive it; that those who mean honestly, may be brought to the knowledge of the truth. O that God would effectually call his people out of that captivity; and that Zion, who dwells with the daughter of Babylon,[d] would deliver herself, and that God would deliver her; that God would by his Spirit stir up the captives to arise and shake themselves from their dust, and loose themselves from the bands of their neck.[e] O that the same spirit of life that entered into the dry bones at the Reformation, might put life into the bones that are yet dead, for they are very many, and lo, they are very dry. We should pray earnestly for the conversion of the papists who are of our own nation, and live among us, that their mistakes may be rectified, and their prejudices removed, and I heartily wish that more were done toward it by the rational, gentle methods of the gospel, than is; and particularly for the instruction of the papists in Ireland, by the carrying on of that which seems to be a very excellent design, of preaching the gospel to them in their own language.

We have reason to fear there are many who are convinced of the errors of popery, but are carried down the stream in them, *(Eamus ad communem errorem—Let us join in the popular error,)* and are held by force and fear in practices contrary to their convictions, and know not how to help themselves. Did we, as we ought, put our souls into their souls' stead, we should pity their case; and, O that God would hear the sorrowful sighings of those prisoners, and find out a way to deliver them from the insults of those who say to their souls, *Bow down, that we may go over.* It is the case of those they call the new converts in France; O that by some means or other, Pharaoh and his task-masters may be compelled to let God's people go, that they may serve him.

And by the prophecies in the Revelation, it is intimated to us, that we should pray particularly for the kings of the earth, that God would put it into their

r Ps. lxvi. 12. s 2 Thess. ii. 7. t Rev. xiii. 11. u Matt. xxiii. 4.
v 1 Pet. v. 3. w 1 Cor. vii. 23. x 2 Cor. iii. 17.
y Rev. xi. 2. z 2 Thess. ii. 10. a 2 Chron. xii. 8.
b Ezek. xx. 25. c Rom. x. 2. d Zech. ii. 7. e Isa. lii. 2.

hearts to assert the rights of their crowns against the bold invasions of the man of sin; and to give their power and honour to the Lord Jesus; that he would inspire them with hatred of this mother of harlots, that, as it is prophesied, they may make her desolate and naked;[f] that the righteous men may judge her after the manner of adulteresses,[g] and free themselves and their kingdoms from the papal yoke. But who shall live when God does this?

3. Let us bless God that we of this nation are by the providence and grace of God delivered out of this house of bondage; that we are a protestant nation, were made so above 150 years ago, and continue so to this day, notwithstanding the restless designs of our popish enemies to bring us back into Egypt again, like Pharaoh's to re-enslave Israel. Many a weapon has been formed against us and our holy religion, which has not prospered. Here we may set up our Eben-ezer, for hitherto the Lord has helped us. *No enchantment* has hitherto *prevailed against our Jacob, nor any divination against our Israel,*[h] but *according to this time* it has been said, and shall be said, of Jacob and of Israel, *What has God wrought!*

We can never be enough thankful to God for the abolishing of the papal power in these islands, and the preventing of its return. *Happy art thou, O* Great Britain; *who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord?* Think what a mercy it is to us that we have the Scriptures in a language we understand, our Father's will in our mother tongue; that the pure word of God is read in our synagogues every sabbath day; that we have plenty of Bibles; that care is taken to teach even the children of the poor to read, and that we have so many helps in searching the Scriptures, that we may understand them; that we may *see with our own eyes,* and may find our religion there, where alone we are to seek it, in the word of God; that our public prayers and praises are offered up so that we may join in them with understanding; that we have the Lord's supper in both kinds, and not maimed; that we worship God only, and are not compelled to pay the homage to saints and angels which is his due, and to say more Ave-Marys than Pater-Nosters. That we are not imposed upon by the frauds and forgeries of popish priests, as the poor deluded members of the church of Rome are; but have the bread of life broken to us by the stewards of the mysteries of God, and are nourished up with the words of truth and good doctrine;[i] and what is the chaff to that wheat? We can never be enough thankful to God for these privileges, and ought to take care, lest by our unthankfulness for them, we provoke God to deprive us of them.

4. Being delivered from this spiritual oppression, let us serve God the more cheerfully in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives.[k] What will it avail us to be protestants in profession, if we be not Christians in sincerity? to be of a reformed church, if we be not reformed in our own conversations, and transformed through the grace of God by the renewing of our minds? This is that which, with all earnestness, I would now in the close press upon you all.

Brethren, we are delivered from the power of the man of sin at Rome, but what the better shall we be for that, if we continue under the power of the man of sin in our own hearts, the anti-christ in our own bosoms, which will be to us the more dangerous enemy. You can glory in it that you are not priest-ridden, but your glory may well be turned into shame if you be pride-ridden, and passion-ridden, and lust-ridden. You thank God that you are not drudges to the pope, and slaves to the French, and you have reason to do so; but your thanks are thankless, if by covetousness you continue drudges to the world, and by sensuality, slaves to the flesh, and a base lust, that *saith to your souls, Bow down, that we may go over.* We live in an age of liberty, but withal it is an age of libertinism, an age of licentiousness, the stream of which is so strong, that there is need of great resolution, and that in the strength of God's grace, to swim against it. Be persuaded, therefore, whatever snare of the devil any of you are taken in, give diligence to recover yourselves out of it, that you may not any longer be led captive by him at his will.[l] The service of sin is perfect slavery, let it not then reign in your mortal bodies, —because they are mortal, and must shortly return to the dust whence they came; nor in your immortal souls,—because they are immortal, and must shortly return to God who gave them. Suffer not appetite and passion to get dominion over conscience and right reason, but since sin is a tyrant, dethrone it, depose it, and shake off its yoke.

But this is not all, being delivered from this tyranny, submit yourselves to the government of the Lord Jesus. He *saith to your souls, Bow down,* not *that he may go over* them, but that he may raise them up. He has authority over your souls: yield to his authority. *Kiss the Son.* Come and take his yoke upon you, and draw in it; it is an easy yoke; the yoke of his institution is very easy in comparison with the yoke of the ceremonial law, much more in comparison with that of the canon law. He has right to rule us, and rules by love; his service is perfect freedom. Come, therefore, and bow your souls to him; your understandings to his truths, your wills to his laws, and let every thought within you be brought into obedience to him. It is foretold, that *they that go down to the dust shall bow before him,* since none can

f Rev. xvii. 16. g Ezek. xxiii. 45. h Numb. xxiii. 23. i 1 Tim. iv. 6. k Luke i. 74, 75. l 2 Tim. ii. 26.

of himself *keep alive his own soul*; we are all going down to the dust,[m] nay, if infinite mercy prevent not, we are going down to the pit, and cannot save ourselves from death or hell. Come, therefore, and let us bow before the Lord Jesus, make him our head, and be willing in the day of his power.

5. Being delivered out of the snare of popish tyranny, let us stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free,[n] and dread the thoughts of being again entangled in that snare. However it may change its disguises, popery is the same evil thing that ever it was; and its patrons and factors as restless as ever to re-establish it in our land, and to bring us back again to the Egyptian brick-kilns; and I wish there be not those among ourselves,—who make light of our deliverance, as even the captive Israelites did of Moses, because, when he saw the Hebrews strive together, he said to him that did the wrong, *Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?*[o]—who, because we are not in Canaan immediately, are for *making a captain* to return into Egypt.[p]

We have therefore no reason to be secure, but to take heed lest by our sins we provoke God to suffer these oppressors of conscience again to have dominion over us. O let us be earnest with God in prayer, to keep popery out of our nation, and to fortify our bulwarks against it, that if that enemy should come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord may again lift up a standard against him.

We know not how we should be able to bear up and keep our ground, if trying times should come, and therefore have reason to pray that there may be a lengthening of our tranquillity, and we may not be put to the trial. Dread the departure of our glory, in the captivity of our ark; and the removal of our candlestick, in the loss of our Bibles; and let us in our places do what it becomes us to do in defence of the present protestant government and settlement we are under, that the blessings thereof may be safely transmitted to those who shall come after us, that the children who shall be created may praise the Lord for them.

6. Let us all carefully watch against that in ourselves, which we witness against in the church of Rome, lest we be found condemning ourselves in that thing which we allow.

We condemn the papists for their idolatry, and formality in worship; let us take heed of spiritual idolatry, of making images of God in our fancy, and worshipping them; of resting in the outside of duties, and suffering our hearts to depart from God, when we draw nigh to him with our mouths, and honour him with our lips; let us take heed lest we grow customary in our accustomed services, and lest our devotion degenerate into a formality, and by losing its life become a carcass.

We condemn them for putting contempt upon the Scriptures, keeping people in ignorance of them, and setting up other rules in competition with them; let us take heed, lest we, through carelessness and neglect of our duty, keep our families, our children and servants, ignorant of the Scriptures; and lest we be ourselves strangers to them, and govern ourselves by the will of the flesh, and the way of the world, in those things wherein the word of God ought to be our commanding rule.

We have been now condemning them for imposing upon men's consciences, and tyrannizing over them; let us take heed to ourselves, lest there be in us any thing of that spirit; lest we grow magisterial in prescribing to others, and censuring them; and lest we expect every sheaf to bow to ours, and every one to believe just as we believe, and speak just as we speak, and do just as we do; or else condemn him as none of God's people, and no follower of Christ because he follows not with us. Our conscience ought to be a rule to ourselves, and by it let every man prove his own work; but we ought not to make it a standard to every one else, by it to judge and set at nought our brother; as if all were blind who do not see with our eyes, and all out of the way to heaven, who do not walk in our particular path; but let all our works be done with charity. As we may remember for our comfort, that others are not to be our judges, or our lords, so we must remember for caution, that we are not to be their judges or their lords; both they and we must stand or fall to our own master,[q] to whom therefore we are concerned to approve ourselves, and refer one another.

There are many things, about which good Christians may, both in judgment and practice, differ from one another, and yet both sides be accepted of God; and therefore they ought to make the best one of another, since there are faults on both sides, and neither without something good. And for private persons to hate and despise, to censure and condemn, to expose and reproach, those who are not in every thing of their mind, is in effect the same thing, as it is in popes and councils to excommunicate, hereticate, and anathematize, all who subscribe not to their sentiments and injunctions; it is saying to men's souls, *Bow down, that we may go over.* But let us make it appear, that we have not so learned Christ; that we are governed by a spirit of love, and not of bigotry. In those things which concern the power of godliness, let us be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, and zealous of good works; but in those things which only concern the form of it, let us take heed of being too hot, lest we be found serving ourselves; but let us conscientiously walk according to the light that God has given us, and charitably believe that others do so too; which is but doing as we would be done by.

m Ps. xxii. 29. n Gal. v. 1. o Exod. ii. 13. p Neh. ix. 17. q Rom. xiv. 3, 4.

A METHOD FOR PRAYER,

WITH

SCRIPTURE EXPRESSIONS

PROPER TO BE USED UNDER EACH HEAD.

To the Reader.

Religion is so much the business of our lives, and the worship of God so much the business of our religion, that what has a sincere intention, and probable tendency, to promote and assist the acts of religious worship, (I think,) cannot be unacceptable to any who heartily wish well to the interests of God's kingdom among men; for if we have spiritual senses exercised, true devotion (that aspiring flame of pious affections to God, as far as in a judgment of charity we discern it in others, though in different shapes and dresses, which may seem uncouth to one another) cannot but appear beautiful and amiable, and as far as we feel it in our own breasts, cannot but be found very pleasant and comfortable.

Prayer is a principal branch of religious worship, which we are moved to by the very light of nature, and obliged to by some of its fundamental laws. Pythagoras's golden verses begin with this precept, "Whatever men made a god of they prayed to," *Deliver me, for thou art my God*, Isa. xliv. 17. Nay, *deos qui rogat ille facit,—whatever they prayed to they made a god of.* It is a piece of respect and homage so exactly consonant to the natural ideas which all men have of God, that it is certain those who live without prayer, live without God in the world.

Prayer is the solemn and religious offering up of devout acknowledgments and desires to God, or a sincere representation of holy affections, with a design to give unto God the glory due unto his name thereby, and to obtain from him promised favours, and both through the Mediator. Our English word prayer is too confined, for that properly signifies petition or request; whereas humble adorations of God, and thanksgivings to him, are as necessary in prayer as any other part of it. The Greek word Προσευχη, from Ευχη, is a vow directed to God. The Latin word *Votum* is used for prayer. Jonah's mariners, with their sacrifices, made vows; for prayer is to move and oblige ourselves, not to move and oblige God. Clemens Alexandrinus (Serom. 7. p 722. Edit. Colon.) calls prayer, (with an excuse for the boldness of the expression,) Ὁμιλια προς τον Θεον, it is conversing with God: and it is the scope of a long discourse of his there, to show that his ὁ Γνωστικος, that is, his believer, (for faith is called knowledge, and, p. 719. he makes his companions to be ὁι ὁμοιως πεπιστευκοτες, those who have in like manner believed,) lives a life of communion with God; and so is praying always; that he studies by his prayers continually to converse with God. Some (says he) have their stated hours of prayer, but he παρα Ὁλον ἔυχεται τον βιον, prays all his life long. The Scripture describes prayer to be our drawing near to God, lifting up our souls to him, pouring out our hearts before him.

This is the life and soul of prayer; but this soul in the present state must have a body, and that body must be such as becomes the soul, and is suited and adapted to it. Some words there must be, of the mind at least, in which, as in the smoke, this incense must ascend; not that God may understand us, for our thoughts afar off are known to him, but that we may the better understand ourselves.

A golden thread of heart-prayer must run through the web of the whole Christian life; we must be frequently addressing ourselves to God in short and sudden ejaculations, by which we must keep up our communion with God in providences and common actions, as well as in ordinances and religious services. Thus prayer must be *sparsim—a sprinkling of it* in every duty, and our eyes must be ever toward the Lord.

In mental prayer, thoughts are words; and they are the first-born of the soul, which are to be consecrated to God. But if, when we pray alone, we see cause, for the better fixing of our minds, and ex-

citing of our devotions, to clothe our conceptions with words; if the conceptions be the genuine products of the new nature, one would think words should not be far to seek: *verbaque prævisam rem non invita sequuntur—when a subject has been meditated, words spontaneously flow.* Nay, if the groanings be such as cannot be uttered, he who searcheth the heart knows them to be the mind of the spirit, and will accept of them, (Rom. viii. 26, 27.) and answer the voice of our breathing, Lam. iii. 56. Yet, through the infirmity of the flesh, and the proneness of our hearts to wander and trifle, it is often necessary that words should go first, and be kept in mind for the directing and exciting of devout affections; and in order thereunto, the assistance here offered, I hope, will be of some use.

When we join with others in prayer, who are our mouth to God, our minds must attend them, by an intelligent believing concurrence with that which is the sense, and scope, and substance of what they say, and affections working in us suitable thereunto: and this the Scripture directs us to signify, by saying Amen mentally, if not vocally, at their giving of thanks, 1 Cor. xiv. 16. And, as far as our joining with them will permit, we may intermix pious ejaculations of our own with their addresses, provided they be pertinent, that not the least fragment of praying time may be lost.

But he that is the mouth of others in prayer, whether in public or private, and therein useth that παῤῥησια, *that freedom of speech*, that holy liberty of prayer, which is allowed us, (and which we are sure many good Christians have found by experience to be very comfortable and advantageous in this duty,) ought not only to consult the workings of his own heart, (though them principally, as putting most life and spirit into the performance,) but the edification also of those who join with him, and both in matter and words should have an eye to it: and for service in that case I principally design this endeavour.

That bright ornament of the church, the learned Dr. Wilkins, bishop of Chester, has left us an excellent performance, much of the same nature with this, in his discourse concerning the gift of prayer; which, some may think, makes this of mine unnecessary: but the multiplying of books of devotion is what few serious Christians will complain of, and as, on the one hand, I am sure those who have this poor essay of mine will still find great advantage by that, so, on the other hand, I think those who have that may yet find some further assistance by this.

It is desirable that our prayers should be copious and full. Our burthens, cares, and wants are many, so are our sins and mercies. The promises are numerous and very rich, our God gives liberally, and has bid us open our mouths wide, and he will fill them, will satisfy them with good things. We are not straitened in him, why then should we be straitened in our bosoms? Christ had taught his disciples the Lord's prayer, and yet tells them, (John xvi. 24.) that hitherto they had asked nothing, that is, nothing in comparison with what they should ask when the Spirit should be poured out, to abide with the church for ever; and they should see greater things than these. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. We are encouraged to be particular in prayer, and in every thing to make our requests known to God, as we ought also to be particular in the adoration of the divine perfections, in the confession of our sins, and our thankful acknowledgment of God's mercies.

But since at the same time we cannot go over a tenth part of the particulars which are fit to be the matter of prayer, without making the duty burthensome to the flesh, which is weak even where the spirit is willing, (an extreme that ought carefully to be avoided,) and without danger of intrenching upon other religious exercises, it will be requisite that what is but briefly touched upon at one time, should be enlarged upon at another time; and herein this store-house of materials for prayer may be of use, to put us in remembrance of our several errands at the throne of grace, that none may be quite forgotten.

And it is requisite to the decent performance of the duty, that some proper method be observed, not only that what is said be good, but that it be said in its proper place and time; and that we offer not any thing to the glorious Majesty of heaven and earth which is confused, impertinent, and indigested. Care must be taken then more than ever, that we be not rash with our mouth, nor hasty to utter any thing before God; that we say not what comes uppermost, nor use such repetitions as evidence not the fervency, but the barrenness and slightness, of our spirits; but that, the matters we are dealing with God about being of such vast importance, we observe a decorum in our words, that they be well chosen, well weighed, and well placed.

And as it is good to be methodical in prayer, so it is to be sententious: the Lord's prayer is remarkably so; and David's Psalms, and many of St. Paul's prayers, which we have in his epistles. We must consider, that the greatest part of those who join with us in prayer will be in danger of losing or mistaking the sense, if the period be long, and the parentheses many; and in this, as in other things, they who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak: Jacob must lead as the children and flocks can follow.

As to the words and expressions we use in prayer, though I have here in my enlargements upon the several heads of prayer confined myself almost wholly to Scripture language, because I would give an instance of the sufficiency of the Scripture to furnish us for every good work, yet I am far from

thinking, but that it is convenient, and often necessary, to use other expressions in prayer, besides those that are purely scriptural; only I would advise, that the sacred dialect be most used, and made familiar to us and others, in our dealing about sacred things. That language Christian people are most accustomed to, most affected with, and will most readily agree to; and where the Scriptures are opened and explained to the people in the ministry of the word, Scripture language will be most intelligible, and the sense of it best apprehended. This is sound speech, that cannot be condemned; and those who are able to do it, may do well to enlarge by way of descant or paraphrase upon the Scriptures they make use of; still speaking according to that rule, and comparing spiritual things with spiritual, that they may illustrate each other.

And it is not to be reckoned a perverting of Scripture, but is agreeable to the usage of many divines, especially the fathers, and I think is warranted by divers quotations in the New Testament out of the Old, to allude to a Scripture phrase, and to make use of it by way of accommodation to another sense than what was the first intention of it, provided it agree with the analogy of faith. As for instance, those words, (Ps. lxxxvii. 7.) *All my springs are in thee*, may very fitly be applied to God, though there it appears, by the feminine article in the original, to be meant of Sion; nor has it ever been thought any wrong to the Scripture phrase, to pray for the *blessings of the upper springs and the nether springs*, though the expression from whence it is borrowed, (Judg. i. 15.) has no reference at all to what we mean, but by common use every one knows the signification, and many are pleased with the significancy of it.

Divers heads of prayer may no doubt be added to those which I have here put together; and many Scripture expressions too, under each head; (for I have only set down such as first occurred to my thoughts;) and many other expressions too, not in Scripture words, which may be very comprehensive and emphatical, and apt to excite devotion. And perhaps those who covet earnestly this excellent gift, and covet to excel in it, may find it of use to them to have such a book as this interleaved, in which to insert such other heads and expressions as they think will be most agreeable to them, and are wanting here. And though I have here recommended a good method for prayer, and that which has been generally approved, yet I am far from thinking we should always tie ourselves to it; that may be varied as well as the expression: thanksgivings may very aptly be put sometimes before confession or petition, or our intercessions for others before our petitions for ourselves, as the Lord's prayer. Sometimes one of these parts of prayer may be enlarged upon much more than another; or they may be decently interwoven in some other method.

There are those, (I doubt not,) who at some times have their hearts so wonderfully elevated and enlarged in prayer, above themselves at other times; such a fixedness and fulness of thought, such a fervour of pious and devout affections, the product of which is such a fluency and variety of pertinent and moving expressions, and in such a just and natural method, that then to have an eye to such a scheme as this, would be a hinderance to them, and would be in danger to cramp and straiten them: if the heart be full of its good matter, it may make the tongue as the pen of a ready writer. But this is a case that rarely happens, and ordinarily there is need of proposing to ourselves a certain method in prayer, that the service may be performed decently and in order; yet, in which one would avoid that which looks too formal. A man may write straight without having his paper ruled.

Some few forms of prayer I have added in the last chapter, for the use of those who need such helps, and who know not how to do as well or better without them; and, therefore, I have calculated them for families. If any think them too long, let them observe that they are divided into many paragraphs, and those mostly independent, so that when brevity is necessary some paragraphs may be omitted

But after all, the intention and close application of the mind, the lively exercises of faith and love, and the outgoings of holy desire toward God, are so essentially necessary to prayer, that without these in sincerity, the best and most proper language is but a lifeless image. If we had the tongue of men and angels, and have not the heart of humble serious Christians, in prayer, we are but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. It is only the *effectual fervent prayer*; the δενοις ενεργεμενη—*the inwrought, inlaid prayer; that avails much.* Thus therefore we ought to approve ourselves to God in the integrity of our hearts, whether we pray by or without a precomposed form.

If any good Christians receive assistance from it in their devotions, I hope they will not deny me one request, which is, that they will pray for me, that I may obtain mercy of the Lord to be found among the faithful watchmen on Jerusalem's walls, who never hold their peace day or night, but give themselves to the word and prayer, that at length I may finish my course with joy.

MATT. HENRY.

Chester, March 25, 1710.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE FIRST PART OF PRAYER, WHICH IS ADDRESS TO GOD, ADORATION OF HIM, WITH SUITABLE ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, PROFESSIONS, AND PREPARATORY REQUESTS.

OUR spirits being composed into a very reverent serious frame, our thoughts gathered in, and all that is within us charged, in the name of the great God, carefully to attend the solemn and awful service that lies before us, and to keep close to it; we must—with a fixed intention and application of mind, and an active lively faith—set the Lord before us, see his eye upon us, and set ourselves in his special presence; presenting ourselves to him as living sacrifices, which we desire may be holy and acceptable, and a reasonable service;[a] and then bind these sacrifices with cords to the horns of the altar,[b] with such thoughts as these:

Let us now lift up our hearts[c] with our eyes[d] and our hands unto God in the heavens.

Let us stir up ourselves to take hold on God,[e] to seek his face,[f] and to give him the glory due unto his name.[g]

Unto thee, O Lord, do we lift up our souls.[h]

Let us now with humble boldness enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, in the new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil.[i]

Let us now attend upon the Lord without distraction,[k] and let not our hearts be far from him when we draw nigh to him with our mouths, and honour him with our lips.[l]

Let us now worship God, who is a Spirit, in spirit and in truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him.[m]

Having *thus engaged our hearts to* approach *unto God*,[n]

I. We must solemnly address ourselves to that infinitely great and glorious Being with whom we have to do, as those who are possessed with a full belief of his presence, and a holy awe and reverence of his majesty; which we may do in such expressions as these:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come.[o]

O thou whose name alone is Jehovah, and who art the Most High over all the earth![p]

O God, thou art our God, early will we seek thee;[q] our God, and we will praise thee; our fathers' God, and we will exalt thee.[r]

O thou, who art the true God, the living God,[s] the one only living and true God, and the everlasting King! The Lord our God, who is one Lord.[t]

And we may, thus, distinguish ourselves from the worshippers of false gods:

The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, they are vanity and a lie, the work of men's hands, they that make them are like unto them, and so is every one that trusteth in them.[u] But the *Portion of Jacob* is not like them, for He is the former of all things, and Israel is the rod of his inheritance; the Lord of hosts is his name,[v] God over all, blessed for evermore.[w]

Their Rock is not as our Rock, even the enemies themselves being judges;[x] for he is the Rock of Ages, the Lord Jehovah, with whom is everlasting strength;[y] whose name shall endure for ever, and his memorial unto all generations,[z] when the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth shall perish from off the earth, and from under these heavens.[a]

II. We must reverently adore God, as a being transcendently bright and blessed, self-existent and self-sufficient, an infinite and eternal Spirit, who has all perfections in himself, and give him the glory of his titles and attributes.

O Lord our God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majesty, thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment,[b] and yet as to us makest darkness thy pavilion,[c] for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.[d]

This is the message which we have heard of thee, and we set to our seal that it is true, That God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all;[e] and, That God is Love, and they that dwell in love dwell in God, and God in them.[f]

Thou art the Father of light, with whom is no variableness or shadow of turning, and from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift.[g]

Thou art the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hast immortality; dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or can see.[h]

We must acknowledge his being to be unquestionable, and past dispute.

The heavens declare thy glory, O God, and the firmament showeth thy handy-work;[i] and by the things that are made is clearly seen and understood thine eternal power and godhead;[k] so that they are fools without excuse who say there is no God;[l] for verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth,[m] and in heaven too.

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a Rom. xii. 1. b Ps. cxviii. 27. c Lam. iii. 41. d John xvii. 1. e Isa. lxiv. 7. f Ps. xxvii. 8. g Ps. xxix. 2. h Ps. xxv. 1. i Heb. x. 19, 20. k 1 Cor. vii. 35. l Matt. xv. 8. m John iv. 23, 24. n Jer. xxx. 21. o Rev. iv. 8. p Ps. lxxxiii. 18. q Ps. lxiii. 1. r Exod. xv. 2. s Jer. x. 10. t Deut vi. 4. u Ps. cxv. 4, 8. v Jer. x. 15, 16. w Rom. ix. 5. x Deut. xxxii. 31. y Isa. xxvi. 4. margin. z Ps. cxxxv. 13. a Jer. x. 11. b Ps. civ 1, 2. c Ps. xviii. 11. d Job xxxvii. 19. e 1 John i. 5. f 1 John iv. 16. g Jam. i. 17. h 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. i Ps. xix. 1. k Rom. i. 20. l Ps. xiv. 1. m Ps. lviii. 11.

We therefore come to thee, believing that thou art, and that thou art the powerful and bountiful rewarder of them that diligently seek thee.[n]

Yet we must own his nature to be incomprehensible.

We cannot by searching find out God, we cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection.[o]

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.[p]

Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can show forth all his praise?[q]

——And his perfections to be matchless, and without comparison.

Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?[r]

Who in the heavens can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee?[s]

Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works; for thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone.[t]

There is not any creature that has an arm like God, or can thunder with a voice like him.[u]

And that he is infinitely above us, and all other beings.

Thou art God and not man;[v] hast not eyes of flesh, nor seest as man seeth. Thy days are not as the days of man, nor thy years as man's days.[w]

As heaven is high above the earth, so are thy thoughts above our thoughts, and thy ways above our ways.[x]

All nations before thee are as a drop of the bucket, or the small dust of the balance, and thou takest up the isles as a very little thing: they are as nothing, and are counted to thee less than nothing, and vanity.[y]

Particularly, in our adorations, we must acknowledge,

1. That he is an eternal, immutable God, without beginning of days, or end of life, or change of time.

Thou art the King eternal, immortal, invisible.[z]

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God;[a] the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.[b]

Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.[c]

Thou art God, and changest not; therefore is it that we are not consumed.[d]

Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord our God, our Holy One?[e] The everlasting God, even the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who faintest not, neither art weary; there is no searching out of thine understanding.[f]

2. That he is present in all places, and there is no place in which he is included, or out of which he is excluded.

Thou art a God at hand, and not a God afar off; none can hide himself in secret places that thou canst not see him, for thou fillest heaven and earth.[g]

Thou art not far from every one of us.[h]

We cannot go any whither from thy presence, or flee from thy Spirit; if we ascend into heaven, thou art there; if we make our bed in hell, in the depths of the earth, behold thou art there; if we take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead us, and thy right hand shall hold us.[i]

3. That he has a perfect knowledge of all persons and things, and sees them all, even that which is most secret, at one clear, certain, and unerring view.

All things are naked and open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do; even the thoughts and intents of the heart.[k]

Thine eyes are in every place beholding the evil and the good; they run to and fro through the earth, that thou mayst show thyself strong on the behalf of those whose hearts are upright with thee.[m]

Thou searchest the heart, and triest the reins, that thou mayst give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.[n]

O God, thou hast searched us and known us, thou knowest our down-sitting and our up-rising, and understandest our thoughts afar off? Thou compassest our path and our lying down, and art acquainted with all our ways; there is not a word on our tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us, it is high, we cannot attain unto it.

Darkness and light are both alike to thee.[o]

4. That his wisdom is unsearchable, and the counsels and designs of it cannot be fathomed.

Thine understanding, O Lord, is infinite, for thou tellest the number of the stars, and callest them all by their names.[p]

Thou art wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.[q] Wise in heart and mighty in strength.[r]

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all;[s] all according to the counsel of thine own will.[t]

n Heb. xi. 6. o Job xi. 7. p Ps. cxlv. 3. q Ps. cvi. 2. r Exod. xv. 11. s Ps. lxxxix. 6, 8. t Ps. lxxxvi. 8, 10. u Job xl. 9. v Hos. xi. 9. w Job x. 4, 5. x Isa lv. 9. y Isa. xl. 15, 17. z 1 Tim. i. 17. a Ps. xc. 2. b Heb. xiii. 8. c Ps. cii. 25—27. d Mal. iii. 6. e Hab. i. 12. f Isa. xl. 28. g Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. h Acts xvii. 27. i Ps. cxxxix. 7—10. k Heb. iv. 12, 13. l Prov. xv. 3. m 2 Chron. xvi. 9. n Jer. xvii. 10. o Ps. cxxxix. 1—4, 6, 12. p Ps. cxlvii. 4, 5. q Isa. xxviii. 29. r Job ix. 4. s Ps. civ. 24. t Eph. i. 11.

O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.[u]

5. That his sovereignty is incontestable, and he is the Owner and absolute Lord of all.

The heavens, even the heavens, are thine,[v] *and all the hosts of them.* The earth is thine, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.[w] In thy hand are the deep places of the earth, and the strength of the hills is thine also: the sea is thine, for thou madest it, and thy hands formed the dry land.[x] All the beasts of the forest are thine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.[y] Thou art therefore a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In thy hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.[z]

Thy dominion is an everlasting dominion, and thy kingdom is from generation to generation: thou dost according to thy will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay thy hand, or say unto thee, What doest thou?[a]

6. That his power is irresistible, and the operations of it cannot be controlled.

We know, O God, that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.[b] Power belongs to thee;[c] and with thee nothing is impossible.[d]

All power is thine, both in heaven and in earth.[e]

Thou killest and thou makest alive, thou woundest and thou healest, neither is there any that can deliver out of thy hand.[f]

What thou hast promised thou art able also to perform.[g]

7. That he is a God of unspotted purity and perfect rectitude.

Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel:[h] holy and reverend is thy name;[i] and we give thanks at the remembrance of thy holiness.[k]

Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,[l] neither shall evil dwell with thee.[m]

Thou art the Rock, thy work is perfect, and all thy ways are truth and judgment; a God of truth, and in whom there is no iniquity.[n] Thou art our Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in thee.[o]

Thou art holy in all thy works,[p] and holiness becomes thy house, O Lord, for ever.[q]

8. That he is just in the administration of his government, and never did, nor ever will, do wrong to any of his creatures.

Righteous art thou, O God, when we plead with thee,[r] and wilt be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest.[s]

Far be it from God that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity; for the work of a man shall he render unto him.[t]

Thy righteousness is as the great mountains, even then when thy judgments are a great deep![u] And though clouds and darkness are round about thee, yet judgment and justice are the habitation of thy throne.[v]

9. That his truth is inviolable, and the treasures of his goodness inexhaustible.

Thou art good, and thy mercy endures for ever.[w] Thy loving-kindness is great towards us,[x] and thy truth endureth to all generations.[y]

Thou hast proclaimed thy name: The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.[z] And this name of thine is our strong tower.[a]

Thou art good and doest good,[b] good to all, and thy tender mercy is over all thy works.[c] But truly God is in a special manner good to Israel, even to them that are of a clean heart.[d]

O that thou wouldst cause thy goodness to pass before us;[e] that we may taste and see that the Lord is good;[f] and his loving-kindness may be always before our eyes.[g]

10. *et ult.* That when we have said all we can of the glorious perfections of the divine nature, we fall infinitely short of the merit of the subject.

Lo, these are but parts of thy ways, and how little a portion is heard of God! But the thunder of his power who can understand?[h]

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out; he is excellent in power and in judgment, and in plenty of justice,[i] and he is exalted far above all blessing and praise.[k]

III. We must give to God the praise of that splendour and glory wherein he is pleased to manifest himself in the upper world.

Thou hast prepared thy throne in the heavens, and it is a throne of glory, high and lifted up, and before thee the seraphims cover their faces.[m] And it is in compassion to us that thou holdest back the face of that throne, and spreadest a cloud upon it.

Thou makest thine angels spirits, and thy ministers a flame of fire.[o] Thousand thousands of them minister unto thee, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before thee[p] to do thy pleasure. The

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u Rom. xi. 33. v Ps. cxv. 16. w Ps. xxiv. 1. x Ps. xcv. 3–5. y Ps. l. 10. z Job xii. 10. a Dan. iv. 34, 35. b Job xlii. 2. c Ps. lxii. 11. d Luke i. 37. e Matt. xxviii. 18 f Deut. xxxii. 39. g Rom. iv. 21. h Ps. xxii. 2. i Ps. cxi 9 k Ps. xxx. 4. l Hab. i 13. m Ps. v. 4. n Deut. xxxii. 4. o Ps. xcii. 15. p Ps. cxlv. 17. q Ps. xciii. 5. r Jer. xii. 1. s Ps. li. 4. t Job xxxiv. 10. 11. u Ps. xxxvi. 6. v Ps. xcvii. 2. w P cxxxvi. 1. x Ps. cxvii. 2. y Ps. c. 5. z Exod. xxxiv. 6, a Prov. xviii. 10. b Ps. cxix. 68. c Ps. cxlv. 9. d Ps. lxx l. e Exod. xxxiii. 19. f Ps. xxxiv. 8. g Ps. xxvi. 3. h J xxvi. 14. i Job xxxvii. 23. k Neh. ix. 5. l Ps. ciii. 19. m I vi. 1, 2. n Job xxvi. 9. o Ps. civ. 4. p Dan. vii. 10.

excel in strength, and hearken to the voice of thy word.[q] And we are come by faith and hope, and holy love, into a spiritual communion with that innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, even to the general assembly, and church of the first-born, in the heavenly Jerusalem.[r]

IV. We must give glory to him as the Creator of the world, and the great Protector, Benefactor, and Ruler of the whole creation.

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive blessing, and honour, and glory, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure, and for thy praise, they are and were created.[s]

We worship him that made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters;[t] who spake and it was done, who commanded and it stood fast;[u] who said, Let there be light, and there was light; Let there be a firmament, and he made the firmament; and he made all very good;[v] and they continue this day according to his ordinance, for all are his servants.[w]

The day is thine, the night is also thine; thou hast prepared the light and the sun: Thou hast set all the borders of the earth; thou hast made summer and winter.[x]

Thou upholdest all things by the word of thy power,[y] and by thee all things subsist.[z]

The earth is full of thy riches; so is the great and wide sea.[a] The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season; thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.[b] Thou preservest man and beast,[c] and givest food to all flesh.[d]

Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all: and the host of heaven worshippeth thee,[e] whose kingdom ruleth over all.[f]

A sparrow falls not to the ground without thee.[g]

Thou madest man at first of the dust of the ground, and breathedst into him the breath of life, and so he became a living soul.[h]

And thou hast made of that one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hast determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.[i]

Thou art the Most High, who rulest in the kingdom of men, and givest it to whomsoever thou wilt,[k] for from thee every man's judgment proceeds.[l]

Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigns,[m] and doth all according to the counsel of his own will, to the praise of his own glory.[n]

V. We must give honour to the three persons in the Godhead, distinctly; to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that great and sacred name into which we were baptized, and in which we assemble for religious worship, in communion with the universal church.

We pay our homage to the Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One.[o]

We adore thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth;[p] and the *Eternal* Word, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made, and who in the fulness of time was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and showed his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.[q]

And since it is the will of God, that all men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father,[r] we adore him as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; herein joining with the angels of God, who were all bid to worship him.[s]

We pay our homage to the exalted Redeemer, who is the faithful witness, the first-begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth,[t] confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.[u]

We also worship the Holy Ghost the Comforter, whom the Son has sent from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father,[v] and who is sent to teach us all things, and to bring all things to our remembrance;[w] who indited the Scriptures, holy men of God writing them as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.[x]

VI. We must acknowledge our dependence upon God, and our obligations to him; as our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor.

Thou, O God, madest us, and not we ourselves, *and therefore* we are *not our own, but thine*, thy people, and the sheep of thy pasture;[y] let us therefore worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.[z]

Thou, Lord, art *the former of our bodies, and they are* fearfully and wonderfully made, and curiously wrought. Thine eyes did see our substance yet being imperfect, and in thy book were all our members written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.[a]

Thou hast clothed us with skin and flesh, thou hast fenced us with bones and sinews, thou hast granted us life and favour, and thy visitation preserves our spirit.[b]

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q Ps. ciii. 20, 21. r Heb. xii. 22, 23. s Rev. iv. 11. t Rev. xiv. 7. u Ps. xxxiii. 9. v Gen. i. 3, 6, 7, 31. w Ps. cxix. 91. x Ps. lxxiv. 16, 17. y Heb. i. 3. z Col. i. 17. a Ps. civ. 24, 25. b Ps. cxlv. 15, 16. c Ps. xxxvi. 6. d Ps. cxxxvi. 25. e Neh. ix. 6. f Ps. ciii. 19. g Matt. x. 29. h Gen. ii. 7. i Acts xvii. 26. k Dan. iv. 25. l Prov. xxix. 26. m Rev. xix. 6. n Eph. i. 11, 12. o 1 John v. 7. p Matt. xi. 25. q John i. 1, 2, 3, 14. r John v. 23. s Heb. i. 3, 6. t Rev. i. 5. u Phil. ii. 11. v John xv. 26. w John xiv. 26. x 2 Peter i. 21. y Ps. c. 3. z Ps. xcv. 6. a Ps. cxxxix. 14, 15, 16. b Job x. 11, 12.

Thou art the Father of our spirits,[c] for thou formed the spirit of man within him,[d] and madest us these souls.[e] The Spirit of God hath made us, and the breath of the Almighty hath given us life:[f] Thou puttest wisdom in the inward part, and givest understanding to the heart.[g]

Thou art God our Maker, and teachest us more than the beasts of the earth, and makest us wiser than the fowls of heaven.[h]

We are the clay, and thou our Potter; we are the work of thy hand.[i]

Thou art he that took us out of the womb, and kept us in safety when we were at our mother's breasts; we have been cast upon thee from the womb, and held up by thee. Thou art our God from our mother's[k] bowels, and therefore praise shall be continually of thee.[l]

In thee, O God, we live, and move, and have our being, for we are thy offspring.[m]

In thy hand our breath is, and thine are all our ways;[n] for the way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man that walketh to direct his steps,[o] but our times are in thy hand.[p]

Thou art the God that has fed us all our life long unto this day, and redeemed us from all evil.[q]

It is of thy mercy that we are not consumed, even because thy compassions fail not: they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.[r]

If thou take away our breath we die, and return to the dust out of which we were taken.[s]

Who is he that saith and it cometh to pass, if thou commandest it not? Out of thy mouth, O thou the Most High, both evil and good proceed.[t]

VII. We must avouch this God to be our God, and own our relation to him, his dominion over us, and property in us.

Our souls have said unto the Lord, Thou art our Lord, though our goodness extendeth not unto thee,[u] neither if we are righteous art thou the better.[v]

Thou art our King, O God:[w] *Other lords beside thee have* had dominion over us, but from henceforth by thee only will we make mention of thy name.[x]

We avouch the Lord this day to be our God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken to his voice, and give ourselves unto him, to be his peculiar people, that we may be a holy people unto the Lord our God;[y] and may be unto him for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory.[z]

O Lord, truly we are thy servants; we are thy servants, born in thy house, and thou hast loosed our bonds;[a] we are bought with a price, and therefore we are not our own,[b] but yield ourselves unto the Lord,[c] and join ourselves unto him in an everlasting covenant, that shall never be forgotten.[d]

We are thine, save us, for we seek thy precepts:[e] It is thine own, Lord, that we give thee, and that which cometh of thy hand.[f]

VIII. We must acknowledge it an unspeakable favour, and an inestimable privilege, that we are not only admitted, but invited and encouraged, to draw nigh to God in prayer.

Thou hast commanded us to pray always, with all prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, and to watch thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints,[g] to continue in prayer,[h] and in every thing by prayer and supplication to make our requests known to God.[i]

Thou hast directed us to ask, and seek, and knock; and hast promised that we shall receive, we shall find, and it shall be opened to us.[k]

Thou hast appointed us a great High Priest, in whose name we may come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may find mercy and grace to help in time of need.[l]

Thou hast assured us, that while the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, the prayer of the upright is his delight;[m] and, that he that offers praise glorifies thee;[n] and, the sacrifice of thanksgiving shall please the Lord better than that of an ox or bullock that has horns and hoofs.[o]

Thou art he that hearest prayer, and therefore unto thee shall all flesh come.[p]

Thou sayest, Seek ye my face, and our hearts answer, Thy face, Lord, will we seek.[q] For, should not a people seek unto their God?[r] Whither shall we go but to thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life.[s]

IX. We must express the sense we have of our own meanness, and unworthiness to draw near to God, and speak to him.

But will God in very deed dwell with man upon the earth, that God whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain,[t] with man that is a worm, and the son of man that is a worm?[u]

Who are we, O Lord God, and what is our Father's house, that thou hast brought us hitherto,[v] to *present ourselves before the Lord;* that we have through Christ an access by one Spirit unto the Father![w] And yet, as if that had been a small thing in thy sight, thou hast spoken concerning thy servants for a great while to come; and, Is this the manner of men, O Lord God?[v]

What is man, that thou art thus mindful of him,

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c Heb. xii. 9. d Zech. xii. 1. e Jer. xxxviii. 16. f Job xxxiii. 4. g Job xxxviii. 36. h Job xxxv. 10, 11. i Isa. lxiv. 8. k Ps. xxii. 9, 10. l Ps. lxxi. 6. m Acts xvii. 28. n Dan. v. 23. o Jer. x. 23. p Ps. xxxi. 15. q Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. r Lam. iii. 22, 23. s Ps. civ. 29. t Lam. iii. 37, 38. u Ps. xvi. 2. v Job xxxv. 7. w Ps. xliv. 4. x Isa. xxvi. 13. y Deut. xxvi. 17—19 z Jer. xiii. 11. a Ps. cxvi. 16. b 1 Cor. vi. 19.

c 2 Chron. xxx. 8. d Jer. l. 5. e Ps. cxix. 94. f 1 Chron. xxix. 16. g Eph. vi. 18. h Col. iv. 2. i Phil. iv. 6. k Matt. vii. 7. l Heb. iv. 16. m Prov. xv. 8. n Ps. l. 23. o Ps. lxix. 31. p Ps. lxv. 2. q Ps. xxvii. 8. r Isa. viii. 19. s John vi. 68. t 2 Chron. vi. 18. u Job xxv. 6. v 2 Sam. vii. 18, 19. w Eph. ii. 18.

and the son of man, that thou visitest him, and dost thus magnify him?[x]

O let not the Lord be angry, if we that are but dust and ashes, take upon us to speak unto the Lord of glory.[y]

We are not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servants;[z] nor is it meet to take the children's bread and cast it to such as we are; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table:[a] And thou art rich *in mercy* to all that call upon thee.[b]

X. We must humbly profess the desire of our hearts toward God, as our felicity and portion, and the fountain of life and all good to us.

Whom have we in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that we desire besides thee, or in comparison of thee. When our flesh and our heart fail, be thou the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever;[c] the portion of our inheritance in the other world, and of our cup in this, *and then we will say, that* the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and that we have a goodly heritage.[d]

The desire of our souls is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee; with our souls have we desired thee in the night, and with our spirits within us will we seek thee early.[e]

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so pant our souls after thee, O God; our souls thirst for God, for the living God, who will command his loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night his song shall be with us, and our prayer to the God of our life.[f]

O that we may come hungering and thirsting after righteousness,[g] for thou fillest the hungry with good things, but the rich thou sendest empty away.[h]

Our souls thirst for thee, and our flesh longs for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, that we may see thy power and thy glory, as we have seen thee in the sanctuary. Thy loving-kindness is better than life; our souls shall be satisfied with that as with marrow and fatness, and then our mouths shall praise thee with joyful lips.[i]

XI. We must likewise profess our believing hope and confidence in God, and his all-sufficiency; in his power, providence, and promise.

In thee, O God, do we put our trust, let us never be ashamed;[k] yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed.[l]

Truly our souls wait upon God, from him cometh our salvation; he only is our rock and our salvation; In him is our glory, our strength, and our refuge, and from him is our expectation.[m]

When refuge fails us, and none cares for our souls, we cry unto thee, O Lord, thou art our refuge and our portion in the land of the living.[n]

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God:[o] We will trust in thy mercy, O God, for ever and ever, and will wait on thy name, for it is good before thy saints.[p]

We have hoped in thy word, O remember thy word unto thy servants, upon which thou hast caused us to hope.[q]

XII. We must entreat God's favourable acceptance of us and our poor performances.

There be many that say, Who will show us any good? But this we say, Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and that shall put gladness into our hearts, more than they have whose corn and wine increaseth.[r]

We entreat thy favour with our whole heart,[s] for in this we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of the Lord.[t]

Hear our prayers, O Lord, give ear to our supplications; in thy faithfulness answer us;[u] and be nigh unto us in all that which we call upon thee for;[v] for thou never saidst to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.[w]

Thou that hearest the young ravens which cry,[x] be not silent to us, lest if thou be silent to us, we be like them that go down to the pit.[y]

Let our prayers be set before thee as incense, and the lifting up of our hands be acceptable in thy sight as the evening sacrifice.[z]

XIII. We must beg for the powerful assistance and influence of the blessed Spirit of grace in our prayers.

Lord, we know not what to pray for as we ought, but let thy Spirit help our infirmities, and make intercession for us.[a]

O pour upon us the spirit of grace and supplication,[b] the spirit of adoption, teaching us to cry, Abba, Father;[c] that we may find in our hearts to pray this prayer:[d]

"O send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead us, let them guide us to thy holy hill and thy tabernacles; to God our exceeding joy."[e]

O Lord, open thou our lips, and our mouth shall show forth thy praise.[f]

XIV. We must make the glory of God our highest end in all our prayers.

This is that which thou, O Lord, hast said; That thou wilt be sanctified in them that come nigh unto thee, and before all the people thou wilt be glorified;[g] we therefore worship before thee, O Lord, that

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x Ps. viii. 4. y Gen. xviii. 27, 30. z Gen. xxxii. 10. a Matt. xv. 26, 27. b Rom. x. 12. c Ps. lxxiii. 25, 26. d Ps. xvi. 5, 6. e Isa. xxvi. 8, 9. f Ps. xlii. 1, 2, 8. g Matt. v. 6. h Luke i. 53. i Ps. lxiii. 1—3, 5. k Ps xxxi. 1. l Ps. xxv. 3. m Ps. lxii. 1, 2, 5—7. n Ps. cxlii. 4, 5. o Ps. xx. 7. p Ps. lii. 8, 9. q Ps. cxix. 74, 49. r Ps. iv. 6, 7. s Ps. cxix. 58. t 2 Cor. v. 9. u Ps. cxliii. 1. v Deut. iv. 7. w Isa. xlv. 19. x Ps. cxlvii. 9. y Ps. xxviii. 1. z Ps. cxli. 2. a Rom. viii. 26. b Zech. xii. 10. c Rom. viii. 15. d 2 Sam. vii. 27. e Ps. xliii. 3, 4. f Ps. li. 15. g Lev. x. 3.

we may glorify thy name;[h] and therefore we call upon thee, that thou may deliver us, and we may glorify thee.[i]

For of thee, and through thee, and to thee, are all things.[k]

XV. We must profess our entire reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ alone for acceptance with God, and come in his name.

We do not present our supplication before thee for our righteousness,[l] for we are before thee in our trespasses, and cannot stand before thee because of them;[m] but we make mention of *Christ's* righteousness,[n] even of his only, who is the Lord our righteousness.[o]

We know that even spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God only through Christ Jesus,[p] nor can we hope to receive any thing but what we ask of thee in his name,[q] and therefore make us accepted in the Beloved;[r] that angel, who puts much incense to the prayers of saints, and offers them up upon the golden altar before the throne.[s]

We come in the name of the great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, who was touched with the feeling of our infirmities,[t] and is therefore able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, because he ever lives making intercession.[u]

Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed,[v] in whom thou hast by a voice from heaven declared thyself to be well pleased;[w] Lord, be well pleased with us in him.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE SECOND PART OF PRAYER, WHICH IS, CONFESSION OF SIN, COMPLAINTS OF OURSELVES, AND HUMBLE PROFESSIONS OF REPENTANCE.

HAVING given glory to God, which is *his* due, we must next take shame to ourselves, which is *our* due, and humble ourselves before him in the sense of our own sinfulness and vileness. And herein, also, we must *give glory to him*,[a] as our Judge, by whom we deserve to be condemned, and yet hope, through Christ, to be acquitted and absolved.

In this part of our work,

I. We must acknowledge the great reason we have to lie very low before God, and to be ashamed of ourselves when we come into his presence, and to be afraid of his wrath, having made ourselves both odious to his holiness and obnoxious to his justice.

O our God! we are ashamed, and blush to lift up our faces before thee, our God, for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.[b]

To us belong shame and confusion of face, because we have sinned against thee.[c]

Behold, we are vile, what shall we answer thee? We will lay our hand upon our mouth,[d] and put our mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope,[e] crying, with the convicted leper under the law, Unclean, unclean.[f]

Thou puttest no trust in thy saints, and the heavens are not clean in thy sight: how much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water.[g]

When our eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts, we have reason to cry out, Woe unto us, for we are undone.[h]

Dominion and fear are with thee, thou makest peace in thy high places: there is not any number of thine armies, and upon whom doth not thy light arise? How then can man be justified with God, or, how can he be clean that is born of a woman?[i]

Thou, even thou, art to be feared, and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?[k] Even thou, our God, art a consuming fire,[l] and who knows the power of thine anger?[m]

If we justify ourselves, our own mouths shall condemn us; if we say we are perfect, that also shall prove us perverse; for if thou contend with us, we are not able to answer thee for one of a thousand.[n]

If we knew nothing by ourselves, yet were we not thereby justified, for he that judgeth us is the Lord;[o] who is greater than our hearts, and knows all things.[p] But we ourselves know that we have sinned, Father, against heaven, and before thee, and are no more worthy to be called thy children.[q]

II. We must take hold of the great encouragement God has given us, to humble ourselves before him with sorrow and shame, and to confess our sins.

If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared; with thee there is mercy, yea, with our God there is plenteous redemption, and he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.[r]

Thy sacrifices, O God, are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise;[s] nay, *though* thou art the high and lofty One that inhabitest eternity, whose name is Holy;[t]

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h Ps. lxxxvi. 9. i Ps. l. 15. k Rom. xi. 36. l Dan. ix. 18.
m Ezra ix. 15. n Ps. lxxi. 16. o Jer. xxiii. 6. p 1 Pet. ii. 5.
q John xvi. 23. r Eph. i. 6. s Rev. viii. 3. t Heb. iv. 14.
u Heb. vii. 25. v Ps. lxxxiv. 9. w Matt. iii. 17.
a Josh. vii. 19. b Ezra ix. 6. c Dan. ix. 8. d Job xl. 4.
e Lam. iii. 29. f Lev. xiii. 45. g Job xv. 15, 16. h Isa. vi. 5.
i Job xxv. 2—4. k Ps. lxxvi. 7. l Heb. xii. 29. m Ps. xc. 11.
n Job ix. 3, 20. o 1 Cor. iv. 4. p 1 John iii. 20. q Luke xv. 21. r Ps. cxxx. 3, 4, 7, 8. s Ps. li. 17. t Isa. lvii. 15.

though the heaven be thy throne and the earth thy footstool, yet to this man wilt thou look, that is poor and humble, of a broken and contrite spirit, and that trembleth at thy word,[u] to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Thou hast graciously assured us, that though they that cover their sins shall not prosper, yet those that confess and forsake them shall find mercy.[v] And when a poor penitent said, I will confess my transgression unto the Lord, thou forgavest the iniquity of his sin; and for this shall every one that is godly, in like manner, pray unto thee in a time when thou mayst be found.[w]

We know, that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but thou hast said, that if we confess our sins, thou art faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.[x]

III. We must therefore confess and bewail our original corruption in the first place, that we were the children of apostate and rebellious parents, and the nature of man is depraved, and wretchedly degenerated from its primitive purity and rectitude, and our nature is so.

Lord, thou madest man upright, but they have sought out many inventions;[y] and being in honour did not understand, and therefore abode not, but became like the beasts that perish.[z]

By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: By that one man's disobedience many were made sinners,[a] and we among the rest.

We are a seed of evil-doers;[b] our father was an Amorite, and our mother a Hittite,[c] and we ourselves were called (and not mis-called) transgressors from the womb, and thou knowest we would deal very treacherously.[d]

The nature of man was planted a choice and noble vine, wholly a right seed, but it is become the degenerate plant of a strange vine;[e] producing the grapes of Sodom, and the clusters of Gomorrah.[f] How is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed![g]

Behold, we were shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mother conceive us.[h] For, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.[i] We are by nature children of wrath, because children of disobedience, even as others.[k]

All flesh have corrupted their way;[l] we are all gone aside, we are altogether become filthy, there is none that doeth good, no, not one.[m]

IV. We must lament our present corrupt dispositions to that which is evil, and our indisposedness to, and impotency in, that which is good. We must look into our hearts, and confess, with holy blushing,

1. The blindness of our understandings, and their unaptness to admit the rays of the divine light.

By nature our understandings are darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us, because of the blindness of our hearts.[n]

The things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the natural man, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.[o]

We are wise to do evil, but to do good we have no knowledge.[p] We know not, neither do we understand, we walk on in darkness.[q]

God speaketh once, yea, twice, but we perceive it not;[r] but hearing, we hear, and do not understand;[s] and we see men as trees walking.[t]

2. The stubbornness of our wills, and their unaptness to submit to the rules of the divine law.

We have within us a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, and is not in subjection to the law of God, neither indeed can be.[u]

Thou hast written to us the great things of thy law, but they have been accounted by us as a strange thing,[v] and our corrupt hearts have been sometimes ready to say, What is the Almighty that we should serve him?[w]—and that we should certainly do whatsoever thing goes forth of our own mouth.[x] For we have walked in the way of our own heart, and in the sight of our eyes,[y] fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind.[z]

Our neck hath been an iron sinew,[a] and we have made our heart as an adamant; we have refused to hearken, have pulled away the shoulder, and stopped our ears,[b] like the deaf adder, that will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.[c]

How have we hated instruction, and our heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of our teachers, nor inclined our ear to them that instructed us.[d]

3. The vanity of our thoughts, their neglect of those things which they ought to be conversant with, and dwelling upon those things that are unworthy of them, and tend to corrupt our minds.

Every imagination of the thoughts of our heart is evil, only evil, and that continually,[e] and it has been so from our youth.[f]

O how long hath those vain thoughts lodged within

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u Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. v Prov. xxviii. 13. w Ps. xxxii. 5, 6. x 1 John i. 8, 9. y Eccl. vii. 29. z Ps. xlix. 12, 20. a Rom. v. 12, 19. b Isa. i. 4. c Ezek. xvi. 3. d Isa. xlviii. 8. e Jer. ii. 21. f Deut. xxxii. 32. g Lam. iv. 1 h Ps. li. 5. i Job xiv. 4. k Eph. ii. 2. 3. l Gen. vi. 12. m Ps. xiv. 3. n Eph. iv. 18.

o 1 Cor. ii. 14. p Jer. iv. 22. q Ps. lxxxii. 5. r Job xxxiii. 14. s Matt. xiii. 14. t Mark viii. 24. u Rom. viii. 7. v Hos. viii. 12. w Job xxi. 15. x Jer. xliv. 17. y Eccl. xi. 19. z Eph. ii. 3. a Isa. xlviii. 4. b Zech. vii. 11, 12. c Ps. lviii. 4, 5. d Prov. v. 12, 13. e Gen. vi. 5. f Gen. viii. 21.

us![f] Those thoughts of foolishness which are sin.[g] *From within*, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts;[h] which devise mischief upon the bed,[i] and carry the heart with the fool's eyes into the ends of the earth.[k]

But God is not in all our thoughts,[l] it is well if he be in any: Of the Rock that begat us we have been unmindful, and have forgotten the God that formed us:[m] We have forgotten him days without number,[n] and our hearts have walked after vanity,[o] and become vain. Our inward thought having been, that our houses should continue for ever; this our way is our folly.[p]

4. The carnality of our affections, their being placed upon wrong objects, and carried beyond due bounds.

We have set those affections on things beneath, which should have been set on things above,[q] where our treasure is,[r] and where Christ sits on the right hand of God, the things which we should seek.[q]

We have followed after lying vanities, and forsaken our own mercies;[s] having forsaken the fountain of living waters, for cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.[t]

We have panted after the dust of the earth,[u] and have been full of care what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed, the things after which the Gentiles seek, but have neglected the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof.[v]

We have lifted up our souls unto vanity,[w] and set our eyes upon that which is not,[x] have looked at the things that are seen, which are temporal, but the things that are not seen, that are eternal, have been forgotten and postponed.[y]

5. The corruption of the whole man;—irregular appetites toward those things that are pleasing to sense; and inordinate passions, against those things that are displeasing; and an alienation of the mind from the principles, powers, and pleasures of the spiritual and divine life.

We are born of the flesh, and we are flesh;[z] Dust we are:[a] We have borne the image of the earthly;[b] and in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing. For if to will is present to us, yet how to perform that which is good we find not; for the good that we would do, we do it not; and the evil which we would not do, that we do.[c]

We have a law in our members warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin, that is in our members: So that when we would do good, evil is present with us,[d] and most easily besets us.[e]

The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in us, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.[f]

There is in us a bent to backslide from the living God:[g] Our hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know them?[h] They start aside like a broken bow.[i]

V. We must lament and confess our omissions of our duty, our neglect of it, and triflings in it; and, that we have done so little since we came into the world, of the great work we were sent into the world about, so very little to answer the end either of our creation or of our redemption, of our birth and of our baptism; and that we have profited no more by the means of grace.

We have been as fig-trees planted in the vineyard, and thou hast come many years seeking fruit from us, but hast found none;[k] therefore we might justly have been cut down and cast into the fire[l] for cumbering the ground:[k] Thou hast come looking for grapes, but behold wild grapes;[m] for we have been empty vines, bringing forth fruit unto ourselves.[n]

We have known to do good, but have not done it:[o] We have hid our Lord's money,[p] and therefore deserve the doom of the *wicked and slothful servant.*

We have been *unfaithful* stewards, that have wasted our Lord's goods,[q] for one sinner destroys much good.[r]

Many a price hath been put into our hand to get wisdom, which we have had no heart to,[s] or our heart has been at our left hand.[t]

Our childhood and youth were vanity,[u] and we have spent our years as a tale that is told.[v]

We have not known, or improved, the day of our visitation,[w] have not provided meat in summer, nor gathered food in harvest, though we have had guides, overseers, and rulers.[x]

We are slow of heart to *understand and* believe;[y] and whereas for the time we might have been teachers of others, we are yet to learn the first principles of the oracles of God, have need of milk, and cannot bear strong meat.[z]

We have cast off fear, and restrained prayer before God;[a] have not called upon thy name, nor stirred up ourselves to take hold on thee.[b]

We have come before thee as thy people come, and have sat before thee as thy people sit, and have heard thy words, when our hearts at the same time have been going after our covetousness.[c] And thus have we brought the torn, and the lame, and the

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f Jer. iv. 14. g Prov. xxiv. 9. h Matt. xv. 19. i Mic. ii. 1. k Prov. xvii. 24. l Ps. x. 4. m Deut. xxxii. 18. n Jer. ii. 32. o Jer. ii. 5. p Ps. xlix. 11, 13. q Col. iii. 1, 2. r Matt. vi. 21. s Jonah ii. 8. t Jer. ii. 13. u Amos ii. 7. v Matt. vi. 31—33. w Ps. xxiv. 4. x Prov. xxiii. 5. y 2 Cor. iv. 18. z John iii. 6. a Gen. iii. 19. b 1 Cor. xv. 49. c Rom. vii. 18, 19. d Rom. vii. 21, 23. e Heb. xii. 1. f Is. i. 6. g Hos. xi. 7. h Jer. xvii. 9. i Hos. vii. 16. k Luke xiii. 6, 7. l Matt. iii. 10 m Is. v. 4. n Hosea x. 1. o Jam. iv. 17. p Matt. xxv. 18, 26 q Luke xvi. 1. r Eccl. ix. 18. s Prov. xvii. 16. t Eccl. x. 2 u Eccl. xi. 10. v Ps. xc. 9. w Luke xix. 44. x Prov. vi. 7, 8 y Luke xxiv. 25. z Heb. v. 12. a Job xv. 4. b Is. lxiv. 7 c Ezek. xxxiii. 31.

sick, for sacrifice, have offered that to God, which we would not have offered to our governor; and have vowed and sacrificed to the Lord a corrupt thing, when we had in our flock a male.[d]

VI. We must likewise bewail our many actual transgressions, in thought, word, and deed.

We have sinned, Father, against thee;[e] we have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God;[f] for the God in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways, have we not glorified.[g]

Against thee, thee only, have we sinned; and have done much evil in thy sight;[h] neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he hath set before us,[i] though they are all holy, just, and good.[k]

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou us from secret faults.[l]

In many things we all offend,[m] and our iniquities are more than the hairs of our head.[n]

As a fountain casteth out her waters, so do our hearts cast out wickedness;[o] and this hath been our manner from our youth up, that we have not obeyed thy voice.[p]

Out of the evil treasure of our hearts we have brought forth many evil things.[q]

1. We must confess and bewail the workings of pride in us.

We have reason to be humbled for the pride of our hearts,[r] that we have thought of ourselves above what hath been meet, and have not thought soberly,[s] nor walked humbly with our God.[t]

We have leaned to our own understanding,[u] and trusted to our own hearts,[v] and have sacrificed to our own net.[w]

We have sought our own glory more than the glory of him that sent us,[x] and have been puffed up with that for which we should have mourned.[y]

2. The breaking out of passion and rash anger.

We have not had the rule we ought to have had over our own spirits, which have therefore been as a city that is broken down and has no walls.[z]

We have been soon angry, and anger[a] hath rested in our bosoms:[b] and when our spirits have been provoked, we have spoken unadvisedly with our lips,[c] and have been guilty of that clamour and bitterness which should have been put far from us.[d]

3. Our covetousness and love of the world.

Our conversation has not been without covetousness,[e] nor have we learned in every state to be content with such things as we have.[f]

Who can say he is clear from that love of money which is the root of all evil,[g] that covetousness which is idolatry.[h]

We have sought great things to ourselves, when thou hast said, *Seek them not.*[i]

4. Our sensuality and flesh-pleasing.

We have minded the things of the flesh more than the things of the spirit,[k] and have lived in pleasure on the earth, and have been wanton, and have nourished our hearts as in a day of slaughter.[l]

We have made provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts of it;[m] even those lusts which war against our souls:[n] and in many instances have acted as if we had been lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.[o]

When we did eat, and when we did drink, did we not eat to ourselves, and drink to ourselves?[p]

5. Our security and unmindfulness of the changes we are liable to in this world.

We have put far from us the evil day,[q] and in our prosperity have said we shall never be moved,[r] as if to-morrow must needs be as this day, and much more abundant.[s]

We have encouraged our souls to take their ease, to eat, drink, and be merry, as if we had goods laid up for many years, when perhaps this night our souls may be required of us.[t]

We have been ready to trust in uncertain riches more than in the living God;[u] to say to the gold, thou art our hope; and to the fine gold, thou art our confidence.[v]

6. Our fretfulness, and impatience, and murmuring under our afflictions, our inordinate dejection, and distrust of God and his providence.

When thou hast chastised us, and we were chastised, we have been as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke,[w] and though our own foolishness hath perverted our way, yet our heart hath fretted against the Lord;[x] and thus in our distress we have trespassed yet more against the Lord.[y]

We have either despised the chastening of the Lord, or fainted when we have been rebuked of him;[z] and if we faint in the day of adversity, our strength is small.[a]

We have said in our haste we are cast off from before thine eyes,[b] and that the Lord hath forsaken us, our God hath forgotten us,[c] as if God would be favourable no more, as if he had forgotten to be gracious, and had in anger shut up his tender mercies. This has been our infirmity.[d]

7. Our uncharitableness towards our brethren, and unpeaceableness with our relations, neigh-

d Mal. i. 8, 14. e Luke xv. 18. f Rom. iii. 23. g Dan. v. 23. h Psal. li. 4. i Dan. ix. 10. k Rom. vii. 12. l Ps. xix. 12. m James iii. 2. n Ps. xl. 12. o Jer. vi. 7. p Jer. xxii. 21. q Matt. xii. 35. r 2 Chron. xxxii. 26. s Rom. xii. 3. t Micah vi. 8. u Prov. iii. 5. v Prov. xxviii. 26. w Hab. i. 16. x John vii. 18. y 1 Cor. v. 2. z Prov. xxv. 28. a Prov. xiv. 17. b Eccl. vii. 9. c Ps. cvi. 33. d Eph. iv. 31.

e Heb. xiii. 5. f Phil. iv. 11. g 1 Tim. vi. 10. h Col. iii. 5. i Jer. xlv. 5. k Rom. viii. 5. l James v. 5. m Rom. xiii. 14. n 1 Pet. ii. 11. o 2 Tim. iii. 3, 4. p Zech. vii. 6. q Amos vi. 3. r Ps. xxx. 6. s Isa. lvi. 12. t Luke xii. 19, 20. u 1 Tim. vi. 17. v Job xxxi. 24. w Jer. xxxi. 18. x Prov. xix. 3. y 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. z Prov. iii. 11. a Prov. xxiv. 10. b Ps. xxxi. 22 c Isa. xlix. 14. d Ps. lxxvii. 7, 8, 10.

bours, and friends, and perhaps injustice towards them.

We have been verily guilty concerning our brother;[e] for we have not studied the things that make for peace, nor things wherewith we might edify one another.[f]

We have been ready to judge our brother, and to set at nought our brother, forgetting that we must all shortly stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.[g]

Contrary to the royal law of charity, we have vaunted ourselves, and been puffed up, have behaved ourselves unseemly, and sought our own; have been easily provoked, have rejoiced in iniquity,[h] and been secretly glad at calamities.[i]

We have been desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another,[k] when we should have considered one another, to provoke to love and to good works.[l]

The bowels of our compassion have been shut up from those that are in need;[m] and we have hidden ourselves from our own flesh.[n] Nay, perhaps our eye has been evil against our poor brother,[o] and we have despised the poor.[p]

And if in any thing we have gone beyond and defrauded our brother,[q] if we have walked with vanity, and our foot hath hasted to deceit, and any blot hath cleaved to our hands,[r] Lord, discover it to us, that if we have done iniquity, we may do so no more.[s]

8. Our tongue sins.

In the multitude of our words there wanteth not sin,[t] nor can a man full of talk be justified.[u]

While the lips of the righteous feed many,[v] our lips have poured out foolishness,[w] and spoken frowardness.[v]

Much corrupt communication hath proceeded out of our mouths;[x] that foolish talking and jesting which is not convenient,[y] and little of that which is good, and to the use of edifying, and which might minister grace unto the hearers.[x]

If for every idle word that men speak they must give an account, and by our words we must be justified, and if by our words we must be condemned,[z] woe unto us, for we are undone; for we are of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.[a]

What would become of us, if God should make our own tongues to fall upon us?[b]

9. Our spiritual slothfulness and decay.

We have been slothful in the business of religion, and not fervent in spirit serving the Lord.[c]

The things which remain are ready to die, and our works have not been found perfect before God.[d]

We have observed the winds, and therefore have not sown, have regarded the clouds, and therefore not reaped;[e] and with the sluggard have frighted ourselves with the fancy of a lion in the way, a lion in the streets, and have turned on our bed as the door on the hinges;[f] still crying, Yet a little sleep, a little slumber.[g]

We have lost our first love,[h] and where is now the blessedness we sometimes spake of?[i]

Our goodness hath been as the morning cloud, and the early dew, which passeth away.[k]

And that which is at the bottom of all, is the evil heart of unbelief in us, which inclines us to depart from the living God.[l]

VII. We must acknowledge the great evil that there is in sin, in our sin; the malignity of its nature, and its mischievousness to us.

1. The sinfulness of sin.

O that sin may appear sin to us, may appear in its own colours, and that by the commandment we may see it to be exceeding sinful,[m] because it is the transgression of the law.[n]

By every wilful sin we have in effect said, We will not have this man to reign over us:[o] and, Who is the Lord, that we should obey his voice?[p] And thus have we *reproached the Lord*,[q] and cast his laws behind our backs.[r]

2. The foolishness of sin.

O God, thou knowest our foolishness, and our sins are not hid from thee:[s] we were foolish in being disobedient,[t] and our lusts are foolish and hurtful.[u]

Foolishness was bound up in our hearts when we were children;[v] for though vain man would be wise, he is born like the wild ass's colt.[w]

Our way hath been our folly,[x] and in many instances we have done foolishly, very foolishly.[y]

So foolish have we been, and ignorant, and even as beasts before God.[z]

3. The unprofitableness of sin.

We have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited us not.[a]

What fruit have we now in those things whereof we have cause to be ashamed, seeing the end of those things is death?[b] And what are we profited, if we should gain the whole world, and lose our own souls?[c]

4. The deceitfulness of sin.

Sin hath deceived us, and by the commandment slain us;[d] for our hearts have been hardened through

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e Gen. xlii. 21. f Rom. xiv. 19. g Rom. xiv. 10. h 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5. i Prov. xvii. 5. k Gal. v. 26. l Heb. x. 24. m 1 John iii. 17. n Isa. lviii. 7. o Deut. xv. 9. p James ii. 6. q 1 Thess. iv. 6. r Job xxxi. 5, 7. s Job xxxiv. 32. t Prov. x. 19. u Job xi. 2. v Prov. x. 21, 32. w Prov. xv. 2. x Eph. iv. 29. y Eph. v. 4. z Matt. xii. 36, 37. a Isa. vi. 5. b Ps. lxiv. 8. c Rom. xii. 11. d Rev. iii. 2. e Eccl. xi. 4. f Prov. xxvi. 13, 14. g Prov. vi. 10. h Rev. ii. 4. i Gal. iv. 15. k Hos. vi. 4. l Heb. iii. 12. m Rom. vii. 13. n 1 John iii. 4. o Luke xix. 14. p Exod. v. 2. q Numb. xv. 30. r Neh. i. 26. s Ps. lxix. 5. t Tit. iii. 3. u 1 Tim. vi. 9. v Prov. xxii. 15. w Job xi. 12. x Ps. xlix. 13. y 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. z Ps. lxxiii. 22. a Job xxxiii. 27. b Rom. vi. 21. c Matt. xvi. 26. d Rom. vii. 11.

the deceitfulness of sin ;[e] and we have been drawn away of our own lust, and enticed.[f]

It hath promised us liberty, but has made us the servants of corruption ;[g] hath promised that we shall not surely die, and that we shall be as gods ;[h] but it has flattered us, and spread a net for our feet.[i]

The pride of our heart particularly has deceived us.[k]

5. The offence which, by sin, we have given to the Holy God.

By breaking the law we have dishonoured God,[l] and have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger[m] most bitterly.[n] And many a thing that we have done hath displeased the Lord.[o]

God has been broken by our whorish heart, and our eyes that have gone a whoring after our idols.[p]

We have tempted him, and proved him, and grieved him in the wilderness,[q] have rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit :[r] and pressed him with our iniquities, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.[s]

We have grieved the Holy Spirit of God, by whom we are sealed to the day of redemption.[t]

6. The damage which, by sin, we have done to our own souls, and, their great interests.

By our iniquities we have sold ourselves,[u] and in sinning against thee we have wronged our own souls.[v]

Our sins have separated between us and God,[w] and have kept good things from us; and by them our minds and consciences have been defiled.[x]

Our own wickedness hath corrected us, and backslidings have reproved us, and we cannot but know and see, that it is an evil thing, and bitter, that we have forsaken the Lord our God, and that his fear hath not been in us.[y]

O what fools are they that make a mock at sin![z]

VIII. We must aggravate our sins, and take notice of those things which make them more heinous in the sight of God, and more dangerous to ourselves.

We bewail before thee all our sins, and all our transgressions in all our sins.[a]

1. The more knowledge we have of good and evil, the greater is our sin.

We have known our Master's will, but have not done it, and therefore deserve to be beaten with many stripes.[b]

We have known the way of the Lord, and the judgments of our God, and yet have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds.[c]

We have known the judgment of God, that they which do such things are worthy of death, and yet have done them, and have had pleasure in them that do them.[d]

We have taught others, and yet have not taught ourselves ;[e] and while we profess to know God, we have in works denied him.[f]

2. The greater profession we have made of religion, the greater hath been our sin.

We call ourselves of the holy city, and stay ourselves upon the God of Israel, and make mention of his name, but not in truth and righteousness.[g] For we have dishonoured that worthy name by which we are called,[h] and given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.[i]

We have named the name of Christ, and yet have not departed from iniquity.[k]

3. The more mercies we have received from God, the greater has been our sin.

Thou hast nourished and brought us up as children, but we have rebelled against thee.[l]

We have ill requited thee, O Lord, as foolish people and unwise: though thou art our Father, that made us, and bought us, and established us, yet our spot has not been the spot of thy children.[m]

We have not rendered again according to the benefit done unto us.[n]

4. The fairer warning we have had from the word of God, and from our own consciences, concerning our danger of sin, and danger by sin, the greater is the sin if we go on in it.

We have been often reproved, and yet have hardened our neck,[o] and have gone on frowardly in the way of our heart.[p]

Thou hast sent to us, saying, O do not this abominable thing which I hate ; but we have not hearkened, nor inclined our ear.[q]

The word of God hath been to us precept upon precept, and line upon line ;[r] and though we have beheld our natural faces in the glass, yet we have gone away and straightway forgot what manner of men we were.[s]

5. The greater afflictions we have been under for sin, the greater is the sin if we go on in it.

Thou hast stricken us, but we have not grieved ; we have refused to receive correction, and have made our faces harder than a rock ;[t] and the rod hath not driven the foolishness out of our hearts.[u]

Thou hast chastened us with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men,[v] yet we have not turned to him that smiteth us, nor have we sought the Lord of hosts.[w]

When some have been overthrown as Sodom and Gomorrah were, we have been as brands plucked out

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e Heb. iii. 13. f James i. 14. g 2 Pet. ii. 19. h Gen. iii. 5, 6. i Prov. xxix 5. k Obad. 3. l Rom. ii. 23. m Isa. i. 4. n Hos. xii. 14. o 2 Sam. xi. *ult.* p Ezek. vi. 9. q Ps. xcv. 8, 9, 10. r Isa. lxiii. 10. s Amos. ii. 13. t Eph. iv. 30. u Isa. l. 1. v Prov. viii. 36. w Isa. lix. 2. x Tit. i. 15. y Jer. ii. 19. z Prov. xiv. 9. a Lev xvi. 16. b Luke xii. 47. c Jer. v. 4, 5. d Rom. i. 32. e Rom. ii. 21. f Tit. i. 16. g Isa. xlviii. 1, 2. h James ii. 7. i 2 Sam. xii. 14. k 2 Tim. ii. 19. l Isa. i. 2. m Deut. xxxii. 5, 6. n 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. o Prov. xxix. 1. p Isa. lvii. 17. q Jer. xliv. 4, 5. r Isa. xxviii. 13. s James i. 23, 24. t Jer. v. 3. u Prov. xxii. 15. v 2 Sam. vii. 14. w Isa. ix. 13.

of the fire, yet have we not returned unto thee, O Lord.[x] And when thy hand has been lifted up, we have not seen it.[y]

6. The more vows and promises we have made of better obedience, the greater has our sin been.

We have not performed the words of the covenant which we made before thee,[z] but, as treacherous dealers, we have dealt treacherously.[a]

Did we not say we would not transgress,[b] we would not offend any more?[c] We did, and yet we have returned with the dog to his vomit;[d] have returned to folly after God hath spoken peace.[e]

IX. We must judge and condemn ourselves for our sins, and own ourselves liable to punishment.

And now, O our God, what shall we say after this, for we have forsaken thy commandments?[f] We have sinned, what shall we do unto thee, O thou preserver of men?[g]

We know that the law curseth every one that continues not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them;[h] that the wages of every sin is death;[i] and that for these things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.[k]

And we are all guilty before God;[l] the Scripture hath concluded us all under sin,[m] and therefore thou mightst justly be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping.[n]

If thou shouldst lay righteousness to the line, and judgment to the plummet,[o] thou mightst justly separate us unto all evil, according to all the curses of the covenant, and blot out our names from under heaven.[p]

Thou mightst justly swear in thy wrath, that we should never enter into thy rest;[q] mightst justly set us naked and bare, and take away our corn in the season thereof, and our wine in the season thereof,[r] and put into our hands the cup of trembling, and make us drink even the dregs of that cup.[s]

Thou art just in whatever thou art pleased to lay upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly.[t] Nay, thou our God hast punished less than our iniquities have deserved.[u]

Thou therefore shalt be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest;[v] and we will accept of the punishment of our iniquity,[w] and humble ourselves under thy mighty hand,[x] and say, The Lord is righteous.[y]

Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?[z] No, we will bear the indignation of the Lord, because we have sinned against him.[a]

X. We must give to God the glory of his patience and long-suffering towards us, and his willingness to be reconciled.

O the riches of the patience and forbearance of God![b] How long-suffering is he to us-ward! not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.[c]

Thou hast not dealt with us according to our sin, nor rewarded us after our iniquities,[d] but thou waitest to be gracious to us.[e]

Sentence against our evil works has not been executed speedily,[f] but thou hast given us space to repent,[g] and make our peace with thee, and callest even backsliding children to return to thee, and hast promised to heal their backsliding; and therefore, Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.[h]

Surely the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation;[i] and if the Lord had been pleased to kill us, he would not as at this time have showed us such things as these.[k]

And O that this goodness of God might lead us to repentance![l] for though we have trespassed against our God, yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.[m]

Thou hast said it, and hast confirmed it with an oath, that thou hast no pleasure in the death of sinners, but rather that they should turn and live:[n] therefore will we rend our hearts, and not our garments, and turn to the Lord our God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness. Who knows if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?[o]

XI. We must humbly profess our sorrow and shame for sin, and humbly engage ourselves, in the strength of divine grace, that we will be better, and do better, for the future.

Lord, we repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,[p] to which thou hast exalted thy Son Christ Jesus, to give repentance and remission of sins.[q]

We have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now our eye seeth thee; wherefore we abhor ourselves, and repent in dust and ashes;[r] therefore will we be like the doves of the valleys, every one mourning for his iniquities.[s]

O that our heads were waters, and our eyes fountains of tears, that we might weep day and night[t] for our transgressions, and might in such a manner sow in those tears, as that at last we may reap in

x Amos iv. 11. y Isa. xxvi. 11. z Jer. xxxiv. 18. a Isa. xxiv. 16. b Jer. ii. 20. c Job xxxiv. 31. d 2 Pet. ii. 22. e Ps. lxxxv. 8. f Ezra ix. 10. g Job vii. 20. h Gal. iii. 10. i Rom. vi. 23. k Eph. v. 6. l Rom. iii. 19. m Gal. iii. 22. n Ezra ix. 14. o Isa. xxviii. 17. p Deut. xxix. 20, 21. q Ps. xcv, *ult.* r Hos. ii. 3, 9. s Isa. li. 22. t Neh. ix. 33. u Ezra ix. 13. v Ps. li. 4. w Lev. xxvi. 43. x 1 Pet. v. 6. y 2 Chron. xii. 6. z Lam. iii. 39. a Mic. vii 9. b Rom ii. 4. c 2 Pet. iii. 9. d Ps. ciii. 10. e Isa. xxx. 18. f Eccl. viii. 11. g Rev ii. 21. h Jer. iii. 22, 23. i 2 Pet. iii. 15. k Judg. xiii. 23. l Rom. ii. 4. m Ezra x. 2. n Ezek. xxxiii. 11. o Joel ii. 13 14. p Matt. iii. 2. q Acts v. 31. r Job xlii. 5, 6. s Ezek vii. 16. t Jer. ix. 1.

joy; may now go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, and may in due time come again with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us.[u]

Our iniquities are gone over our heads as a heavy burthen, they are too heavy for us;[v] but weary and heavy laden under this burthen we come to Christ, who has promised that in him we shall find rest for our souls.[w]

O that knowing every man the plague of his own heart,[x] we may look unto him whom we have pierced, and may mourn, and be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for a first-born.[y] That we may sorrow after a godly sort, with that sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of; and that we may remember, and be confounded, and never open our mouth any more, because of our shame, when thou art pacified toward us.[a]

And, O that we may bring forth fruits meet for repentance![b] and may never return again to folly![c] for, what have we to do any more with idols?[d] Sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under the law, but under grace.[e]

We have gone astray like lost sheep; seek thy servants, for we do not forget thy commandments.[f]

CHAPTER III.

OF THE THIRD PART OF PRAYER, WHICH IS PETITION AND SUPPLICATION FOR THE GOOD THINGS WHICH WE STAND IN NEED OF.

HAVING opened the wounds of sin, both the guilt of it, and the power of it, and its remainders in us; we must next seek—unto God—for the remedy, for healing and help, for from him alone it is to be expected, and he will for this be inquired of[a] by us. And now we must impress our hearts with a deep sense of the need we have of those mercies which we pray for, that we are undone, for ever undone, without them; and with a high esteem and value for them, that we are happy, we are made for ever, if we obtain them; that we may, like Jacob, wrestle with him, in prayer, as for our lives, and the lives of our souls. But we must not think in our prayers to prescribe to him, or by our importunity to move him. He knows us better than we know ourselves; and knows what he will do.[b] But thus we open our wants and our desires, and then refer ourselves to his wisdom and goodness; and hereby we give honour to him as our Protector and Benefactor, and take the way which he himself has appointed, of fetching in mercy from him, and by faith plead his promise with him; and if we are sincere herein, we are, through his grace, qualified according to the tenor of the new covenant, to receive his favours, and are to be assured that we do, and shall, receive them.[c]

And now, Lord, what wait we for? Truly our hope is even in thee. Deliver us from all our transgressions, that we may not be the reproach of the foolish.[d]

Lord, all our desire is before thee; and our groaning is not hid from thee;[e] even the groanings which cannot be uttered; for he that searcheth the heart knows what is the mind of the spirit.[f]

We do not think that we shall be heard for our much speaking; for our Father knows what things we have need of before we ask him;[g] but our Master has told us, that whatsoever we ask the Father in his name, he will give it us. And he has said, Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.[h]

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.[i]

I. We must earnestly pray for the pardon and forgiveness of all our sins.

Lord, we come to thee as the poor publican, that stood afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast; and we pray his prayer, God be merciful to us sinners. The God of infinite mercy be merciful to us.[k]

O wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin, for we acknowledge our transgressions, and our sin is ever before us. O purge us with hyssop, and we shall be clean, wash us, and we shall be whiter than snow: Hide thy face from our sins, and blot out all our iniquities.[l]

Be thou merciful to our unrighteousness, and our sins and our iniquities do thou remember no more.[m] O forgive us that great debt.[n]

Let us be justified freely by thy grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus,[o] from all those things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses.[p]

O let not our iniquity be our ruin,[q] but let the Lord take away our sin, that we may not die, not die eternally;[r] that we may not be hurt of the second death.[s]

Blot out as a cloud our transgressions, and as a thick cloud our sins; for we return unto thee because thou hast redeemed us.[t]

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u Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. v Ps. xxxviii. 4. w Matt. xi. 28. x 1 Kings viii. 38. y Zech. xii. 10. z 2 Cor. vii. 10. a Ezek. xvi. 63. b Matt. iii. 8. c Ps. lxxxv. 8. d Hos. xiv. 8. e Rom. vi. 14. f Ps. cxix. *ult.*

a Ezek. xxxvi. 37. b John vi. 6. c Mark xi. 24. d Ps. xxxix. 7, 8. e Ps. xxxviii. 9. f Rom. viii. 26, 27. g Matt. vi. 7, 8. h John xvi. 23, 24. i 1 John v. 14, 15. k Luke xviii. 13. l Ps. li. 2, 3, 7. m Heb. viii. 12. n Matt. xviii. 32. o Rom. iii. 24. p Acts xiii. 39. q Ezek. xviii. 30. r 1 Sam. xii. 19, s Rev. ii. 11. t Isa. xliv. 22.

Enter not into judgment with thy servants, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified.[u]

Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; heal our backslidings, and love us freely, and let thine anger be turned away from us, for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.[v]

Though our sins have been as scarlet, let them be as white as snow; and though they have been red like crimson, let them be as wool, that being willing and obedient, we may eat the good of the land.[w]

We will say unto God, do not condemn us,[x] but deliver us from going down to the pit, for thou hast found the ransom.[y]

For the encouraging of our faith, and the exciting of our fervency, in this petition for the pardon of sin; we may plead with God,

(1.) The infinite goodness of his nature, his readiness to forgive sin, and his glorying in it.

Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and rich in mercy to all them that call upon thee. Thou art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.[z]

Thou art a God of pardons, merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness,[a] that dost not always chide, nor keep thine anger for ever.[b]

Thou, even thou, art he that blottest out our transgressions for thine own sake, and wilt not remember our sins, which we are here to put thee in remembrance of, to plead with thee, and to declare, that we may be justified.[c]

And now, we beseech thee, let the power of our Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, the Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression. Pardon, we beseech thee, the iniquity of thy people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy; and as thou hast forgiven even until now.[d]

For who is a God like unto thee, that pardonest iniquity, and passest by the transgression of the remnant of thine heritage; who retainest not thine anger for ever, because thou delightest in mercy. O that thou wouldst have compassion upon us, and subdue our iniquities, and cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.[e]

(2.) The merit and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we rely upon as our main plea in our petition for the pardon of sin.

We know that as thou art *gracious and merciful*, so thou art the righteous God that loveth righteousness,[f] and wilt by no means clear the guilty.[g] We cannot say, Have patience with us, and we will pay thee all;[h] for we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.[i] But Jesus Christ is made of God to us righteousness;[k] being made sin for us, though he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.[l]

We have sinned, but we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.[m]

It is God that justifieth, who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, and now is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us,[n] and whose blood speaks better things than that of Abel.[o]

We desire to count every thing loss for Christ, and dung that we may win Christ, and be found in him, not having any righteousness of our own, but that which is through the faith of Christ.[p]

This is the name whereby we will call him, The Lord our righteousness.[q] In him, Lord, we believe; help thou our unbelief.[r]

Lord, remember David and all his troubles, the Son of David. Remember all his offerings, and accept his burnt sacrifice;[s] and turn not away the face of thine Anointed,[t] who by his own blood is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.[u]

Hast not thou thyself sent forth thy Son Christ Jesus, to be a propitiation for sin through faith in his blood, to deliver thy righteousness for the remission of sins, to declare at this time thy righteousness, that thou mayst be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus;[v] and we now receive the atonement.[w]

(3.) The promises God has made in his word to pardon and absolve all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel.

Lord, is not this the word which thou hast spoken, that if the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return unto the Lord, even to our God, that thou wilt abundantly pardon, wilt multiply to pardon?[x]

To thee the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against thee.[y]

Is not this the covenant which thou hast made with the house of Israel, that thou wilt take away their sins;[z] that thou wilt forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more;[a] that the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found?[b]

Hast thou not said, that if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep thy statutes, he shall live, he shall not die, all his transgressions shall not be mentioned unto him?[c]

Hast thou not appointed, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in Christ's name unto all nations?[d]

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u Ps. cxliii. 2. v Hos. xiv. 2, 3. w Isa. i. 18. x Job x. 2. y Job xxxiii. 24. z Ps. lxxxvi. 5, 15. a Neh. ix. 17 b Ps. ciii. 9. c Isa. xliii. 25, 26. d Numb. xiv. 17—19. e Mic. vii. 18, 19. f Ps. xi. 7. g Exod. xxxiv. 7. h Matt. xviii. 26. i Isa. lxiv. 6. k 1 Cor. i. 30. l 2 Cor. v. 21. m 1 John ii. 1, 2.

n Rom. viii. 33, 34. o Heb. xii. 24. p Phil. iii. 7—9. q Jer xxiii. 6. r Mark ix. 24. s Ps. xx. 3. t Ps. cxxxii. 1, 10 u Heb. ix. 12, 24. v Rom. iii. 25, 26. w Rom. v. 11. x Isa lv. 7. y Dan. ix. 9. z Rom. xi. 27. a Jer. xxxi. 34. b Jer l. 20. c Ezek. xviii. 21, 22. d Luke xxiv. 47.

Didst thou not promise, that when the sins of Israel were put upon the head of the scape goat, they should be sent away into the wilderness, into a land not inhabited?[e] And as far as the east is from the west, so far dost thou remove our transgressions from us.[f]

O remember these words unto thy servants, upon which thou hast caused us to hope.[g]

(4.) Our own misery and danger because of sin.

For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon our iniquity, for it is great;[h] for innumerable evils have compassed us about, our iniquities have taken hold upon us, so that we are not able to look up: be pleased, O Lord, to deliver us; O Lord, make haste to help us.[i]

O remember not against us former iniquities, let thy tender mercy speedily prevent us, for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; deliver us, and purge away our sins for thy name's sake.[k]

Remember not the sins of our youth, nor our transgressions; according to thy mercy remember thou us, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord.[l]

(5.) The blessed condition which they are in whose sins are pardoned.

O let us have the blessedness of those whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered; of that man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.[m]

O let us have redemption through Christ's blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of thy grace, wherein thou hast abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.[n] That being in Christ Jesus, there may be no condemnation to us.[o]

That our sins, which are many, being forgiven us, we may go in peace:[p] And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick, if the people that dwell therein be forgiven their iniquity.[q]

II. We must likewise pray, that God will be reconciled to us, that we may obtain his favour and blessing, and gracious acceptance.

(1.) That we may be at peace with God; and his anger may be turned away from us.

Being justified by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and through him let us have access into that grace wherein believers stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.[r]

Be not thou a terror to us, for thou art our hope in the day of evil.[s]

In Christ Jesus let us, who sometimes were afar off, be made nigh by the blood of Christ; for he is our peace, who hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, and that he might reconcile us to God by his cross, hath slain the enmity thereby, so making peace. Through him therefore let us, who had made ourselves strangers and foreigners, become fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.[t]

Fury is not in thee: who would set the briars and thorns against thee in battle? thou wouldst go through them, yea, thou wouldst burn them together; but thou hast encouraged us to take hold on thy strength, that we may make peace; and hast promised that we shall make peace:[u] O let us therefore acquaint ourselves with thee, and be at peace, that thereby good may come unto us.[v]

Heal us, and we shall be healed; save us, and we shall be saved; for thou art our praise.[w] Be not angry with us for ever, but receive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee. Show us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation.[x]

(2.) That we may be taken into covenant with God, and admitted into relation to him.

Be thou to us a God, and take us to be to thee a people,[y] and make us a willing people in the day of thy power.[z]

Though we are no more worthy to be called thy children;[a] for how shouldst thou put us, who have been rebellious, among the children, and give us the pleasant land? but thou hast said that we shall call thee our Father, and not turn away from thee.[b] Shall we not therefore from this time cry unto thee, Our Father, thou art the guide of our youth?[c]

Lord, we take hold of thy covenant,[d] to thee we join ourselves in a perpetual covenant;[e] O that thou wouldst cause us to pass under the rod, and bring us into the bond of the covenant,[f] that we may become thine.

Make with us an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David.[g]

(3.) That we may have the favour of God, and an interest in his special love.

We entreat thy favour, O God, with our whole hearts: be merciful unto us according to thy word,[h] for in thy favour is life;[i] yea, thy loving-kindness is better than life itself.[k]

Lord, make thy face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us; Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and give us peace.[l]

Remember us, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit us with thy salvation, that we may see the good of thy chosen, and may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, and may glory with thine inheritance.[m]

(4.) That we may have the blessing of God.

O God be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause

e Lev. xvi. 21, 22. f Ps. ciii. 12. g Ps. cix. 49. h Ps. xxv. 11. i Ps. xl. 12, 13. k Ps. lxxix. 8, 9. l Ps. xxv. 7. m Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. n Eph. i. 7, 8. o Rom. viii. 1. p Luke vii. 47, 50. q Isa. xxxiii. *ult.* r Rom. v. 1, 2. s Jer. xvii. 17. t Eph. ii. 13–16, 19. u Is. xxvii. 4, 5. v Job xxii. 21. w Jer. xvii. 14. x Ps. lxxxv. 5–7. y Heb. viii. 10. z Ps. cx. 3. a Luke xv. 19. b Jer. iii. 19. c Jer. iii. 4. d Is. lvi. 4. e Jer. l. 5. f Ezek. xx. 37. Ezek. xvi. 8. g Is. lv. 3. h Ps. cxix. 59. i Ps. xxx. 5. k Ps. lxiii. 3. l Numb. vi. 25, 26. m Ps. cvi. 4, 5.

thy face to shine upon us; yea, let God, even our own God, give us his blessing.[n]

The Lord that made heaven and earth, bless us out of Zion,[o] bless us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things by Christ Jesus.[p]

O that thou wouldst bless us indeed![q] Command thy blessing upon us, even life for evermore;[r] for thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be blessed.[s]

Let us receive the blessing from the Lord, even righteousness from the God of our salvation.[t]

Hast thou but one blessing? Yea, thou hast many blessings: bless us, even us also, O our Father;[u] yea, let the blessing of Abraham come upon us, which comes upon the Gentiles through faith;[v] and the blessing of Jacob, for we would not let thee go, except thou bless us.[w]

(5.) That we may have the presence of God with us.

If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence;[x] never leave us nor forsake us.[y]

O cast us not away from thy presence, nor ever take thy Holy Spirit away from us;[z] but let us always dwell with the upright in thy presence.[a]

III. We must pray for the comfortable sense of our reconciliation to God, and our acceptance with him.

(1.) That we may have some evidence of the pardon of our sins, and of our adoption.

O make us to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which sin hath broken may rejoice.[b]

Say unto each of us, Son, Daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.[c]

Let the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge our conscience from dead works to serve thee the living God.[d]

Let thy Spirit witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.[e]

Say unto our souls, that thou art our salvation.[f]

(2.) That we may have a well grounded peace of conscience; a holy security and serenity of mind, arising from a sense of our justification before God, and a good work wrought in us.

The Lord of peace himself give us peace, all peace, always, by all means;[g] that peace which Jesus Christ hath left with us, which he gives to us; such a peace as the world can neither give nor take away; such a peace, that our hearts may not be troubled or afraid.[h]

Let the work of righteousness in our souls be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever.[i]

Speak peace to thy people, and to thy saints, and let them not turn again to folly.[k]

O create the fruit of the lips peace, peace to them that are afar off, and to them that are nigh, and restore comfort to thy mourners.[l]

Where the sons of peace are, let thy peace find them out, and rest upon them.[m]

Cause us to hear thy loving-kindness, and to taste that thou art gracious,[n] for in thee do we trust.[o]

Let the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus;[p] and let that peace rule in our hearts, unto which we are called.[q]

Now the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.[r]

IV. We must pray for the grace of God, and all the kind and powerful influences and operations of that grace.

We come to the throne of grace, that we may obtain not only mercy to pardon, but grace to help in every time of need, grace for seasonable help.[s]

From the fulness that is in Jesus Christ, (in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell,[t]) let every one of us receive, and grace for grace.[u]

(1.) We must pray for grace to fortify us against every evil thought, word, and work. Having been earnest for the removing of the guilt of sin, that we may not die for it as a crime; we must be no less earnest for the breaking of the power of sin, that we may not die by it as a disease; but that it may be mortified in us.

O let no iniquity have dominion over us, because we are not under the law but under grace.[v]

Let the flesh be crucified in us, with its affections and lusts; that walking in the Spirit, we may not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.[w]

Let our old man be crucified with Christ, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we may not serve sin; and let not sin reign in our mortal bodies, (in our immortal souls,) that we should obey it in the lusts thereof; but being made free from sin, let us become the servants of righteousness.[x]

Let the law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, make us free from the law of sin and death.[y]

Give us grace to put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, that we may put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.[z]

That the world may be crucified to us, and we to the world, by the cross of Christ.[a]

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n Ps. lxvii. 1, 6. o Ps. cxxxiv. 3. p Eph. i. 3. q 1 Chron. iv. 10. r Ps. cxxxiii. 3. s 1 Chron. xvii. 27. t Ps. xxiv. 5. u Gen. xxvii. 38. v Gal. iii. 14. w Gen. xxxii. 26. x Exod. xxxiii. 15. y Heb. xiii. 5. z Ps. li. 11. a Ps. cxl. 13. b Ps. li. 8. c Matt. ix. 2. d Heb. ix. 14. e Rom. viii. 16, 17. f Ps. xxxv. 3. g 2 Thess iii. 16. h John xiv. 27. i Is. xxxii. 17. k Ps. lxxxv. 8. l Is. lvii. 18, 19. m Luke x. 6. n Ps. cxliii. 8. o 1 Pet. ii. 3. p Phil. iv. 7. q Col. iii. 15. r Rom. xv. 13. s Heb. iv. 16. t Col. i. 19. u John i. 16. v Rom. vi. 14. w Gal. v. 16, 24. x Rom. vi. 6, 12, 18. y Rom. viii. 2. z Eph. iv. 22, 24. a Gal. vi. 14.

And that the temptations of Satan may not overcome us.

We pray that we may not enter into temptation ;[b] or, however, that no temptation may take us but such as is common to men ; and let the faithful God never suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but with the temptation make way for us to escape.[c]

Put upon us the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Let our loins be girt about with truth, put on us the breastplate of righteousness, and let our feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Give us the shield of faith, wherewith we may quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and the helmet of salvation ; and let the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, be always ready to us.[d]

Enable us so to resist the devil, as that he may flee from us ;[e] to resist him stedfast in the faith.[f] And the God of peace tread Satan under our feet, and do it shortly.[g]

(2.) We must pray for grace to furnish us for every good thought, word, and work, that we may not only be kept from sin, but may be in every thing as we should be, and do as we should do.

Let Christ be made of God to us, not only righteousness, but wisdom, sanctification, and redemption.[h]

Let us be planted together in the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection, that as he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.[i]

[1.] That the work of grace may be wrought there, where it is not yet begun.

Lord, teach transgressors thy ways, and let sinners be converted unto thee ;[k] and let the disobedient be turned to the wisdom of the just, and make ready a people prepared for the Lord.[l]

Let those be quickened that are yet dead in trespasses and sins :[m] say unto them, Live ; yea, say unto them, Live ; and the time shall be a time of love.[n]

Open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified.[o]

By the blood of the covenant, send forth the prisoners out of the pit in which is no water, that they may turn to the strong hold, as prisoners of hope.[p]

Let the word of God prevail to the pulling down of strong holds, and the casting down of imaginations, and every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and let every thought be brought into obedience to Christ.[q]

[2.] That where it is begun it may be carried on, and at length perfected, and the foundation that is well laid may be happily built upon.

Fulfil in us all the good pleasure of thy goodness, and the work of faith with power.[r]

Let the God that has begun a good work in us, perform it unto the day of Christ.[s]

Perfect, O God, that which concerns us : thy mercy, O Lord, endures for ever ; forsake not the work of thine own hands.[t]

Lord, let thy grace be sufficient for us, and let thy strength be made perfect in weakness, that where we are weak, there we may be strong ;[u] strong in the Lord, and the power of his might.[v]

(3.) More particularly we must pray for grace, to teach and instruct us, and make us knowing and intelligent in the things of God.

Give us so to cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice for understanding, to seek for it as silver, and to search for it as for hid treasure, that we may understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.[w]

Give us all to know thee, from the least even to the greatest,[x] and to follow on to know thee ;[y] and so to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, as may be life eternal to us.[z]

Give us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, that the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and may experience what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.[a]

Open thou our eyes, that we may see the wondrous things of thy law and gospel.[b]

Give us to know the certainty of those things wherein we have been instructed ;[c] and let our knowledge grow up to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, even of the Father, and of Christ.

Deal with thy servants according to thy mercy, and teach us thy statutes ; we are thy servants, give us understanding that we may know thy testimonies. Let our cry come before thee, O Lord, give us understanding according to thy word ;[d] that good understanding which they have that do thy commandments, whose praise endureth for ever.[e]

(4.) To lead us into, and keep us in the way of truth, and if in any thing we are in an error, to rectify our mistake.

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b Matt. xxvi. 41. c 1 Cor. x. 13. d Eph. vi. 12—17. e James iv. 7. f 1 Pet. v. 9. g Rom. xvi. 20. h 1 Cor. i. 30. i Rom. vi. 4. k Ps. li. 13. l Luke i. 17. m Eph. ii. 1. n Ezek. xvi. 6, 8. o Acts xxvi. 18. p Zech. ix. 11, 12. q 2 Cor. x. 5. r 2 Thess. i. 11. s Phil. i. 6. t Ps. cxxxviii. 8. u 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. v Eph. vi. 10. w Prov. ii. 3—5. x Heb. viii. 11. y Hos. vi. 3. z John xvii. 3. a Eph. i. 17—19. b Ps. cxix. 18. c Luke i. 4. d Ps. cxix. 124, 125, 160. e Ps. cxi. 10.

Let the Spirit of truth guide us into all truth,[f] and cause us to understand wherein we have erred.[g]

That which we see not teach thou us,[h] and enable us so to prove all things, as to hold fast that which is good.[i]

Lord, grant that we may not be as children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Christ in all things, who is the head.[k]

Lord, give us so to do thy will, as that we may know of the doctrine whether it be of God;[l] and so to know the truth, that the truth may make us free, may make us free indeed.[m]

Enable us, we pray thee, to hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard, in faith, and love, which is in Christ Jesus,[n] and to continue in the things which we have learned, and been assured of.[o]

(5.) To help our memories, that the truths of God may be ready to us, whenever we have occasion to use them.

Lord, let thy Spirit teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance, whatsoever thou hast said unto us,[p] that the word of Christ may dwell richly in us, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.[q]

Lord, grant that we may give a more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we let them slip,[r] and may keep in memory what hath been preached to us, and may not believe in vain.

Lord, make us ready and mighty in the Scriptures,[s] that we may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,[t] and being well instructed into the kingdom of heaven, may, as the good householder, bring out of our treasure things new and old.

(6.) To direct our consciences, to show us the way of our duty, and to make us wise, knowing, judicious Christians.

Lord, give us a wise and an understanding heart,[u] that wisdom which, in all cases, is profitable to direct;[v] that wisdom of the prudent, which is to understand his way.[w]

This we pray, that our love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment, that we may discern things that differ, and may approve things that are excellent; that we may be sincere, and without offence unto the day of Christ, and may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.[x]

O that we may be filled with the knowledge of thy will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that we may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.[y]

Teach us thy way, O God, and lead us in a plain path, because of our observers.[z]

When we know not what to do, our eyes are up unto thee;[a] then let us hear the word behind us, saying, This is the way, walk in it, that we turn not to the right hand, or to the left.[b]

Order our steps in thy word, and let no iniquity have dominion over us.[c]

(7.) To sanctify our nature, to plant in us all holy principles and dispositions, and to increase every grace in us.

The very God of peace sanctify us wholly; and we pray God our whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; for faithful is he that calleth us, who also will do it.[d]

Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us: cast us not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit away from us: restore unto us the joy of thy salvation, and uphold us with thy free Spirit.[e]

Write thy law in our hearts, and put it in our inward part,[f] that we may be the epistles of Christ, written by the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart,[g] that the law of our God being in our heart, none of our steps may slide,[h] and we may delight to do thy will,[i] O God; may delight in the law of God after the inward man.[k]

O that we may obey from the heart that form of doctrine into which we desire to be delivered,[l] as into a mould, that our whole souls may be leavened by it;[m] and that we may not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our mind;[n] may not fashion ourselves after our former lusts in our ignorance, but, as obedient children, may be holy in all manner of conversation, as he which hath called us is holy.[o]

[1.] We must pray for faith.

Unto us, Lord, let it be given to believe;[p] for the faith by which we are saved is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.[q]

Lord, increase our faith,[r] and perfect what is lacking in it,[s] that we may be strong in faith, giving glory to God.[t]

Lord, give us so to be crucified with Christ, as that the life we now live in the flesh, we may live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us;[u] and so to bear about with us continually the dying of the Lord Jesus, as that the

f John xvi. 13. g Job vi. 24. h Job xxxiv. 32. i 1 Thess. v. 21. k Eph. iv. 14, 15. l John vii. 17. m John viii. 32, 36. n 2 Tim. i. 13. o 2 Tim. iii. 14. p John xiv. 26. q Col. iii. 16. r Heb. ii. 1. s Acts xviii. 29. t 2 Tim. iii. 17. u 1 Kings iii. 9. v Eccl. x. 10. w Prov. xiv. 8. x Phil. i. 9—11. y Col. i. 9, 10. z Ps. xxvii. 11. a 2 Chron. xx. 12. b Isa. xxx. 21.

c Ps. cxix. 133. d 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. e Ps. li. 10—12. f Heb. viii. 10. g 2 Cor. iii. 3. h Ps. xxxvii. 31. i Ps. xl. 8. k Rom. vii. 22. l Rom. vi. 17. m Luke xiii. 21. n Rom. xii. 2. o 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. p Phil. i. 29. q Eph. ii. 8. r Luke xvii. 5. s 1 Thess. iii. 10. t Rom. iv. 20. u Gal. ii. 20.

life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal bodies.[v]

As we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, enable us so to walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith as we have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.[w]

Let every word of thine profit us, being mixed with faith,[x] by which we receive thy testimony, and set to our seal that God is true.[y]

We beseech thee, work in us that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen,[z] by which we may look above the things that are seen, that are temporal, and may look at the things that are not seen, that are eternal.[a]

Enable us by faith to set the Lord always before us,[b] and to have our eyes ever toward him,[c] that we may act in every thing as seeing him that is invisible, and having a respect to the recompence of reward.[d]

Let our hearts be purified by faith,[e] and let it be our victory overcoming the world;[f] and let us be kept from fainting, by believing that we shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.[g]

[2.] We must pray for the fear of God.

Lord, work in us that fear of thee, which is the beginning of wisdom,[h] which is the instruction of wisdom,[i] and which is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.[k]

Unite our hearts to fear thy name,[l] that we may keep the commandments, which is the whole of man.[m]

O put thy fear into our hearts, that we may never depart from thee.[n] Let us all be devoted to thy fear;[o] and let us be in the fear of the Lord every day, and all the day long.[p]

[3.] We must pray that the love of God and Christ may be rooted in us; and, in order thereunto, that the love of the word may be removed from us.

Give us grace, we beseech thee, to love thee, the Lord our God, with all our heart and soul, and mind and might, which is the first and great commandment;[q] to set our love upon thee,[r] and to delight ourselves always in thee; and therein we shall have the desire of our heart.[s]

Circumcise our hearts to love thee, the Lord our God, with all our hearts, and with all our soul, that we may live.[t]

O that the love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.[u]

O that Jesus Christ may be very precious to us, as he is to all that believe,[v] that he may be in our account the chiefest of ten thousand, and altogether lovely, and that he may be our beloved and our friend:[w] that though we have not seen him, yet we may love him; and though now we see him not, yet believing, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.[x]

Let the love of Christ to us constrain us to live, not to ourselves, but to him that died for us, and rose again.[y]

And, Lord, grant that we may not love the world, nor the things that are in the world, because if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;[z] that we may set our affections on things above, and not on things that are on the earth.

[4.] We must pray that our consciences may be always tender, and that we may live a life of repentance.

Lord, take away the stony heart out of our flesh, and give us a heart of flesh.[a]

Make us afraid of all appearances of evil,[b] and careful not to give Satan advantage against us, as being not ignorant of his devices.[c]

Lord, give us the happiness which they have who fear always,[d] that when we think we stand, we may take heed lest we fall.[e]

[5.] We must pray to God to work in us charity and brotherly love.

Lord, put upon us that charity which is the bond of perfectness,[f] that we may keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;[g] and may live in love and peace, that the God of love and peace may be with us.[h]

Lord, give us to love our neighbour as ourselves, with that love which is the fulfilling of the law;[i] to love one another with a pure heart, fervently,[k] that hereby all men may know that we are Christ's disciples.[l]

And as we are taught of God to love one another, give us to abound therein more and more,[m] and, as we have opportunity, to do good to all men,[n] and as much as in us lies to live peaceably with all men,[o] always following after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.[p]

Lord, make us able to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us, and to do good to them that hate us,[q] forbearing one another, and forgiving one another in love, as Christ forgave us.[r]

[6.] We must pray for the grace of self-denial.

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v 2 Cor. iv. 10. w Col. ii. 6, 7. x Heb. iv. 2. y John iii. 33. z Heb. xi. 1. a 2 Cor. iv. 18. b Ps. xvi. 8. c Ps. xxv. 15. d Heb. xi. 26, 27. e Acts xv. 9. f 1 John v. 4. g Ps. xxvii. 13. h Prov. i. 7. i Prov. xv. 33. k Prov. xiv. 27. l Ps. lxxxvi. 11. m Eccl. xii. 13. n Jer. xxxii. 40. o Ps. cxix. 38. p Prov. xxiii. 17. q Matt. xxii. 37. r Ps. xci. 14. s Ps. xxxvii. 4. t Deut. xxx. 6. u Rom. v. 5. v 1 Pet. ii. 7. w Cant. v. 10, 16. x 1 Pet. i. 8. y 2 Cor. v. 14. z 1 John ii. 15. a Ezek. xi. 19. b 1 Thess. v. 22. c 2 Cor. ii. 11. d Prov. xxviii. 14. e 1 Cor. x. 12. f Col. iii. 14. g Eph. iv. 3. h 2 Cor. xiii. 11. i Rom. xiii. 9, 10. k 1 Pet. i. 22. l John xiii. 35. m 1 Thess. iv. 9, 10. n Gal. vi. 10. o Rom. xii. 18. p Rom. xiv. 19. q Matt. v. 44. r Col. iii. 13.

Lord, give us grace to deny ourselves, to take up our cross daily, and to follow Christ,[s] to keep under the body and bring it into subjection.[t]

Lord, keep us from being lovers of our own selves,[u] from being wise in our own conceit, and leaning to our understanding.[v]

Lord, give us to seek, not our own only, but every one his brother's welfare.[w]

And grant that none of us may live to ourselves, or die to ourselves, but whether we live or die, we may be the Lord's, and may live and die to him.[x]

[7.] We must pray for humility and meekness.

Lord, give us all to learn of Christ to be meek and lowly in heart, that we may find rest to our souls;[y] and that herein the same mind may be in us, that was also in Christ Jesus.[z]

Lord, hide pride from us,[a] and clothe us with humility,[b] and put upon us the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in thy sight is of great price.[c]

Lord, give us grace to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.[d]

Let anger never rest in our bosoms,[e] nor the sun ever go down upon our wrath;[f] but enable us to show all meekness toward all men, because we ourselves also were sometimes foolish and disobedient.[g]

Let us be clothed as becomes the elect of God, holy and beloved, with bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness and long-suffering,[h] that being merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful,[i] we may be perfect as he is perfect.[k]

[8.] We must pray for the grace of contentment and patience, and a holy indifference to all the things of sense and time.

Lord, teach us whatsoever state we are in therewith to be content;[l] let us know both how to be abased and how to abound; every where and in all things, let us be instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. And let godliness with contentment be great gain to us,[m] and a little with the fear of the Lord, and quietness, is better than great treasure, and trouble therewith.[n]

Lord, grant that our conversation may be without covetousness,[o] and we may always be content with such things as we have; still saying, The will of the Lord be done.[p]

Enable us in our patience to possess our own souls;[q] and let patience always have its perfect work, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.[r]

Lord, give us grace to weep as though we wept not, and to rejoice as though we rejoiced not, and to buy as though we possessed not, and to use this world as not abusing it, because the time is short, and the fashion of this world passeth away.[s]

[9.] We must pray for the grace of hope; a hope in God and Christ, and a hope of eternal life.

Let patience work experience in us, and experience hope, such a hope as maketh not ashamed.[t] Through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, let us have hope,[u] and be saved by hope.[v]

Let the God of Jacob be our help, and our hope always be in the Lord our God.[w]

Let us be begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,[x] and let that hope be to us as an anchor to the soul, sure and stedfast, entering into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered.[y]

Let us have Christ in us the hope of glory, and never be moved away from that hope of the gospel;[z] but enable us to give diligence unto the full assurance of hope unto the end.[a]

(8.) We must pray for grace to preserve us from sin, and all appearances of it, and approaches towards it.

Now we pray to God that we may do no evil,[b] but may be blameless and harmless as the children of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.[c]

Turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou us in thy way. Remove from us the way of lying, and grant us thy law graciously.[d]

Incline not our hearts to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with them that work iniquity, and let us not eat of their dainties.[e]

O cleanse us from our secret faults; keep back thy servants also from presumptuous sins;[f] let them not have dominion over us, but let us be upright, and innocent from the great transgressions; and grant that hereby we may prove ourselves upright before thee, by keeping ourselves from our own iniquity.[g]

Let the word be hid in our hearts, that we may not sin against thee,[h] and thy grace be at all times sufficient for us,[i] ready to us, and mighty in us, and never give us up to our own hearts' lust, to walk in our own counsels.[k]

Enable us to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise;[l] so circumspectly that we may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion[m] to blaspheme that worthy name by which we are called,[n]

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s Matt. xvi. 24. t 1 Cor. ix. 27. u 2 Tim. iii. 2. v Prov. iii. 5, 7. w 1 Cor. x. 24. x Rom. xiv. 7, 8. y Matt. xi. 29. z Phil. ii. 5. a Job xxxiii. 17. b 1 Pet. v. 5. c 1 Pet. iii. 4. d Eph. iv. 1, 2. e Eccl. vii. 9. f Eph. iv. 26. g Tit. iii. 2, 3. h Col. iii. 12. i Luke vi. 26. k Matt. v. *ult.* l Phil. iv. 11, 12. m 1 Tim. vi. 6. n Prov. xv. 16. o Heb. xiii. 5. p Acts xxi. 14. q Luke xxi. 19. r James i. 4. s 1 Cor. vii. 29—31.

t Rom. v. 4, 5. u Rom. xv. 4. v Rom. viii. 24. w Ps. cxlvi. 5. x 1 Pet. i. 3. y Heb. vi. 19, 20. z Col. i. 23, 27. a Heb. vi. 11. b 2 Cor. xiii. 7. c Phil. ii. 15. d Ps. cxix. 37, 29. e Ps. cxli. 4. f Ps. xix. 12, 13. g Ps. xviii. 23. h Ps. cxix. 11. i 2 Cor. xii. 9. k Ps. lxxxi. 12. l Eph. v. 15. m 2 Cor. xi. 12. n James ii. 7.

and with well-doing may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men,[o] and may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour,[p] in all things.

(9.) We must pray for grace to enable us both to govern our tongues well, and to use them well.

Lord, enable us to take heed to our ways, that we offend not with our tongue,[q] and to keep our mouth as it were with a bridle, that it may not be hasty to utter any thing.[r]

Set a watch, O Lord, before our mouth, keep the door of our lips,[s] that we may not offend in word.[t]

Let our speech be always with grace seasoned with salt,[u] and enable us always out of the good treasure of our heart to bring forth good things.[v] Let our mouth speak wisdom, and our tongue talk of judgment;[w] and let not thy words depart out of our mouth, nor out of the mouth of our seed, or our seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever.[x]

Enable us always to open our mouth with wisdom, and let the law of kindness be in our tongue.[y] Give us to know what is acceptable, that our tongues may be as choice silver, and our lips may feed many.[z]

(10.) We must pray for grace to direct and quicken us to, and to strengthen and assist us in, our duty, in the whole course of our conversation.

Let the grace of God, which hath appeared to us, and to all men, bringing salvation, effectually teach us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.[a]

[1.] That we may be prudent and discreet in our duty.

Thou hast said, If any man lack wisdom, he must ask it of God, who gives to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.[b] Lord, we want wisdom; make us wise as serpents, and harmless as doves;[c] that wisdom may make our face shine,[d] and may be better to us than weapons of war.[e]

Enable us to walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time.[f]

Give us to order all our affairs with discretion,[g] and to behave ourselves wisely, in a perfect way with a perfect heart.[h]

[2.] That we may be honest and sincere in our duty.

Let our wisdom be not that from beneath, which is earthly, sensual, devilish, but wisdom from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.[i]

O that we may always have our conversation in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God.[k]

Lord, uphold us in our integrity, and set us before thy face for ever,[l] and let integrity and uprightness preserve us, for we wait on thee.[m]

Let our hearts be sound in thy statutes, that we be not ashamed;[n] and let our eye be single, that our whole body may be full of light.[o]

[3.] That we may be active and diligent in our duty.

Lord, quicken us to work the works of him that sent us, while it is day, because the night comes, wherein no man can work;[p] and what good our hand finds to do, to do it with all our might, because there is no work or knowledge in the grave, whither we are going.[q]

Lord, grant that we may never be slothful in any good business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;[r] stedfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.[s]

Lord, make us zealously affected in every good work,[t] and what we do, enable us to do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men.[u]

Lord, enable us to do the work of every day in its day, according as the duty of the day requires,[v] redeeming the time, because the days are evil,[w] that when our Lord comes, he may find us so doing.[x]

[4.] That we may be resolute and courageous in our duty, as those who know, that though we may be losers for Christ, we shall not be losers by him in the end.

Lord, teach us to endure hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ,[y] that we may not fear the reproach of men, or their revilings,[z] nor be ashamed of Christ, or of his words,[a] knowing whom we have believed, even one who is able to keep what we have committed to him against that day.[b]

Though bonds and afflictions should abide us, Lord, grant that none of these things may move us, and that we may not count life itself dear to us, so we may finish our course with joy.[c]

Enable us in all things to approve ourselves to God, and then to pass by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, clad with the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,[d] as those who account it a very small thing to be judged of man's judgment, for he that judgeth us is the Lord.[e]

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o 1 Pet. ii. 15. p Tit. ii. 10. q Ps. xxxix. 1. r Eccl. v. 2.
s Ps. cxli. 3. t Jam. iii. 2. u Col. iv. 6. v Matt. xii. 35.
w Ps. xxxvii. 30. x Is. lix. 21. y Prov. xxxi. 26. z Prov. x. 32, 20, 21. a Tit. ii. 11—14. b Jam. i. 5. c Matt. x. 16.
d Eccl. viii. 1. e Eccl. ix. 18. f Col. iv. 5. g Ps. cxii. 5.
h Ps. ci. 2. i Jam. iii. 15, 17. k 2 Cor. i. 12. l Ps. xli. 12.
m Ps. xxv. 21. n Ps. cxix. 80. o Matt. vi. 22. p John ix. 4.
q Eccl. ix. 10. r Rom. xii. 11. s 1 Cor. xv. 58. t Gal. iv. 18.
u Col. iii. 23. v Ezra iii. 4. w Eph. v. 16. x Luke xii. 43.
y 2 Tim. ii. 3. z Isa. li. 7. a Mark viii. 38. b 2 Tim. i. 12.
c Acts xx. 23, 24. d 2 Cor. vi. 4, 7. e 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

[5.] That we may be pleasant and cheerful in our duty.

Lord, enable us to rejoice evermore,[f] to rejoice in the Lord always, because he hath again said unto us, Rejoice;[g] that we may go on our way rejoicing,[h] may eat our bread with joy, and drink our wine with a merry heart, as we shall have reason to do, if God now accepteth our works.[i]

Give us grace to serve thee, the Lord our God, with joyfulness and gladness of heart in the abundance of all things;[k] and to sing in the ways of the Lord, because great is the glory of our God.[l]

Let us have that cheerfulness of heart which doeth good like a medicine,[m] and deliver us from that heaviness which maketh the heart stoop,[n] and that sorrow of the world which worketh death.[o]

[6.] That we may do the duty of every condition of life, every event of providence, and every relation wherein we stand.

Lord, enable us in a day of prosperity to be joyful, and in a day of adversity to consider, because God hath set the one over against the other,[p] to add to our knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience.[q]

Give us grace to abide with thee in the calling wherein we are called;[r] and in all our ways to acknowledge thee, and be thou pleased to direct our steps.[s]

Let those who are called, being servants, be the Lord's freemen;[t] and those who are called, being free, be Christ's servants.

Let all in every relation dwell together in unity, that it may be as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion.[u] O that we may dwell together as joint heirs of the grace of life, that our prayers may not be hindered.[v]

Give us grace to honour all men, to love the brotherhood, to fear God,[w] and to be subject to the higher powers, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.[x]

[7.] That we may be universally conscientious.

O that we may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.[y]

O that our ways were directed to keep thy commandments! And then shall we not be ashamed, when we have a respect to them all.[z]

Teach us, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and we shall keep it to the end. Give us understanding, and we shall keep thy law, yea, we shall observe it with our whole heart. Make us to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do we delight. Incline our hearts unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.[a]

Grant us, we pray thee, according to the riches of thy glory, that we may be strengthened with all might by thy Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, and that we being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and may know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and be filled with a divine fulness,[b] and may partake of a divine nature.[c]

And let the love of Christ constrain us to live not to ourselves, but to him that died for us, and rose again.[d]

(11.) We must pray for grace to make us wiser and better every day than other.

Lord, give us to increase with the increases of God;[e] to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;[f] to hold on our way, and having clean hands, to grow stronger and stronger.[g]

Let our path be as the shining light, which shines more and more to the perfect day.[h]

We have not yet attained, nor are we already perfect; Lord, grant that therefore forgetting the things that are behind, we may reach forth to those things that are before, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.[i]

Be thou as the dew unto us, that we may grow as the lily, and cast forth our roots as Lebanon; that our branches may spread, and our beauty be as the olive-tree.[k] And let the Sun of Righteousness arise upon us with healing under his wings, that we may go forth and grow up as the calves of the stall.[l]

(12.) We must pray for effectual support and comfort under all the crosses and afflictions that we meet with in this world.

We know that we are born to trouble as the sparks fly upward; but in six troubles be thou pleased to deliver us, and in seven let no evil touch us.[m]

Let the eternal God be our refuge, and underneath be the everlasting arms,[n] that the spirit thou hast made may not fail before thee, nor the soul tha thou hast redeemed.[o]

Let us be strengthened with all might, accordin to thy glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness.[p]

Let thy statutes be our songs in the house of ou pilgrimage; and let thy testimonies which we hav taken as a heritage for ever, be always the rejoicing of our hearts.[q]

When we are troubled on every side, yet let u not be distressed, and when we are perplexed, let u not be in despair,[r] but as sorrowful, and yet alway rejoicing; as having nothing, and yet possessing a things.[s]

f 1 Thess. v. 16. g Phil. iv. 4. h Acts viii. 39. i Eccl. ix. 7 k Deut. xxviii. 47. l Ps. cxxxviii. 5. m Prov. xvii. 22. n Prov. xii. 25. o 2 Cor. vii. 10. p Eccl. vii. 14. q 2 Pet. i. 6. r 1 Cor. vii. 20. s Prov. v. 6. t 1 Cor. vii. 21. u Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 3. v 1 Pet. iii. 7. w 1 Pet. ii. 17. x Rom. xiii. 1, 5. y Col. iv. 12. z Ps. cxix. 5, 6. a Ps. cxix. 33—36. b Eph. iii. 16—19.

c 2 Pet. i. 4. d 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. e Col. ii. 19. f 2 Pet. iii. g Job xvii. 9. h Prov. iv. 18. i Phil. iii. 12—14. k H xiv. 5, 6. l Mal. iv. 2. m Job v. 7, 19. n Deut. xxxiii. o Isa. lvii. 16. p Col. i. 11. q Ps. cxix. 54, 111. r 2 Cor. iv s 2 Cor. vi. 10.

(13.) We must pray for grace to preserve us to the end, and to fit us for whatever lies before us betwixt this and the grave.

Lord, deliver us from every evil work, and preserve us to thy heavenly kingdom,[t] being kept from falling, that we may be presented faultless at the coming of thy glory with exceeding joy.[u]

Lord, make us to increase and abound in love one towards another, and towards all men, that our hearts may be established unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.[v]

If Satan desire to have us, that he may sift us as wheat, yet let Christ's intercession prevail for us, that our faith fail not.[w]

Till we are taken out of the world, let us be kept from the evil, and sanctified through thy truth; thy word is truth.[x]

Build us up, we pray thee, in our most holy faith, and keep us in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.[y]

Grant that we may continue to call upon thee as long as we live,[z] and till we die may never remove our integrity from us; and that our righteousness we may hold fast, and never let it go, and our hearts may not reproach us so long as we live.[a]

(14.) We must pray for grace to prepare us for death, and to carry us well through our dying moments.

Lord, make us to know our end, and the measure of our days, what it is, that we may know and consider how frail we are; and that our days are as a hand-breadth, and that every man at his best state altogether vanity,[b] and our days upon earth are as a shadow, and there is no abiding.[c]

Lord, teach us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom,[d] and make us to consider our latter end.[e]

Lord, make us always ready, with our loins girded about, and our lights burning, because the Son of man comes at an hour that we think not.[f]

Keep us all the days of our appointed time, waiting till our change comes; and then shalt thou call, and we will answer.[g]

Bring us to our grave as a shock of corn in its season;[h] satisfy us with life, whether it be longer or shorter, and show us thy salvation.[i]

And when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, be thou with us, that we may fear no evil, let thy rod and thy staff comfort us.[k]

Let goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our life, and let us dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.[l] Mercy and truth be with us.[m]

Redeem our souls from the power of the grave, and receive us;[n] guide us by thy counsel, and afterwards receive us to glory.[o]

(15.) We must pray for grace to fit us for heaven, and that we may at length be put in possession of eternal life.

Lord, make us meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light;[p] let God himself work in us to the self-same thing, and give us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.[q]

O that we may now have our conversation in heaven; that we may from thence with comfort look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus, who shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.[r]

O that now we may set our affections on things above, and that our life may be hid with Christ in God, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also may appear with him in glory;[s] that when he shall appear we may be like him, and may see him as he is,[t] may behold his face in righteousness, and when we awake may be satisfied with his likeness.[u]

When we fail, let us be received into everlasting habitations,[v] in the city that hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God,[w] that we may be together for ever with the Lord, to see as we are seen, and know as we are known.[x]

And in the mean time help us to comfort ourselves and one another with these words; and having this hope in us, to purify ourselves even as Christ is pure.[y]

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort our hearts, and stablish us in every good word and work.[z]

(16.) We must pray for the good things of life, with an humble submission to the will of God.

Lord thou hast told us that godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come:[a] and that if we seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, other things shall be added to us;[b] and therefore we cast all our care about these things upon thee, who carest for us,[c] for our heavenly Father knows that we have need of all these things.[d]

[1.] We must pray to be preserved from the calamities to which we are exposed.

Thou, Lord, art our refuge, and our fortress, and under thy wings will we trust, thy truth shall be our shield and buckler; let us therefore not be afraid

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2 Tim. iv. 18 u Jude 24. v 1 Thess. iii. 12, 13. w Luke i. 31, 32. x John xvii. 15, 17. y Jude 20, 21. z Ps. cxvi. 2. ob xxvii. 5, 6. b Ps. xxxix. 4, 5. c 1 Chron. xxix. 15. s. xc. 12. e Deut. xxxii. 29. f Luke xii. 35, 40. g Job 14, 15. h Job v. 26. i Ps. xci. 16. k Ps. xxiii. 4. l Ps. xxiii. 6. m 2 Sam. xv. 20. n Ps. xlix. 15. o Ps. lxxiii. 24. p Col. i. 12. q 2 Cor. v. 5. r Phil. iii. 20, 21. s Col. iii. 2–4. t 1 John iii. 2. u Ps. xvii. 15. v Luke xvi. 9. w Heb. xi. 10. x 1 Cor. xiii. 12. y 1 John iii. 3. z 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17. a 1 Tim. iv. 8. b Matt. vi. 33. c 1 Pet. v. 7. d Matt. vi. 32.

for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day. Having made the Lord our refuge, and the Most High our habitation, let no evil befall us, nor any plague come nigh our dwelling.[e]

Let the Lord be our keeper, even he that keepeth Israel, and neither slumbers nor sleeps. Let the Lord be our shade on our right hand, that the sun may not smite us by day, nor the moon by night; let the Lord preserve us from all evil; the Lord preserve our souls; the Lord preserve our going out and coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore.[f]

Lord, make a hedge round about us, about our houses, and about all that we have round about;[g] and take sickness away from the midst of us.[h]

[2.] We must pray to be supplied with the comforts and supports we daily stand in need of.

O that the beauty of the Lord our God may be upon us, prosper thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.[i] Save now, we beseech thee, O Lord; O Lord, we beseech thee, send now prosperity.[k]

Let our sons be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace: let our garners be full, affording all manner of store;[l] and let there be no breaking in or going out, no complaining in our streets. Happy is the people that is in such a case, yea, rather, happy is the people whose God is the Lord.

Let us be blessed in the city, and blessed in the field, let our basket and our store be blessed, and let us be blessed when we come in, and when we go out.[m]

Let thy good providence so order all events concerning us, that they may be made to work for good to us, as thou hast promised they shall to all that love thee, and are called according to thy purpose.[n]

Give us to trust in the Lord, and do good, and then we shall dwell in the land, and verily we shall be fed; and be thou pleased to bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon day.[o]

Let us be hid from the scourge of the tongue, and not be afraid of destruction when it cometh; let us be in league with the stones of the field, and let the beasts of the field be at peace with us; let us know that our tabernacle is in peace, and let us visit our habitation, and not sin.[p]

And if God will be with us, and will keep us in the way that we go, during our pilgrimage in this world, and will give us bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that we may come to our heavenly Father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be our Lord.[q]

(17.) We must plead the promises of God for the enforcing of all our petitions, put these promises in suit, and refer ourselves to them.

Lord, thou hast given us many exceeding great and precious promises,[r] which are all yea and amen in Christ.[s] Now be it unto thy servants according to the word which thou hast spoken.[t]

Give us to draw water with joy out of those wells of salvation,[u] to suck and be satisfied from those breasts of consolation;[v] and now, O Lord God, let the word which thou hast spoken concerning thy servants be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.[w]

Deal with us according to the tenor of the everlasting covenant, which is well ordered in all things, and sure, and which is all our salvation and all our desire.[x]

Look upon us, and be merciful to us, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name,[y] and do more for us than we are able to ask or think,[z] and supply all our needs according to thy riches in glory by Christ Jesus.[a]

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE FOURTH PART OF PRAYER, WHICH IS THANKSGIVING FOR THE MERCIES WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM GOD, AND TH MANY FAVOURS OF HIS WE ARE INTERESTED IN, AND HAV HOPE FOR BENEFIT BY.

Our errand at the throne of grace is not onl to seek the favour of God, but to give un him the glory due unto his name, and that n only by an awful adoration of his infinite pe fections, but by a grateful acknowledgment his goodness to us, which cannot indeed ac any thing to his glory, but he is pleased to acce of it, and to reckon himself glorified by it, if come from a heart that is humbly sensible of own unworthiness to receive any favour fr God, that values the gifts, and loves the giver them.

We must stir up ourselves to praise G with the consideration both of the reason a of the encouragement we have to praise him.

Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto t do we give thanks, for that thy name is near wondrous works declare.[a]

Let our souls bless the Lord, and let all tha within us bless his holy name; yea, let our s bless the Lord, and not forget any of his benefits

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e Ps. xci. 2, 4, 9, 10. f Ps. cxxi. 4—8. g Job i. 10. h Exod. xxiii. 25. i Ps. xc. 17. k Ps. cxviii. 25. l Ps. cxliv. 12, 13. m Deut. xxviii. 3, 5, 6. n Rom. viii. 28. o Ps. xxxvii. 3, 6. p Job v. 21, 23, 24. q Gen. xxviii. 20, 21. r 2 Pet. i. 4. s 2 Cor. i. 20. t Luke i. 38. u Isa. xii. 3. v Isa. lxvi. 11. w 2 vii. 25. x 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. y Ps. cxix. 132. z Eph. i a Phil. iv. 19.

a Ps. lxxv. 1. b Ps. ciii. 1, 2.

We will praise the Lord, for it is good, it is pleasant, and praise is comely for the upright;[c] yea, it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High; to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.[d]

We will extol thee our God, O King, and will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will we bless thee, and will praise thy name for ever and ever; we will abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and sing of thy righteousness.[e]

We will sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints. O let Israel rejoice in him that made him, let the children of Zion be joyful in their King; let the saints be joyful in glory, and let the high praises of God be in their hearts, and in their mouths.[f]

While we live we will bless the Lord, and will sing praise unto our God while we have any being;[g] and when we have no being on earth, we hope to have a being in heaven, to be doing it better.

We are here through Jesus Christ to offer the sacrifice of praise to thee, which we desire to do continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to thy name.[h] And thou hast said, that he that offers praise glorifies thee,[i] and that this also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.[k]

We will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses.[l]

(1.) We must be particular in our thanksgiving to God for the discoveries which he has made to us in his word of the goodness of his nature.

We give thanks unto the God of gods, unto the Lord of Lords, for his mercy endures for ever.[m]

Thy goodness is thy glory, and it is for that which all thy works do praise thee, and thy saints do bless thee.[n]

Thou art gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy,[o] and hast told us, that thou dost not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men, but though thou cause grief, yet thou wilt have compassion, according to the multitude of thy mercies.[p]

Thou takest pleasure in them that fear thee, in them that hope in thy mercy.[q]

(2.) For the many instances of goodness in his providence relating to our bodies, and the life that now is; and this,

With reference to all the creatures, and the world of mankind in general.

Thou hast stretched out the heavens like a curtain,[r] and in them thou hast set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.[s] And thou causest thy sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendest rain on the just and on the unjust.[t]

When we consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the sun, the moon, and the stars, which thou hast ordained, Lord, what is man, that thou thus visitest him.[u] For truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun:[v] all the glory be to the Father of lights,[w] who commandeth the morning, and causeth the day-spring to know his place.[x]

Thou didst not leave thyself without witness among the heathen, in that thou didst good, and gavest them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness.[y]

Thou coverest the heavens with clouds, and preparest rain for the earth, and makest grass to grow upon the mountains. Thou givest to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.[z]

Thou causest it to rain on the wilderness, where there is no man, to satisfy the desolate and waste ground.[a]

Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it, thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water; thou preparest them corn when thou hast so provided for it; thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly, thou settlest the furrows thereof, thou makest it soft with showers, thou blessest the springing thereof; thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness.[b]

Thou sendest the springs into the valleys which run among the hills; and they give drink to every beast of the field; and by them the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.[c]

Thou hast laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever, and settest bounds to the waters of the sea, that they turn not again to cover the earth;[d] thou hast shut up the sea with doors, and broken up for it thy decreed place, saying, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, here shall thy proud waves be stayed.[e] And thou hast made good what thou hast sworn, that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth.[f]

Thy covenant of the day and of the night is not broken,[g] but still thou givest the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars

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c Ps. cxlvii. 1. d Ps. xcii. 1, 2. e Ps. cxlv. 1, 2, 7. f Ps. lix. 1, 2, 5, 6. g Ps. cxlvi. 2. h Heb. xiii. 15. i Ps. l. *ult.* k Ps. lxix. 31. l Isa. lxiii. 7. m Ps. cxxxvi. 2, 3. n Ps. cxlv. 10. o Ps. cxlv. 8. p Lam. iii. 32, 33. q Ps. cxlvii. 11. r Ps. civ. 2. s Ps. xix. 4, 5. t Matt. v. 45. u Ps. viii. 3, 4. v Eccl. xi. 7. w Jam. i. 17. x Job xxxviii. 12. y Acts xiv. 17. z Ps. cxlvii. 8, 9. a Job xxxviii. 26, 27. b Ps. lxv. 9—11. c Ps. civ. 10—12. d Ps. civ. 5, 9. e Job xxxviii. 8, 11. f Isa. liv. 9. g Jer. xxxiii. 20.

for a light by night,[h] and art faithful to that covenant of providence, that while the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.[i]

The heaven, even the heavens are thine, but the earth thou hast given to the children of men,[k] and thou hast put all things under their feet, and made them to have dominion over the works of thy hands;[l] so that the fear of man and the dread of man is upon every beast of the earth, and upon the fowl of the air, and into his hand they are delivered,[m] because thou hast a favour to him, and thy delights were with the sons of men.[n]

Thou causest the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that thou mayst bring forth food out of the earth, wine that makes glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengthens man's heart.[o]

Thou givest to all life, and breath, and all things,[p] and the earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy.[q]

All the creatures wait upon thee, that thou mayst give them their meat in due season; that thou givest them they gather, thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good: thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, thou renewest the face of the earth. This thy glory shall endure for ever, and thou rejoicest in these works.[r]

It is through thy goodness, O Lord, that as one generation of mankind passeth away, another generation comes,[s] and that thou hast not blotted out the name of that corrupt and guilty race from under heaven.[t]

(3.) With reference to us in particular; we must give thanks that he has made us reasonable creatures, capable of knowing, loving, serving, and enjoying him, and that he has not made us as the beasts that perish.

We will praise thee, for we are fearfully and wonderfully made, and that our souls, our noble part, know right well;[u] for what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?[v]

Thou hast made us of that rank of beings which is little lower than the angels, and is crowned with glory and honour;[w] for there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding,[x] and the spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord.[y]

Our bodies are capable of being the temples of the Holy Ghost, and our souls of having the Spirit of God dwell in them; we therefore glorify thee with our bodies and with our spirits which are thine.[z]

Thou, Lord, hast formed us for thyself, that we might show forth thy praise.[a]

h Jer. xxxi. 35. i Gen. viii. 22. k Ps. cxv. 16. l Ps. viii. 6. m Gen. ix. 2. n Prov. viii. 31. o Ps. civ. 14, 15. p Acts xvii. 25. q Ps. cxix. 64. r Ps. civ. 27, 28, 30, 31. s Eccl. i. 4. t Deut. xxix. 20. u Ps. cxxxix. 14. v 1 Cor. ii. 11. w Ps. viii. 5. x Job xxxii. 2. y Prov. xx. 27. z 1 Cor. vi. 10, 20.

(1.) We must give thanks for our preservation, that our lives are prolonged, and that the use of our reason and understanding, our limbs and senses, are continued to us.

It was owing to thy good providence that we died not from the womb, and did not give up the ghost when we came out of the belly; that the knees prevented us, and the breasts that we should suck.[b]

Though we were called transgressors from the womb,[c] yet by thy power we have been born from the belly, and carried from the womb;[d] and thou holdest our souls in life, and sufferest not our foot to be moved.[e]

All our bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee,[f] for thou keepest all our bones, not one of them is broken.[g]

We lay us down and sleep, for thou, Lord, makest us to dwell in safety.[h]

Thou hast given thine angels a charge concerning us, to keep us in all our ways, to bear us up in their hands, lest we dash our foot against a stone.[i] And they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the good of them that shall be heirs of salvation.[k]

(2.) For signal recoveries from danger by sickness or otherwise.

When perhaps there has been but a step between us and death,[l] and we have received a sentence of death within ourselves,[m] and have been ready to say, in the cutting off of our days we should go to the gates of the grave, and were deprived of the residue of our years, yet thou hast in love to our souls delivered them from the pit of corruption, and cast all our sins behind thy back.[n]

When the sorrows of death have compassed us, and the pains of hell have got hold upon us, we have called upon the name of the Lord, and have found, that gracious is the Lord, and righteous, yea our God is merciful; we have been brought low, and he hath helped us, and hath delivered our soul from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling. We will therefore walk before the Lord in the land of the living.[o]

(3.) For the supports and comforts of this life, which have hitherto made the land of our pilgrimage easy and pleasant to us.

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with his benefits, even the God of our salvation.[p]

Thou makest us to lie down in green pastures, thou feedest us beside the still waters; thou preparest a table for us in the presence of our enemies, thou anointest our head, and our cup runs over.[q]

It may be we were sent forth without purse or scrip, but lacked we any thing? Nothing, Lord.[r]

The candle of God hath shined upon our head,

a Isa. xliii. 21. b Job iii. 11, 12. c Isa. xlviii. 8. d Isa. xlvi. 3. e Ps. lxvi. 9. f Ps. xxxv. 10. g Ps. xxxiv. 20. h Ps. iii. 5. i Ps. xci. 11, 12. k Heb. i. 14. l 1 Sam. xx. 3. m 2 Cor. i. 9. n Isa. xxxviii. 10, 17. o Ps. cxvi. 3–6, 9. p Ps. lxviii. 19. q Ps. xxiii. 2, 5. r Luke xxii. 35.

and by his light we have walked through darkness, and the secret of God has been in our tabernacle.[a]

Thou hast given us all things richly to enjoy,[t] and into our hands hast brought plentifully.

Many a time we have eaten and been filled, and have delighted ourselves with thy great goodness.[u]

When we remember all the way which the Lord our God hath led us for so many years in this wilderness,[v] we must here set up a stone *and call it Ebenezer*, for hitherto the Lord hath helped us.[w]

[4.] For success in our callings and affairs, comfort in relations, and comfortable places of abode.

It is God that girdeth us with strength, and maketh our way perfect,[x] that hath blessed the work of our hands,[y] and it may be so, that though our beginning was small, yet our latter end hath greatly increased.[z]

Our houses have been safe from fear, and there hath been no rod of God upon us,[a] so that the voice of rejoicing and salvation hath been in our tabernacle[b] from day to day.

With our staff it may be we have passed over this Jordan, and now we are become two bands;[c] and it is God that setteth the solitary in families.[d]

If we have lived joyfully[e] with our relations, and they have been to us as the loving hind and as the pleasant roe,[f] we must give thee thanks for it, for every creature is that to us, and no more, than thou makest it to be.

[5.] For our share in the public plenty, peace, and tranquillity.

When we have eaten and are full, we have reason to bless thee for the land which thou hast given us,[g] a land which the eyes of the Lord our God are always upon, from the beginning of the year even to the end of the year.[h]

Thou makest peace in our borders, and fillest us with the finest of the wheat:[i] we are delivered from the noise of archers in the place of drawing water; there therefore will we rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, even his righteous acts towards the inhabitants of his villages.[k]

We thank thee that the powers that are set over us are ministers of God to us for good, that they seek the welfare of our people, speaking peace to all their seed.[l]

(4.) The goodness of his grace relating to our souls, and the life that is to come.

But especially blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ.[m]

[1.] We must give thanks for his gracious design and contrivance of man's redemption and salvation, when he was lost and undone by sin.

O how wonderfully did the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appear, not by any works of righteousness which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us.[n] We had destroyed ourselves, but in thee, and thee only, was our help.[o]

When we were cast out in the open field, and no eye pitied us, thou sawest us polluted in our own blood, and thou saidst unto us, Live; yea, thou saidst unto us, Live; and the time was a time of love.[p]

When the redemption of the soul was so precarious, as that it must have ceased for ever, and no man could by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him,[q] then thou wast pleased to find a ransom,[r] that we might be delivered from going down to the pit.

When we must needs die, and were as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again, then didst thou devise means that the banished might not be for ever expelled from thee.[s]

When thou sparedst not the angels that sinned, but didst cast them down to hell;[t] thou saidst concerning the race of mankind, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.[u]

Herein appears the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world for our glory.[v]

[2.] For the eternal purposes and counsels of God concerning man's redemption.

We are bound to give thanks always to thee, O God, because thou hast from the beginning chosen some to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit:[w] that there is a remnant according to the election of grace,[x] whom God hath chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before thee in love, having predestinated them to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto thyself, according to the good pleasure of thy will, to the praise of the glory of thy grace.[y]

Thine they were, and thou gavest them to Christ,[z] and this is thy will, that of all that thou hast given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.[a]

[3.] For the appointing of the Redeemer, and God's gracious condescension to deal with men upon new terms, receding from the demands of the broken covenant of innocency.

We bless thee that when sacrifice and offerings thou wouldst not, and in them hadst no pleasure,

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a Job xxix. 3, 4. t 1 Tim. vi. 17. u Neh. ix. 25. v Deut. viii. 2. w 1 Sam. vii. 12. x Ps. xviii. 32. y Job i. 10. z Job viii. 7. a Job xxi. 9. b Ps. cxviii. 15. c Gen. xxxii. 10. d Ps. lxviii. 6. e Eccl. ix. 9. f Prov. v. 19. g Deut. viii. 10. h Deut. xi. 12. i Ps. cxlvii. 14. k Judges v. 11. l Esth. x. 3.

m Eph. i. 3. n Tit. iii. 4, 5. o Hos. xiii. 9. p Ezek. xvi. 5, 6, 8. q Ps. xlix. 7, 8. r Job xxxii. 24. s 2 Sam. xiv. 14. t 2 Pet. ii. 4. u Isa. lxv. 8. v 1 Cor. ii. 7. w 2 Thess. ii. 13. x Rom. xi. 5. y Eph. i. 4—6. z John xvii. 6. a John vi. 39.

that then the eternal Son of God said, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,[b] and a body hast thou prepared me: and that, as in the volume of the book it was written of him, he did delight to do thy will, O God, yea, thy law was within his heart.[c]

Thou hast laid help upon one that is mighty, one chosen out of the people. Thou hast found David thy servant, with thy holy oil thou hast anointed him, even with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and didst promise that with him thy hand should be established, and thy arm should strengthen him, and that thou wouldst make him thy first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.[d]

We bless thee that the Father now judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; that as he has life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have life in himself, and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man:[e] that the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand;[f] and that the counsel of peace is between them both.[g]

That he is thy servant, whom thou dost uphold; thine elect, in whom thy soul delighteth;[h] thy beloved Son, in whom thou art well pleased;[i] that thou hast given him for a covenant of the people,[k] and that through him we are not under the law, but under grace.[l]

That God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.[m]

[4.] For the early and ancient indications of the gracious design concerning fallen man.

We bless thee, that as soon as ever man had sinned, it was graciously promised, that the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head;[n] and that in the Old-Testament sacrifices Jesus Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.[o]

And that by faith the elders, though they received not the promise, yet obtained a good report, for they obtained witness that they were righteous.[p]

We bless thee for the promise made to Abraham, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed;[q] and to Jacob, that the Shiloh should come, and to him should the gathering of the people be;[r] and that the patriarchs rejoiced to see Christ's day, and they saw it and were glad.[s]

[5.] For the many glorious instances of God's favour to the Old-Testament church.

We adore that wisdom, peace, and goodness with which thou broughtest the vine out of Egypt, didst cast out the heathen and plant it; thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.[t]

And they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them, but thy right hand, thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour to them.[u]

We bless thee, that to the Jews were committed the oracles of God,[v] that they had the adoption, the glory and the covenants, the giving of the law, and the service of God and the promises:[w] and that there did not fail one word of all thy good promise, which thou promisedst by the hand of Moses thy servant.[x]

We bless thee for all which thou didst at sundry times, and in divers manners, speak in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,[y] those holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,[z] and prophesied of the grace that should come unto us, testifying before-hand the suffering of Christ, and the glory that should follow, and that not to themselves only but to us they ministered those great things, things which the angels themselves desire to look into.[a]

And especially we bless thee, that thou hast provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.[b]

[6.] For the wonderful and mysterious incarnation of the Son of God, and his coming into the world.

We bless thee, that when the fulness of time was come, thou didst send forth thy Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.[c]

That the Eternal Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and there were those who saw his glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.[d] And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, that God was manifested in the flesh.

We bless thee, that to this end he was born, and for this cause he came into the world, that he might bear witness of the truth,[e] and we believe, and are sure, that he is that Christ, the Son of the living God;[f] that it is he that should come, and we are to look for no other.[g]

We bless thee, that the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost;[h] that he is come that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly,[i] and that for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.[k]

Lord, we receive it as a faithful saying, and we worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief.[l]

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b Heb x. 5—7. c Ps. xl. 7, 8. d Ps. lxxxix. 19—21, 27 e John v. 22, 26, 27. f John iii. 35. g Zech. vi. 13. h Isa. xlii. 1. i Matt. xvii. 5. k Isa. xlix. 8. l Rom. vi. 14. m John iii. 16. n Gen iii. 15. o Rev. xiii. 8. p Heb. xi. 2, 4, 39. q Gen. xii. 3. r Gen. xlix. 10. s John viii. 56.

t Ps. lxxx. 8, 9. u Ps. xliv. 3. v Rom. iii. 2. w Rom. ix. x 1 Kings viii. 56. y Heb. i. 1. z 2 Pet. i. 21. a 1 Pet. 10—12. b Heb. xi. 40. c Gal. iv. 4, 5. d John i. e John xviii. 37. f John vi. 69. g Matt. xi. 3. h Luke x 10. i John x. 10. k 1 John iii. 8. l 1 Tim. i. 15.

We bless thee, that forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same: that he took not on him the nature of angels, but our nature, and was in all things made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people;[m] and that he is not ashamed to call them brethren.

And that the first-begotten was brought into the world with a charge given to all the angels of God to worship him.[n]

[7.] For God's gracious owning of him in his undertaking, and in the carrying of it on.

We bless thee, that thou wast in Christ reconciling the world to thyself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and that thou hast committed unto us the word of reconciliation.[o]

That thou hast thyself given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.[p] That he was sanctified and sealed, and sent into the world,[q] and that the Father which sent him did not leave him alone, for he always did those things that pleased him.[r]

Glory be to God in the highest, for in and through Jesus Christ there is on earth peace, and good will towards men.[s]

In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.[t]

We thank thee for the power thou hast given him over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as were given him.[u]

[8.] For his holy life, his excellent doctrine, and the glorious miracles he wrought to confirm his doctrine.

We bless thee for the assurance we have, that he is a teacher come from God, since no man can do those miracles which he did, except God were with him.[v]

That thou hast in these last days spoken unto us by thy Son,[w] whose doctrine was not his, but his that sent him,[x] and he spake as one having authority;[y] and that we are encouraged to come and learn of him, because he is meek and lowly in heart, and in learning of him we shall find rest to our souls.[z]

We bless thee, that he has left us an example, that we should follow his steps, in that he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, and when he was reviled he reviled not again;[a] and his meat and drink was to do the will of his Father;[b] in that he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners.[c] O that we may be armed with the same mind,[d] and that as he was, so we may be, in this world;[e] and that we may so walk even as he walked.

We bless thee, that the works which he did, the same bore witness of him, that the Father had sent him,[f] that by his power the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, the deaf heard, the dead were raised up, and the poor had the gospel preached to them,[g] and even the winds and the sea obeyed him,[h] for which we glorify the God of Israel. Doubtless this was the Son of God.[i]

[9.] For the great encouragements Christ gave to poor sinners to come to him.

We bless thee, that Jesus Christ came to call, not the righteous, but sinners (such as we are) to repentance, and had power on earth to forgive sin;[k] that he came to save his people from their sins;[l] and is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world,[m] and that he is (to his honour, and not to his reproach) a friend to publicans and sinners.[n]

We thank thee for the gracious invitation he gave to those who are weary and heavy laden to come to him for rest:[o] and for the assurance he has given, that whosoever comes unto him, he will in no wise cast him out.[p]

That he made a gracious offer, that whosoever thirsts might come unto him and drink.[q]

[10.] For the full satisfaction which he made to the justice of God for the sin of man, by the blood of his cross, for the purchases, victories, and triumphs of the cross, and for all the precious benefits which flow to us from the dying of our Lord Jesus.

Herein indeed God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,[r] that we might be reconciled to him by the death of his Son. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins,[s] and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world;[t] that he tasted death for every man,[u] that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.

We bless thee, that by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,[v] that he has finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and hath brought in an everlasting righteousness.[w]

That he has redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us.[x]

That what the law could not do in that it was

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m Heb. ii. 11, 14, 16, 17. n Heb. i. 6. o 2 Cor. v. 29. p Isa. lv. 4. q John x. 36. r John viii. 19. s Luke ii. 14. t 1 John iv. 9. u John xvii. 2. v John iii. 2. w Heb. i. 2. x John vii. 16. y Matt. vii. 29. z Matt. xi. 29. a 1 Pet. ii. 21—23. b John iv. 34. c Heb. vii. 26. d 1 Pet. iv. 1.

e 1 John iv. 17. f John v. 36. g Matt. xi. 5. h Matt. viii. 27. i Matt. xxvii. 54. k Matt. ix. 6, 13. l Matt. i. 21. m John i. 29. n Matt. xi. 19. o Matt. xi. 28. p John vi. 37. q John vii. 37. r Rom. v. 8. s 1 John iv. 10. t 1 John ii. 2. u Heb. ii. 9, 14. v Heb. x. 14. w Dan. ix. 24. x Gal. iii. 13.

weak through the flesh, God hath done by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, who by a sacrifice for sin condemned sin in the flesh.[y]

That he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, and that the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed: and that the Lord having laid upon him the iniquity of us all, it pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief.[z]

That appearing to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, he did by the eternal Spirit offer himself without spot unto God, and by his own blood entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.[a]

That he hath spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross, and hath blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, which was contrary to us, taking it out of the way, by nailing it to his cross.[b]

That he is our peace, who having broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, hath made himself of twain one new man, hath reconciled both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.[c]

That he hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us unto our God kings and priests.[d]

O the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of that love of Christ which passeth knowledge![e] that great love wherewith he loved us![f]

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing; for he was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood.[g]

[11.] For his resurrection from the dead on the third day.

We thank thee, that as he was delivered for our offences, so he rose again for our justification,[h] and was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead.[i]

That though he was dead, yet he is alive, and lives for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and death;[k] and being raised from the dead, he dies no more, death hath no more dominion over him.[l]

That now is Christ risen from the dead, and is become the first-fruits of them that slept, that as in Adam all died, so in Christ all might be made alive,[m] and every one in his own order.

That God suffered not his Holy One to see corruption, but loosed the pains of death, because it was impossible he should be holden of them, and so declared to all the house of Israel, that that same Jesus whom they crucified is both Lord and Christ.[n]

And that for this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living,[o] and that whether we wake or sleep, we might live together with him.[p]

[12.] For his ascension into heaven, and his sitting at God's right hand there.

We bless thee, that our Lord Jesus is ascended to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God;[q] is ascended up on high, having led captivity captive, and hath received gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.[r]

That as the forerunner he is for us entered,[s] entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us,[t] a Lamb as it had been slain standing in the midst of the throne.[u]

That he is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,[v] angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject to him.[w]

That he is gone before to prepare a place for us in his Father's house, where there are many mansions; and though whither he is gone we cannot follow him now, yet we hope to follow him hereafter,[x] when he shall come again to receive us to himself, that where he is, there we may be also.[y]

[13.] For the intercession which he ever lives to make in the virtue of his satisfaction.

We thank thee, that having borne the sins of many, he makes intercession for transgressors;[z] and prays not for those only that were given him when he was upon earth, but for all that shall believe on him through their word; that they all may be one.[a]

That we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous,[b] who is therefore able to save to the uttermost all those that come to God as a Father, by him as Mediator, seeing he ever lives making intercession.[c]

That we have a High Priest taken from among men, and ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifice for sin, who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way, and that he is become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.[d]

[14.] For the dominion and sovereignty to which the Redeemer is exalted.

We thank thee, that because our Lord Jesus humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee might

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y Rom. viii. 3. z Isa. liii. 5, 6, 10. a Heb. ix. 12. b Col. ii 14, 15. c Eph. ii. 14—16. d Rev. i. 5, 6. e Eph. iii. 19. f Eph. ii. 4. g Rev. v. 9, 12. h Rom. iv. 25. i Rom. i. 4. k Rev. i. 18. l Rom. vi. 9. m 1 Cor. xv. 20, 22. n Acts ii. 24, 31, 36. o Rom. xiv. 9. p 1 Thess. v. 10. q John xx. 17 r Ps. lxxviii. 18. s Heb. vi. 20. t Heb. ix. 24. u Rev. v. 6 v Heb. viii. 1. w 1 Pet. iii. 22. x John xiii. 36. y John xiv 2, 3. z Isa. liii. 12. a John xvii. 20, 21. b 1 John ii. 1 c Heb. vii. 25. d Heb. v. 1, 2, 9.

bow,[e] and every tongue confess (as we do at this time) that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

That all power is given unto him both in heaven and on earth,[f] that thou hast set him over the works of thy hands, and hast put all things in subjection under his feet, and so hast crowned him with glory and honour.[g]

That he is King of kings, and Lord of lords,[h] that the Ancient of days has given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, an everlasting dominion, and a kingdom which shall not be destroyed.[i]

That the government is upon his shoulders, and that his name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace; and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.[k]

That thou hast set him as King upon thy holy hill of Zion,[l] and that he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever,[m] shall reign till he has put down all opposing rule, principality, and power, till all his enemies are made his footstool, and then he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.[n]

[15.] For the assurance we have of his second coming to judge the world.

We bless thee, that thou hast appointed a day in which thou wilt judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom thou hast ordained, whereof thou hast given assurance unto all men, in that thou hast raised him from the dead.[o]

That in that day the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: and shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired by all them that believe;[p] for them that sleep in Jesus he will bring with him.[q]

That he shall then send forth his angels to gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity,[r] and to gather together his elect from the four winds,[s] and then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

And we then, according to thy promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness: Lord, grant that, seeing we expect such things, we may give diligence to be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless:[t] and then, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.[u]

[16.] For the sending of the Holy Spirit to supply the want of Christ's bodily presence, to carry on his undertaking, and to prepare things for his second coming.

We bless thee, that when our Lord Jesus went away, he sent us another Comforter to abide with us for ever, even the Spirit of truth,[v] who shall glorify the Son, for he shall take of his and shall show it unto us.[w]

That being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost,[x] he poured it forth as rivers of living water.[y]

Blessed be God for the signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts, of the Holy Ghost, with which God bare witness to the great salvation.[z]

And blessed be God for the promise, that as earthly parents, though evil, know how to give good gifts to their children, so our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him,[a] that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.[b]

[17.] For the covenant of grace made with us in Jesus Christ, and all the exceeding great and precious privileges of that covenant, and for the seals of it.

We thank thee, that in Jesus Christ thou hast made an everlasting covenant with us, even the sure mercies of David,[c] and that though the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, yet this covenant of thy peace shall never be removed.[d]

That thou hast given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of a divine nature:[e] and that Jesus Christ is the Mediator of this better covenant, which is established upon better promises.[f]

That though thou chasten our transgression with the rod, and our iniquity with stripes, yet thy loving-kindness thou wilt not utterly take away, nor cause thy faithfulness to fail; thy covenant thou wilt not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of thy lips.[g]

That being willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of thy counsel, thou hast confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.[h]

That baptism is appointed to be a seal of the righteousness which is by faith,[i] as circumcision was: that it assures us of the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; and that this promise is to us and our children.[k] And that the cup in the Lord's supper is the blood of the New Testament, which was shed for many, for the remission of sins.[l]

[18.] For the writing of the Scriptures, and

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e Phil. ii. 8–10. f Matt. xxviii. 18. g Heb. ii. 7–9. h Rev. xix. 16. i Dan. vii. 14. k Isa. ix. 6, 7. l Ps. ii. 6. m Luke i. 33. n 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, 28. o Acts xvii. 31. p 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 10. q 1 Thess. iv. 14. r Matt. xiii. 41. s Matt. xxiv. 31. t 2 Pet. iii. 13, 14. u Rev. xxii. 20. v John xiv. 16, 17. w John xvi. 14. x Acts. ii. 33. y John vii. 38. z Heb. ii. 4. a Luke xi. 13. b Eph. i. 13, 14. c Isa. lv. 3. d Isa. liv. 10. e 2 Pet. i. 4. f Heb. viii. 6. g Ps. lxxxix. 32–34. h Heb. vi. 17, 18. i Rom. iv. 11. k Acts ii. 38, 39. l Matt. xxvi. 28.

the preserving of them pure and entire to our day.

We thank thee, that we have the Scriptures to search, and that in them we have eternal life, and that they testify of Christ,[m] and that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.[n]

That whatsoever things were written afore-time, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scripture might have hope:[o] and that we have this most sure word of prophesy, as a light shining in a dark place.[p]

That the vision is not become to us as the words of a book that is sealed,[q] but that we hear in our own tongue the wonderful works of God.[r]

We thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that the things which were hid from the wise and prudent, and which many prophets and kings desired to see, and might not,[s] are revealed to us babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

[19.] For the institution of ordinances, and particularly that of the ministry.

We thank thee, that thou hast not only showed thy word unto Jacob, but thy statutes and judgments unto Israel, unto us: Thou hast not dealt so with other nations, and as for thy judgments they have not known them.[t]

That the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them,[u] and that he has set his sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore,[v] and there will meet the children of Israel.[w]

We thank thee, that thou hast made known unto us thy holy sabbaths;[x] and that still there remains the keeping of a sabbath to the people of God.[y]

And that when the Lord Jesus ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men, not only prophets, apostles, and evangelists, but pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;[z] and that while they teach us to observe all things which Christ hath commanded, he has promised to be with them always, even unto the end of the world.[a]

[20.] For the planting of the Christian religion in the world, and the setting up of the gospel-church, notwithstanding all the oppositions of the powers of darkness.

We thank thee, that the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the commandment of the everlasting God, and the gospel which was made known to all nations for the obedience of faith,[b] was mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds:[c] that the Lord wrought with it, and confirmed the word by signs following;[d] so that Satan fell as lightning from heaven.[e]

That though the gospel was preached in much contention,[f] yet it grew and prevailed mightily,[g] and multitudes turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God,[h] and to wait for his Son from heaven.

Now came salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ:[i] and the exalted Redeemer rode forth with his bow, and with his crown, conquering, and to conquer;[k] and nations were born at once.[l]

[21.] For the preservation of Christianity in the world unto this day.

We bless thee, that though the enemies of Israel have afflicted them from their youth up, have many a time afflicted them, yet they have not prevailed against them; though the ploughers have ploughed on their back, yet the righteous Lord has cut asunder the cords of the wicked.[m]

That Jesus Christ has built his church upon a rock, which the gates of hell cannot prevail against,[n] but his seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.[o]

[22.] For the martyrs and confessors, the lights of the church, and the good examples of those who are gone before us to heaven.

We bless thee for all those who have been enabled to approve themselves to God in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,[p] who when they have been brought before governors and kings for Christ's sake, it has turned to them for a testimony, and God has given them a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist.[q]

That those who for Christ's sake were killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter, yet in all these things were more than conquerors, through him that loved us.[r]

That they overcame the accuser of the brethren by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and by not loving their lives unto the death.[s]

We bless thee for the cloud of witnesses with which we are compassed about,[t] for the footsteps of the flock,[u] for the elders that have obtained a good report,[v] and are now, through faith and patience, inheriting the promises.[w] Lord, give us to follow them as they followed Christ.[x]

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m John v. 39. n 2 Tim. iii. 16. o Rom. xv. 4. p 2 Pet. i. 19. q Isa. xxix. 11. r Acts ii. 11. s Luke x. 21, 24. t Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. u Rev. xxi. 3. v Ezra xxxvii. 26. w Exod. xxix. 43. x Neh. ix. 14. y Heb. iv. 9. z Eph. iv. 8, 11—13. a Matt. xxviii. 20. b Rom. xvi. 25, 26. c 2 Cor. x. 4. d Mark xvi. 20. e Luke x. 18. f 1 Thess. ii. 2. g Acts xix. 20. h 1 Thess. i. i Rev. xii. 10. k Rev. vi. 2. l Isa. lxvi. 8. m Ps. cxxix. 1—n Matt. xvi. 18. o Ps. lxxxix. 29. p 2 Cor. vi. 4. q Luke xx 12, 13, 15. r Rom. viii. 36, 37. s Rev. xii. 11. t Heb. xii. u Cant. i. 8. v Heb. ix. 2. w Heb. vi. 12. x 1 Cor. xi. 1.

[23.] For the communion of saints, that spiritual communion which we have in faith, and hope, and holy love, and in prayers and praises with all good Christians.

We bless thee, that if we walk in the light, we have fellowship one with another,[y] even with all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.[z]

That we, being many, are one bread and one body,[a] and that though there are diversities of gifts, and administrations, and operations, yet there is the same Spirit, the same Lord, and the same God, which worketh all in all.[b]

We thank thee, that all the children of God which were scattered abroad[c] are united in him who is the head of the body, the church;[d] so that they are all our brethren and companions in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.[e]

[24.] For the prospect and hope of eternal life, when time and days shall be no more.

We thank thee for the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him;[f] the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.

That having here no continuing city,[g] we are encouraged to seek the better country, that is, the heavenly, the city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.[h]

That we are in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, hath promised;[i] and that all true believers through grace have eternal life abiding in them.[k]

(5.) We must give God thanks for the spiritual mercies bestowed upon us in particular, especially if we are called with an effectual call, and have a good work of grace begun in us.

[1.] We must bless God for the strivings of his Spirit with us, and the admonitions and checks of our own consciences.

We bless thee, that thou hast not given us over to a reprobate mind,[l] that our consciences are not seared,[m] that thou hast not said, concerning us, they are joined to idols, let them alone,[n] but that thy Spirit is yet striving with us.[o]

We thank thee for the work of the law written in our hearts, our own consciences also bearing witness, and our own thoughts between themselves accusing or excusing one another.[p]

[2.] We must bless God if there be a saving change wrought in us by his blessed Spirit.

And has God, by his grace, translated us out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son?[q] Has he called us into the fellowship of Jesus Christ,[r] and made us nigh by his blood, who by nature were afar off?[s] Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name, give glory.[t]

We give thanks to God always for those to whom the gospel is come, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.[u]

Thou hast loved us with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness thou hast drawn us,[v] drawn us with the cords of a man, and the bands of love.[w]

When the strong man armed kept his palace in our hearts, and his goods were in peace, it was a stronger than he that came upon him, and took from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divided the spoil.[x]

[3.] We must give thanks for the remission of our sins, and the peace of our consciences.

We bless thee for the redemption we have through Christ's blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of thy grace, wherein thou hast abounded towards us.[y]

That thou hast forgiven all our iniquities, and healed all our diseases;[z] and hast in love to our souls delivered them from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all our sins behind thy back.[a]

When thou broughtest us into the wilderness, yet there thou spakest comfortably to us, and gavest us our vineyards from thence; and the valley of Achor for a door of hope.[b]

[4.] For the powerful influences of the divine grace, to sanctify and preserve us, to prevent our falling into sin, and to strengthen us in doing our duty.

Thou hast not quenched the smoking flax, nor broke the bruised reed,[c] nor despised the day of small things,[d] but having obtained help of God we continue hitherto.[e]

In the day when we cried thou hast answered us, and hast strengthened us with strength in our souls.[f]

We have been continually with thee; thou hast holden us by the right hand, when our feet were almost gone, and our steps had well nigh slipped.[g]

We have reason never to forget thy precepts, for by them thou hast quickened us; and unless thy law had been our delight, we should many a time have perished in our afflictions;[h] for thy statutes have been our songs in the house of our pilgrimage.

Unless the Lord had been our help, our souls had almost dwelt in silence: but when we said, Our foot slippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held us up: and in the multitude of our thoughts within us, thy comforts have been the delight of our souls.[i]

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y 1 John i. 7. z 1 Cor. i. 2. a 1 Cor. x. 17. b 1 Cor. ii. 4—6. c John xi. 52. d Col. i. 18. e Rev. i. 9. f James 12. g Heb. xiii. 14. h Heb. xi. 10, 16. i Tit. i. 2. k 1 John v. 13. l Rom. i. 28. m 1 Tim. iv. 2. n Hos. iv. 17. Gen. vi. 3. p Rom. ii. 15. q Col. i. 13. r 1 Cor. i. 9. s Eph. ii. 13. t Ps. cxv. 1. u 1 Thess. i. 2, 5. v Jer. xxxi. 3. w Hos. xi. 4. x Luke xi. 21, 22. y Eph. i. 7, 8. z Ps. ciii. 3. a Isa. xxxviii. 17. b Hos. ii. 14, 15. c Matt. xii. 20. d Zech. iv. 10. e Acts xxvi. 22. f Ps. cxxxviii. 3. g Ps. lxxiii. 2. h Ps. cxix. 92, 93. i Ps xciv. 17—19.

[5.] For sweet communion with God in holy ordinances, and the communications of his favour.

We have been abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou hast made us drink of the river of thy pleasures: for with thee is the fountain of life, in thy light shall we see light.[k]

Thou hast brought us to thy mountain, and made us joyful in thy house of prayer,[l] and we have found it good for us to draw near to God.[m]

We have had reason to say, A day in thy courts is better than a thousand, and it is better to be doorkeepers in the house of our God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness; for the Lord God is a sun and shield, he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will we withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.[n]

We have sitten down under thy shadow with delight, and thy fruit hath been sweet unto our taste; thou hast brought us into the banqueting house, and thy banner over us has been love.[o]

[6.] For gracious answers to our prayers.

We have reason to love thee, O Lord, because thou hast heard the voice of our supplications, and because thou hast inclined thine ear unto us, we will therefore call upon thee as long as we live.[p]

Out of the depths have we cried unto thee, O Lord,[q] and thou hast heard our vows, and given us the heritage of those that fear thy name.[r]

Nay, before we have called thou hast answered, and while we have been yet speaking, thou hast heard,[s] and hast said, Here I am,[t] and hast been nigh unto us in all that which we call upon thee for.[u]

Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble, thou wilt prepare their heart, and cause thine ear to hear.[v]

Blessed be God, who hath not turned away our prayer, or his mercy from us,[w] for we have prayed and have gone away, and our countenances have been no more sad.[x]

[7.] For support under our afflictions, and spiritual benefit and advantage by them.

Thou hast comforted us in all our tribulation,[y] hast considered our trouble, and known our souls in adversity, and showed us thy marvellous kindness, as in a strong city.[z]

When afflictions have abounded, consolations have much more abounded.[a]

Though no affliction, for the present, hath been joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, afterward it hath yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness, and hath proved to be for our profit, that we might be partakers of thy holiness.[b]

We have had reason to say, that it was good for us we were afflicted, that we might learn thy commandments; for before we were afflicted we went astray, but afterwards have kept thy word.[c]

It has been but for a season, and when there was need, that we were in heaviness, through manifold temptations: and we beg, that all the trials of our faith may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen we love, in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory; and are longing to receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.[d]

[8.] For the performance of God's promises.

Thou hast dealt well with thy servants, O Lord, according to thy word,[e] and thou hast been ever mindful of thy covenant, the word which thou hast commanded to a thousand generations.[f]

There hath not failed one word of all the good promises which thou hast promised to David thy servant, and Israel thy people.[g]

And now, what shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards us? Let our souls return to him, and repose in him, as their rest, because he hath dealt bountifully with us. We will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord:[h] for the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations.[i]

We will bless the Lord at all times, yea, his praise shall continually be in our mouths; we will sing[k] unto the Lord as long as we live;[l] and we hope to be shortly with those blessed ones who dwell in his house above, and are still praising him, and who rest not day or night from saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty.[m]

CHAPTER V.

OF THE FIFTH PART OF PRAYER, WHICH IS INTERCESSION, O ADDRESS AND SUPPLICATION TO GOD FOR OTHERS.

Our Lord Jesus has taught us to pray, n only with, but for, others; and the apostle ha appointed us to make supplication for all saints and many of his prayers in his epistles are f his friends: and we must not think, that wh we are in this part of prayer, we may be le fervent, and be more indifferent, because ourselves are not immediately concerned in but rather, let a holy fire of love, both to G and man, here make our devotions yet mo warm and lively.

1. We must pray for the whole world of ma

k Ps. xxxvi. 8, 9. l Isa. lvi. 7. m Ps. lxxiii. 28. n Ps. lxxxiv. 10—12. o Cant. ii. 3, 4. p Ps. cxvi. 1, 2. q Ps cxxx. 1. r Ps. lxi. 5. s Isa. lxv. 25. t Isa. lviii. 9. u Deut. iv. 7. v Ps. x. 17. w Ps. lxvi. 20. x 1 Sam. i. 18. y 2 Cor. i. 4. z Ps. xxxi. 7, 21. a 2 Cor. i. 5. b Heb. xii. 10, 11. c cxix. 67, 71. d 1 Pet. i. 6—9. e Ps. cxix. 65. f Ps. cv g 1 Kings viii. 56, 66. h Ps. cxvi. 7, 12, 13. i Ps. c. 5. k xxxiv. 1. l Ps. civ. 33. m Rev. iv. 8. n Eph. vi. 18.

kind, the lost world ;[b] and thus we must honour all men, and according to our capacity do good to all men.[c]

We pray, as we are taught, for all men, believing that this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth, and of Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all.[d]

O look with compassion upon the world that lies in wickedness,[e] and let the prince of this world be cast out,[f] that has blinded their minds.[g]

O let thy way be known upon earth,[h] that barbarous nations may be civilized, and those who live without God in the world[i] may be brought to the service of the living God; and thus let thy saving health be known unto all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God, yea, let all the people praise thee: O, let the nations be glad, and sing for joy, for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.[k]

O let thy salvation and thy righteousness be openly showed in the sight of the heathen, and let all the ends of the earth see the salvation of our God.[l]

O give thy Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession ;[m] for thou hast said, It is a light thing for him to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, but thou wilt give him for a light to the Gentiles.[n]

Let all the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ.[o]

2. For the propagating of the gospel in foreign parts, and the enlargement of the church, by the bringing in of many to it.

O let the gospel be preached unto every creature ;[p] for how shall men believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without preachers? And how shall they preach except they be sent?[q] And who shall send forth labourers, but the Lord of the harvest?[r]

Let the people which sit in darkness see a great light, and to them which sit in the region and shadow of death let light spring up.[s]

Add unto thy church daily such as shall be saved ;[t] enlarge the place of its tent, lengthen its cords, and strengthen its stakes.[u]

Bring thy seed from the east, and gather them from the west; say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back: bring thy sons from far, and thy daughters from the ends of the earth.[v] Let them come with acceptance to thine altar, and glorify the house of thy glory ; let them fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows.[w]

In every place let incense be offered to thy name, and pure offerings; and from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, let thy name be great among the Gentiles ;[x] and let the offering up of the Gentiles be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.[y]

O let the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.[z]

3. For the conversion of the Jews.

Let the branches which are broken off not abide still in unbelief, but be grafted in again into their own olive-tree. And though blindness is in part happened to Israel, yet let the fulness of the Gentiles come in, and let all Israel be saved.[a]

Let them be made to look unto him whom they have pierced,[b] and that they may turn to the Lord, let the veil which is upon their hearts be taken away.[c]

4. For the Eastern churches, that are groaning under the yoke of Mahometan tyranny.

Let the churches of Asia, that were golden candlesticks,[d] which the Lord Jesus delighted to walk in the midst of,[e] be again made so.

Restore unto them their liberties, as at first, and their privileges, as at the beginning; purely purge away their dross, and take away all their tin,[f] and turn again their captivity as the streams of the south.[g]

5. For the churches in the plantations.

Be thou the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of those that are afar off beyond the sea;[h] and let them have the blessing which came upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the head of him that was separated from his brethren, even to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.[i]

Create peace to those that are afar off, as well as to those that are nigh.[k]

And let those that suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand, call the people to the mountain, that they may offer sacrifices of righteousness.[l]

6. For the universal church, wherever dispersed, and for all the interests of it.

Our heart's desire and prayer to God for the gospel Israel is, that it may be saved.[m]

Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion, build thou the walls of Jerusalem.[n] Peace be within her walls, and prosperity within her palaces. For our brethren and companions' sake, we will now say, peace be within her.[o]

O that we may see the good of the gospel Jerusalem all the days of our life, and peace upon Israel.[p] And that thus we may have reason to answer the messengers of the nations, that the Lord hath found-

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b 1 Pet. ii. 17. c Gal. vi. 10. d 1 Tim. ii. 1, 3, 4, 6. e 1 John v. 19. f John xii. 31. g 2 Cor. iv. 4. h Ps. lxvii. 2. i Eph. ii. 12. k Ps lxvii. 3, 4. l Ps. xcviii. 2, 3. m Ps. ii. 8. n Isa. xlix. 6. o Rev. xi. 15. p Mark xvi. 15. q Rom. x. 14, 15. r Matt. ix. 38. s Matt. iv. 16. t Acts ii. 47. u Isa. liv. 2.

v Isa. xliii. 5, 6. w Isa. lx. 7, 8. x Mal. i. 11. y Rom. xv. 16. z Is. xi. 9. a Rom. xi. 23—26. b Zech. xii. 10. c 2 Cor. iii. 16. d Rev. i. 11, 12. e Rev. ii. 1. f Isa. i. 25, 26. g Ps. cxxvi. 4. h Ps. lxv. 5. i Gen. xlix. 26. k Isa. lvii. 19. l Deut. xxxiii. 19. m Rom. x. 1. n Ps. li. 18. o Ps. cxxii. 7, 8. p Ps. cxxviii. 5, 6.

ed Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust to that.[q]

Save thy people, O Lord, and bless thine heritage: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.[r] Give strength unto thy people, and bless thy people with peace;[s] with thy favour do thou compass them as with a shield.[t]

Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;[u] for thou knowest them that are thine: and give to all that name the name of Christ, to depart from iniquity.[v]

We pray for all that believe in Christ, that they all may be one;[w] and since there is one body, and one spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all,[x] give to all Christians to be of one heart,[y] and one way.

Let the word of the Lord in all places have a free course, and let it be glorified.[z]

7. For the conviction and conversion of atheists, deists, and infidels, and of all that are out of the way of truth, and of profane scoffers, and those that disgrace Christianity by their vicious and immoral lives.

O teach transgressors thy ways, and let sinners be converted unto thee.[a]

O give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, the truth as it is in Jesus,[b] the truth which is according to godliness,[c] that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil.[d]

Let those who are as sheep going astray, return to Jesus Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.[e]

Show those fools their folly and misery, that have said in their hearts, there is no God, and that are corrupt, and have done abominable works.[f]

Lord, maintain the honour of the Scripture, the law and the testimony, and convince those who speak not according to that word, that it is because there is no light in them;[g] magnify that word above all thy name;[h] magnify the law, magnify the gospel, and make both honourable.[i]

Let those who will not be won by the word, be won by the conversation of Christians,[k] which we beg may be such in every thing, that they who believe not may be convinced of all, and judged of all, may be brought to worship God, and to report that God is with them of a truth.[l]

8. For the amending of every thing that is amiss in the church, the reviving of primitive Christianity, and the power of godliness, and in order thereunto the pouring out of the Spirit.

Lord, let thy Spirit be poured out upon thy churches from on high, and then the wilderness shall become a fruitful field,[m] then judgment shall return unto righteousness, and all the upright in heart shall follow it.[n]

Let what is wanting be set in order,[o] and let every plant that is not of our heavenly Father's planting be plucked up.[p]

Let the Lord whom we seek come to his temple like a refiner's fire, and fuller's soap, and let him purify the sons of Levi, and all the seed of Israel, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness,[q] pleasant to the Lord, as in the days of old, as in former years.

Let pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father,[r] flourish and prevail every where; that kingdom of God among men, which is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.[s] O revive this work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known,[t] and let our times be times of reformation.[u]

9. For the breaking of the power of all the enemies of the church, and the defeating of all their designs against her.

Let all that set themselves, and take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed, who would break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from them, imagine a vain thing. Let him that sits in heaven laugh at them, and have them in derision; speak unto them in thy wrath, and vex them in thy sore displeasure.[v] Give them, O Lord, what thou wilt give them; give them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts.[w]

O our God, make them like a wheel, and as stubble before the wind; fill their faces with shame that they may seek thy name, O Lord, and that men may know that thou, whose name is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth.[x]

Put them in fear, O Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men,[y] and wherein the proud enemies of thy church deal proudly, make it to appear that thou art above them.[z]

Let them be confounded, and turned back, that hate Zion, and be as the grass upon the house-tops which withereth before it groweth up.[a]

Let no weapon formed against thy church prosper, and let every tongue that riseth against it in judgment be condemned.[b]

Make Jerusalem a burthensome stone for all people, and let all that burthen themselves with it be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth should be gathered together against it;[c] so let all thy enemies perish, O Lord, but let them that love

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q Isa. xiv. 32. r Ps. xxviii. 9. s Ps. xxix. 11. t Ps. v. 12. u Eph. vi. 24. v 2 Tim. ii. 19. w John xvii. 20, 21. x Eph. iv. 4—6. y Jer. xxxii. 39. z 2 Thess. iii. 1. a Ps. li. 13. b Eph. iv. 21. c Tit. i. 1. d 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. e 1 Pet. ii. 25. f Ps. xiv. 1. g Isa. viii. 20. h Ps. cxxxviii. 2. i Isa. xlii. 21. k 1 Pet. iii. 1. l 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. m Isa. xxxii. 15. n Ps. xciv. 15. o Tit. i. 5. p Matt. xv. 13. q Mal. iii. 3. r Jas. i. 27. s Rom. xiv. 17. t Hab. iii. 2. u Heb. ix. 10. v Ps. ii. 1—5. w Hos. ix. 14. x Ps. lxxxiii. 13, 16, 18. y Ps. ix. z Exod. xviii. 11. a Ps. cxxix. 5, 6. b Isa. liv. 17. c Zech. xii.

thee be as the sun when he goes forth in his strength.[d]

Lord, let the man of sin be consumed with the spirit of thy mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of thy coming: and let those be undeceived that have been long under the power of strong delusions to believe a lie, and let them receive the truth in the love of it.[e]

Let Babylon fall, and sink like a mill-stone into the sea;[f] and let the kings of the earth that have given their power and honour to the beast,[g] be wrought upon at length to bring it into the new Jerusalem.[h]

10. For the relief of suffering churches, and the support, comfort, and deliverance of all that are persecuted for righteousness.

We desire in our prayers to remember them that are in bonds for the testimony of Jesus, as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being ourselves also in the body.[i] O send from above, and deliver them from those that hate them, and bring them forth into a large place.[k]

O let not the rod of the wicked rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.[l]

Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, as in the generations of old, and make the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over.[m]

For the oppression of the poor, and the sighing of the needy, now do thou arise, O Lord, and set them in safety from them that puff at them.[n]

O strengthen the patience and faith of thy suffering saints,[o] that they may hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.[p]

O let the year of thy redeemed come,[q] and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.[r]

O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion; and when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad.[s]

O let not the oppressed return ashamed, but let the poor and needy praise thy name.[t]

Lord, arise, and have mercy upon Zion, and let the time to favour her, yea, the set time, come; yea, let the Lord build up Zion, and appear in his glory. Lord, regard the prayer of the destitute, and do not despise their prayer.[u]

O Lord God, cease, we beseech thee: By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small?[v] O cause thy face to shine upon that part of thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.[w]

Let the sorrowful sighing of thy prisoners come before thee, and according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou those that for thy name's sake are appointed to die.[x]

Let those whose teachers are removed into corners, again see their teachers, though they have the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction.[y]

11. For the nations of Europe, and the countries about us.

Thou, Lord, art the Governor among the nations:[z] Who shall not fear thee, O King of nations?[a] Thou sittest in the throne judging right; judge the world therefore in righteousness, and minister judgment to the people in uprightness.[b]

Lord, hasten the time when thou wilt make wars to cease to the ends of the earth;[c] when nation shall no more lift up sword against nation, nor kingdom against kingdom, but swords shall be beaten into plough-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and they shall not learn war any more.[d]

Make kings nursing fathers, and their queens nursing mothers, to the Israel of God.[e]

And in the days of these kings let the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed,[f] even the kingdom of the Redeemer. And whatever counsels there are in men's hearts, Lord, let thy counsel stand,[g] and do thou fulfil the thoughts of thy heart unto all generations.[h]

12. For our own land and nation, the happy islands of Great Britain and Ireland, which we ought in a special manner to seek the welfare of, that in the peace thereof we may have peace.

(1.) We must be thankful to God for his mercies to our land.

We bless thee, that thou hast planted us in a very fruitful hill,[i] and hast not made the wilderness our habitation, or the barren land our dwelling,[k] but our land yields her increase.[l]

Lord, thou hast dealt favourably with our land.[m] We have heard with our ears, and our fathers have told us, what work thou didst for us in their days, and in the times of old:[n] and as we have heard, so have we seen; for we have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.[o]

Thou hast given us a pleasant land,[p] it is Immanuel's land,[q] it is a valley of vision,[r] thou hast set up thy tabernacle among us, and thy sanctuary is in the midst of us.[s]

We dwell safely under our own vines and fig-trees,[t] and there is peace to him that goeth out, and to him that comes in.[u]

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d Judg. v. 31. e 2 Thess. ii. 3, 8, 10, 11. f Rev. xviii. 2, 21. g Rev. xvii. 17. h Rev. xxi. 24. i Heb. xiii. 3. k Ps. xviii. 16, 17, 19. l Ps. cxxv. 3. m Isa. li. 9, 10. n Ps. xii. 5. o Rev. xiii. 10. p Lam. iii. 26. q Isa. lxiii. 4. r Isa. xxxiv. 8. s Ps. xiv. 7. t Ps. lxxiv. 21. u Ps. cii. 13, 16, 17. v Amos vii 5. w Dan. ix. 17. x Ps. lxxix. 11. y Isa. xxx. 20.

z Ps. xxii. 28. a Jer. x. 7. b Ps. ix. 4, 8. c Ps. xlvi. 9. d Isa. ii. 4. e Isa. clx. 23. f Dan. ii. 44. g Prov. xix. 21. h Ps. xxxiii. 11. i Isa. v. 1. k Job xxxix. 6. l Ps. lxxxv. 12. m Ps. lxxxv. 1. n Ps. xliv. 1. o Ps. xlviii. 8, 9. p Jer. iii. 19. q Isa. viii 8. r Isa. xxii. 1. s Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27. t 1 Kings iv. 25. u 2 Chron. xv. 5.

And because the Lord loved our people, therefore he hath set a good government over us, to do judgment and justice;[v] to be a terror to evil doers, and a protection and praise to them that do well.[w]

(2.) We must be humble before God for our national sins and provocations.

But we are a sinful people, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers;[x] and a great deal of reason we have to sigh and cry for the abominations that are committed among us.[y]

Iniquity abounds among us, and the love of many is waxed cold.[z]

We have not been forsaken, nor forgotten of our God, though our land be full of sin against the Holy One of Israel.[a]

(3.) We must pray earnestly for the favour of God to us, and the tokens of his presence among us, as that in which the happiness of our nation is bound up.

O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble: be not thou as a stranger in our land, or a way-faring man that turns aside to tarry but for a night; but be thou always in the midst of us; we are called by thy name, O leave us not.—Though our iniquities testify against us, yet do thou it for thy name's sake; though our backslidings are many, and we have sinned against thee.[b]

Turn us to thee, O Lord God of hosts, and then cause thy face to shine, and we shall be safe. O stir up thy strength, and come and save us.[c]

Show us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation; yea, let that salvation be nigh them that fear thee, that glory may dwell in our land. Let mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other: let truth spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven; yea, let the Lord give that which is good: let righteousness go before him, and set us in the way of his steps.[d]

(4.) For the continuance of the gospel among us, and the means of grace, and a national profession of Christ's holy religion.

O let the throne of Christ endure for ever among us,[e] even the place of thy sanctuary, that glorious high throne from the beginning.[f]

Let our candlestick never be removed out of its place, though we have deserved it should, because we have left our first love.[g] Never do to us as thou didst to thy place which was in Shiloh, where thou didst set thy name at the first.[h]

Let us never know what a famine of the word means; nor ever be put to wander from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth, to seek the word of God.[i]

Let wisdom and knowledge be the stability of our times, and strength of salvation, and let the fear of the Lord be our treasure:[k] let the righteous flourish among us, and let there be those that shall fear thee in our land, as long as the sun and moon endure; throughout all generations,[l] may there be abundance of peace, and may the children which shall be created praise the Lord.[m]

(5.) For the continuance of our outward peace and tranquillity, our liberty and plenty, for the prosperity of our trade, and a blessing upon the fruits of the earth.

Let God himself be a wall of fire round about us, and the glory in the midst of us,[n] yea, let his gospel be our glory, and upon all that glory let there be a defence; and create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night.[o]

Peace be within our borders, and prosperity within our palaces,[p] the prosperity both of merchandise and husbandry, that Zebulun may rejoice in his going out, and Issachar in his tents.[q]

Appoint salvation to us for walls and bulwarks, and in order to that let the gates be opened, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.[r]

Make our officers peace, and our exactors righteousness; let violence never be heard in our gates, wasting or destruction in our borders, but let our walls be called salvation, and our gates praise;[s] never let our land be termed forsaken and desolate, but let the Lord delight in us, and let our land be married to him.[t]

Let our peace be as a river, and in order to that, our righteousness as the waves of the sea.[u] Let that righteousness abound among us which exalteth a nation, and deliver us from sin, which is a reproach to any people.[v]

Never make our heaven as brass, and our earth as iron,[w] nor take away thy corn in the season thereof and thy wine in the season thereof,[x] but give us rain moderately,[y] the former and the latter rain in due season, and reserve unto us the appointed weeks of harvest,[z] giving us fair weather also in its season. Let our land yield her increase, and the trees their fruit, that we may eat bread to the full, and dwell in our land safely.[a]

Abundantly bless our provision, and satisfy our poor with bread,[b] that they which have gathered it may eat and praise the Lord.[c] Blow not thou upon it, for then when we look for much, it will come to little,[d] but bless our blessings, that all nations may call us blessed, and a delightsome land.[e]

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v 1 Kings x. 9. w Rom. xiii. 3. x Isa. i. 4. y Ezek. ix. 4. z Matt. xxiv. 12. a Jer. li. 5. b Jer. xiv. 7—9. c Ps. lxxx. 2, 3. d Ps. lxxxv. 7—13. e Ps. xlv. 6. f Jer. xvii. 12. g Rev. ii. 4, 5. h Jer. vii. 12, 14. i Amos viii. 11, 12. k Isa. xxxiii. 6. l Ps. lxxii. 5, 7. m Ps. cii. 18. n Zech. ii. 5. o Isa. iv. 5. p Ps. cxxii. 7. q Deut. xxxiii. 18. r Isa. xxvi. 1, 2. s Isa. lx. 17, 18. t Isa. lxii. 4. u Isa. xlviii. 1 v Prov. xiv. 34. w Deut. xxviii. 23. x Hos. ii. 9. y Joel 23. z Jer. v. 24. a Lev. xxvi. 4, 5. b Ps. cxxxii. 1 c Isa. lxii. 9. d Hag. i. 9. e Mal. iii. 10, 12.

(6.) For the success of our endeavours for the reformation of manners, the suppression of vice and profaneness, and the support of religion and virtue, and the bringing of them into reputation.

O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the just, O thou righteous God, that triest the hearts and reins.[f] Spirit many to rise up from thee against the evil doers, and to stand up for thee against the workers of iniquity.[g]

Let the Redeemer come to Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob;[h] and let the filth of Jerusalem be purged from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of burning.[i]

Let all iniquity stop her mouth,[k] and let the infection of that plague be stayed, by executing judgment.[l]

Let those who are striving against sin never be weary or faint in their minds.[m]

Cause the unclean spirit to pass out of the land,[n] and turn to the people a pure language, that they may call on the name of the Lord.[o]

Make us high above all nations in praise, and in name, and in honour, by making us a holy people unto the Lord our God.[p]

(7.) For the healing of our unhappy divisions, and the making up of our breaches.

For the divisions that are among us, there are great searchings of heart;[q] for there are three against two, and two against three in a house.[r] But is the breach wide as the sea, which cannot be healed?[s] Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of *our* people recovered?[t] Lord, heal the breaches of our land, for because of them it shaketh.[u]

We beg, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that there be no divisions among us, but that we may be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.[v]

Now the God of patience and consolation grant us to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus, that we may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,[w] and promote the common salvation.[x]

Lord, keep us from judging one another, and despising one another, and give us to follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify one another;[y] that living in love and peace, the God of love and peace may be with us.[z]

Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but every thing in lowliness of mind,[a] and grant that our moderation may be known unto all men, because the Lord is at hand.[b]

(8.) For victory and success against our enemies abroad, that seek our ruin.

Rise, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let those that hate thee flee before thee, but return, O Lord, to the many thousands of thine Israel.[c]

Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man. Through God let our forces do valiantly; yea, let God himself tread down our enemies;[d] and give them as dust to our sword, and as driven stubble to our bow.[e]

Let us be a people saved by the Lord, as the shield of our help, and the sword of our excellency;[f] and make our enemies sensible that the Lord fighteth for us against them.[g]

Those who jeopard their lives for us in the high places of the field,[h] teach their hands to war, and their fingers to fight, give them the shield of thy salvation, and let thy right hand hold them up,[i] and cover their heads in the day of battle.[k]

(9.) For our sovereign lord the king, that God will protect his person, preserve his health, and continue his life and government long a public blessing.

Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness, that he may judge the poor of the people, may save the children of the needy, and may break in pieces the oppressor.[l]

Let his throne be established with righteousness,[m] and upheld with mercy.[n] Give him long life and length of days for ever and ever, and let his glory be great in thy salvation, and make him exceeding glad with thy countenance: through the tender mercy of the Most High let him not be moved.[o]

Clothe his enemies with shame, but upon himself let the crown flourish,[p] and continue him long, very long, a nursing-father to thine Israel.[q]

(10.) For the succession in the protestant line, that a blessing may attend it, that the entail of the crown may prove a successful expedient for the establishing of peace and truth in our days, the securing of them to posterity, and the extinguishing the hopes of our popish adversaries, and all their aiders and abettors.

Lord, preserve the lamp which thou hast ordained for thine anointed,[r] that the generation to come may know thee, even the children which shall be born, that they may set their hope in God, and keep his commandments.[s]

Let the protestant succession abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth which may preserve it, so will we sing praise unto thy name for ever.[t] Thus let the Lord save Sion, and build the cities of Judah, and the seed of thy servants shall

f Ps. vii. 9. g Ps. xciv. 16. h Rom. xi. 26. i Isa. iv. 4. Ps. cvii. 42. k Ps. cvi. 30. m Heb. xii. 3, 4. n Zech. xiii. 2. Zeph. iii. 9. p Deut. xxvi. 19. q Judg. v. 16. r Luke ii. 52. s Lam. ii. 8. t Jer. viii. 22. u Ps. lx. 2. v 1 Cor. 10. w Rom. xv. 5, 6. x Jude 3. y Rom. xiv. 3, 19. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. a Phil. ii. 3. b Phil. iv. 5. c Numb. x. 33, 36. d Ps. lx. 11, 12. e Isa. xli. 2. f Deut. xxxiii. 29. g Exod. xiv. 25. h Judg. v. 18. i Ps. xviii. 34, 35. k Ps. cxl. 7. l Ps. lxxii. 1, 4. m Prov. xxv. 5. n Prov. xx. 28. o Ps. xxi. 4—7. p Ps. cxxxii. 18. q Isa. xlix. 23. r Ps. cxxxii. 17. s Ps. lxxviii. 6, 7. t Ps. lxi. 7, 8.

inherit it, and they that love thy name shall dwell therein.[u]

Let their design, who would make a captain to return into Egypt,[v] be again defeated, and let not the deadly wound that hath been given to the beast be healed any more.[w]

Let our eyes see Jerusalem, the city of our solemnities, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down: let none of the stakes thereof be removed, nor any of the cords thereof be broken, but let the glorious Lord be to us a place of broad waters and streams; for the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, he will save us.[x]

(11.) For the privy-counsellors, the ministers of state, the members of parliament, the ambassadors and envoys abroad, and all that are employed in the conduct of public affairs.

Counsel our counsellors, and teach our senators wisdom:[y] O give them a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and might, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, to make them of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.[z]

O remove not the speech of the trusty, nor take away the understanding of the aged,[a] nor ever let the things that belong to the nation's peace be hid from the eyes [b] of those that are intrusted with the nation's counsels.

Make it to appear that thou standest in the congregation of the mighty, and judgest among the gods,[c] and that when the princes of the people are gathered together,[d] even the people of the God of Abraham, the God of Abraham himself is among them; and let the shields of the earth belong unto the Lord, that he may be greatly exalted.

Let those that be of us build the old waste places, and raise up the foundations of many generations, that they may be called the repairers of the breaches, and restorers of paths to dwell in.[e]

(12.) For the magistrates, the judge, and justices of peace in the several counties and corporations.

Make those that rule over us just, ruling in the fear of God;[f] and let those that judge remember, that they judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with them in the judgment, that therefore the fear of the Lord may be upon them.[g]

Make them able men and men of truth, fearing God, and hating covetousness,[h] that judgment may run down like a river, and righteousness as a mighty stream.[i]

Enable our magistrates to defend the poor and fatherless, to do justice for the afflicted and needy, to deliver the poor and needy, and to rid them out of the hand of the wicked,[k] and let rulers never be a terror to good works,[l] but to the evil.[m]

(13.) For all the ministers of God's holy word and sacraments, the masters of assemblies.

Teach thy ministers how they ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God,[n] that they may not preach themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord,[o] and may study to show themselves approved to God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.[p]

Make them mighty in the Scriptures,[q] that thence they may be thoroughly furnished for every good work,[r] in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, and sincerity, and sound speech, which cannot be condemned.[s]

Enable them to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine, to meditate upon these things, to give themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word,[t] to give themselves wholly to them; and to continue in them, that they may both save themselves and those that hear them.[u]

Let utterance be given to them, that they may open their mouths boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, that thereof they may speak as they ought to speak,[v] as able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit,[w] and let them obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful.[x]

Let the arms of their hands be made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob;[y] and let them be full of power by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts to show thy people their transgressions,[z] and the house of Jacob their sins.[a]

Make them sound in the faith,[b] and enable them always to speak the things which become sound doctrine,[c] with meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; and let not the servants of the Lord strive, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach.[d]

Make them good examples to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith in purity;[e] and let them be clean that bear the vessels of the Lord,[f] and let holiness to the Lord[g] be written upon their foreheads.

Lord, grant that they may not labour in vain, or spend their strength for nought, and in vain,[h] but let the hand of the Lord be with them, that many may believe, and turn to the Lord.[i]

(14.) For all the universities, schools, and nurseries of learning.

Let the schools of the prophets be replenished with every good gift and every perfect gift from above, from the Father of lights.[k]

u Ps. lxix. 35, 36. v Numb. xiv. 4. w Rev. xiii. 12. x Isa. xxxiii. 20—22. y Ps. cv. 22. z Isa. xi. 2, 3. a Job xii. 20. b Luke xix. 42. c Ps. lxxxii. 1. d Ps. xlix. 7. e Isa. lviii. 12. f 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. g 2 Chron. xix. 6, 7. h Exod. xviii. 21. i Amos v. 24. k Ps. lxxxii. 3, 4. l 1 Pet. ii. 14. m Rom. xiii. 4. n 1 Tim. iii. 15. o 2 Cor. iv. 5. p 2 Tim. ii. 15. q Acts xviii. 24 r 2 Tim. iii. 17. s Tit. ii. 7. t Acts vi. u 1 Tim. iv. 13, 15, 16. v Eph. vi. 19, 20. w 2 Cor. iii. 6. x 1 Cor. vii. 25. y Gen. xlix. 24. z Mic. iii. 8. a Isa. lviii. 1. b Tit. i. 13. c Tit. ii. 1. d 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. e 1 Tim. iv. f Isa. lii. 11. g Exod. xxviii. 36. h Isa. xlix. 4. i Acts xi. 21. k James i. 17.

Cast salt into those fountains,[l] and heal the waters thereof, that from thence may issue streams which shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.[m]

(15.) For the common people of the land.

Give grace to all the subjects of this land, that we may, under the government God has set over us, live quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty,[n] dwelling together in unity, that the Lord may command a blessing upon us, even life for evermore.

Let all of every denomination, that fear God and work righteousness, be accepted of him ;[o] yea, let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified, that hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants.[p]

(16.) For those who are young, and setting out in the world.

Lord, give to those who are young to remember their Creator in the days of their youth,[q] that thereby they may be kept from the vanity which childhood and youth are subject to, and may be restrained from walking in the way of their heart, and in the sight of their eyes, by considering, that for all these things God will bring them into judgment.[r]

Lord, make young people sober-minded,[s] and let the word of God abide in them, that they may be strong, and may overcome the wicked one.[t]

From the womb of the morning let Christ have the dew of the youth,[u] and let him be formed in the hearts of those who are young.[v]

Keep those who are setting out in the world from the corruption that is in the world through lust ;[w] and give to those who have been well educated to hold fast the form of sound words,[x] and to continue in the things which they have learned.[y]

(17.) For those who are old, and are of long standing in profession.

There are some who are old disciples of Jesus Christ ;[z] Lord, give them still to bring forth fruit in old age, to show that the Lord is upright, that he is their rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.[a] Now the evil days are come, and the years of which they say there is no pleasure in them,[b] let thy comforts delight their souls.[c]

Even to their old age be thou he, and to the hoary hairs do thou carry them thou hast made, we beseech thee, bear, yea, do thou carry and deliver them.[d]

Those whom thou hast taught from their youth up, and who have hitherto declared all thy wondrous works, now, also, when they are old and grey-headed leave them not, cast them not off in their old age, fail them not when their strength fails.[e]

Let every hoary head be a crown of glory to those who have it, being found in the way of righteousness,[f] and give them to know whom they have believed.[g]

(18.) For those who are rich and prosperous in the world, some of whom perhaps need prayers as much as those that request them.

Lord, keep those that are rich in the world from being high-minded, and trusting in uncertain riches, and give them to trust in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy : that they may do good, and be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate ; that they may lay up in store for themselves a good security for the time to come.[h]

Though it is hard for those that are rich to enter into the kingdom of heaven, yet with thee this is possible.[i]

(19.) For those who are poor and in affliction, for such we have always with us.

Lord, make those who are poor in the world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom,[k] and give to them to receive the gospel.[l]

O that the poor of the flock may wait upon thee, and may know the word of the Lord.[m]

Many are the troubles of the righteous, good Lord, deliver them out of them all,[n] and though no affliction for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, afterward let it yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.[o]

(20.) For our enemies, and those who hate us.

Lord, give us to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us.[p]

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do ;[q] and lay not their malice against us to their charge,[r] and work in us a disposition to forbear and forgive in love,[s] as thou requirest we should when we pray.[t]

And grant that our ways may so please the Lord, that even our enemies may be at peace with us.[u] Let the wolf and the lamb lie down together, and let there be none to hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain ; let not Ephraim envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim.[v]

(21.) For our friends and those who love us.

And we wish for all those whom we love in the truth, that they may prosper, and be in health, especially that their souls may prosper.[w]

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with their spirits.[x]

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l 2 Kings ii. 21. m Ps. xlvi. 4. n 1 Tim. ii. 2. o Acts x. 35. p Ps. xxxv. 27. q Eccl. xii. 1. r Eccl. xi. 9, 10. s Tit. ii. 6. t 1 John ii. 14. u Ps. cx. 3. v Gal. iv. 19. w 2 Pet. i. 4. x 2 Tim. i. 13. y 2 Tim. iii. 14. z Acts xxi. 16. a Ps. xcii. 14, 15. b Eccl. xii. 1. c Ps. xciv. 19. d Isa. xlvi. 4. e Ps. lxxi. 9, 17, 18. f Prov. xvi. 31. g 2 Tim. i. 12. h 1 Tim. vi. 17, 19. i Matt. xix. 26. k Matt. xi. 5. l James ii. 5. m Zech. xi. 11. n Ps. xxxiv. 19. o Heb. xii. 11. p Matt. v. 44. q Luke xxiii. 34. r Acts vii. 60. s Col. iii. 13 t Mark xi. 25. u Prov. 16. 7. v Isa. xi. 6, 9, 13. w 3 John 2. x Philem. 25

CHAPTER VI.

OF ADDRESSES TO GOD UPON PARTICULAR OCCASIONS, WHETHER DOMESTIC OR PUBLIC.

It is made our duty, and prescribed as a remedy against disquieting care, that in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, we should make our requests known to God.[a] And it is part of the *παῤῥησια—the boldness,*[b] *the liberty of speech*, (so the word signifies,) which is allowed us in our access to God, that we may be particular in opening our case, and seeking to him for relief; that according as the sore and the grief is, accordingly the prayer and the supplication may be by any man, or by the people of Israel.[c] Not that God needs to be particularly informed of our condition, he knows it better than we ourselves do, and our souls too in our adversity, but it is his will that we should thus acknowledge him in all our ways,[d] and wait upon him for the direction of every step,[e] not prescribing, but subscribing, to infinite wisdom, humbly showing him our wants, burthens, and desires, and then referring ourselves to him, to do for us as he thinks fit.

We shall mention some of the occasions of particular address to God, more or less usual, which may either be the principal matter of a whole prayer, or inserted in our other prayers, and in some cases that are more peculiar to ministers, or others, in common to them with masters of families and private Christians. As there may be something particular,

1. In our morning prayers.

Our voice shalt thou now hear in the morning, in the morning will we direct our prayer unto thee, and will look up;[f] for our souls wait for thee, O Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, yea, more than they that watch for the morning;[g] and we will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning; for thou hast been our defence.[h]

It is thou, O God, who hast commanded the morning, and caused the day-spring to know its place, that it might take hold of the ends of the earth, and it is turned as clay to the seal.[i]

The day is thine, the night also is thine, thou hast prepared the light and the sun.[k]

With the light of the morning let the day-spring from on high visit us, to give us the knowledge of salvation, through the tender mercy of our God;[l] and let the Sun of righteousness arise upon our souls with healing under his wings;[m] and our path be as the shining light, which shines more and more to the perfect day.[n]

It is of thy mercy, O Lord, that we are not consumed, even because thy compassions fail not; they are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness:[o] and if weeping sometimes endures for a night, joy comes in the morning.[p]

We thank thee that we have laid us down,[q] have had where to lay our head,[r] and have not been wandering in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth;[s] and that we have slept, and have not been full of tossings to and fro till the dawning of the day, that wearisome nights are not appointed to us, and we are not saying at our lying down, When shall we arise, and the night be gone? But our bed comforts us, and our couch eases our complaint.[t]—Thou givest us sleep as thou givest it to thy beloved;[u] and having laid us down and slept, we have waked again; thou hast enlightened our eyes, so that we have not slept the sleep of death.[v]

Thou hast preserved us from the pestilence that walketh in darkness,[w] and from the malice of the rulers of the darkness of this world,[x] the roaring lion that goes about seeking to devour.[y]—He that keeps Israel, and neither slumbers nor sleeps,[z] has kept us, and so we have been safe.

But we cannot say, with thy servant David, that when we awake we are still with thee,[a] or that our eyes have prevented the night watches, that we might meditate on thy word;[b] but vain thoughts still lodge within us.[c] O pardon our sins, and cause us to hear thy loving-kindness this morning, for in thee do we trust; cause us to know the way wherein we should walk, for we lift up our souls unto thee: and teach us to do thy will, for thou art our God. Thy Spirit is good, lead us into the way and land of uprightness.[d]

And now let the Lord preserve and keep us from all evil this day, yea, let the Lord preserve our souls. Lord, preserve our going out and coming in;[e] give thine angels charge concerning us, to bear us up in their hands, and keep us in all our ways.[f] And give us grace to do the work of the day in its day as the duty of the day requires.[g]

2. In our evening prayers.

Thou, O God, makest the out-goings of the evening, as well as of the morning, to rejoice;[h] for thereby thou callest us from our work and our labour,[i] and biddest us rest awhile.[k] And now let our souls return to thee, and repose in that as our rest, because thou hast dealt bountifully with us; so shall our sleep be sweet to us.[m]

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with h

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a Phil. iv. 6. b Heb. x. 19. c 2 Chron. vi. 29. d Prov. iii. 6. e Ps. xxxvii. 23. f Ps. v. 3. g Ps. cxxx. 6. h Ps. lix. 16. i Job xxxviii. 12—14. k Ps. lxxiv. 16. l Luke i. 77, 78. m Mal. iv. 2. n Prov. iv. 18. o Lam. iii. 22, 23. p Ps. xxx. 5. q Ps iii. 5. r Matt. viii 20. s Heb. xi. 38. t Job vii. 3, 4, 13 u Ps. cxxvii. 2. v Ps. xiii. 3. w Ps. xci. 6. x Eph. vi. y 1 Pet. v. 8. z Ps. cxxi. 4. a Ps. cxxxix. 18. b Ps. cxix. c Jer. iv. 14. d Ps. cxliii. 8, 10. e Ps. cxxi. 7, 8. f Ps. x 11, 12. g Ezra iii. 4. h Ps. lxv. 8. i Ps. civ. 23. k Ps vi. 31. l Ps. cxvi 7. m Jer. xxxi 26.

benefits,[n] who has this day preserved our going out and coming in;[o] and now we have received from thee our daily bread, we pray, Father, forgive us our trespasses.[p]

And we will lie us down and sleep; for thou, Lord, makest us to dwell in safety.[q] Make a hedge of protection (we pray thee) about us, and about our house, and about all that we have round about.[r] Let the angels of God encamp round about us to deliver us;[s] that we may lie down, and none make us afraid.[t]

Into thy hands we commit our spirits;[u] that in slumberings upon the bed,[v] our ears may be opened, and instruction sealed; and let the Lord give us counsel, and let our reins instruct us in the night-season.[w] Visit us in the night, and try us,[x] and enable us to commune with our own hearts upon our bed.[y]

Give us to remember thee upon our bed, and to meditate upon thee in the night-watches,[z] with the saints who are joyful in glory, and who sing aloud upon their beds.[a]

3. In craving a blessing before meat.

Thou, O Lord, givest food to all flesh, for thy mercy endures for ever.[b] The eyes of all wait on thee;[c] but especially thou givest meat to them that fear thee, being ever mindful of thy covenant.[d]

Thou art our life, and the length of our days,[e] the God that hath fed us all our life long unto this day:[f] Thou givest us all things richly to enjoy,[g] though we serve thee but poorly. Thou hast not only given us every green herb, and the fruits of the trees to be to us for meat,[h] but every moving thing that liveth, even as the green herb.[i]

And blessed be God, that now under the gospel we are taught to call nothing common or unclean,[k] and that it is not that which goes into the man, that defiles the man,[l] but that every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused; for God hath created it to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.[m]

We acknowledge we are not worthy of the least crumb that falls from the table[n] of thy providence: Thou mightst justly take away from us the stay of bread and the stay of water,[o] and make us to eat our bread by weight, and to drink our water by measure, and with astonishment;[p] because when we have been fed to the full, we have forgotten God our Maker.[q] But let our sins be pardoned, we pray thee, that our table may not become a snare before us, nor that be made a trap which should have been for our welfare.[r]

We know that every thing is sanctified by the word of God and prayer;[s] and that man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God;[t] and therefore according to our Master's example, we look up to heaven, and pray for a blessing[u] upon our food, Abundantly bless our provision.[v]

Lord, grant that we may not feed ourselves without fear,[w] that we may not make a God of our belly,[x] that our hearts may never be overcharged with surfeiting or drunkenness,[y] but that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we may do all to the glory of God.[z]

4. In returning thanks after our meat.

Now we have eaten and are full, we bless thee for the good land thou hast given us.[a] Thou preparest a table for us in the presence of our enemies, thou anointest our head, and our cup runs over.[b]

Thou, Lord, art the portion of our inheritance and of our cup, thou maintainest our lot, so that we have reason to say, The lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage.[c]

Especially we bless thee for the bread of life, which came down from heaven, which was given for the life of the world: Lord, evermore give us that bread, and wisdom to labour less for the meat which perisheth, and more for that which endures to everlasting life.[d]

The Lord give food to the hungry,[e] and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared.

Let us be of those blessed ones that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God,[f] that shall eat of the hidden manna.[g]

5. When we are going a journey.

Lord, keep us in the way that we go,[h] and let no evil thing befall us;[i] let us have a prosperous journey by the will of God,[k] and with thy favour let us be compassed wherever we go as with a shield.[l]

Let us walk in our way safely, and let not our foot stumble,[m] or dash against a stone.[n]

Direct our way in every thing,[o] and enable us to order all our affairs with discretion,[p] and the Lord send us good speed, and show kindness to us.[q]

And the Lord watch between us, when we are absent one from the other.[r]

6. When we return from a journey.

Blessed be the Lord God of Abraham, who hath not left us destitute of his mercy and his truth.[s]

All our bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee,[t] for thou keepest all our bones.[u]

n Ps. lxviii. 19. o Ps. cxxi. 8. p Matt. vi. 11, 12. q Ps. iv. 8. r Job i. 10. s Ps. xxxiv. 7. t Job xi. 19. u Ps. xxxi. 5. v Job xxxiii. 15. w Ps. xvi. 7. x Ps. xvii. 3. y Ps. iv. 4. z Ps. lxiii. 6. a Ps. cxlix. 5. b Ps cxxxvi. 25. c Ps. cxlv. 15. d Ps. cxi. 5. e Deut. xxx. 20. f Gen. xlviii. 15. g 1 Tim. vi. 17. h Gen. i. 29. i Gen. ix. 3. k Acts x. 15. l Matt. xv. 11. m 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4. n Matt. xv. 27. o Isa. iii. 1. p Ezek. iv. 16. q Deut. xxxii. 15. r Ps. lxix. 22.

s 1 Tim. iv. 5. t Matt. iv. 4. u Matt. xiv. 19. v Ps. cxxxii. 15. w Jude 12. x Phil. iii. 19. y Luke xxi. 34. z 1 Cor. x. 31. a Deut. viii. 10. b Ps. xxiii. 5. c Ps. xvi. 5, 6. d John vi. 27, 33, 34. e Ps. cxlvi. 7. f Luke xiv. 15. g Rev. ii. 17. h Gen. xxviii. 20. i Ps. xci. 10. k Rom. i. 10. l Ps. v. 12. m Prov. iii. 23. n Ps. xci. 12. o 1 Thess. iii. 11. p Ps. cxii. 5. q Gen. xxiv. 12. r Gen. xxxi. 49. s Gen. xxiv. 27. t Ps. xxxv. 10. u Ps. xxxiv. 20.

It is God that girdeth us with strength, and maketh our way perfect.[v]

7. On the evening before the Lord's day.

Now give us to remember that to-morrow is the sabbath of the Lord,[w] and that it is a high day,[x] holy of the Lord and honourable,[y] and give us grace so to sanctify ourselves, that to-morrow the Lord may do wonders among us:[z] and to mind the work of our preparation now the sabbath draws on.[a]

When thou sawedst every thing that thou hadst made in six days, behold all was very good,[b] but in many things we have all offended.[c] O that by repentance, and faith in Christ's blood, we may wash not our feet only, but also our hands and our head,[d] and our heart, and so may compass thine altar, O Lord.[e]

Now give us to rest from all our own works,[f] and to leave all our worldly cares at the bottom of the hill, while we go up into the mount to worship God, and return again to them.[g]

8. On the morning of the Lord's day.

We bless thee, Lord, who hath showed us light,[h] and that the light we see is the Lord's; that we see one more of the days of the Son of man,[i] a day to be spent in thy courts, which is better than a thousand elsewhere.[k]

We thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that the things which were hid from the wise and prudent are revealed unto us babes, even so, Father, because it seemed good in thine eyes; that our eyes see, and our ears hear, that which many prophets and kings desired to see, desired to hear, and might not;[l] that life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel.[m]

And now, O that we may be in the Spirit on the Lord's day![n] That we may call the sabbath a delight,[o] and may honour the Son of man, who is Lord also of the sabbath-day,[p] not doing our own ways, or finding our own pleasure, or speaking our own words.

9. At the entrance upon the public worship on the Lord's day, by the masters of the assemblies.

Thou, O God, art greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about thee.[q] O give us grace to worship thee with reverence and godly fear, because thou our God art a consuming fire.[r]

This is that which thou hast said, That thou wilt be sanctified in them which come nigh unto thee, and before all the people thou wilt be glorified.[s] Thou art the Lord that sanctified us;[t] sanctify us by thy truth,[u] that we may sanctify thee in our hearts, and make thee our fear and our dread.[v]

We come together to give glory to the great Jehovah, who in six days made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, and therefore blessed a sabbath-day, and hallowed it.[w] Our help stands in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.[x]

O let us be new creatures,[y] thy workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto good works:[z] and let that God, who on the first day of the world commanded the light to shine out of darkness, on this first day of the week shine in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.[a]

We come together to give glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to sanctify this sabbath to his honour, who was the stone that the builders refused, but is now become the head-stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.[b] He is the first and the last, who was dead, and is alive.[c]

O that we may this day experience the power of Christ's resurrection,[d] and may be planted together in the likeness of it, that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life,[e] and may sit with him in heavenly places;[f] and by seeking the things that are above,[g] may make it to appear that we are risen with him.

We come together to give glory to the blessed Spirit of grace, and to celebrate the memorial of the giving of that promise of the Father,[h] in whom the apostles received power on the first day of the week,[i] as on that day Christ arose.

O that we may this day be filled with the Holy Ghost, and that the fruit of the Spirit in us may be in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.[k]

We come together to testify our communion with the universal church; that though we are many, yet we are one;[l] that we worship one and the same God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, in the name of one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him;[m] under the conduct of the same Spirit, one and the self-same Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as he will;[n] walking by the same rule,[o] looking for the same blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour.[p]

10. In our preparation for the Lord's supper

Now we are invited to come eat of Wisdom's

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v Ps. xviii. 32. w Exod. xvi. 23. x John xix. 31. y Isa. lviii. 13. z Josh. iii. 5. a Luke xxiii. 54. b Gen. i. 31. c James iii. 2. d John xiii. 19. e Ps. xxvi. 6. f Heb. iv. 10. g Gen. xxii. 5. h Ps. cxviii. 27. i Luke xvii. 22. k Ps. lxxxiv. 10. l Luke x. 21, 23, 24. m 2 Tim. i. 10. n Rev. i. 10. o Isa. lviii. 13. p Mark ii. 28. q Ps. lxxxix. 7. r Heb. xii. 28, 29. s Lev. x. 3. t Ezek. xx. 12. u John xvii. 17. v Isa. viii. 13. w Exod. xx. 11 x Ps. cxxiv. 8. y 2 Cor. v. 17. z Eph. ii. 10. a 2 Cor. iv. 6 b Ps. cxviii. 22—24. c Rev. ii. 8. d Phil. iii. 10. e Rom. vi. 4, 5 f Eph. ii, 6. g Col. iii. 1. h Acts i. 4. i Acts ii. 1. k Eph v. 18. l 1 Cor. x. 17. m 1 Cor. viii. 6. n 1 Cor. xii. 11 o Gal. vi. 16. p Tit. ii. 13.

bread, and drink of the wine that she has mingled,[q] give us to hunger and thirst after righteousness;[r] and being called to the marriage supper of the Lamb,[s] give us the wedding garment.[t]

Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, and blow upon our garden, that the spices thereof may flow forth; and then let our beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.[u]

Draw us, and we will run after thee; bring us into thy chambers, that there we may be glad and rejoice in thee, and may remember thy love more than wine. And when the King sits at his table, let our spikenard send forth the smell thereof.[v]

And the good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.[w] Hear our prayers, and heal the people.

11. In the celebrating of the Lord's supper.

O let this cup of blessing, which we bless, be the communion of the blood of Christ; let this bread, which we break, be the communion of the body of Christ,[x] and enable us herein to show the Lord's death till he come.[y]

Now let us be joined to the Lord in an everlasting covenant;[z] so joined to the Lord, as to become one spirit with him.[a] Now let us be made partakers of Christ, by holding fast the beginning of our confidence stedfast to the end.[b]

Let Christ's flesh be meat indeed to us, and his blood drink indeed; and give us so by faith to eat his flesh and drink his blood, that he may dwell in us, and we in him, and we may live by him.[c]

Let the cross of Christ, which is to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, be to us the wisdom of God, and the power of God.[d]

Seal to us the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost,[e] and the promise of eternal life,[f] and enable us to take this cup of salvation, and to call on the name of the Lord.[g]

12. After the celebrating of the Lord's supper.

And now, Lord, give us to hold fast that which we have received, that no man take our crown:[h] and keep it always in the imagination of the thoughts of our hearts, and prepare our hearts unto thee.[i]

Give us grace, as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so to walk in him,[k] that our conversation may be in every thing as becomes his gospel.[l]

O that we may now bear about with us continually the dying of the Lord Jesus, so as that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal body,[m] that to us to live may be Christ.[n]

Thy vows are upon us, O God,[o] O that we may be daily performing our vows.[p]

13. Upon occasion of the baptism of a child.

To thee, O God, whose all souls are, the souls of the parents, and the souls of the children,[q] we present this child a living sacrifice, which we desire may be holy and acceptable,[r] and that it may be given up and dedicated to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.[s]

It is conceived in sin,[t] but there is a fountain opened;[u] O wash the soul of this child in that fountain, now it is by thine appointment washed with pure water.[v]

It is one of the children of the covenant,[w] one of the children that is born unto thee,[x] it is thy servant,[y] born in thy house: O make good thy ancient covenant, that thou wilt be a God to believers, and to their seed;[z] for this blessing of Abraham comes upon the Gentiles,[a] and the promise is still to us, and to our children.[b]

Thou hast encouraged us to bring little children to thee; for thou hast said, that of such is the kingdom of God. Blessed Jesus, take up this child in the arms of thy power and grace, put thy hands upon it, and bless it;[c] let it be a vessel of honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use,[d] and owned as one of thine in that day when thou makest up thy jewels.[e]

O pour thy Spirit upon our seed, thy blessing upon our offspring, that they may spring up as willows by the water-courses, and may come to subscribe with their own hands unto the Lord, and to surname themselves by the name of Israel.[f]

14. Upon occasion of a funeral.

Lord, give us to find it good for us to go to the house of mourning,[g] that we may be reminded thereby of the end of all men, and may lay it to our heart, and may be so wise as to consider our latter end;[h] for we also must be gathered to our people, as our neighbours and brethren are gathered;[i] and though whither those who are dead in Christ are gone we cannot follow them now,[k] yet grant that we may follow them afterwards, every one in his own order.[l]

We know that thou wilt bring us to death, and to the house appointed for all living;[m] but let us not see death, till by faith we have seen the Lord Christ, and then let us depart in peace according to the word.[n] And when the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, let us have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.[o]

And give us to know that our Redeemer liveth,

q Prov. ix. 5. r Matt. v. 6. s Rev. xix. 9. t Matt. xxii. 11. u Cant. iv. 16. v Cant. i. 4, 12. w 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19. x 1 Cor. x. 16. y 1 Cor. xi. 20. z Jer. l. 5. a 1 Cor. vi. 17. b Heb. iii. 14. c John vi. 55—57. d 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. e Acts ii. 38. f 1 John ii. 25. g Ps. cxvi. 13. h Rev. iii. 11. i 1 Chron. xxix. 18. k Col. ii. 6. l Phil. i. 27. m 2 Cor. iv. 10. n Phil. i. 21. o Ps. lvi. 12. p Ps. lxi. 8. q Ezek. xviii. 4. r Rom. xii. 1. s Matt. xxviii. 19. t Ps. li. 5. u Zech. xiii. 1. v Heb. x. 22. w Acts iii. 25. x Ezek. xvi. 20. y Ps. cx. 16. z Gen. xvii. 7. a Gal. iii. 14. b Acts ii. 39. c Mark x. 14, 16. d 2 Tim. ii. 21. e Mal. iii. 17. f Isa. xliv. 3—5. g Eccl. vii. 2. h Deut. xxxii. 29. i Numb. xxvii. 13. k John xiii. 36. l 1 Cor. xv. 23. m Job xxx. 23. n Luke ii. 26, 29. o 2 Cor. v. 1.

and that though after our skin, worms destroy these bodies, yet in our flesh we shall see God, whom we shall see for ourselves, and our eyes shall behold, and not another.[p]

15. Upon occasion of marriage.

Give to those who marry to marry in the Lord,[q] and let the Lord Jesus by his grace come to the marriage, and turn the water into wine.[r]

Make them helps meet for each other,[s] and instrumental to promote one another's salvation;[t] and give them to live in holy love, that they may dwell in God, and God in them.[u]

Let the wife be as a fruitful vine by the side of the house,[v] and the husband dwell with the wife as a man of knowledge; and let them dwell together as joint-heirs of the grace of life, that their prayers be not hindered.[w] And make us all meet for that world where they neither marry nor are given in marriage.[x]

16. Upon occasion of the ordaining of ministers.

Let the things of God be committed to faithful men, who may be able also to teach others,[y] and make others such burning and shining lights,[z] that it may appear it was Christ Jesus who put them into the ministry;[a] and let not hands be suddenly laid on any.[b]

Give to those who are ordained to take heed to the ministry which they have received of the Lord, that they fulfil it,[c] and to make full proof of it by watching in all things.[d]

Let those who in Christ's name are to preach repentance and remission of sins, be endued with power from on high;[e] give them another Spirit,[f] and make them good ministers of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine.[g]

17. Upon occasion of the want of rain.

Thou hast kept back the rain from us, and caused it to rain upon one city, and not upon another, yet have we not returned unto thee[h]

But thou hast said, When heaven is shut up that there is no rain, because we have sinned against thee, if we confess thy name, and turn from our sins, thou wilt hear from heaven, and forgive our sin, and give rain upon our land.[i]

We ask of thee the former and latter rain,[k] and depend upon thee for it; for there are not any of the vanities of the heathen that can give rain, nor can the heavens give showers, but we wait on thee, for thou hast made all these things.[l]

18. Upon occasion of excessive rain.

Let the rain thou sendest be in mercy to our land,[m] and not for correction; not a sweeping rain, which leaveth no food.[n]

Thou hast sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more return to cover the earth;[o] let fair weather therefore come out of the north, for with thee is terrible majesty.[p]

19. Upon occasion of infectious diseases.

Take sickness away from the midst of us,[q] and deliver us from the noisome pestilence.[r]

Appoint the destroying angel to put up his sword into the sheath, and to stay his hand.[s]

20. Upon occasion of fire.

Thou callest to contend by fire,[t] we bewail the burning which the Lord hath kindled:[u] O Lord God, cease, we beseech thee,[v] and let the fire be quenched, as that kindled in Israel was at the prayer of Moses.[w]

21. Upon occasion of great storms.

Lord, thou hast the winds in thy hands,[x] and bringest them out of thy treasures,[y] even stormy winds fulfil thy word:[z] O preserve us and our habitations, that we be not buried in the ruins of them, as Job's children were.[a]

22. Upon occasion of the cares, and burthens, and afflictions of particular persons; as,

(1.) When we pray with or for those that are troubled in mind, and melancholy, and under doubts and fears about their spiritual state.

Lord, enable those that fear thee, and obey the voice of thy servant, but walk in darkness, and have no light, to trust in the name of the Lord, and to stay themselves upon their God;[b] and at evening-time let it be light.[c]

O strengthen the weak hands, confirm the feeble knees, say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not.[d] Answer them with good words, and comfortable words,[e] saying unto them, Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you:[f] Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid,[g] I am your salvation:[h] and make them to hear this voice of joy and gladness, that broken bones may rejoice.[i]

Let those who now remember God, and are troubled, whose spirits are overwhelmed,[k] and whose souls refuse to be comforted, be enabled to trust in thy mercy, so that at length they may rejoice in thy salvation; though thou slay them, yet to trust in thee.[l]

Though deep calls unto deep, and all thy waves and thy billows go over them, yet do thou command thy loving-kindness for them in the day-time, and in the night let thy song be with them, and their

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p Job xix. 25—27. q 1 Cor. vii. 39. r John ii. 1. s Gen. ii. 18. t 1 Cor. vii. 16. u 1 John iv. 16. v Ps. cxxviii. 3. w 1 Pet. iii. 7. x Luke xx. 35. y 2 Tim. ii. 2. z John v. 35. a 2 Tim. i. 13. b 1 Tim. v. 22. c Col. iv. 17. d 2 Tim. iv. 5. e Luke xxiv. 47, 49. f 1 Sam. x. 9. g 1 Tim. iv. 6. h Amos iv. 7. i 1 Kings. viii. 35, 36. k Zech. x. 1. l Jer. xiv. 22. m Job xxxvii. 13. n Prov. xxviii. 3. o Isa. liv. 9. p Job xxxviii. 22.

q Exod. xxiii. 25. r Ps. xci. 3. s 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. t Amos vii. 4. u Lev. x. 6. v Amos vii. 5. w Numb. xi. 2. x Prov. xxx. 4. y Ps. cxxxv. 7. z Ps. cxlviii. 8. a Job i. 19. b Isa. l. 10. c Zech. xiv. 7. d Isa. xxxv. 3, 4. e Zech. i. 13. f Matt. ix. 2. g Mark vi. 50. h Ps. xxxv. 3. i Ps. li. 8. k Ps. lxxvii. 2, 3. l Job xiii. 15.

prayer to the God of their life; though their souls are cast down and disquieted within them, give them to hope in God, that they shall yet praise him, and let them find him the health of their countenance, and their God.[m]

O renew a right spirit within them, cast them not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from them, but restore unto them the joy of thy salvation, and uphold them with thy free Spirit, that their tongues may sing aloud of thy righteousness,[n] and show forth thy salvation.[o]

O bring them out of this horrible pit, and this miry clay, and set their feet upon a rock, establishing their goings, and put a new song in their mouth, even praises to our God:[p] O comfort them again now after the time that thou hast afflicted them.[q]

Though for a small moment thou hast forsaken them, and hid thy face from them, yet gather them, and have mercy on them with everlasting kindness.[r]

O let thy Spirit witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God;[s] and by the blood of Christ let them be purged from an evil conscience.[t]

Lord, rebuke the tempter, even the accuser of the brethren; the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke him, and let the poor, tempted, troubled souls, be as brands plucked out of the burning.

(2.) Those who are under convictions of sin, and begin to be concerned about their souls, and their salvation, and to inquire after Christ.

Those who are asking the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward,[u] that are lamenting after the Lord,[v] and are pricked to the heart for sin,[w] O show them the good and the right way,[x] and lead them in it.

To those who are asking what they shall do to inherit eternal life,[y] discover Christ as the way, the truth, and the life,[z] the only true and living way.

O do not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed, but bring forth judgment unto victory.[a] Let the great Shepherd of the sheep gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead them,[b] and help them against their unbelief.[c]

Let not the red dragon devour the man child as soon as it is born, but let it be caught up to God, and to his throne.[d]

(3.) When we pray with, or for, those who are sick and weak, and distempered in body; that those who are sick, and in sin, may be convinced; those who are sick, and in Christ, comforted.

Lord, thou hast appointed those that are sick to be prayed for, and prayed with, and hast promised, that the prayer of faith shall save the sick;[e] Lord, help us to pray in faith for the sick, and as being ourselves also in the body.

When our Lord Jesus was here upon earth, we find that they brought to him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and he healed all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases among the people;[f] and he has still the same power over bodily diseases that ever he had; he says to them, Go, and they go; Come, and they come; Do this, and they do it; and can speak the word, and they shall be healed.[g] He is still touched with the feeling of our infirmities;[h] and in the belief of this we do by prayer bring our friends that are sick, and lay them before him.[i]

Lord, grant those who are sick may neither despise the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when they are rebuked of him;[k] but that they may both hear the rod, and him that has appointed it,[l] and may kiss the rod, and accept of the punishment of their iniquity.[m]

Give them to see, that affliction cometh not forth out of the dust, nor springs out of the ground;[n] that they may therefore seek unto God, to the Lord more than to the physicians,[o] because unto God the Lord belong the issues of life and death.[p]

Lord, show them wherefore thou contendest with them,[q] and give them in their afflictions to humble themselves greatly before the God of their fathers,[r] and to repent and turn from every evil way, and make their ways and their doings good,[s] that being judged and chastened of the Lord, they may not be condemned with the world.[t] By the sickness of the body, and the sadness of the countenance, let the heart be made better.[u]

O Lord, rebuke them not in thine anger, neither chasten them in thy hot displeasure. Have mercy upon them, O Lord, for they are weak. Lord, heal them, for their bones are vexed, their souls also are sore vexed. Return, O Lord, and deliver their souls, save them for thy mercy's sake;[v] and lay no more upon them than thou wilt enable them to bear, and enable them to bear what thou dost lay upon them.[w]

When thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth. Surely every man is vanity. But remove thy stroke, we pray thee, from those that are even consumed by the blow of thine hand: O spare a little, that they may recover strength before they go hence, and be no more seen.[x]

Those who are chastened with pain upon their bed, and the multitude of their bones with strong pain, so that their life abhorreth bread, and their soul dainty meat, show them thine uprightness, be gracious to them. Deliver them from going down to the pit, for thou hast found a ransom.[y]

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m Ps. xlii. 7, 8, 11. n Ps. li. 10—12, 14. o Ps. lxxi. 15. p Ps. xl. 2, 3. q Ps. xc. 15. r Isa. liv. 7, 8. s Rom. viii. 16. t Heb. x. 22. u Jer. l. 5. v 1 Sam. vii. 2. w Acts ii. 37. x 1 Sam. xii. 23. y Matt. xix. 16. z John xiv. 6. a Matt. xii. 20. b Isa. xl. 11. c Mark ix. 24. d Rev. xii. 4. 5. e James v. 14, 15. f Matt. iv. 23, 24. g Matt. viii. 8, 9. h Heb. iv. 15. i Luke v. 18. k Heb. xii. 5. l Mic. vi. 9. m Lev. xxvi. 41. n Job v. 6. o 2 Chron. xvi. 12. p Ps. lxviii. 20. q Job x. 2. r 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12. s Jer. xviii. 11. t 1 Cor. xi. 32. u Eccl. vii. 3. v Ps. vi. 1—4. w 1 Cor. x. 13. x Ps. xxxix. 10, 11, 13. y Job xxxiii. 19, 20, 23, 24.

Let the eternal God be their refuge, and underneath them be the everlasting arms.[z] Consider their frame, remember that they are but dust.[a]

O deliver those that are thine in the time of trouble, preserve them, and keep them alive: O strengthen them upon their bed of languishing, and make their bed in their sickness: be merciful to them, and heal their souls, for they have sinned.[b]

O turn to them, and have mercy upon them, bring them out of their distresses, look upon their affliction and their pain, but especially forgive all their sin.[c]

Make thy face to shine upon them; save them for thy mercy's sake.[d] The God that comforteth them that are cast down,[e] comfort them; and let the soul dwell at ease in thee,[f] when the body lies in pain.

If it be the beginning of a distemper,—Lord, set bounds to this sickness, and say, Hitherto shall it come, and no further;[g] let it not prevail to extremity, but in measure, when it shooteth forth, do thou debate, and stay thy rough wind in the day of thine east wind; and by this let iniquity be purged, and let this be all the fruit, even the taking away of sin.[h]

If it have continued long,—Lord, let patience have its perfect work,[i] even unto long-suffering, that those who have been long in the furnace may continue hoping, and quietly waiting for the salvation of the Lord:[k] let tribulation work patience, and patience experience, and experience a hope that maketh not ashamed,[l] and enable them to call even this affliction light, and but for a moment, seeing it to work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.[m]

If there be hopes of recovery,—Lord, when thou hast tried them, let them come forth like gold;[n] let their souls live, and they shall praise thee, let thy judgments help them:[o] O deal bountifully with them, that they may live and keep thy word. In love to their souls deliver them from the pit of corruption, and cast all their sins behind thy back.[p] Recover them and make them to live. Speak the word, and they shall be healed;[q] say unto them, Live, yea, say unto them, Live, and the time shall be a time of love.[r] Father, if it be possible, let the cup pass away; however, not as we will, but as thou wilt. The will of the Lord be done.[s] Perfect that which concerns them. Thy mercy, O Lord, endures for ever; forsake not the work of thine own hands,[t] but whether they live or die let them be the Lord's.[u]

If they be in appearance at the point of death,—Now the flesh and the heart are failing, Lord, be thou the strength of the heart,[v] and an everlasting portion: in the valley of the shadow of death,[w] Lord, be thou present, as the good Shepherd, with a guiding rod, and a supporting staff. O do not fail them nor forsake them now:[x] be a very present help.[y] Into thy hands we commit the departing spirit,[z] as into the hands of a faithful Creator,[a] by the hands of him who has redeemed it. Let it be carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.[b] Let it be presented to thee without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.[c] Lord Jesus, receive this precious soul;[d] let it come to the spirits of just men made perfect;[e] when it is absent from the body, let it be present with the Lord![f] This day let it be with thee in paradise.[g] Now let it be for ever comforted,[h] and perfectly freed from sin.[i] And prepare us to draw after, as there are innumerable before,[k] that we may be together for ever with the Lord, there where there shall be no more death, and where all tears shall be wiped away.[l]

(4.) When we pray with, or for, those that are deprived of the use of their reason.

O look with pity upon those who are put out of the possession of their own souls,[m] whose judgment is taken away,[n] so that their soul chooseth strangling and death rather than life.[o] O restore them to themselves,[p] and their right mind.[q] Deliver them from doing themselves any harm.[r] And whatever afflictions thou layest upon any of us in this world, preserve to us the use of our reason, and the peace of our consciences.

(5.) When we pray with, or for, sick children.

Lord, we see death reigning even over them that have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;[s] but Jesus Christ hath abolished death,[t] and admitted even little children into the kingdom of God.[u] O let sick children be pitied by thee,[v] as they are by their earthly parents. They are come forth like flowers, O let them not be cut down again.[w] Turn from them, that they may rest till they shall have accomplished as a hireling their day. Be gracious to us, and let the children live.[x] However, Father, thy will be done.[y] O let their spirits be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.[z]

(6.) When we pray with, or for, families where death is, especially such as have lost their head.

Visit the houses of mourning, as our Saviour did, and comfort them, by assuring them that Christ is the resurrection and the life,[a] that their relations which are removed from them, are not dead, but sleep;[b] and that they shall rise again, that they may not sorrow as those that have no hope:[c] and enable

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z Deut. xxxiii. 27. a Ps. ciii. 14. b Ps. xli. 1—4. c Ps. xxv. 16—18. d Ps. xxxi. 16. e 2 Cor. vii. 6. f Ps. xxv. 13 g Job xxxviii. 11. h Isa. xxvii. 8, 9. i James i. 4. k Lam. iii. 26. l Rom. v. 3—5. m 2 Cor. iv. 17. n Job xxiii. 10. o Ps. cxix. 175. p Isa. xxxviii. 16, 17. q Matt. viii. 8. r Ezek. xvi. 6, 8. s Matt. xxvi. 39. t Ps. cxxxviii. 8. u Rom. xiv. 8. v Ps. lxxiii. 26. w Ps. xxiii. 4. x Heb. xiii. 5. y Ps. xlvi. 1. z Ps. xxxi. 5. a 1 Pet. iv. 19. b Luke xvi. 22. c Eph. v. 27. d Acts vii. 59. e Heb. xii. 23. f 2 Cor. v. 8. g Luke xxiii. 43. h Luke xvi. 25. i Rom. vi. 7. k Job xxi. 33. l Rev. xxi. 4. m Luke xxi. 19. n Job xxvii. 2. o Job vii. 15. p Luke xv. 17. q Matt. v. 15. r Acts xvi. 28. s Rom. v. 14. t 2 Tim. i. 10. u Matt. xviii. 3. v Ps. ciii 13. w Job xiv. 2, 6. x 2 Sam. xii. 22. y Acts xxi. 14. z 1 Cor. v. 5. a John xi. 25. b Matt. ix. 24. c 1 Thess. iv. 13.

them to trust in the living God,[d] the Rock of Ages,[e] and enjoy the fountains of living waters, when creatures prove broken reeds and broken cisterns.[f]

Be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widows, O God, in thy holy habitation.[g] With thee let the fatherless find mercy;[h] keep them alive, and let the widows trust in thee,[i] that they may be widows indeed, who, being desolate, trust in God, and continue instant in prayer night and day.[k] And where father and mother have forsaken,[l] let the Lord take up the children, and not leave them orphans,[m] but come to them.

(7.) When we pray with, or for, those women that are near the time of travail, or in travail.

Lord, thou hast passed this sentence upon the woman that was first in the transgression,[n] that in sorrow she shall bring forth children.[o] But let this handmaid of thine be saved in child-bearing, and continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety.[p] Enable her to cast her burthen upon the Lord, and let the Lord sustain her;[q] and what time she is afraid, grant that she may trust in thee,[r] and may encourage herself in the Lord her God.[s] O let not the root be dried up from beneath, nor let the branch be withered or cut off;[t] but let both live before thee. Be thou her strong habitation, her rock, and her fortress, give commandment to save her.[u] And when travail comes upon her, which she cannot escape,[v] be pleased, O Lord, to deliver her; O Lord, make haste to help her; be thou thyself her help and deliverer, make no tarrying, O our God.[w] Let her be safely delivered, and remember the anguish no more, for joy that a child is born into the world,[x] is born unto thee.

(8.) When we pray with, or for, those that are recovered from sickness, or are delivered in child-bearing, and desire to give thanks unto God for his mercy.

We will extol thee, O Lord, upon the account of those whom thou hast lifted up, whose souls thou hast brought up from the grave, and kept them alive, that they should not go down to the pit.[y] Those who were brought low thou hast helped, hast delivered their souls from death, their eyes from tears, and their feet from falling. Now give them grace to walk before thee in the land of the living, to offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, to call upon thy name, and to pay their vows unto the Lord.[z]

The grave cannot thus praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down to the pit cannot hope for thy truth; but the living, the living, they shall praise thee, as we do this day.[a] Lord, grant that those who are delivered from death may not be as the nine lepers, who did not return to give thanks;[b] or as Hezekiah, who rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him;[c] but that they may so offer praise, as to glorify thee, and so order their conversation, as to see the salvation of God.[d]

Those whom the Lord hath chastened sore, yet he has not delivered over unto death: O that they may therefore praise him, who is become their salvation.[e]

(9.) When we pray with, or for, those parents whose children are a grief to them, or such as they are in fear about.

Lord, give to parents the desire of their souls concerning their children, which is to see them walking in the truth;[f] form Christ in their souls.[g] O give them betimes to know the God of their fathers, and to serve him with a a perfect heart and a willing mind.[h] Let children of the youth, that are as arrows in the hand, be directed aright, that those parents may have reason to think themselves happy that have their quiver full of them, and they may never be arrows in the heart.[i]

Let those foolish children, who are the grief of the father, and the heaviness of her that bare them,[k] who mock at their parents, and despise to obey[l] them, be brought to repentance; and let those who have been unprofitable, now at length be made profitable.[m] O turn the hearts of the children to their fathers,[n] even the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that they may be made ready a people prepared for the Lord.[o] O show them their work and their transgression, that they have exceeded,[p] and open their ear to discipline.[q]

(10.) When we pray with, or for, those that are in prison.

Those that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron, because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High, give them grace to cry unto thee in their trouble,[r] and in a day of adversity to consider.[s]

In their captivity give them to bethink themselves, to humble themselves, and pray, and seek thy face, to repent, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely,[t] and to return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul; and bring their souls out of prison, that they may praise thy name.[u] Bring them into the glorious liberty of the children of God, out of the bondage of corruption.[v] Let the Son make them free, and then they shall be free indeed.[w]

Those who are wrongfully imprisoned, be thou

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a 1 Tim. vi. 17. e Ps. xxvi. 4 f Jer. ii. 13. g Ps. lxviii. 5. h Hos. xiv. 3. i Jer. xlix. 11. k 1 Tim. v. 5. l Ps. xxvii. 10. m John xiv. 18. n 1 Tim. ii. 14. o Gen. iii. 16. p 1 Tim. ii. 13. q Ps. lv. 22. r Ps. lvi. 3. s 1 Sam. xxx. 6. t Job xviii. 16. u Ps. lxxi. 3. v 1 Thess. v. 3. w Ps. xl. 13, 17. x John xvi. 21. y Ps. xxx. 1, 3. z Ps. cxvi. 6—9, 17, 18. a Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19. b Luke xvii. 18. c 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. d Ps. l. 23. e Ps. cxviii. 18, 21. f 2 John 4. g Gal. iv. 19. h 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. i Ps. cxxvii. 4, 5. k Prov. xvii. 25. l Prov. xxx. 17. m Philem. 11. n Mal. iv. 6. o Luke i. 17. p Job xxxvi. 9. q Isa. xlviii. 8, 9. r Ps. cvii. 10, 11, 13. s Eccl. vii. 14. t 1 Kings viii. 47. u Ps. cxlii. 7. v Rom. viii. 21. w John viii. 36.

with them, as thou wast with Joseph in the prison, and show them mercy.[x] Hear the poor, and despise not thy prisoners,[y] but let their sorrowful sighing come before thee, and according to the greatness of thy power preserve those that are unjustly appointed to die.

(11.) When we pray with, or for, condemned malefactors, that have but a little while to live.

O look with pity upon those, the number of whose months is to be cut off in the midst[z] for their sin: O give them repentance unto salvation,[a] as thou didst to the thief upon the cross, that they may own the justice of God in all that is brought upon them, that he has done right, but they have done wickedly.[b] O turn them, and they shall be turned,[c] that being instructed they may smite upon the thigh, and may be ashamed, yea, even confounded, because they do bear the reproach of their own iniquity. O pluck them as brands out of the fire;[d] let them be delivered from the wrath to come.[e]

Enable them to give glory to God by making confession,[f] that they may find mercy, and that others may hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously.[g]

Lord Jesus, remember them now thou art in thy kingdom.[h] O let them not be hurt of the second death.[i] Deliver them from going down to that pit.[k] Though the flesh be destroyed, O let the spirit be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.[l] The God of infinite mercy be merciful to these sinners,[m]—sinners against their own souls.[n]

(12.) When we pray with, or for, those who are at sea.

Let those who go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, observe the works of the Lord there, and his wonders in the deep:[o] and acknowledge what a great God he is whom the winds and the seas obey;[p] who hath placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over.[q]

O preserve them through the paths of the seas,[r] and in perils by waters, and perils by robbers.[s] If the stormy wind be raised, which lifteth up the waves, so that they are at their wits' end, deliver them out of their distresses, make the storm a calm, and bring them to their desired haven: and, O that those who are delivered may praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.[t]

x Gen. xxxix. 21. y Ps. lxix. 33. z Job xxi. 21. a 2 Cor. vii. 10. b Neh. ix. 33. c Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. d Jude 23. e 1 Thess. i. 10. f Josh. vii. 19. g Deut. xvii. 13. h Luke xxiii. 42. i Rev. ii. 11. k Job xxxiii. 24. l 1 Cor. v. 5. m Luke xviii. 13. n Numb. xvi. 38. o Ps. cvii. 23, 24.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE CONCLUSION OF OUR PRAYERS.

We are commanded to pray always, to pray without ceasing, to continue in prayer, because we must always have in us a disposition to this duty, must be constant to it, and never grow weary of it, or throw it up; and yet we cannot be always praying, we must come down from this mount; nor may we be over long, so as to make the duty a task, or a toil to ourselves, or those who join with us. We have other work that calls for our attendance. Jacob wrestles with the angel; but he must go, for the day breaks. We must therefore think of concluding. The prayers of David the son of Jesse must be ended. But how shall we conclude, so as to have the impressions of the duty keep always in the imagination of the thought of our heart.

1. We may then sum up our requests in some comprehensive petitions, as the conclusion of the whole matter.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Christ Jesus.[a]

Now the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.[b]

And the God of all grace, who hath called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that we have suffered a while, make us perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle us.[c]

And now, Lord, what wait we for? Truly our hope is even in thee,[d] and on thee do we depend to be to us a God all-sufficient.[e]

Do for us exceeding abundantly above what we are able to ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us:[f] and supply all our need according to thy riches in glory by Christ Jesus.[g]

2. We may then beg for the audience and acceptance of our poor weak prayers, for Christ's sake.

Now the God of Israel grant us the things we have requested of him.[h]

Let the words of our mouths, and the meditation of our hearts, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord our strength and our Redeemer.[i]

Let thine eyes be open unto the supplication of thy servants, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call

p Matt. viii. 27. q Jer. v. 22. r Ps. viii. 8. s 2 Cor. xi. t Ps. cvii. 25, 27—31.
a Heb. xiii. 20, 21. b 2 Thess. iii. 5. c 1 Pet. v. 10. d xxxix. 7. e Gen. xvii. 1. f Eph. iii. 20. g Phil. iv. h 1 Sam. i. 17. i Ps. xix. 14.

unto thee for; for they be thy people and thine inheritance.[k]

O our God, let thine ears be attent unto the prayers that we have made: O turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant;[l] even Jesus, who is at thy right hand making intercession for us.

Lord, thou hast assured us, that whatever we ask the Father in Christ's name, he will give it us:[m] we ask all these things in that name, that powerful name, which is above every name;[n] that precious name, which is as ointment poured forth.[o] O make thy face to shine upon us for the Lord's sake,[p] who is the Son of thy love, and whom thou hearest always.[q] Good Lord, give us to hear him, and be well pleased with us in him.[r]

3. We may then beg for the forgiveness of what has been amiss in our prayers.

Lord, we have not prayed as we ought;[s] who is there that does good, and sins not?[t] Even when we would do good, evil is present with us; and if to will be present, yet how to perform that which is good we know not;[u] for the good that we would, we do not; so that thou mightest justly refuse to hear even when we make many prayers.[v] But we have a great High Priest, who bears the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts;[w] for his sake take away all that iniquity from us, even all the iniquity of our holy things, and receive us graciously, and love us freely;[x] and deal not with us after our folly.[y]

4. We may then recommend ourselves to the conduct, protection, and government of the divine grace, in the further services that lie before us, and in the whole course of our conversation.

And now let us be enabled to go from strength to strength, until we appear before God in Zion, and while we pass through this valley of Baca, let it be made a well, and let the rain of the divine grace and blessing fill the pools.[z]

Now speak, Lord, for thy servants hear.[a] What saith our Lord unto his servants?[b] Grant that we may not turn away our ear from hearing the law; for then our prayers will be an abomination;[c] but may hearken unto God, that he may hearken unto us.[d]

And now the Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers; let him not leave us, nor forsake us; that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments;[e] and let our hearts be perfect with the Lord our God all our days, and continue so till the end be, that then we may rest, and may stand in our lot, and let it be a blessed lot in the end of the days.[f]

5. We may conclude all with doxologies or solemn praises of God, ascribing honour and glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and sealing up all our praises and prayers with an affectionate Amen.

Now, blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting,[g] Amen and Amen.

For ever blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things, and blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.[h] Yea, let all the people say, Amen, Hallelujah.[i]

To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever, Amen.[k]

Now to God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father, be glory for ever and ever, Amen.[l]

To God be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end, Amen.[m]

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen.[n] To him be honour and power everlasting,[o] to him be glory and dominion, Amen.[p]

Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, now and ever, Amen.[q]

Hallelujah, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God, Amen, Hallelujah.[r]

And now, we prostrate our souls before the throne, and worship God, saying, Amen, blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen.[s]

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever;[t] and let the whole creation say, Amen, Amen.

6. It is very proper to sum up our prayers in that form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples.

Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.[u]

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k 1 Kings viii. 52. l 2 Chron. vi. 40, 42. m John xvi. 23. n Phil. ii. 9. o Cant. i. 3. p Dan ix. 17. q John xi. 42. r Matt. xvii. 5. s Rom. viii. 26. t Eccl. vii. 20. u Rom. vii. 18, 19. v Isa. i. 15. w Exod. xxviii. 38. x Hos. xiv. 2. y Job xiii. 8. z Ps. lxxxiv. 6, 7. a 1 Sam. iii. 9. b Josh. v. 14. c Prov. xxviii. 9. d Judg. ix. 7. e 1 Kings viii. 57, 58. f Dan. xii. 13. g Ps. xli. 13. h Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. i Ps. cvi. 48. k Rom. xvi. 27. l Gal. i. 3—5. m Eph. iii. 21. n 1 Tim. i. 17. o 1 Tim. vi. 16. p 1 Pet. v. 11. q Jude 24, 25. r Rev. xix. 1, 4. s Rev. vii. 11, 12. t Rev. v. 13. u Matt. vi. 9—13.

CHAP. VIII.

A PARAPHRASE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, IN SCRIPTURE EXPRESSIONS.

THE Lord's Prayer being intended not only for a form of prayer itself, but a rule of direction, a plan or model in miniature, by which we may frame our prayers; and the expressions being remarkably concise, and yet vastly comprehensive, it will be of good use sometimes to lay it before us, and observing the method and order of it, to dilate upon the several passages and petitions of it, that when we use it only as a form, we may use it the more intelligently; of which we shall only here give a specimen in the assistance we may have from some other scriptures.

Our Father which art in heaven.

O Lord our God, doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; O Lord, thou art our Father, our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting;[a] and we will from this time cry unto thee, our Father, thou art the guide of our youth.[b]

Have we not all one Father, has not one God created us?[c] Thou art the Father of our spirits, to whom we ought to be in subjection and live.[d]

Thou art the Father of lights,[e] and the Father of mercies,[f] and the God of all consolation: the eternal Father,[g] of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things.[h]

Thou art the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,[i] whose glory was that of the only-begotten of the Father, who is in his bosom,[k] by him as one brought up with him, daily his delight, and rejoicing always before him.[l]

Thou art in Christ our Father, and the Father of all believers, whom thou hast predestinated to the adoption of children,[m] and into whose hearts thou hast sent the Spirit of the Son, teaching them to cry, Abba, Father.[n] Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God.[o] That the Lord God Almighty should be to us a Father, and we should be to him for sons and daughters;[p] and that as many as receive Christ, to them thou shouldst give power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which are born, not of the will of man, but of God,[q] and his grace.

O that we may receive the adoption of sons,[r] and that, as obedient and genuine children, we may fashion ourselves according to the example of him who hath called us, who is holy;[s] and may be followers of God as dear children,[t] and conformed to the image of his Son, who is the first-born among many brethren.[u]

Enable us to come to thee with humble boldness and confidence,[v] as to a Father, a tender Father, who spares us as a man spares his son that serves him;[w] and as having an Advocate with the Father,[x] who yet has told us, that the Father himself loves us.[y]

Thou art a Father, but where is thine honour?[z] Lord, give us grace to serve thee as becomes children, with reverence and godly fear.[a]

Thou art a Father; and if earthly parents, being evil, yet know how to give good gifts unto their children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?[b] Lord, give us the Spirit of grace and supplication.[c]

We come to thee as prodigal children, who have gone from our Father's house into a far country; but we will arise and go to our Father, for in his house there is bread enough, and to spare, and if we continue at a distance from him, we perish with hunger. Father, we have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and are no more worthy to be called thy children, make us even as thy hired servants.[d]

Thou art our Father in heaven, and therefore unto thee, O Lord, do we lift up our souls. Unto thee we lift up our eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. As the eyes of a servant are to the hand of his master, and the eyes of a maiden to the hand of her mistress, so do our eyes wait upon thee, O Lord our God;[e] a God whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain,[f] and yet to whom we may have access, having a High Priest that is passed into the heavens, as our fore-runner.[g]

Thou, O God, dwellest in the high and holy place,[h] and holy and reverend is thy name.[i] God is in heaven, and we upon earth,[k] therefore should we choose out words to reason with him;[l] and yet through a mediator we have boldness to enter into the holiest.[m]

Look down, we pray thee, from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness, and of thy glory,[n] and have compassion upon us, and help us.[o]

Heaven is the firmament of thy power: O hear us from thy holy heaven, with the saving strength of thy right hand; send us help from the sanctuary, and strengthen us out of Zion.[p]

And, O that since heaven is our Father's house,[q] we may have our conversation there,[r] and may seek the things that are above.[s]

a Isa. lxiii. 16. b Jer. iii. 4. c Mal. ii. 10. d Heb. xii. 9. e James i. 17. f 2 Cor. i. 3. g Isa. ix. 6. h Rom. xi. 36. i Eph. i. 3. k John i. 14, 18. l Prov. viii. 30. m Eph. i. 5. n Gal. iv. 6. o 1 John iii. 1. p 2 Cor. vi. 18. q John i. 12, 13. r Gal. iv. 5. s 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. t Eph. v. 1. u Rom. viii. 29. v Eph. iii. 12. w Mal. iii. 17. x 1 John ii. 1. y John xvi. 27.

z Mal. i. 6. a Heb. xii. 28. b Luke xi. 13. c Zech. xii. 10. d Luke xv. 13, 17—19. e Ps. lxxxvi. 4. Ps. cxxiii. 1, 2. f 1 Kings viii. 27. g Heb. iv. 14. h Isa. lvii. 15. i Ps. cxi. 9. k Eccl. v. 2. l Job ix. 14. m Heb. x. 19. n Isa. lxiii. 15. o Mark ix. 22. p Ps. xx. 2, 6. q John xiv. 2. r Phil. iii. 20. s Col. iii. 1.

Hallowed be thy name.

And now, what is our petition, and what is our request?[t] What would we that thou shouldst do for us?[u] This is our hearts' desire and prayer[v] in the first place, Father in heaven, let thy name be sanctified.[w] We pray that thou mayst be glorified as a Holy God.

We desire to exalt the Lord our God, to worship at his footstool, at his holy hill, and to praise his great and terrible name, for it is holy, for the Lord our God is holy.[x] Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.[y]

We glory in thy holy name, and therefore shall our hearts rejoice,[z] because we have trusted in that holy name of thine,[a] to which we will always give thanks, and triumph in thy praise.[b]

Lord, enable us to glorify thy holy name for evermore, by praising thee with all our hearts,[c] and by bringing forth much fruit, for herein is our heavenly Father glorified.[d] O that we may be to our God for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory,[e] that being called out of darkness into his marvellous light, to be to him a peculiar people, we may show forth the praises of him that hath called us.[f]

O that we may be thy children, the work of thy hands, that we may sanctify thy name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and fear the God of Israel,[g] and may be to the praise of his glory.[h]

Enable us, as we have received the gift, so to minister the same, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: and if we suffer, enable us to suffer as Christians, and to glorify God therein,[i] for this is our earnest expectation and hope, that always Jesus Christ may be magnified in our bodies, in life and death.[k]

Lord, enable others to glorify thee, let even the strong people glorify thee, and the city of the terrible nations fear thee;[l] but especially let the Lord be magnified from the border of Israel.[m] Let them glorify the Lord in the fires, even the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea.[n] O let all nations whom thou hast made, come and worship before thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name; for thou art great, and dost wondrous things, thou art God alone.[o]

O let the Gentiles glorify God for his mercy, let his name be known and confessed among the Gentiles, and let them rejoice with his people.[p] O let thy name be great among the Gentiles,[q] and let all the ends of the world remember and turn to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations worship before thee; and let them declare thy righteousness to a people that shall be born.[r]

Lord, do thou thyself dispose of all things to thy own glory, both as King of nations,[s] and as King of saints:[t] do all according to the counsel of thy own will,[u] that thou mayst magnify thyself, and sanctify thyself, and mayst be known in the eyes of many nations, that thou art the Lord.[v] O sanctify thy great name, which has been profaned among the heathen, and let them know that thou art the Lord, when thou shalt be sanctified in them.[w]

Father, glorify thine own name: thou hast glorified it, glorify it again.[x] Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.[y] O give him a name above every name,[z] and in all places and in all things let him have the pre-eminence.[a]

Lord, what wilt thou do for thy great name?[b] Do this for thy great name; Pour out of thy Spirit upon all flesh;[c] and let the word of Christ dwell richly in the hearts of all.[d] Be thou exalted, O Lord, among the heathen, be thou exalted in the earth;[e] be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, let thy glory be above all the earth;[f] be thou exalted, O Lord, in thine own strength, so will we sing and praise thy power.[g] Do great things with thy glorious and everlasting arm, to make unto thyself a glorious and an everlasting name.[h]

O let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel.[i]

Thy kingdom come.

In order to the sanctifying and glorifying of thy holy name, Father in heaven, let thy kingdom come; for thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all: both riches and honour come of thee; thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and might; in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.[k] And we desire to speak of the glorious majesty of thy kingdom, for it is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endures throughout all generations.[l] Thou rulest by thy power for ever; thine eyes behold the nations. O let not the rebellious exalt themselves,[m] but through the greatness of thy power let thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.[n]

O make it to appear that the kingdom is thine, and that thou art the Governor among the nations, so evident, that they may say among the heathen, The Lord reigneth;[o] that all men may fear, and may declare the works of God,[p] and may say, Verily he

t Esth. v. 6. u Matt. xx. 32. v Rom. x. 1. w Lev. x. 3. x Ps. xcix. 3, 5, 9. y Ps xxii. 3. z Ps. cv. 3. a Ps. xxxiii. 21. b Ps. cvi. 47. c Ps. lxxxvi. 12. d John xv. 8. e Jer. xiii. 11. f 1 Pet. ii. 9. g Isa. xxix. 23. h Eph. i. 12. i 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11, 16. k Phil. i. 20. l Isa. xxv. 3. m Mal. i. 5. n Isa. xxiv. 15. o Ps. lxxxvi. 9, 10. p Rom. xv. 9, 10. q Mal. i. 11. r Ps. xxii. 27, 31. s Jer. x. 7. t Rev. xv. 3.

u Eph. i. 11. v Ezek. xxxviii. 23. w Ezek. xxxvi. 23. x John xii. 27, 28. y John xvii. 1. z Phil. ii. 9. a Col. i. 18. b Josh. vii. 9. c Joel ii. 28. d Col. iii. 16. e Ps. xlvi. 10. f Ps. lvii. 11. g Ps. xxi. 13. h Isa. lxiii. 12, 14. i 1 Chron. xvii. 24. k 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12. l Ps cxlv. 12, 13. m Ps. lxvi. 7. n Ps, lxvi. 3. o Ps. xcvi. 10. p Ps. lxiv. 9.

is a God that judgeth in the earth.[q] Make all the kings of the earth to know that the heavens do rule, even that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will; and to praise and extol, and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.[r]

O let the kingdom of thy grace come more and more in the world, that kingdom of God which cometh not with observation, that kingdom of God which is within men.[s] Let it be like leaven in the world, diffusing its relish till the whole be leavened, and like a grain of mustard seed, which, though it be the least of all seeds, yet when it is grown, is the greatest among herbs.[t]

Let the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ. Take unto thyself thy great power, and reign, though the nations be angry.[u] Set up thy throne there where Satan's seat is,[v] let every thought be brought into obedience to thee,[w] and let the law of thy kingdom be magnified and made honourable.[x]

Let that kingdom of God, which is not in word, but in power,[y] be set up in all the churches of Christ. Send forth the rod of thy strength out of thy Zion, and rule by the beauty of holiness.[z]

Where the strong man armed hath long kept his palace, and his goods are in peace, let Christ, who is stronger than he, come upon him, and overcome him, and take from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divide the spoil.[a]

O give to the Son of man dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages may serve him, and the judgment may be given to the saints of the Most High.[b]

Let the kingdom of thy grace come more and more in our land, and the places where we live. There let the word of the Lord have free course, and be glorified,[c] and let not the kingdom of God be taken from us, as we have deserved it should, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.[d]

Let the kingdom of thy grace come into our hearts, that they may be the temples of the Holy Ghost.[e] Let no iniquity have dominion over us.[f] Overturn, overturn, overturn the power of corruption there, and let him come whose right our hearts are, and give them him;[g] make us willing, more and more willing, in the day of thy power.[h] Rule in us by the power of truth, that being of the truth, we may always hear Christ's voice,[i] and may not only call him Lord, Lord, but do the things that he saith.[k] And let the love of Christ command us, and constrain us,[l] and his fear be before our eyes, that we sin not.[m]

O let the kingdom of thy glory be hastened; we believe it will come, we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus, to come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory;[n] we hope that he shall appear to our joy;[o] we love his appearing;[p] we are looking for, and hasting to, the coming of the day of God;[q] make us ready for it,[r] that we may then lift up our heads with joy, knowing that our redemption draws nigh.[s] And, O that we may have such first-fruits of the Spirit, that we ourselves may groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of our body;[t] and may have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is best of all.[u]

Blessed Jesus, be with thy ministers and people (as thou hast said) always even unto the end of the world,[v] and then, as thou hast said, Surely, I come quickly; Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly;[w] when the mystery of God shall be finished,[x] make haste our beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.[y]

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And as an evidence that thy kingdom comes, and in order to the sanctifying of thy name, Father in heaven, let thy holy will be done. We know, O Lord, that whatsoever thou pleasest, that thou doest in heaven, and in earth, in the sea, and in all deep places;[z] thy counsel shall stand, and thou wilt do all thy pleasure:[a] Even so be it, Holy Father, not our will, but thine be done.[b] As thou hast thought, so let it come to pass; and as thou hast purposed, let it stand.[c] Do all according to the counsel of thine own will.[d] Make even those to serve thy purposes who have not known thee,[e] and who mean not so, neither doth their heart think so.[f]

Father, let thy will be done concerning us and ours: Behold here we are; It is the Lord, let him do to us as seemeth good unto him;[g] the will of the Lord be done.[h] O give us to submit to thy will in conformity to the example of the Lord Jesus, who said, Not as I will, but as thou wilt;[i] and to say the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.[k] Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil also?[l]

Father, let the Scriptures be fulfilled;[m] the Scriptures of the prophets, which cannot be broken. Though heaven and earth pass away, let not one iota or tittle of thy word pass away.[n] Do what i

q Ps. lviii. 11. r Dan. iv. 25, 26, 37 s Luke xvii. 20, 21 t Matt. xiii. 31—33. u Rev. xi. 15, 17. v Rev. ii. 13. w 2 Cor. x. 5. x Isa. xlii. 21. y 1 Cor. iv. 20. z Ps. cx. 2, 3. a Luke xi. 21, 22. b Dan. vii. 14, 22. c 2 Thess. iii. 1. d Matt. xxi. 43 e 1 Cor. iii. 16 f Ps. cxix. 133. g Ezek. xxi. 27. h Ps cx. 3. i John xviii. 37. k Luke vi. 46. l 2 Cor. v. 14. m Exod. xx. 20. n Matt. xxiv. 30. o Isa. lxvi. 5. p 2 Tim. iv. 8. q 2 Pet. iii. 12. r Matt. xxiv. 44. s Luke xxi. 2 t Rom. viii. 23. u Phil. i. 23. v Matt. xxviii. 20. w Re xxii. 20. x Rev. x. 7. y Cant. viii. 14. z Ps. cxxxv. 6. a Is xlvi. 10. b Luke xxii. 42. c Isa. xiv. 24. d Eph. i. 12. e Is xlv. 4. f Isa. x. 7. g 2 Sam. xv. 26. h Acts xxi. 14. i Mat xxvi. 39. k Job i. 21. l Job ii. 10. m Matt. xxvi 56. n Job x. 35. o Matt. xxiv. 35.

written in the Scriptures of truth, and let it appear that for ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.[p]

Lord, give grace to each of us to know and do the will of our Father which is in heaven.[q] This is the will of God, even our sanctification.[r] Now the God of peace sanctify us wholly.[s] O let us be filled with the knowledge of thy will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,[t] and make us perfect in every good work to do thy will.[u] O let the time past of our life suffice us to have wrought the will of the flesh,[v] and to have walked according to the course of this world;[w] and henceforth grant that it may always be our meat and drink to do the will of our Father,[x] and to finish his work;[y] not to do our own will, but his that sent us, that we may be of those that shall enter into the kingdom of heaven,[z] and not those that shall be beaten with many stripes.

Lord, give grace to others also, to know and do thy will; to prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God;[a] not to be unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is;[b] and then give them to stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.[c] And let us all serve our generations according to that will.[d] And when we have done the will of God, let us inherit the promises;[e] and let that part of the will of God be done; Lord, let the word which thou hast spoken concerning thy servants be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.[f]

We rejoice that thy will is done in heaven; that the holy angels do thy commandments, and always hearken to the voice of thy word,[g] that they always behold the face of our Father:[h] and we lament that thy will is so little done on earth, so many of the children of men being led captive by Satan at his will.[i] O that this earth may be made more like to heaven! and saints more like to the holy angels! And that we who hope to be shortly as the angels of God in heaven,[k] may now, like them, not rest from praising him;[l] may now, like them, resist and withstand Satan; may be as a flame of fire,[m] and fly swiftly,[n] and may go straight forward whithersoever the Spirit goes;[o] may minister for the good of others, and thus may come into communion with the innumerable company of angels.[p]

Give us this day our daily bread.

Thou, O God, who hast appointed us to seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, hast promised, that if we do so other things shall be added unto us:[q] and therefore, having prayed for the sanctifying of thy name, the coming of thy kingdom, and the doing of thy will, we next pray, Father in heaven, give us this day, give us day by day, our daily bread.[r]

Remove far from us vanity and lies: give us neither poverty nor riches; feed us with food convenient for us;[s] lest we be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or, lest we be poor and steal, and take the name of our God in vain.

Lord, we ask not for dainties, for they are deceitful meat;[t] nor do we pray that we may fare sumptuously every day, for we would not in our life-time receive our good things;[u] but we pray for that bread which is necessary to strengthen man's heart.[v] We desire not to eat the bread of deceit,[w] nor to drink any stolen waters,[x] nor would eat the bread of idleness,[y] but that if it be thy will we may eat the labour of our hands,[z] that with quietness we may work, and eat our own bread;[a] and having food and raiment, give us to be therewith content,[b] and to say, We have all, and abound.[c]

Bless, Lord, our substance, and accept the work of our hands;[d] and give us wherewithal to provide for our own, even for those of our own house,[e] and to leave an inheritance, as far as is just, to our children's children.[f] Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; prosper thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.[g] Bless, Lord, our land with the precious things of the earth, and the fulness thereof; but above all let us have the good will of him that dwelt in the bush, even the blessing that was upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.[h]

But if the fig-tree should not blossom, and there should be no fruit in the vine; if the labour of the olive should fail, and the field should yield no meat, if the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there should be no herd in the stall, yet let us have grace to rejoice in the Lord, and to joy in the God of our salvation.[i]

Father, we ask not for bread for a great while to come, but that we may have this day our daily bread; for we would learn, and the Lord teach us, not to take thought for the morrow, what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed, but we cast the care upon thee, our heavenly Father, who knowest that we have need of all these things; who feedest the fowls of the air, though they sow not, neither do they reap, and wilt much more feed us who are of more value than many sparrows.[k]

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p Ps. cxix. 89. q Matt. xii. 50. r 1 Thess. iv. 3. s 1 Thess. v. 23. t Col. i. 9. u Heb. xiii. 21. v 1 Pet. iv. 3. w Eph. ii. 2. x John iv. 34. y John vi. 38. z Matt. vii. 21. a Rom. xiii. 2. b Eph. v. 17. c Col. iv. 12. d Acts xiii. 36. e Heb. x. 36. f 1 Chron. xvii. 23. g Ps. ciii. 20. h Matt. xviii. 10. i 2 Tim. ii. 26. k Matt. xxii. 30. l Rev. iv. 8. m Ps. civ. 4. n Dan. ix. 21. o Ezek. i. 9, 12. p Heb. xii. 22. q Matt. vi. 33

r Luke xi. 3. s Prov. xxx. 8, 9. t Prov. xxiii. 3. u Luke xvi. 19, 25. v Ps. civ. 15. w Prov. xx. 17. x Prov. ix. 17. y Prov. xxxi. 27. z Ps. cxxviii. 2. a 2 Thess. iii. 12. b 1 Tim. vi. 8. c Phil. iv. 18. d Deut. xxxiii. 11. e 1 Tim. v. 8. f Prov. xiii. 22. g Ps. xc. 17. h Deut. xxxiii. 13, 16. i Hab. iii. 17, 18. k Matt. vi. 31, 32.

Nor do we pray for daily bread for ourselves only, but for others also. O satisfy thy poor with bread.[l] Let all that walk righteously and speak uprightly dwell on high: let the place of their defence be the munition of rocks; let bread be given to them, and let their waters be sure.[m]

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And, Lord, as duly as we pray every day for our daily bread, we pray for the forgiveness of our sins; for we are all guilty before God, have all sinned, and have come short of the glory of God.[n] In many things we all offend every day.[o] Who can tell how often he offends? If thou shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared.[p] God be merciful to us sinners.

We have wasted our Lord's goods,[q] we have buried the talents we were intrusted with,[r] nor have we rendered again according to the benefit done unto us,[s] and thus we come to be in debt. The Scripture has concluded us all under sin;[t] we have done such things as are worthy of death,[u] things for which the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience.[v] Our debt is more than ten thousand talents, it is a great debt, and we have nothing to pay, so far are we from being able to say, Have patience with us, and we will pay thee all.[w] Justly therefore might our adversary deliver us to the judge, and the judge to the officer, to be cast into prison, the prison of hell, till we pay the last farthing.[x]

But blessed be God, there is a way found out of agreeing with our adversary; for if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.[y] For his sake, we pray thee, blot out all our transgressions,[z] and enter not into judgment with us.[a] He is our Surety,[b] who restored that which he took not away;[c] that blessed Days-man, which hath laid his hand upon us both.[d] Through him let us be reconciled unto God;[e] and let the hand-writing which was against us, which was contrary to us, be blotted out, and taken out of the way, being nailed to the cross of Christ,[f] that we may be quickened together with Christ, having all our trespasses forgiven us. Be thou merciful to our unrighteousnesses, and our sins and our iniquities do thou remember no more.[g]

And give us, we pray thee, to receive the atonement,[h] to know that our sins are forgiven us.[i] Speak peace to us,[k] and make us to hear joy and gladness.[l] Let the blood of Christ thy Son cleanse us from all sin,[m] and purge our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God.[n]

And as an evidence that thou hast forgiven our sins, we pray thee give us grace to forgive our enemies, to love them that hate us, and bless them that curse us; for we acknowledge, that if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our Father forgive our trespasses;[o] and, therefore, we forgive, Lord, we desire heartily to forgive, if we have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave us.[p] Far be it from us to say, that we will recompense evil,[q] or that we should avenge ourselves,[r] but we pray that all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, may be put away from us, with all malice; and that we may be kind one to another, and tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake we hope hath forgiven us.[s] O make us merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful, who hath promised that with the merciful he will show himself merciful.[t]

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

And, Lord, forasmuch as there is in us a bent to backslide from thee,[u] so that when our sins are forgiven, we are ready to return again to folly,[v] we pray that thou wilt not only forgive us our debts, but take care of us, that we may not offend any more.[w] Lord, lead us not into temptation. We know that no man can say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God, for God tempteth not any man;[x] but we know that God is able to make all grace to abound towards us,[y] and to keep us from falling, and present us faultless.[z] We, therefore, pray that thou wilt never give us up to our own hearts' lusts, to walk in our own counsels,[a] but restrain Satan, that roaring lion, that goes about seeking whom he may devour,[b] and grant that we may not be ignorant of his devices.[c] O let not Satan have us, to sift us as wheat; or, however, let not our faith fail.[d] Let not the messengers of Satan be permitted to buffet us; but if they be, let thy grace be sufficient for us that where we are weak, there we may be strong,[e] and may be more than conquerors through him that loved us.[f] And the God of peace tread Satan under our feet, and do it shortly.[g] And since we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, let us be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.[h]

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l Ps. cxxxii. 15. m Isa. xxxiii. 15, 16. n Rom. iii. 19, 23. o Jam. iii. 2. p Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. q Luke xvi. 1. r Matt. xxv. 18. s 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. t Gal. iii. 22. u Rom. i. 32. v Eph v. 6. w Matt. xviii. 24—26, 32. x Matt. v. 25, 26. y 1 John ii. 1, 2. z Ps. li. 1. a Ps. cxliii. 2. b Heb. vii. 22. c Ps. lxix. 4. d Job ix. 33. e 2 Cor. v. 20. f Col. ii. 13, 14. g Heb. viii. 12. h Rom. v. 11. i 1 John ii. 12. k Ps. lxxxv. 8. l Ps. li. 8.

m 1 John i. 7. n Heb. ix. 14. o Matt. v. 44. Matt. vi. 1 p Col. iii. 13. q Prov. xx. 22. r Rom. xii. 19. s Eph. iv. 31, 3 t Ps. xviii. 25. u Hos. xi. 7. v Ps. lxxxv. 8. w Job xxxiv. x Jam. i. 13. y 2 Cor. ix. 8. z Jude 24. a Ps. lxxxi. 1 b 1 Pet. v. 8. c 2 Cor. ii. 11. d Luke xxii. 31, 32. e 2 Co xii. 7, 9, 10. f Rom. viii. 37. g Rom. xvi. 20. h Eph. vi. 10,

Lord, grant that we may never enter into temptation,[i] but having prayed, may set a watch;[k] let thy wise and good providence so order all affairs and all events that are concerning us, that no temptation may take us but such as is common to men, and that we may never be tempted above what we are able[l] to discern, resist, and overcome through the grace of God. Lord, do not lay any stumbling-blocks before us,[m] that we should fall upon them and perish. Let nothing be an occasion of falling to us,[n] but give us that great peace which they have that love thy law, whom nothing shall offend.[o]

And lead us, we pray thee, into all truth; lead us into thy truth,[p] and teach us, for thou art the God of our salvation. Show us thy ways, O God, and teach us thy paths, the paths of righteousness; O lead us in those paths for thy name's sake, that so we may be led beside the still waters.[q]

And deliver us, we pray thee, from the evil one; keep us, that the wicked one touch us not,[r] that he sow not his tares[s] in the field of our hearts, that we be not insnared by his wiles, or wounded by his fiery darts;[t] let the word of God abide in us, that we may be strong, and may overcome the wicked one.[u]

Deliver us from every evil thing, we pray, that we may do no evil:[v] O deliver us from every evil work;[w] save us from our sins,[x] redeem us from all iniquity,[y] especially the sin that doth most easily beset us.[z] Hide pride from us;[a] remove from us the way of lying; let us not eat of sinners' dainties; incline our hearts to thy testimonies, and not to covetousness; and keep us that we never speak unadvisedly with our lips: but especially keep back thy servants from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over us.[b]

Preserve us, we pray thee, that no evil thing may befall us; let thy hand be with us, and keep us from evil, that it may not hurt us.[c] O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee, from those that rise up against them, show us thy marvellous loving-kindness, and keep us as the apple of thine eye; hide us under the shadow of thy wings.[d] Keep that which we commit unto thee.[e] Thou hast delivered, dost deliver, and we trust and pray that thou wilt yet deliver,[f] wilt deliver us from all our fears.[g] O make us to dwell safely, and grant that we may be quiet from the fear of evil.[h] And bring us safe at last to that holy mountain, where there is no pricking brier, or grieving thorn,[i] nothing to hurt or destroy.[k]

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Father in heaven, let thy kingdom come, for thine is the kingdom, thou art God in heaven, and rulest over all the kingdoms of the heathen;[l] let thy will be done, for thine is the power, and there is nothing too hard for thee;[m] let thy name be sanctified, for thine is the glory, and thou hast set thy glory above the heavens.[n]

Father in heaven, supply our wants, pardon our sins, and preserve us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, and thou art Lord over all, who art rich to all that call upon thee.[o] None can forgive sins but thou only;[p] let thy power be great[q] in pardoning our sins: and since it is the glory of God to pardon sin,[r] and to help the helpless, help us, O God of our salvation; for the glory of thy name deliver us, and purge away our sins for thy name sake.[s]

We desire in all our prayers to praise thee, for thou art great, and greatly to be praised.[t] We praise thy kingdom, for it is an everlasting kingdom, and endures throughout all generations,[u] and the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness.[v] To thee belongeth mercy, and thou renderest to every man according to his works.[w] We praise thy power, for thou hast a mighty arm; strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand, and yet judgment and justice are the habitation of thy throne, mercy and truth shall go before thy face.[x] We praise thy glory, for the glory of the Lord shall endure for ever.[y] Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. O let God be praised in his sanctuary, and praised in the firmament of his power; let him be praised for his mighty acts, and praised according to his excellent greatness. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Hallelujah.[z]

And forasmuch as we know that he heareth us, and whatsoever we ask, according to his will, in faith, we have the petitions that we desired of him,[a] we will triumph in his praise.[b] Now know we that the Lord heareth his Anointed, and for his sake will hear us from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand:[c] and therefore, in token not only of our desire, but of our assurance to be heard in Christ's name, we say, Amen, Amen.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, &c.

i Matt. xxvi. 41. k Neh. iv. 9. l 1 Cor. x. 31. m Jer. vi. 21. n Rom. xiv. 13. o Ps. cxix. 165. p John xvi. 13. q Ps. xxv. 4, 5. Ps. xxiii. 2, 3. r 1 John v. 18. s Matt. xiii. 25. t Eph. vi. 11, 16. u 1 John ii. 14. v 2 Cor. xiii. 7. w 2 Tim. iv. 18. x Matt. i. 21. y Tit. ii. 14. z Heb. xii. 1. a Job xxxiii. 17. b Ps cxix. 29. Ps cxii. 4. Ps. cxix. 36. Ps. cvi. 33. Ps. xix. 13. Ps. xci. 10. c 2 Chron. iv. 10. d Ps. xvii. 7, 8. e 2 Tim. i. 12.

f 2 Cor. i. 10. g Ps. xxxiv. 4. h Prov. i. 33. i Ezek. xxviii. 24. k Isa. xi. 9. l 2 Chron. xx. 6. m Jer. xxxii. 17. n Ps. viii. 1. o Rom. x. 12. p Mark ii. 7. q Numb. xiv. 17. r Prov. xxv. 2. s Ps. lxxix. 9. t Ps. cxlv. 3. u Ps. cxlv. 13. v Ps. xlv. 6, 7. w Ps. lxii. 12. x Ps. lxxxix. 13, 14. y Ps. civ. 31. z Ps. cl. 1, 2, 6. a 1 John v. 15. b Ps. cvi. 47. c Ps. xx. 6.

CHAP. IX.

SOME SHORT FORMS OF PRAYER, FOR THE USE OF THOSE WHO MAY NOT BE ABLE TO COLLECT FOR THEMSELVES OUT OF THE FOREGOING MATERIALS.

A Prayer to be used by Children.

O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee.

Thou art my God, and I will praise thee; my Father's God, and I will extol thee.

Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. When my flesh and my heart fail, thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Thou madest me for thyself, to show forth thy praise.

But I am a sinner; I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

God be merciful to me a sinner.

O deliver me from the wrath to come, through Christ Jesus, who died for me, and rose again.

Lord, give me a new nature. Let Jesus Christ be formed in my soul, that to me to live may be Christ, and to die may be gain.

Lord, I was in my baptism given up to thee; receive me graciously, and love me freely.

Lord Jesus, thou hast encouraged little children to come to thee, and hast said, that of such is the kingdom of God. I come to thee: O make me a faithful subject of thy kingdom; take me up in thy arms, put thy hands upon me and bless me.

O give me grace to redeem me from all iniquity, and particularly from the vanity which childhood and youth are subject to.

Lord, give me a wise and an understanding heart, that I may know and do thy will in every thing, and may in nothing sin against thee.

Lord, grant that from my childhood I may know the Holy Scriptures, and may continue in the good things that I have learnt.

Remove from me the way of lying, and grant me thy law graciously.

Lord, be thou a Father to me, teach me, and guide me; provide for me, and protect me; and bless me, even me, O my Father.

Bless all my relations, father, mother, brothers, sisters, and give me grace to do my duty to them in every thing.

Lord, prepare me for death, and give me wisely to consider my latter end.

O Lord, I thank thee for all thy mercies to me: for life and health, food and raiment, and for my education; for my creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift; blessed be God for Jesus Christ. None but Christ, none but Christ for me.

Now to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that great name into which I was baptized, be honour and glory, dominion and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Father which art in heaven, &c.

Another Paraphrase on the Lord's Prayer, in the words of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism.

Our Father in heaven, we come to thee as children to a Father able and ready to help us.

We beseech thee, Let thy name be sanctified; enable us and others to glorify thee in all that whereby thou hast made thyself known, and dispose of all things to thine own glory.

Let thy kingdom come; let Satan's kingdom be destroyed, and let the kingdom of thy grace be advanced; let us and others be brought into it, and kept in it, and let the kingdom of thy glory be hastened.

Let thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven; make us by thy grace able and willing to know, obey, and submit to thy will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; of thy free gift let us receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and let us enjoy thy blessing with them.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. We pray that for Christ's sake thou wouldst freely pardon all our sins, and that by thy grace thou wouldst enable us from the heart to forgive others.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Either keep us, O Lord, from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Lord, we take our encouragement in prayer from thyself only, and desire in our prayers to praise thee, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to thee: and in testimony of our desires and assurance to be heard through Jesus Christ, we say, Amen.

Another Prayer drawn out of my plain Catechism for Children; (which was first published in the Year 1702;) which will be easy to those Children who have learned that Catechism.

O Lord, thou art an Infinite and Eternal Spirit, most wise and powerful, holy, just, and good.

Thou art the great God who madest the world, and art my Creator; and thou who madest me dost preserve and maintain me, and in thee I live, and move, and have my being. O that I may remember

thee as my Creator in the days of my youth, and never forget thee.

Lord, give me grace to serve and honour thee, to worship and obey thee, and in all my ways to trust in thee, and to please thee.

Lord, I thank thee for thy holy word, which thou hast given me to be the rule of my faith and obedience, and which is able to make me wise unto salvation.

I confess, O Lord, that the condition I was born in is sinful and miserable. I am naturally prone to that which is evil, and backward to that which is good, and foolishness is bound up in my heart; and I am by nature a child of wrath, so that if thou hadst not raised up a Saviour for me, I had been certainly lost and undone for ever. I have been disobedient to the command of God, and have eaten forbidden fruit.

But, blessed, and for ever blessed, be God, for the Saviour Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, and the only Mediator between God and man, who took our nature upon him, and became man, that he might redeem and save us.

Lord, I bless thee for his holy life; give me to follow his steps. I bless thee for the true excellent doctrine which he preached; give me to mix faith with it. I bless thee for the miracles which he wrought to confirm his doctrine: and, especially, that he died the cursed death of the cross to satisfy for sin, and to reconcile us to God; and that he rose again from the dead on the third day, and ascended up to heaven, where he ever lives making intercession for us, and has all power, both in heaven and in earth; and that we are assured he will come again in glory to judge the world at the last day.

Lord, I thank thee, that I am one of his disciples; for I am a baptized Christian; and I give glory to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in whose name I am baptized.

Lord, be thou in Christ to me a God, and make me one of thy people.

Be thou my chief good and highest end; let Jesus Christ be my Prince and Saviour; and let the Holy Ghost be my sanctifier, teacher, guide, and comforter.

Lord, enable me to deny all ungodliness and worldly, fleshly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, always looking for the blessed hope.

Work in me repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; and give me to live a life of faith and repentance.

Lord, make me truly sorry that I have offended thee in what I have thought, and spoken, and done amiss, and give me grace to sin no more.

And enable me to receive Jesus Christ, and to rely upon him as my Prophet, Priest, and King, and to give up myself to be ruled, and taught, and saved by him.

Lord, grant unto me the pardon of my sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and eternal life.

And give me grace to manifest the sincerity of my faith and repentance, by a diligent and conscientious obedience to all thy commandments.

Enable me to love thee with all my heart, and to love my neighbour as myself.

Give me grace always to make mention of thy name with reverence and seriousness, to read and hear thy word with diligence and attention, to meditate upon it, to believe it, and to frame my life according to it.

Lord, grant that I may receive all thy mercies with thankfulness, and bear all afflictions with patience and submission to thy holy will.

Lord, grant that my heart may never be lifted up with pride, disturbed with anger, or any sinful passion; and that my body may never be defiled with intemperance, uncleanness, or any fleshly lusts; and keep me from ever speaking any sinful words.

Lord, give me grace to reverence and obey my parents and governors. I thank thee for their instructions and reproofs: I pray thee bless them to me, and make me in every thing a comfort to them.

Lord, pity, help, and succour the poor, and those in affliction and distress.

Lord, bless my friends, forgive my enemies, and enable me to do my duty to all men.

Wherein I have in any thing offended thee, I humbly pray for pardon in the blood of Christ, and grace to do my duty better for the time to come, and so to live in the fear of God, as that I may be happy in this world, and that to come.

Lord, prepare me to die, and leave this world: O save me from that state of everlasting misery and torment which will certainly be the portion of all the wicked and ungodly, and bring me safe to the world of everlasting rest and joy with thee, and Jesus Christ.

And give me wisdom and grace to live a holy, godly life, and to make it my great care and business to serve thee, and to save my own soul.

All this I humbly beg in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, my blessed Saviour and Redeemer, to whom with thee, O Father, and the Eternal Spirit, be honour, glory, and praise, henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

A Morning Prayer for a Family.

O Lord our God, we desire with all humility and reverence to adore thee, as a Being infinitely bright, and blessed, and glorious; thou hast all perfection in thyself, and art the Fountain of all being, power, life, motion, and perfection.

Thou art good to all, and thy tender mercies are

over all thy works; and thou art continually doing us good, though we are evil and unthankful.

We reckon it an unspeakable privilege, that we have liberty of access to thee through Jesus Christ, and leave to call thee our Father in him. O look upon us now, and be merciful unto us, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

O give us all to account our daily worship of thee in our family, the most needful part of our daily business, and the most pleasant of our daily comforts.

Thou art the God of all the families of Israel, be thou the God of our family, and grant, that whatever others do, we and ours may always serve the Lord; that thou mayst cause the blessing to rest on our house from the beginning of the year to the end of it. Lord, bless us, and we are blessed indeed.

We humbly thank thee for all the mercies of this night past, and this morning, that we have laid us down and slept, and waked again, because thou hast sustained us; that no plague has come nigh our dwelling; but that we are brought in safety to the light and comforts of another day.

It is of thy mercies, O Lord, that we are not consumed, even because thy compassions fail not, they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.

We have rested and are refreshed, when many have been full of tossings to and fro till the dawning of the day. We have a safe and quiet habitation, when many are forced to wander and lie exposed.

We own thy goodness to us, and ourselves we acknowledge less than the least of all thy mercy, and of all the truth thou hast showed unto us.

We confess we have sinned against thee, we are guilty before thee, we have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God: we have corrupt and sinful natures, and are bent to backslide from thee; backward to good, and prone to evil continually.

Vain thoughts come into us, and lodge within us, lying down and rising up, and they defile or disquiet our minds, and keep out good thoughts. We are too apt to burthen ourselves with that care which thou hast encouraged us to cast upon thee.

We are very much wanting in the duties of our particular relations, and provoke one another more to folly and passion than to love and to good works. We are very cold and defective in our love to God, weak in our desires toward him, and unsteady and uneven in our walking with him; and are at this time much out of frame for his service.

We pray thee forgive all our sins for Christ's sake, and be at peace with us in him who died to make peace, and ever lives making intercession.

There be many who say, Who will show us any good? But, Lord, let not us be put off with the good of this world for a portion; for this is our hearts' desire and prayer, Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and that shall put gladness in our hearts, more than they have whose corn, and wine, and oil, increase.

Lord, let thy peace rule in our hearts, and give law to us, and let thy peace keep our hearts and minds, and give comfort to us; and let the consolations of God, which are neither few nor small, be our strength and our song in the house of our pilgrimage.

Lord, we commit ourselves to thy care and keeping this day: watch over us for good; compass us about with thy favour as with a shield; preserve us from all evil, yea, the Lord preserve and keep our souls; preserve our going out and coming in.

Our bodies, and all our worldly affairs, we commit to the conduct of thy wise and gracious providence, and submit to its disposals. Let no hurt or harm happen to us; keep us in health and safety; bless our employments, prosper us in all our lawful undertakings, and give us comfort and success in them. Let us eat the labour of our hands, and let it be well with us.

Our precious souls, and all their concerns, we commit to the government of thy Spirit and grace. O let thy grace be mighty in us, and sufficient for us, and let it work in us, both to will and to do that which is good, of thine own good pleasure.

O give us grace to do the work of this day in its day, according as the duty of the day requires, and to do even common actions after a godly sort; acknowledging thee in all our ways, and having our eye ever up to thee, and be thou pleased to direct our steps.

Lord, keep us from sin; give us rule over our own spirits, and grant that we may not this day break out into passion upon any provocation, or speak unadvisedly with our lips. Give us grace to live together in peace and holy love, that the Lord may command the blessing upon us, even life for evermore.

Make us conscientious in all our dealings, and always watchful against sin, as become those who see thine eye ever upon us. Arm us against every temptation, uphold us in our integrity, keep us in the way of our duty; and grant that we may be in thy fear every day, and all the day long.

In every doubtful case let our way be made plain before us; and give us that wisdom of the prudent which is at all times profitable to direct; and let integrity and uprightness preserve us, for we wait on thee.

Sanctify to us all our losses, crosses, afflictions, and disappointments, and give us grace to submit to thy holy will in them, and let us find it good for us to be afflicted, that we may be partakers of thy holiness.

Prepare us for all the events of this day, for we know not what a day may bring forth. Give us to stand complete in thy whole will; to deny our

selves, to take up our cross daily, and to follow Jesus Christ.

Lord, fit us for death, and judgment, and eternity, and give us grace to live every day as those who do not know but it may be our last day.

Lord, plead thy cause in the world: build up thy church into perfect beauty; set up the throne of the exalted Redeemer in all places upon the ruins of the devil's kingdom. Let the reformed churches be more and more reformed, and let every thing that is amiss be amended; and let those who suffer for righteousness' sake be supported and delivered.

Do us good in these nations; bless the king and all in authority; guide public counsels and affairs; overrule all to thine own glory; let peace and truth be in our days, and be preserved to those who shall come after us.

Be gracious to all our relations, friends, neighbours, and acquaintance, and do them good according as their necessities are. Supply the wants of all thy people. Dwell in the families that fear thee, and call upon thy name. Forgive our enemies, and those that hate us; give us a right and charitable frame of spirit toward all men, and all that is theirs.

Visit those who are in affliction, and comfort them, and be unto them a very present help. Recover the sick, ease the pained, succour the tempted, relieve the oppressed, and give joy to those who mourn in Zion.

Deal with us and our family according to the tenor of the everlasting covenant, which is well ordered in all things and sure, and which is all our salvation, and all our desire; however it pleases God to deal with us and with our house.

Now blessed be God for all his gifts, both of nature and grace, for those that concern this life, and that to come; especially for Jesus Christ, the fountain and foundation of all. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

We humbly beseech thee for Christ Jesus' sake to pardon our sins, accept our services, and grant an answer of peace to our prayers, even for his sake who died for us, and rose again, who hath taught us to pray, *Our Father which art in heaven, &c.*

An Evening Prayer for a Family.

Most holy, and blessed, and glorious Lord God, whose we are, and whom we are bound to serve; for because thou madest us, and not we ourselves, therefore, we are not our own, but thine, and unto thee, O Lord, do we lift up our souls. Thy face, Lord, do we seek; whither shall we go for happiness but to thee, from whom we derive our being?

Thou art the great Benefactor of the whole creation: thou givest to all life, and breath, and all things: thou art our Benefactor; the God who has fed us, and kept us all our life long unto this day. Having obtained help of God, we continue hitherto monuments of sparing mercy, and witnesses for thee, that thou art gracious, that thou art God and not man; for therefore it is that we are not cut off.

One day tells another, and one night certifies to another, that thou art good, and doest good, and never failest those that seek thee, and trust in thee. Thou makest the out-goings of the morning and of the evening to praise thee.

It is through the good hand of our God upon us, that we are brought in safety to the close of another day, and that after the various employments of the day, we come together at night to mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the praises of our God, who is good, and whose mercy endureth for ever.

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with his benefits, even the God of our salvation; for he who is our God is the God of salvation. We have from thee the mercies of the day in its day, according as the necessity of the day requires, though we come far short of doing the work of the day in its day, according as the duty of the day requires.

We bless thee for the ministration of the good angels about us, the serviceableness of the inferior creatures to us, for our bodily health and ease, comfort in our relations, and a comfortable place of abode, and that thou hast not made the wilderness our habitation, and the barren land our dwelling; and, especially, that thou continuest to us the use of our reason, and the quiet and peace of our consciences.

We bless thee for our share in the public tranquillity, that thou hast given us a good land, in which we dwell safely under our own vines and fig-trees.

Above all, we bless thee for Jesus Christ, and his mediation between God and man, for the covenant of grace made with us in him, and all the exceeding great and precious promises and privileges of that covenant, for the throne of grace erected for us, to which we may, in his name, come with humble boldness, and for the hope of eternal life through him.

We confess we have sinned against thee; this day we have sinned and done foolishly: O God, thou knowest our foolishness, and our sins are not hid from thee. We mispend our time, we neglect our duty, we follow after lying vanities, and forsake our own mercies. We offend with our tongues. Are we not carnal, and walk as men, below Christians? Who can understand his errors? Cleanse us from our secret faults.

We pray thee, give us repentance for our sins of daily infirmity, and make us duly sensible of the evil of them, and of our danger by them, and let the blood of Christ thy Son, which cleanses from all sin, cleanse us from it, that we may lie down to-

night at peace with God, and our souls may comfortably return to him, and repose in him as our rest.

And give us grace so to repent every day for the sins of every day, that when we come to die we may have the sins but of one day to repent of, and so we may be continually easy.

Do us good by all the providences we are under, merciful or afflictive; give us grace to accommodate ourselves to them, and by all bring us nearer to thee, and make us fitter for thee.

We commit ourselves to thee this night, and desire to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Let the Lord be our habitation, and let our souls be at home in him.

Make a hedge of protection, we pray thee, about us, and about our house, and about all that we have round about, that no evil may befall us, nor any plague come nigh our dwelling. The Lord be our keeper, who neither slumbers nor sleeps. Lord, be thou a sun and a shield to us.

Refresh our bodies, we pray thee, with quiet and comfortable rest, not to be disturbed with any distrustful, disquieting cares or fears; but especially, let our souls be refreshed with thy love, and the light of thy countenance, and thy benignity, which is better than life.

When we awake, grant that we may be still with thee, and may remember thee upon our beds, and meditate upon thee in the night-watches, and may improve the silence and solitude of our retirements for communing with God and our own hearts; that when we are alone we may not be alone, but God may be with us, and we with him.

Restore us to another day in safety, and prepare us for the duties and events of it: and by all the supports and comforts of this life, let our bodies be fitted to serve our souls in thy service, and enable us to glorify thee with both, remembering that we are not our own, we are bought with a price.

And, forasmuch as we are now brought one day nearer our end, Lord, enable us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Let us be reminded by our putting off our clothes, and going to sleep in our beds, of putting off the body, sleeping the sleep of death, and of making our bed in the darkness shortly, that we may be dying daily in expectation of, and preparation for, our change, that when we come to die indeed, it may be no surprise or terror to us, but we may with comfort put off the body, and resign the spirit, knowing whom we have trusted.

Lord, let our family be blessed in him, in whom all the families of the earth are blessed, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things by Christ Jesus, and with temporal blessings as far as thou seest good for us. Give us health and prosperity, but especially let our souls prosper, and be in health, and let all that belong to us belong to Christ, that we who live in a house together on earth, may be together for ever with the Lord.

Look with pity upon a lost world, we beseech thee, and set up Christ's throne there where Satan's seat is; send the gospel where it is not, make it successful where it is; let it be mighty through God to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin.

Let the church of Christ greatly flourish in all places, and make it to appear that it is built upon a rock, and that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it; and suffer not the rod of the wicked any where to rest upon the lot of the righteous.

Let the land of our nativity be still the particular care of thy good providence, that in the peace thereof we may have peace. Let glory dwell in our land, and upon all the glory let there be a defence.

Rule in the hearts of our rulers. We pray thee, continue the king's life and government long a public blessing; make all who are in places of public trust faithful to the public interest, and all who bear the sword a terror to evil doers, and a protection and praise to them who do well. Own thy ministers in their work, and give them skill and will to help souls to heaven.

Be gracious to all who are dear to us: let the rising generation be such as thou wilt own, and do thee more and better service in their day than this has done.

Comfort and relieve all that are in sorrow and affliction, lay no more upon them than thou wilt enable them to bear, and enable them to bear what thou dost lay upon them.

Do for us, we pray thee, abundantly above what we are able to ask or think, for the sake of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who is the Lord our Righteousness. To him with the Father, and the Eternal Spirit, be glory and praise, now and for ever. Amen.

A Family Prayer for the Lord's Day Morning.

Most gracious God, and our Father in our Lord Jesus Christ, it is good for us to draw near to thee, the nearer the better, and it will be best of all when we come to be nearest of all in the kingdom of glory.

Thou hast thy being of thyself, and thy happiness in thyself; we therefore adore thee as the Great Jehovah: we have our being from thee, and our happiness in thee, and therefore it is both our duty and our interest to seek thee, to implore thy favour, and to give unto thee the glory due to thy name.

We bless thee for the return of the morning light, and that thou causest the day-spring to know its place and time. O let the Day-spring from on high visit our dark souls, and the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing under his wings.

We bless thee, that the light we see is the Lord's: that this is the day which the Lord has made, has

made for man, has made for himself, we will rejoice and be glad in it. That thou hast revealed unto us thy holy sabbaths, and that we were betimes taught to put a difference between this day and other days, and that we live in a land, in all parts of which God is publicly and solemnly worshipped on this day.

We bless thee, that sabbath liberties and opportunities are continued to us; and that we are not wishing in vain for these days of the Son of man; that our candlestick is not removed out of its place, as justly it might have been, because we have left our first love.

Now we bid this sabbath welcome. Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest. O that we may be in the Spirit on this Lord's day; that this may be the sabbath of the Lord in our dwelling; in our hearts, a sabbath of rest from sin, and a sabbath of rest in God. Enable us, we pray thee, so to sanctify this sabbath, as that it may be sanctified to us, and be a means of our sanctification; that by resting to-day from our worldly employments, our hearts may be more and more taken off from present things, and prepared to leave them; and that, by employing our time to-day in the worship of God, we may be led into a more experimental acquaintance with the work of heaven, and be made more meet for that blessed world.

We confess we are utterly unworthy of the honour, and unable for the work, of communion with thee, but we come to thee in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is worthy, and depend upon the assistances of thy blessed Spirit to work all our works in us, and so ordain peace for us.

We keep this day holy, to the honour of God the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, in remembrance of the work of creation, that work of wonder, in which thou madest all things out of nothing by the word of thy power, and all very good; and they continue to this day according to thine ordinance, for all are thy servants. Thou art worthy to receive blessing, and honour, and glory, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. O thou, who at first didst command the light to shine out of darkness, who saidst on the first day of the first week, Let there be light, and there was light; we pray thee shine this day into our hearts, and give us more and more of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ: and let us be thy workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, a kind of first-fruits of thy creatures.

We likewise sanctify this day to the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, and our exalted Redeemer, in remembrance of his resurrection from the dead on the first day of the week, by which he was declared to be the Son of God with power. We bless thee, that having laid down his life to make atonement for sin, he rose again for our justification, that he might bring in an everlasting righteousness: that the stone which the builders refused, the same is become the head-stone of the corner: *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.* We bless thee, that he is risen from the dead, as the first-fruits of them that slept, that he might be the resurrection and the life to us. Now we pray, that while we are celebrating the memorial of his resurrection with joy and triumph, we may experience in our souls the power and virtue of his resurrection, that we may rise with him, may rise from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, from the dust of this world, to a holy, heavenly, spiritual, and divine life. O that we may be planted together in the likeness of Christ's resurrection, that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.

We sanctify this day also to the honour of the eternal Spirit, that blessed Spirit of grace the *Comforter*, rejoicing at the remembrance of the descent of the Spirit on the apostles on the day of Pentecost, the first day of the week likewise. We bless thee, that when Jesus was glorified, the Holy Ghost was given to make up the want of his bodily presence, to carry on his undertaking, and to ripen things for his second coming; and that we have a promise that he shall abide with us for ever. And now we pray, that the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, may dwell and rule in every one of us, to make us partakers of a new and divine nature. Come, O blessed Spirit of grace, and breathe upon these dry bones, these dead hearts of ours, that they may live, and be in us a spirit of faith, and love, and holiness, a spirit of power, and of a sound mind.

O Lord, we bless thee for thy holy word, which is a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths, and which was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope; that the Scriptures are preserved pure and entire to us, and that we have them in a language that we understand. We beg that we may not receive the grace of God herein in vain. We bless thee, that our eyes see the joyful light, and our ears hear the joyful sound, of a Redeemer and Saviour, and of redemption and salvation by him; that life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel. Glory be to God in the highest, for in and through Jesus Christ there is on earth peace, and good-will toward men.

We bless thee for the great gospel record, that *God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* Lord, we receive it as a faithful saying, and well worthy of all acceptation; we will venture our immortal souls upon it; and we are encouraged by it to come to thee, to beg for an interest in the mediation of thy Son. O let him be made of God to us

wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; let us be effectually called into fellowship with him, and by faith be united to him, so that Christ may live in us, and we may grow up into him in all things, who is the head; that we may bring forth fruit in him, and whatever we do in word or deed, we may do all in his name: O let us have the Spirit of Christ, that thereby it may appear we are his. And through him we pray that we may have eternal life, that we may none of us come short of it, but may all of us have the first-fruits and earnests of it abiding in us.

We bless thee for the new covenant made with us in Jesus Christ; that when the covenant of innocence was irreparably broken, so that it was become impossible for us to get to heaven by that covenant, thou wast then pleased to deal with us upon new terms; that we are under grace, and not under the law; that this covenant is established upon better promises in the hand of a Mediator. Lord, we fly for refuge to it, we take hold of it as the hope set before us. O receive us graciously into the bond of this covenant, and make us accepted in the Beloved, according to the tenor of the covenant. Thou hast declared concerning the Lord Jesus, that he is thy beloved Son, in whom thou art well pleased, and we humbly profess that he is our beloved Saviour, in whom we are well pleased: Lord, be well pleased with us in him.

O that our hearts may be filled this day with pleasing thoughts of Christ, and his love to us, that great love wherewith he loved us. O the admirable dimensions of that love, the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge! Let this love constrain us to love him, and live to him, who died for us, and rose again. O that it may be a pleasure and great satisfaction to us to think, that while we are here praying at the footstool of the throne of grace, our blessed Saviour is sitting at the right hand of the throne of glory, interceding for us. We earnestly beg that through him we may find favour with thee our God, and may be taken into covenant and communion with thee.

We humbly pray thee for his sake, forgive all our sins, known and unknown, in thought, word, and deed: through him let us be acquitted of the guilt, and accepted as righteous in thy sight: let us not come into condemnation, as we have deserved; let our iniquity be taken away, and our sin covered; and let us be clothed with the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness, that the shame of our nakedness may not appear. O let there be no cloud of guilt to interpose between us and our God this day, and to intercept our comfortable communion with him; and let our lusts be mortified and subdued, that our own corruptions may not be as a clog to us, to hinder the ascent of our souls heavenwards.

We pray thee, assist us in all the religious services of this thine own holy day. Go along with us to the solemn assembly, for if thy presence go not up with us, wherefore should we go up? Give us to draw nigh to thee with a true heart, with a free heart, with a fixed heart, and in full assurance of faith. Meet us with a blessing: grace thine own ordinances with thy presence, that special presence of thine which thou hast promised where two or three are gathered together in thy name. Help us against our manifold infirmities, and the sins that do most easily beset us in our attendance upon thee; let thy word come with life and power to our souls, and be as good seed sown in good soil, taking root, and bringing forth fruit to thy praise; and let our prayers and praises be spiritual sacrifices, acceptable in thy sight through Christ Jesus; and let those who tarry at home divide the spoil.

Let thy presence be in all the assemblies of good Christians this day. Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; let great grace be upon them all. In the chariot of the everlasting gospel let the great Redeemer ride forth triumphantly, conquering, and to conquer; and let every thought be brought into obedience to him. Let many be brought to believe the report of the gospel, and to many let the arm of the Lord be revealed. Let sinners be converted unto thee, and thy saints edified, and built up in faith, holiness, and comfort, unto salvation. Complete the number of thine elect, and hasten thy kingdom.

Now the Lord of peace himself give us peace always by all means. The God of hope fill us with joy and peace in believing for Christ Jesus' sake, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer, who hath taught us to pray, *Our Father which art in heaven, &c.*

A Family Prayer for the Lord's Day Evening.

O eternal and for ever blessed and glorious Lord God! Thou art God over all, and rich in mercy to all that call upon thee, most wise and powerful, holy, just, and good; the King of kings, and Lord of lords; our Lord and our God.

Thou art happy without us, and hast no need of our services, neither can our goodness extend unto thee, but we are miserable without thee; we have need of thy favours, and are undone, for ever undone, if thy goodness extend not unto us; and therefore, Lord, we entreat thy favour with our whole hearts; O let thy favour be towards us in Jesus Christ, for our happiness is bound up in it, and it is to us better than life. We confess we have forfeited thy favour, we have rendered ourselves utterly unworthy of it; yet we are humbly bold to pray for it in the name of Jesus Christ, who loved us, and gave himself for us.

We bewail before thee, that by the corruption of

our natures we are become odious to thine holiness, and utterly unfit to inherit the kingdom of God, and that by our many actual transgressions we are become obnoxious to thy justice, and liable to thy wrath and curse. Being by nature children of disobedience, we are children of wrath, and have reason both to blush and tremble in all our approaches to the holy and righteous God Even the iniquity of our holy things would be our ruin, if God should deal with us according to the desert of them.

But with thee, O God, there is mercy and plenteous redemption: thou hast graciously provided for all those that repent and believe the gospel, that the guilt of their sin shall be removed through the merit of Christ's death, and the power of their sins broken by his Spirit and grace; and he is both ways able to save to the uttermost all those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever lives making intercession for us.

Lord, we come to thee as a Father, by Jesus Christ the Mediator, and earnestly desire by repentance and faith to turn from the world and the flesh to God in Jesus Christ, as our ruler and portion. We are sorry that we have offended thee; we are ashamed to think of our treacherous and ungrateful carriage toward thee. We desire that we may have no more to do with sin, and pray as earnestly that the power of sin may be broken in us, as that the guilt of sin may be removed from us: and we rely only upon the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and upon the merit of his death, for the procuring of thy favour. O look upon us in him, and for his sake receive us graciously; heal our backslidings, and love us freely, and let not our iniquity be our ruin.

We beg, that being justified by faith, we may have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation for sin, that he may be just, and the justifier of them which believe in Jesus. Through him who was made sin for us, though he knew no sin, let us who know no righteousness of our own, be accepted as righteous.

And the God of peace sanctify us wholly. Begin and carry on that good work in our souls, renew us in the spirit of our minds, and make us in every thing such as thou wouldst have us to be. Set up thy throne in our hearts, write thy law there, plant thy fear there, and fill us with all the graces of thy Spirit, that we may be fruitful in the fruits of righteousness, to the glory and praise of God.

Mortify our pride, and clothe us with humility; mortify our passion, and put upon us the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Save us from the power of a vain mind, and let thy grace be mighty in us to make us serious and sober-minded. Let the flesh be crucified in us, with all its affections and lusts; and give us grace to keep under our body, and to bring it into subjection to the laws of religion and right reason, and always to possess our vessel in sanctification and honour.

Let the love of the world be rooted out of us, and that covetousness which is idolatry; and let the love of God in Christ be rooted in us. Shed abroad that love in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and give us to love thee the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and might; and to do all we do in religion from a principle of love to thee.

Mortify in us all envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness; pluck up these roots of bitterness out of our minds, and give us grace to love one another with a pure heart, fervently, as become the followers of the Lord Jesus, who has given us this as his new commandment. O that brotherly love may continue among us, love without dissimulation!

We pray thee rectify all our mistakes; if in any thing we be in an error, discover it to us, and let the Spirit of truth lead us into all truth, the truth as it is in Jesus, the truth which is according to godliness; and give us that good understanding which they have who do thy commandments; and let our love and all good affections abound in us yet more and more, in knowledge, and in all judgment.

Convince us, we pray thee, of the vanity of this world, and its utter insufficiency to make us happy, that we may never set our hearts upon it, nor raise our expectations from it; and convince us of the vileness of sin, and its certain tendency to make us miserable, that we may hate it and dread it, and every thing that looks like it, or leads to it.

Convince us, we pray thee, of the worth of our own souls, and the weight of eternity, and the awfulness of that everlasting state which we are standing upon the brink of; and make us diligent and serious in our preparation for it, labouring less for the meat that perishes, and more for that which endures to eternal life, as those who have set their affections on things above, and not on things that are on the earth, which are trifling and transitory.

O that time, and the things of time, may be as nothing to us in comparison with eternity, and the things of eternity; that eternity may be much upon our heart, and ever in our eye; that we may be governed by that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; looking continually at the things that are not seen, which are eternal.

Give us grace, we pray thee, to look up to the other world with such a holy concern, that we may look down upon this world with a holy contempt and indifference, as those that must be here but a very little while, and must be somewhere for ever; that we may rejoice as though we rejoiced not, and weep as though we wept not, and buy as though we possessed not, and may use this world as not abusing

it; because the fashion of this world passeth away, and we are passing away with it.

O let thy grace be mighty in us, and sufficient for us, to prepare us for that great change which will come certainly and shortly, and may come very suddenly; which will remove us from a world of sense to a world of spirits, from our state of trial and probation, to that of recompence and retribution; and to make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light; that when we fail, we may be received into everlasting habitations.

Prepare us, we beseech thee, for whatever we may meet with betwixt us and the grave: we know not what is before us, and therefore know not what particular provision to make; but thou dost, and therefore we beg of thee to fit us by thy grace for all the services and sufferings which thou shalt at any time call us out to; and arm us against every temptation which we may at any time be assaulted with, that we may at all times and in all conditions glorify God, keep a good conscience, and be found in the way of our duty, and may keep up our hope and joy in Christ, and a believing prospect of eternal life; and then welcome the holy will of God.

Give us grace, we pray thee, to live a life of communion with thee both in ordinances and providences, to set thee always before us, and to have our eyes ever up unto thee; and to live a life of dependence upon thee, upon thy power, providence, and promise, trusting in thee at all times, and pouring out our hearts before thee; and to live a life of devotedness to thee, and to thine honour and glory, as our highest end.—And that we may make our religion not only our business, but our pleasure, we beseech thee, enable us to live a life of complacency in thee, to rejoice in thee always; that making God our heart's delight, so we may have our heart's desire; and this is our heart's desire, to know, and love, and live to God, to please him, and to be pleased in him.

We beseech thee, preserve us in our integrity to our dying day, and grant that we may never forsake thee, or turn from following after thee; but that with purpose of heart we may cleave unto the Lord, and may not count life itself dear to us, so we may but finish our course with joy and true honour.

Let thy good providence order all the circumstances of our dying, so as may best befriend our comfortable removal to a better world; and let thy grace be sufficient for us then to enable us to finish well; and let us then have an abundant entrance ministered to us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And while we are here, make us wiser and better every day than other; more weaned from the world, and more willing to leave it: more holy, heavenly, and spiritual; that the longer we live in this world, the fitter we may be for another, and our last days may be our best days, our last works our best works, and our last comforts our sweetest comforts.

We humbly pray thee, accomplish all that which thou hast promised concerning thy church in the latter days; let the earth be filled with thy glory: let the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in, and let all Israel be saved. Let the mountain of the Lord's house be established upon the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and let all nations flow unto it.

Propagate the gospel in the plantations, and let the enlargement of trade and commerce contribute to the enlargement of thy church. Let the kingdom of Christ be set up in all places, upon the ruins of the devil's kingdom.

Hasten the downfall of the man of sin, and let primitive Christianity, even pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, be revived, and made to flourish in all places; and let the power of godliness prevail and get ground among all that have the form of it.

Let the wars of the nations end in the peace of the church, the shakings of the nations in the establishment of the church, and the convulsions and revolutions of states and kingdoms in the settlement and advancement of the kingdom of God among men,—that kingdom which cannot be moved.

Let Great Britain and Ireland flourish in all their public interests. Let thine everlasting gospel be always the glory in the midst of us, and let thy providence be a wall of fire round about us.—Destroy us not, but let a blessing be among us, even a meat-offering and a drink-offering to the Lord our God.

Be very gracious to our sovereign lord the king; protect his person, preserve his health, prolong his days, guide his councils, let his reign be prosperous, and crown all his undertakings for the public good.

Bless the privy-counsellors, the nobility, the judges, and magistrates in our several counties and corporations, and make them all in their places faithful and serviceable to the interests of the nation, and every way public blessings.

Bless all the ministers of thy holy word and sacrament; make them burning and shining lights, and faithful to Christ, and to the souls of men. Unite all thy ministers and people together in the truth, and in true love one to another; pour out a healing spirit upon them, a spirit of love and charity, mutual forbearance and condescension, that with one shoulder and with one consent all may study to promote the common interests of our great Master, and the common salvation of precious souls.

We pray thee, prosper the trade of the nation, guard our coasts, disappoint the devices of our enemies against us, preserve the public peace, and keep all the people of these lands in quietness among themselves, and due subjection to the authority God

has set over us; and let the Lord delight to dwell among us, and to do us good.

Bless the fruits of the earth, continue our plenty, abundantly bless our provision, and satisfy even our poor with bread.

We bless thee for all the mercies of this thine own holy day; we have reason to say, that a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! Bless the word we have heard this day to us, and to all that heard it; hear our prayers, accept our praises, and forgive what thy pure eye has seen amiss in us and our performances.

Take us under thy protection this night, and enable us to close the day with thee, that we may lie down, and our sleep may be sweet. Be with us the week following in all our ways; forgive us that we brought so much of the week with us into the sabbath, and enable us to bring a great deal of the sabbath with us into the week, that so we may be the fitter for the next sabbath, if we shall live to it.

Make us meet for the everlasting sabbath which we hope to keep within the veil, when time and days shall be no more; and let this day bring us a sabbath day's journey nearer heaven, and make us a sabbath day's work fitter for it.

As we began this Lord's day with the joyful memorials of Christ's resurrection, so we desire to conclude it with the joyful expectations of Christ's second coming, and of our own resurrection then to a blessed immortality, triumphing in hopes of the glory of God.

Bless the Lord, love the Lord, O our souls, and let all that is within us love and bless his holy name, for he is good, and his mercy endures for ever. In praising God we desire to spend as much of our time as may be, that we may begin our heaven now, for in this good work we hope to be spending a happy eternity.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, and our God, in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be honour and glory, dominion and praise, henceforth and for ever. Amen.

A Prayer proper to be put up by Parents for their Children.

O Lord our God, the God of the spirits of all flesh! all souls are thine, the souls of the parents and the souls of the children are thine, and thou hast grace sufficient for both.

Thou wast our fathers' God, and as such we will exalt thee; thou art our children's God, and that also we will plead with thee, for the promise is to us and our children; and thou art a God in covenant with believers and their seed.

Lord, it is thy good providence that has built us up into a family: we thank thee for the children thou hast graciously given thy servants; the Lord, who has blessed us with them, make them blessings indeed to us, that we may never be tempted to wish we had been childless.

We lament the iniquity which our children are conceived and born in, and the corrupt nature which they derive through our loins.

But we bless thee that there is a fountain opened for their cleansing from that original pollution, and that they were betimes by baptism dedicated to thee, and admitted into the bonds, and under the blessings, of thy covenant; that they are born in thy house, and taken in as members of thy family upon earth.

It is a comfort to us to think that they are baptized, and we humbly desire to plead it with thee. They are thine; save them; enable them, as they become capable to make it their own act and deed, to join themselves unto the Lord, that they may be owned as thine in the day when thou makest up thy jewels.

Give them a good capacity of mind, and a good disposition, make them towardly and tractable, and willing to receive instruction; incline them betimes to religion and virtue.—Lord, give them wisdom and understanding, and drive out the foolishness which is bound up in their hearts.

Save them from the vanity which childhood and youth are subject to, and fit them every way to live comfortably and usefully in this world. We ask not for great things in the world for them; give them, if it please thee, a strong and healthy constitution of body, preserve them from all ill accidents, and feed them with food convenient for them, according to their rank.

But the chief thing we ask of God for them is, that thou wilt pour thy Spirit upon our seed, even thy blessing, that blessing, that blessing of blessings, upon our offspring, that they may be a seed to serve thee, which shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation: Give them that good part which shall never be taken away from them.

Give us wisdom and grace to bring them up in thy fear, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, with meekness and tenderness, and having them in subjection with all gravity. Teach us how to teach them the things of God as they are able to bear them, and how to reprove and admonish, and when there is need, to correct them in a right manner, and how to set them good examples of every thing that is virtuous and praise-worthy, that we may recommend religion to them, and so train them up in the way wherein they should go, that if they live to be old, they may not depart from it.

Keep them from the snare of evil company, and all the temptations to which they are exposed, and make them betimes sensible how much it is their interest as well as their duty to be religious; and, Lord, grant that none who come of us may come

short of eternal life, or be found on the left hand of Christ in the great day.

We earnestly pray that Christ may be formed in their souls betimes, and that the seeds of grace may be sown in their hearts while they are young, and we may have the satisfaction of seeing them walking in the truth, and setting their faces heavenwards. Give them now to hear counsel and receive instruction, that they may be wise in their latter end; and if they be wise, our hearts shall rejoice, even ours.

Prosper the means of their education; let our children be taught of the Lord, that great may be their peace; and give them so to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, as may be life eternal to them.

O that they may betimes get wisdom, and get understanding, and never forget it. As far as they are taught the truth as it is in Jesus, give them to continue in the things which they have learned.

It is our heart's desire and prayer that our children may be praising God on earth when we are gone to praise him in heaven, and that we and they may be together for ever, serving him day and night in his temple.

If it should please God to remove any of them from us while they are young, let us have grace submissively to resign them to thee, and let us have hope in their death.

If thou remove us from them while they are young, be thou thyself a Father to them, to teach them, and provide for them, for with thee the fatherless findeth mercy.

Thou knowest our care concerning them, we cast it upon thee; ourselves and ours we commit to thee. Let not the light of our family religion be put out with us, nor that treasure be buried in our graves, but let those who shall come after us do thee more and better service in their day than we have done in ours, and be unto thee for a name and a praise.

In these prayers we aim at thy glory. Father, let thy name be sanctified in our family, there let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done by us and ours, as it is done by the angels in heaven; for Christ Jesus' sake, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer, whose seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. Now to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that great and sacred name, into which we and our children were baptized, be honour and glory, dominion and praise, henceforth and for ever. Amen.

A Prayer for the use of a Person before receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Most holy, and blessed, and gracious Lord God, with all humility and reverence I here present myself before thee, to seek thy face and entreat thy favour, and as an evidence of thy good will toward me, to beg that I may experience thy good work in me.

I acknowledge myself unworthy, utterly unworthy of the honour; unfit, utterly unfit for the service to which I am now called. It is an inestimable privilege that I am admitted so often to hear from thee in thy word, and to speak to thee in prayer; and yet, as if this had been a small matter, I am now invited into communion with thee at thy holy table, there to celebrate the memorial of my Saviour's death, and to partake, by faith, of the precious benefits which flow from it. I, who deserve not the crumbs, am called to eat of the children's bread.

O Lord, I thank thee for the institution of this blessed ordinance, this precious legacy and token of love which the Lord Jesus left to his church; that it is preserved to this age, that it is administered in this land, that I am admitted to it, and have now before me an opportunity to partake of it; Lord, grant that I may not receive thy grace herein in vain.

O thou who hast called me to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, give me the wedding-garment; work in me a disposition of soul, and all those pious and devout affections, which are suitable to the solemnities of this ordinance, and requisite to qualify me for an acceptable and advantageous participation of it. Behold the fire and the wood, all things are now ready, but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering? Lord, provide thyself a lamb, by working in me all that which thou requirest of me upon this present occasion. The preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue are both from thee; Lord, prepare my unprepared heart for communion with thee.

Lord, I confess I have sinned against thee, I have done foolishly, very foolishly, for foolishness is bound up in my heart; I have sinned and have come short of the glory of God; I have come short of glorifying thee, and deserve to come short of being glorified with thee. The imagination of my heart is evil continually, and the bias of my corrupt nature is very strong toward the world, the flesh, and the gratifications of sense: but toward God, and Christ, and heaven, I move slowly, and with a great many stops and pauses. Nay, there is in my carnal mind a wretched aversion to divine and spiritual things. I have mispent my time, trifled away my opportunities, have followed after lying vanities, and forsaken my own mercies. God be merciful to me a sinner! for how little have I done, since I came into the world, of the great work that I was sent into the world about.

Thou hast taken me into covenant with thee, for I am a baptized Christian, set apart for thee, and sealed to be thine; thou hast laid me, and I have also laid myself, under all possible obligations to love thee, and serve thee, and live to thee. But I

have started aside from thee like a deceitful bow, I have not made good my covenant with thee, nor hath the temper of my mind, and the tenor of my conversation, been agreeable to that holy religion which I make profession of, to my expectations from thee, and engagements to thee. I am bent to backslide from the living God; and if I were under the law I were undone; but I am under grace, a covenant of grace, which leaves room for repentance, and promises pardon upon repentance, which invites even backsliding children to return, and promises that their backslidings shall be healed. Lord, I take hold of this covenant, seal it to me at thy table: there let me find my heart truly humbled for sin, and sorrowing for it after a godly sort: O that I may there look on him whom I have pierced, and mourn, and be in bitterness for him; that there I may sow in tears, and receive a wounded Christ into a broken heart! And there let the blood of Christ, which speaks better things than that of Abel, be sprinkled upon my conscience, to purify and pacify it: there let me be assured that thou art reconciled to me, that my iniquities are pardoned, and that I shall not come into condemnation. There say unto me, Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.

And that I may not come unworthily to this blessed ordinance, I beseech thee, lead me into a more intimate and experimental acquaintance with Jesus Christ, and him crucified; with Jesus Christ, and him glorified; that knowing him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and being by his grace planted in the likeness of both, I may both discern the Lord's body, and show forth the Lord's death.

Lord, I desire by a true and lively faith to close with Jesus Christ, and consent to him as my Lord and my God: I here give up myself to him as my Prophet, Priest, and King, to be ruled, and taught, and saved by him: this is my beloved, and this is my friend. None but Christ, none but Christ! Lord, increase this faith in me, perfect what is lacking in it, and enable me, in receiving the bread and wine at thy table, by a lively faith to receive Christ Jesus the Lord. O let the great gospel doctrine of Christ's dying to save sinners, which is represented in that ordinance, be meat and drink to my soul, meat indeed, and drink indeed: let it be both nourishing and refreshing to me; let it be both my strength and my song, and be the spring both of my holiness and of my comfort: and let such deep impressions be made upon my soul by the actual commemoration of it, as may abide always upon me, and have a powerful influence upon me in my whole conversation, that the life I now live in the flesh I may live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Lord, I beseech thee, fix my thoughts; let my heart be engaged to approach unto thee, that I may attend unto thee without distraction. Draw my desires towards thee; give me to hunger and thirst after righteousness, that I may be filled; and to draw near to thee with a true heart, and in full assurance of faith; and since I am not straitened in thee, O let me not be straitened in my own bosom.

Draw me, Lord, and I will run after thee. O send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead and guide me; pour thy Spirit upon me, put thy Spirit within me, to work in me both to will and to do that which is good; and leave me not to myself. Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, and blow upon my garden; come, O blessed Spirit of grace, and enlighten my mind with the knowledge of Christ, bow my will to the will of Christ, fill my heart with the love of Christ, and confirm my resolutions to live and die with him.

Work in me (I pray thee) a principle of holy love and charity toward all men, that I may forgive my enemies, which by thy grace I heartily do, and may keep up a spiritual communion in faith, hope, and holy love, with all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Lord, bless them all, and particularly that congregation with which I am to join in this solemn ordinance. Good Lord, pardon every one that engages his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. Hear my prayers, and heal the people.

Lord, meet me with a blessing, a Father's blessing, at thy table; grace thine own institutions with thy presence; and fulfil in me all the good pleasure of thy goodness, and the work of faith with power, for the sake of Jesus Christ my blessed Saviour and Redeemer.—To him, with the Father, and the Eternal Spirit, be everlasting praise. Amen.

Another, after the receiving of the Lord's Supper.

O Lord, my God and my Father in Jesus Christ, I can never sufficiently admire the condescension of thy grace to me. What is man, that thou dost thus magnify him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him. Who am I? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto, hast brought me into thy banqueting-house, and thy banner over me hath been love? I have reason to say, that a day in thy courts, an hour at thy table, is better, far better, than a thousand days, than ten thousand hours, elsewhere; it is good for me to draw near to God. Blessed be God for the privileges of his house, and those comforts with which he makes his people joyful in his house of prayer.

But I have reason to blush, and be ashamed of myself, that I have not been more affected with the great things which have been set before me, and offered me at the Lord's table. O what a vain, foolish, trifling heart have I! When I would do

good, even then evil is present with me. Good Lord, be merciful to me, and pardon the iniquity of my holy things, and let not my manifold defects in my attendance upon thee be laid to my charge, or hinder my profiting by the ordinance.

I have now been commemorating the death of Christ; Lord, grant that by the power of it, sin may be crucified in me, the world crucified to me, and I to the world; and enable me so to bear about with me continually the dying of the Lord Jesus, as that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in my mortal body.

I have now been receiving the precious benefits which flow from Christ's death; Lord, grant that I may never lose, may never forfeit, those benefits, but, as I have received Christ Jesus the Lord, give me grace so to walk in him, and to live as one that am not my own, but am bought with a price, glorifying God with my body and spirit, which are his.

I have now been renewing my covenant with thee, and engaging myself afresh to thee, to be thine; now, Lord, give me grace to perform my vow. Keep it always in the imagination of the thought of my heart, and establish my way before thee. Lord, preserve me by thy grace, that I may never return again to folly, after God has spoken peace; may I never, by my loose and careless walking, undo what I have been doing to-day; but, having my heart enlarged with the consolations of God, give me to run the way of thy commandments with cheerfulness and constancy, and still to hold fast my integrity.

This precious soul of mine, which is the work of thine own hands, and the purchase of thy Son's blood, I commit into thy hands, to be sanctified by thy Spirit and thy grace, and wrought up into a conformity to the holy will in every thing: Lord, set up thy throne in my heart, write thy law there, shed abroad thy love there, and bring every thought within me into obedience to thee, to the commanding power of thy law, and the constraining power of thy love. Keep through thy own name that which I commit unto thee, keep it against that day when it shall be called for; let me be preserved blameless to the coming of thy glory, that I may then be presented faultless with exceeding joy.

All my outward affairs I submit to the disposal of thy wise and gracious providence. Lord, save my soul, and then, as to other things, do as thou pleasest with me; only make all providences work together for my spiritual and eternal advantage. Let all things be pure to me, and give me to taste covenant love in common mercies, and by thy grace let me be taught both how to want and how to abound, how to enjoy prosperity, and how to bear adversity, as becomes a Christian; and at all times let thy grace be sufficient for me, and mighty in me, to work in me both to will and to do that which is good of thine own good pleasure.

And that in every thing I may do my duty, and stand complete in it, let my heart be enlarged in love to Jesus Christ, and affected with the height and depth, the length and breadth, of that love of his to me, which passes all conception and expression.

And as an evidence of that love, let my mouth be filled with his praises; Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing, and honour, and glory, and power; for he was slain, and has redeemed a chosen remnant unto God by his blood, and made them to him kings and priests. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless his holy name, who forgiveth all mine iniquities, and healeth all my diseases; who redeemeth my life from destruction, and crowneth me with loving-kindness and tender mercy; who having begun a good work, will perform it unto the day of Christ. As long as I live I will bless the Lord; I will praise my God while I have any being; and when I have no being on earth, I hope to have a being in heaven to be doing it better. O let me be borne up in everlasting arms, and carried from strength to strength, till I appear before God in Zion, for Jesus' sake, who died for me, and rose again, in whom I desire to be found living and dying. Now to God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, be ascribed kingdom, power, and glory, henceforth and for ever. Amen.

An address to God before meat.

O Lord our God, in thee we live, and move, and have our being, and from thee we receive all the supports and comforts of our being: thou spreadest our table, and fillest our cup, and comfortest us with the gifts of thy bounty from day to day. We own our dependence upon thee, and obligations to thee: pardon our sins we pray thee; sanctify thy good creatures to our use, and give us grace to receive them soberly and thankfully, and to eat and drink not to ourselves, but to thy glory, through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Another.

Gracious God, thou art the protector and preserver of the whole creation, thou hast fed us all our lives unto this day with food convenient for us, though we are evil and unthankful. We pray thee, forgive all our sins, by which we have forfeited all thy mercies, and let us see our forfeited right restored in Christ Jesus. Give us a taste of covenant love in common mercies, and to use these and all our creature comforts to the glory of our great Benefactor, through the grace of our great Redeemer. Amen.

An Address to God after Meat.

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with his benefits, and gives us all things richly to enjoy, though we serve him but poorly. O Lord, we thank thee for present refreshments in the use of thy good creatures, and for thy love to our souls in Jesus Christ, which sweetens all. We pray thee, pardon our sins, go on to do us good, provide for the poor that are destitute of daily food, fit us for thy whole will, and be our God, and guide, and portion for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Another.

We thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for all the gifts both of thy providence and of thy grace; for those blessings which relate to the life that now is, and that to come; and for the use of thy good creatures at this time. Perfect, O God, that which concerns us, nourish our souls with the bread of life to life eternal, and let us be of those who shall eat bread in the kingdom of our Father, for Christ Jesus' sake, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

FAMILY HYMNS,

GATHERED MOSTLY OUT OF THE

TRANSLATIONS OF DAVID'S PSALMS.

To the Reader.

My design in this essay is to promote the singing of psalms in families, as a part of their daily worship, especially their sabbath worship; an exercise which (however it be now with other instances of the warmest devotion sadly disused, yet) was anciently practised by the generality of serious Christians, who thus turned their houses into churches, (such churches as St. Paul speaks of, Rom. xvi. 5. Col. iv. 15. Philem. 2.) by praising God together, and by teaching and admonishing one another in singing of psalms. If we ask for the good old way, we shall find this path in it trodden by the primitive Christians in the church's early days; among the particulars of whose religion, that learned pen which wrote the "Primitive Christianity," traces remarkable footsteps of this family exercise, Part 1. Ch. 9. The sound of this melody was not only heard in their solemn assemblies, where it appears by many passages (particularly that known account which Pliny gives to Trojan of the Christians, Epist. l. 10.) to have been a considerable part of their public worship, but in their private houses also, where it seems to have been the common usage to sing psalms with their wives and children, especially at and after their meals; a practice commended by Clemens Alexandrinus, (Pædag. Lib. 2. c. 4. by Chrysostom in Ps. xli.) which made the psalms so familiar to them, that, as Jerom tells us, (Epist. ad Marcel.) in the place where he lived, you could not go into the field, but you should hear the ploughmen, and the mowers, and the vine-dressers, thus employed: *Sonet psalmos convivium sobrium—The sober feast resounds with psalms,* says Cyprian. Socrates (Hist. Eccles. lib. 7. cap. 22.) speaks of it as the practice of Theodosius, the Emperor, to rise early every morning to sing psalms with his sisters; "so that his palace" (says he) "was like a monastery or religious house," *οὐκ ἀλλοιοτερα ἡ ἀσκητιριου κατεστησε τα βασιλεια.* And I have sometimes thought that the service of the monasteries, in the degenerate ages of the church, (which is known to have consisted very much in singing,) was but the remaining form and carcass of that life and power of godliness and religious worship which had originally reigned in most Christian families. That is a good hint of Tertullian, in his book ad Uxorem, (written about the year 205,) Lib. 2. cap. 9. where, cautioning Christian women not to marry with unbelievers, he urges this against it, That those who were so linked, could not have their husbands to sing psalms with them in their houses: whereas, when those in that relation draw together in the yoke of Christ, *Sonant inter duos psalmi et hymni, et mutuo provocant, quis melius Deo suo canet,—They sing psalms and hymns together; their only strife then is, which shall be most affectionate and serious in singing.* And, to come nearer to our own day, that is worthy our notice which Mr. Quick, in the Introduction to his Synodicon, tells us, Vol. I. p. 5. That the singing of Psalms in families, even those of the best rank, not only at their morning and evening worship, but at their meals, conduced very much to the strength and growth of the reformed religion in France, in its first and best days. And the title-page of our Old English Translation of the Psalms into Metre, set forth and allowed at the beginning of our reformation, in Edward the VIth's time, recommends them to be sung in private houses for their godly solace and comfort. And how the houses of the good old protestants were perfumed with this incense daily, especially on Lord's days, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have told us. Gladly therefore would I contribute something toward the revival of this duty in Christian families, which, if they be (as they should be) nurseries and seminaries of piety, would certainly embrace this as an excellent means of instilling religion betimes into the minds of their little children, who, as they commonly attend most to this duty, so they will sooner receive the good impressions of it than of any other; and thus out of the mouths o babes and sucklings will praise be perfected to th glory of God, and strength ordained to the comfor of families; compare Matt. xxi. 16. with Ps. viii. 2 Austin (Prolog. in Lib. Psalm.) suggests that Psalm

were written, and the singing of psalms appointed, very much for the sake of youth. *Propterea psalmorum* (says he) *nobis per modulos aptata sunt carmina, ut vel ætate puerili, vel qui adolescentes sunt moribus, quasi cantilenâ quâdam psallentes delectari videantur—For this purpose were the psalms set to music, that the sprightly period of youth might be entertained and exhilarated.*

What shall I say then to persuade masters of families, who have hitherto neglected their duty, to begin it now? Better late than never. The experience of many who make conscience of it will testify both the sweetness and profit of it. If psalms were more sung in families, they would be better sung in congregations. Let none plead want of time as an excuse; for how can time be spent better than in praising God? And is there not a great deal of our precious hours thrown away every day upon other things that are less to the purpose of a Christian? Nor will there be room for this pretence, if care be taken not to defer family worship too late, either morning or evening, so as to crowd it into a corner, (as many do by a thousand impertinences,) as likewise so to proportion the other parts of the duty, that they may not prevent this. It is the wisdom of masters of families, so to manage their family worship, that they may make it as much as possible a pleasure, and not a task, to their children and servants. Nor let want of skill be any excuse; there may be much of acceptable affection, where there appears but little of art. Plain songs best befit plain Israelites. A small degree of skill (and that is easily attained by any who give their minds to it) will suffice to the management of this duty decently and in order, and more there needs not; for in private families the quickest way of singing seems to be most agreeable; such singing as the great Athanasius appointed in the church of Alexandria, *Ut pronuncianti vicinior esset quàm canenti—more like reading than singing.* So Austin tells us, (Confess. Lib. 10. Cap. 33.) and approves of it as a good means to preserve that spiritual delight which should be in this ordinance, from degenerating into a sensitive pleasure, which it is apt to do when tunes and notes are overmuch studied and affected, and the ear tickled with them.

Nor let any be afraid that their neighbours should overhear them: we serve a Master that we have no reason to be ashamed of, to whom we have engaged, that whatever others do, we and our houses will serve him; and whose hold is so great of the consciences, even of bad men, that those whose contempt and reproach you fear, even of them perhaps you will be had in honour, 2 Sam. vi. 22. Nay, your light hereby may so shine before men, that others may be brought to glorify your Father which is in heaven, Matt. v. 16.

If any make it an excuse that they are unready in finding out such psalms, or passages in the psalms, as are most proper for family use, such may perhaps receive some help from this small collection.

It is taken out of David's Psalms, and further we seldom need to go for hymns and spiritual songs, though other Scriptures may, no doubt, be used this way much to edification. *Nolite cantare nisi quod legitis esse cantandum—Sing nothing but what you read as being appointed to be sung,* is a good rule, which Austin gives, Epist. 109. This collection will be the more useful, (and it is what I chiefly aim at in it,) if every one in the family have a book, so that the psalm or hymn (for the distinction is but nominal) may be sung without reading the line betwixt, which is the general practice of the reformed churches abroad, and renders the duty more pleasant and profitable, and takes up less time, and is practicable enough in a family, if not in large congregations.

The gathering of verses out of several psalms, and putting them together, may seem to be a violation of their own native coherence; but I hope it will not give offence to any, since it is no more so, than the joining of several passages of Scriptures remote from each other, and putting them together in our prayers and sermons, which is generally practised: besides that, it is a liberty which is often taken by the clerks who give out the psalms in public; and I think those who dislike it not there, will the rather allow it in private families. Nay, I am in hopes that the reference I have made all along to the psalms and verses, will increase and lead to an acquaintance with the book of Psalms in general, which I would not that this essay should at all lessen or supersede.

I have made use of the best approved translations, especially Mr. Patrick's and Mr. Barton's; as likewise Bishop King's, Mr. Smith's, Dr. Ford's, and Mr. Baxter's, who have each of them laboured well in this province; nor have I neglected the old translation, which (considering the age in which it was done, and that it broke the ice) is not such a contemptible piece as some love to represent it. I have taken that out of each, which I judged the best and most suitable to my purpose, acting herein not as a censor, but as a gleaner. Books are known to have their fate, *ad captum lectoris,* and therefore I hope my pardon for making this use of the labours of others will be easily granted, and this general acknowledgment will suffice to acquit me from the charge of plagiarism. I have not varied at any time from my authors merely for variation sake, yet throughout I have seen cause very often to alter, and in many places to build anew, (especially where I was willing to contract,) according to the best of my skill. The performance indeed is but very small, yet the design is honest; and it will be fruit abounding to a good account, if it do but help forward the

work of singing psalms, in which the will of God is done on earth, somewhat like as it is in heaven, where singing hallelujahs to him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, is both the everlasting work, and the everlasting felicity, of those glorified beings, that wear the crown of perfection within the veil.

M. H.

Jan. 14, 1694.

POSTSCRIPT.

A third edition of this small collection being called for, though for the sake of those who had accustomed themselves to the former, I would not make any considerable alterations, yet I thought it might be acceptable to make large additions, in which I must own myself to have borrowed some lines from that excellent version of the Psalms done by Mr. Tate, which was not published when this collection was first made; I have also taken in some of the New-Testament Hymns, which being calculated for gospel times, will, I doubt not, be very agreeable to every good Christian.

For Morning Worship.

HYMN I. Psal. lvii. 7, 8.

My heart is now prepared for praise,
'Tis fixed for the same;
And I will sing to thee, O Lord,
And bless thy holy name.
Awake my glory, lute and harp,
Concerts of praise to make,
Now in the morning I myself
Will to this work awake.

——xix. 1—6.

The heavens, throughout their vast extent,
Declare their Maker's praise;
The glittering starry firmament
His handy-work displays.
Day unto day doth celebrate,
And night to night proclaim,
Without the help of speech or tongue,
His universal fame.
There doth the sun with joy and strength
His constant course complete,
The earth rejoiceth in his light,
And in his quickening heat.

——xc. 17.

So let the Lord shine on our souls,
Lighten and warm us thus:
Prosper, O God, our handy-works,
And stablish them to us.

HYMN II. Psal. cxviii. 15; iii. 5.

The voice of saving health and joy
In just men's dwellings is;
The Lord's right-hand works powerfully,
That strong right-hand of his.
I lay me down, and sweetly slept,
And safely waked again,
Because it was the Lord that kept,
And did my soul sustain.

——xxxi. 21; xxx. 5.

Blessed be God's most sacred name,
Who hath such wonders shown,
Wonders of love, securing me
As in a fenced town.
His wrath is in a moment past,
Life from his favour springs:
Though weeping for a night may last,
The morning comfort brings.

——xxxiii. 20—22.

Therefore we wait for thee, O Lord,
Who still art our defence;
In all estates we trust in thee
With cheerful confidence.
Lord, let thy grace on us descend
Like a refreshing shower;
For all our hopes and joys depend
On thine almighty power.

HYMN III. Psal. lxxiv. 16, 17.

The shining day, and shady night,
Peculiarly are thine;
Thou hast, O Lord, prepared the light,
And caused the sun to shine.
The earth, with all its ends and coasts,
Thy mighty hand did frame,
Both summer's heat, and winter's frost,
By thine appointment came.

——xxxiii. 6, 7; cxix. 91.

By thy great word the heavens were made;
And all their hosts are thine;
The gathered waters of the sea
Thou dost in bounds confine.
According to thine ordinance these
Continue to this day;
For all are servants unto thee,
And do thy word obey.

Rev. iv. 11. Psal. cxxiv. 8.

Glory and honour must, O Lord,
To thee of right be paid,
For all these things are by thy power
And for thy pleasure made.
And our continual hope and help
In his great name doth stand,
Who did create both heaven and earth
By his almighty hand.

HYMN IV. Psal. cxxi. 1—8.

Up to the hills I lift mine eyes,
From whence I look for aid;
In God alone my succour lies,
That earth and heaven made.
He will sustain thy weaker powers
With his almighty arm,
And keep thee with continual care
From all surprising harm.
The great Protector of the saints,
He slumbers not, nor sleeps;
The Lord, thy shade on thy right-hand,
Thy soul in safety keeps;
So that thy head the scorching sun
By day shall never smite,
Nor the moon's hurtful influence
Distemper thee by night.
The Lord shall save thee from all ill,
And keep thy soul from sin,
He shall preserve thy going out,
And bless thy coming in.

HYMN V. Psal. cxv. 1, 8, 9.

Lord, not to us, but to thy name
Be given the praise we owe,
To thy rich goodness, and thy truth,
Whence all our blessings flow.
Whilst heathens worship senseless gods,
Such senseless fools they be;
Let Israel trust the living God,
Our help and shield is he.

—— cxv. 12, 13, 14, 17, 18.

The Lord hath had us in his mind,
And he will bless us still,
Even Israel's house, and Aaron's too,
With blessings he shall fill.
Them that be fearers of the Lord,
He 'll bless them, great and small;
God shall increase you more and more,
You and your children all.
The dead indeed praise not the Lord,
They give him no renown,
Nor do they thus declare his name
To silence that go down.
We therefore that are yet alive
His praises will record,
From this time forth for evermore,
Amen. Praise ye the Lord.

HYMN VI. Psal. ci. 1—7.

Mercy and judgment in my song
United (Lord) shall be;
And since from thee they both do flow,
I 'll sing of both to thee.
I 'll wisely walk in perfect ways;
When wilt thou come to me,
To dwell and rule (Lord) in my house,
And bless my family?
And that thou mayst be still my guest,
No sin I will abide,
But will abandon all the works
Of them that turn aside.
Him that persists in wicked ways
I 'll from my house discard,
No proud or scornful ones befriend,
Or in the least regard.
I will look out the faithful men,
That they may dwell with me,
And such as walk in righteous ways,
My servants they shall be.
I will no guileful person have
Within my walls to dwell,
Nor in my sight will I abide
The man that lies doth tell.

—— cv. 45.

That we the better may observe
The statutes of his word,
And from his precepts may not swerve,
O magnify the Lord!

HYMN VII. Psal. cxxvii. 1, 2.

Except the Lord do build the house,
Vain are the pains of man;
Except the Lord the city guard,
No other watchman can.
Your rising early will not do,
Night-watching fruitless is,
And eating still the bread of care,
While God gives sleep to his.

—— xxxvii. 4, 5.

Therefore delight thyself in God,
To him by faith retire,
And he shall wisely bring about
Thy very heart's desire.
Commit thy way unto the Lord,
On him by faith depend,
And he shall bring thy just designs
Unto a happy end.

—— xvi. 23, 24.

A little that the just enjoys
Is better far to them
Than all the ill-got, ill-spent wealth
Of many wicked men.
The Lord that guides a good man's steps,
Delighteth in his way;
He is not ruined by his falls,
For God will be his stay.

—— xxv. 35—37.

In all my life I never yet
That liberal man could see,
Whose alms reduced himself to want,
Or his to beggary.

I 've seen the wicked rise and spread
Like laurels fresh and green,
Till total ruin swept him off,
As if he ne'er had been.
Mark and behold the perfect man
That 's upright in his ways,
Mercy attends his happy life,
And peace concludes his days.

HYMN VIII. Psal. xvi. 1—3.

Lord, save me, for I trust in thee
With all my mind and heart;
To thee my soul hath often said,
My Lord, my God thou art.
My goodness never can extend
To thee, O Lord, above;
But to thine excellent saints on earth,
Whom I entirely love.

5, 6.

God is my portion, all my good
From his rich mercy flows,
And his kind providence secures
The blessings he bestows.
I envy not the great man's state,
Nor pine to see his store;
With what I have I 'm pleased much,
With what I hope for, more.

7, 8.

I bless the Lord, who did direct
My soul to choose aright,
On which my secret thoughts reflect
With comfort every night.
I still conceived the Lord to stand
Before me as my guide;
While he doth stand at my right-hand
I know I shall not slide.

9, 10, 11.

Therefore my heart and tongue rejoice,
In him my flesh shall trust;
My soul shall not remain in hell,
Nor body in the dust.
The path of life they both shall find,
And in thy presence taste
Pleasures to full perfection grown,
And joys that ever last.

HYMN IX. Psal. cxii. 1, 2.

Praise ye the Lord, for blest are those
That fear the Lord aright,
That greatly love his sacred laws,
And do them with delight.
The upright man's successful seed
On earth shall mighty grow,
To all that from his loins descend
Shall special blessings flow.

3, 4.

Riches and wealth shall in his house
Abound from day to day,
Whilst graces do adorn his soul,
More durable than they.
In midst of darkness to the just
There springs a joyful light;
Gracious he is, compassionate,
And every way upright.

5, 6, 7.

He lends assistance to the poor,
Discreetly guides his way;
Nothing shall ever move the just,
Nor make his name decay:
For any evil tidings told
He shall not be afraid,
But trusting in the Lord alone,
His heart is fixt and staid.

—— cxxviii. 4—6.

Thus art thou blest that fearest God,
And he shall let thee see
The promised *Jerusalem*,
And her felicity.
Thou shalt thy children's children see,
To thy great joy's increase,
Whilst on God's *Israel* there shall rest
Prosperity and peace.

HYMN X. Psal. v. 3; cxxx. 3, 4.

Lord, thou shalt hear my morning cry,
At morning it shall be
That I 'll by faith direct my prayer,
And will look up to thee.
If thou shouldst mark iniquities,
Then who should stand, O Lord?
But there's forgiveness (Lord) with thee,
That thou mayst be adored.

—— li. 9, 10; xvii. 5.

Lord, hide thine eyes from all my sin,
And my misdeeds deface;
O God, make clean my heart within,
Renew my mind with grace.
Uphold my goings, Lord, my guide,
In all thy paths divine,
That I may never step aside
Out of those ways of thine.

—— xxvii. 11; cxli. 3.

Lord, let me plainly see thy way
Where I may safely tread,
Avoiding all the cunning snares
Mine enemies have laid.
And set a constant watch before
My hasty mouth, O Lord;
And of my lips keep thou the door
Against each evil word.

—— xix. 12—14.

For who can all his errors see,
And what lies hid within?
Lord, cleanse me, and deliver me
From all my secret sin.
From bold presumptions keep me back,
Lest they dominion gain;
So shall I shun the great offence,
And upright shall remain.
Accept my mouth, accept my heart,
My words and thoughts each one;
For my redeemer and my strength,
O Lord, thou art alone.

HYMN XI. To the tune of Psalm lxvii.

Psal. xxv. 5, 7.

Lord, lead me in thy truth,
And teach me in thy way;
For thou my God and Saviour art,
On thee I wait all day.
My youthful sins and faults,
O keep not on record;
In mercy, for thy goodness sake,
Remember me, O Lord.

8, 10.

The Lord is good and just,
And therefore takes delight
To teach poor sinners in his way,
That they may walk aright.
For all the ways of God
Are mercy, truth, and grace,
To them that keep his covenant,
And his commands embrace.

12, 13.

What man doth fear the Lord,
And dread the paths of sin,
The Lord himself shall choose his way,
And guide his steps therein.
Possessed with quiet thoughts,
His soul shall dwell at ease;
His happy offspring shall possess
The promised land of peace.

14, 21, 22.

The secret of the Lord
Shall all that fear him know;
His counsel and his covenant
He to his saints will show.
Let mine integrity
And uprightness defend
And keep me; for in faith and hope
On thee I do depend.
Lord, by thy power redeem,
And bring thy people out
From all the straits and miseries
That compass them about.

HYMN XII. Psal. xxiii. 1—3.

My shepherd is the Lord most high,
I shall be well supplied,
In pastures green he makes me lie,
By silent waters' side.
He doth restore my soul that strays,
And then he leads me on,
To walk in his most righteous ways,
For his name's sake alone.

4—6.

Yea, though through death's dark vale I go,
Yet will I fear no ill,
Thy rod and staff support me so,
And thou art with me still.
My table thou hast furnished
In presence of my foe;
With oil thou dost anoint my head,
My cup doth overflow.
Surely thy goodness and thy grace
Shall always follow me;
And my perpetual dwelling-place
Thy holy house shall be.

—— xxviii. last.

Lord, save thy people powerfully,
And bless thine heritage:
Feed them likewise, and raise them high,
Henceforth from age to age.

For Evening Worship.

HYMN XIII. Psal. lxviii. 19, 20.

Blessed be God that doth us load
With daily favours thus;
Even that God that hath bestowed
Salvation upon us.
For our God is the God alone
From whom salvation is;
The issues and escapes from death
Are all and only his.

—— xxxiv. 3—6.

O magnify the Lord with me,
And let us praise his name,
Who heard my prayers, observed my fears,
And saved me from the same.
Who doth regard with favour those
That him by faith regard;
Who poor afflicted souls hath saved,
And all their cries hath heard.

—— lxvi. 9; xxxiv. 20; xxxv. 10.

Who setting dangers all aside,
Our soul in life doth stay,
And suffering not our foot to slide,
Upholds us in our way.

Who keepeth all his people's bones,
That they unbroken be:
Therefore my bones shall all confess,
Lord, who is like to thee!

HYMN XIV. Psal. xxxiv. 7—9.

The angel of the Lord most high
Encampeth every where
About the saints, delivering them
That walk in God's true fear.
O taste and see that God is good,
And in his grace confide;
For unto those that fear his name
No good shall be denied.

—— cxvi. 7; xxxi. 5.

Return, my soul, that art set free,
Return unto thy rest,
For graciously the Lord to thee
His bounty hath exprest.
Lord God of truth, my precious soul
I to thy hands commit,
That spirit which is by purchase thine,
For thou redeemest it.

—— xvii. 8, 15.

Preserve me, Lord, from hurtful things,
As the apple of thine eye,
And under covert of thy wings
Defend me secretly.
I shall in rightcousness behold
Thy reconciled face;
And waking shall be satisfied
With the image of thy grace.

HYMN XV. Psal. xci. 1, 4, 5.

He that for his secure retreat
Hath chosen the Most High,
Shall underneath the Almighty's shade
Abide continually.
Under his sheltering wings concealed
Thou shalt be safe and warm;
Terrors by night thou shalt not fear,
Nor dread the noon-day's harm.

9, 10.

Because thou madest the Lord most high
Thy constant home to be,
The same to whom I always fly,
To shield and succour me;
No evil shall to thee betide,
Whatever comes to pass;
Nor shall there any plague at all
Come nigh thy dwelling-place.

11, 12, 14—16.

Angels shall be thy faithful guards,
Being charged by his commands
To keep thee safe in all thy ways,
And bear thee in their hands.
Because he knew and loved my name,
Therefore, saith God, will I
Answer his prayers, deliver him,
And set him up on high.
I will be with him in his griefs,
Honour him with my love,
Suffice him with long life on earth,
And endless joys above.

HYMN XVI. Psal. iv. 1, 2.

O God that art my righteousness,
Hear when I call to thee,
For in the day of my distress
Thou hast enlarged me.
O mortal men, how long will ye
My glory thus despise?
Why wander ye in vanity,
And follow after lies?

3, 4.

Know ye that good and godly men
The Lord doth take and choose,
And when to him I do complain,
He doth me not refuse.
Then stand in awe, and do not sin,
But set yourselves apart,
And silent on your beds begin
To commune with your heart.

5, 6.

Offer to God the sacrifice
Of love and righteousness,
And then put all your trust in him
For succour in distress.
Many take up with any good,
And worldly things embrace,
But we desire of thee, O God,
The shining of thy face.

7, 8.

For thou thereby shalt make my heart
More joyful and more glad,
Than they that of their corn and wine
A great increase have had.
In peace therefore will I lie down
To take my rest and sleep,
For thou only wilt me, O Lord,
Alone in safety keep.

HYMN XVII. Psal. cxli. 1, 2.

To thee, O Lord, I call and cry,
Make haste and come to me;
Give ear unto my humble voice,
Now when I cry to thee.
O let my prayer be now set out
As incense in thine eyes;
And the up-lifting of my hands
As the evening sacrifice.

—— cxix. 147, 148, 162;—cxxx. 6.

I did prevent the dawning day
In crying to the Lord,
And have engaged my waking thoughts
To meditate in thy word.
Thy righteous judgments I will praise
In the dark silent night,
And thus my soul shall wait for thee
More than to see the light.

—— lxiii. 5, 7.

In thee my soul shall be sufficed,
As if with fatness filled,
And thankful praise my mouth always
With joyful lips shall yield.
Since thou alone art he from whom
My help proceeds and springs,
Therefore will I rest joyfully
Under thy shady wings.

HYMN XVIII. Psal. cvi. 4; cxviii. 25.

THINK on us, Lord, with favour free,
Such as thy people find;
With thy salvation visit us,
And have us in thy mind.
Save now, we do beseech thee, Lord,
We pray thee earnestly,
Now to afford thy grace, O Lord,
And send prosperity.

—— cxliv. 12, 13.

That so our sons may thrive apace,
As plants in youth do grow;
Like polished stones of some fair place,
So may our daughters show.
That our enlarged garners may
With precious stores be filled;
And in our streets the fruitful flocks
May many thousands yield.

14, 15.

Let not our labouring oxen faint,
Nor enemy invade:
No leading captive, no complaint
Within our streets be made.
O happy people! would we say,
With all these blessings stored;
Yea, rather happy people they
Whose God is God the Lord.

—— xlviii. last.

This God is evermore our God,
Our covenant God is he,
Even unto death, and beyond death,
Our faithful guide he'll be.

HYMN XIX. Psal. cxvi. 1, 2, 7, 8.

GOD, that so gracious a regard
To my request did give,
Shall have my best and choicest love
And service while I live.
God and thyself, my soul, enjoy,
Quiet and free from fears;
He saved thy life, upheld thy steps,
And dried up all thy tears.

12, 13, 16.

What shall I render, Lord, for all
The kindness thou hast shown?
Praises I'll offer, and with thanks
Will all thy favours own.
Truly I am thy servant, Lord,
Thy servant I will be,
Born in thy house, and from my bonds
By thy good hand set free.

—— xlii. 8, 11.

Therefore will God command for me
His kindest love by day;
His song shall be by night with me,
To God my life I'll pray.
Why art thou then cast down my soul,
With sorrows over-prest?
Why do despairing thoughts disturb
Thy peace and break my rest?
Have faith in God, for yet shall I
Sing forth his praise divine;
He to my countenance is health,
He's God, and shall be mine.

HYMN XX. Psal. cxxxviii. 1—5.

WITH my whole heart before the gods
I will with praise proclaim
That word of love and truth, which is
Greater than all thy name.
With spiritual strength thou answerest me,
And thou shalt have thy praise
From princes, all that hear thy word,
And sing in all thy ways

6—8.

Though God be high, he likes the low,
But proud men he disdains,
Therefore in midst of dangers great
My quickening hope remains.
The Lord will perfect mine affairs,
So sure thy mercy stands;
Forsake not, Lord, but succour still
The work of thine own hands.

—— xcvii. 11, 12.

Since the immortal seeds of light
For upright men are sown,
A joyful harvest will at length
Their work and sorrows crown.
Then let our constant joys declare
The God we serve is kind,
We'll praise him for his mercies past,
And wait for those behind.

HYMN XXI. Psal. cxxxix. 1—5.

LORD, thou hast searched my inward part,
And all my thoughts hast known;
Thou seest me sit, thou seest me rise,
Walking and lying down.
All my close ways, all my quick words,
Thou, Lord, dost understand;
Behind, before, thou hast beset,
And on me laid thine hand.

7, 8—10.

Whither can I retire from thee,
Or from thy presence fly?
For neither heaven nor hell can hide
From thine all-seeing eye.
Could I remove to the utmost sea,
Wing'd with the morning ray,
Thy hand that must support my flight,
Would my abode betray.

11—15.

In vain I seek to lie concealed
In the darkness of the night,
For midnight darkness shines to thee
As clear as noon-day light.
Maker and Master of my reins
Thou didst at once become;
Blest Lord, how strangely was I framed
And formed in the womb!

17, 18, 23, 24.

How precious are the thoughts of love
Thou dost to me express!
Deep in themselves, but dear to me,
And they are numberless.
When I awake I 'm still with thee,
And thus to thee I cry,
Search me, O God, and know my heart
My thoughts and conscience try;
And see if I do go astray
In any course of sin;
Show me the everlasting way,
And lead me, Lord, therein.

HYMN XXII. Psal. ciii. 1—3.

BLESS thou the living Lord, my soul,
His glorious praise proclaim,
Let all my inward powers extol
And bless his holy name.
Forget not all his benefits,
But bless the Lord, my soul,
Who all thy trespasses remits,
And makes thee sound and whole.

4, 5, 8—10.

Who did redeem thy life from death,
And crowned thee with his love:
Renewed thy youth, and filled thy mouth
With goodness from above.
The Lord is kind, to anger slow,
Ready to pardon sin,
Deals not with us in constant wrath,
As our deserts have been.

11, 12; xciv. 19.

As heaven is high above the earth,
So is his covenant love;
Further than east is from the west,
He doth our sins remove.
Thus in the crowd and multitude
Of various thoughts which roll
Within my breast, these comforts rest,
And do delight my soul.

HYMN XXIII. To the tune of Psal. lxvii.

Psal. lxv. 1—3.

O GOD, praise waiteth still
For thee in *Sion* hill;
The vow will we perform to thee,
And readily fulfil.
O thou whose titles are,
The God that hearest prayer,
The God to whom all flesh shall come,
To thee do we repair.
Our sins have borne great sway,
And much against us say,
But as for these, Lord, thou shalt please
To purge them all away.

—— cxliii. 8.

Cause me to hear thy love
Before the break of day:
Cause me to know which way to go,
For thou art all my stay.

—— lvi. 12, 13.

Thy vows upon me lie,
Lord, I will pay the same;
And I always will render praise
To thy most holy name.
For thou my soul hast saved
From death so near at hand,
And wilt not thou uphold me now,
And make my feet to stand;
That I may still proceed
To walk as in thy sight,
And spend my days unto thy praise,
With them that live in light?

—— cl. 6.

Let every breathing thing
Be ready to record
The praise and fame of God's great name;
Amen. Praise ye the Lord.

HYMN XXIV. Psal. viii. 1, 2.

O LORD, our Lord, through all the earth,
How excellent is thy name;

Who hast thy glory so advanced
Above the heavens' high frame.
Weak babes and sucklings thou ordainest
Thy power and praise to show;
To still thereby the enemy,
And the avengeful foe.

3—5.

When to thine heavens I lift mine eye,
The palace thou didst rear,
And the bright moon and stars observe,
Ordained to govern there:
Lord, what is man, that he should have
In thy kind thoughts a place,
That thou shouldst thus advance and bless
His mean and mortal race!
Little below the angels high,
He stands in glory placed;
Whilst all the creatures here below
Under his feet are cast.

—— lxxiii. 25, 26.

But whom have I in heaven but thee?
Nor is there any one
In all the earth desired of me,
Except thyself alone.
For when my flesh and heart do fail,
Then God upholds my heart;
He is my strength for evermore,
My portion and my part.

27, 28.

For they that far estranged be,
Lo, they, and every one
That goes a whoring, Lord, from thee,
Shall quite be overthrown.
But it is good for me always
That I to God draw nigh;
Then shall I praise his truth and love,
When I on him rely.

For the Lord's-day Morning.

HYMN XXV. Psal. cxviii. 1—4.

Give thanks to God, for he is good,
His mercies still endure;
Let all the seed of Israel say,
His promises are sure.
Let Aaron's house confess this day
His goodness still prevails;
Let them that fear the Lord now say,
His kindness never fails.

22, 23.

For that same stone which men refused,
Despised and trampled on,
Is chosen and preferred to be
The head and corner-stone.
This is the work of our great God,
He did the thing devise,
And he this great salvation wrought
That's wondrous in our eyes.

24, 25.

This is a joyful day indeed,
Which God hath holy made,
Hath made for man, and we will now
With holy mirth be glad.
We 'll join our acclamations now,
And loud hosannas sing,
Wishing prosperity may wait
On our anointed King.

26—29.

Blest Saviour! that from God to us
On this kind errand came,
We welcome thee, and bless all those
That spread thy glorious name.
God is the Lord who gives the light
Which this high day adorns,
Come, bind the sacrifice with cords
Unto the altar's horns.
Thou art my God whom I 'll exalt,
My God whom I will praise;
Give thanks to God, for he is good,
His mercy lasts always.

HYMN XXVI. Psal. lxxxiv. 1—3.

How lovely is the place where thou
Thy presence (Lord) dost grant!
O! how I long to approach thy courts,
Impatient of restraint!
I envy much the sparrow's place,
And grudge the swallow's bliss,
That build their nests in God's own courts;
My King, my God he is.

4—7.

Happy the dwellers in thine house,
For they will praise thee still;
Thrice happy they whose strength thou art,
Whose hearts thy graces fill.
Who make the best of Sion's ways,
And go from strength to strength,
Till they appear before the Lord
In Sion hill at length.

8—10.

Lord God of hosts, hear thou my prayer,
O Jacob's God, give ear,
O Lord our shield, behold the face
Of thine Anointed dear.
For in thy courts thy name to praise,
I count a day spent there
Far better than a thousand days,
A thousand days elsewhere.
There would I rather be confined,
And at the threshold lie,

Than dwell in sinners' tents with ease
And boundless liberty.

11, 12.

For God the Lord is sun and shield,
He grace and glory gives,
And no good thing shall he withhold
From them that purely live.
O Lord of hosts, that man is blest,
And happy sure is he,
Whose heart by faith doth ever rest
With confidence in thee.

HYMN XXVII. Psal. xxvii. 4.

THIS is my great request, O God,
Which here I do present,
That all the days I have to live
May in thy house be spent.
There to contemplate and behold
The beauty of the Lord,
And in his temple to inquire
Into his holy word.

8, 9.

When as thou saidst, My face seek ye,
Instructed by thy grace,
My ready heart with joy replied,
Lord, I will seek thy face.
Hide not thy face from me in wrath;
Lord, turn me not away:
My Saviour, thou hast been my help,
Be still my strength and stay.

—— xliii. 3, 4.

O send out light and truth divine,
To lead and bring me near
Unto that holy hill of thine,
And tabernacles there.
Then to God's altar I will go,
The gladness of my joy,
O God, my God, thy praise to show,
My harp I will employ.

—— cxix. 32.

And I will run with full consent
The way thou givest in charge,
When with thy sweet encouragement
Thou shalt my heart enlarge.

HYMN XXVIII. Psal. xcii. 1, 2, 4.

O WHAT a pleasant work it is
To praise the Lord above,
Morning and evening to proclaim
His faithfulness and love!
Thy works, O Lord, with joy divine
My ravished heart affect,
And in the glory of thy acts
My triumphs I 'll erect.

5—7.

O Lord, how great are all thy works!
Thy thoughts are all profound;
The foolish men mistake thy ways,
These depths they cannot sound.
When prospering sinners flourish most,
And as the grass do spring,
'Tis that they may upon themselves
A swift destruction bring.

12, 13.

But saints like laden palms shall thrive,
So flourish and come on,
Grow strong and tall, like cedar trees
In fruitful *Lebanon*.
Trees planted in the holy place,
Where God the Lord doth dwell,
Still watered with the dews of grace,
Shall thrive and prosper well.

14, 15.

Yea (even when nature's strength decays)
In age much fruit shall bring,
And in the winter of their days
Be fat and flourishing.
To show that God 's an upright God,
He is a rock to me;
And there is no unrighteousness
In him, nor none can be.

HYMN XXIX. Psal. xcvi. 1, 2.

SING ye with praise unto the Lord
New songs of joy and mirth;
Sing to the Lord with one accord,
All people of the earth.
Sing to the Lord, enthroned on high,
Bless his adored name,
The great salvation he hath wrought
From day to day proclaim.

—— xcviii. 1, 2.

Renew your songs to God, and tell
What wonders he hath done;
Let 's all admire the victories
His holy arm hath won.
His mercy which was kept before
A secret, and enclosed,
Now to the clear and open view
Of heathen is exposed.

3—6.

His promised goodness, and his truth,
Was first to *Israel* shown,
But now the ends of the earth have seen
His great salvation.
Let all the earth this welcome news
Applaud with loudest noise,
Join music to their hymns of praise,
To testify their joys.

7—9.

Let swelling seas roar, and excite
The joys of neighbouring lands;
Let echoing hills the noise repeat,
And rivers clap their hands.
Whole nature well may feel a change,
When God's approach is nigh,
Who comes to judge and rule the world
With truth and equity.

HYMN XXX. Psal. lxviii. 4, 17.

Sing unto God, sing forth his praise,
Extol him with your voice,
That rides on the heavens by JAH his name,
In which we will rejoice.
God's chariots twenty thousand are;
Always before his face
Millions of angels do attend,
As in the holy place.

18.

Thou hast ascended up on high,
And thou, O Christ, didst then
Lead captive our captivity,
Receiving gifts for men:
Yea even for rebellious men
Thou didst those gifts receive,
That God the Lord might dwell with them,
And they rebellion leave.

24, 28.

For they have seen thy power, O God,
They saw thy steps of grace,
The goings of my God, my King,
Within his holy place.
Thy God, by his supreme command,
Hath strengthened thee thus;
Strengthen, O God, by thy good hand
What thou hast wrought for us.

34, 35.

Ascribe ye strength to our great God,
Whose excellency rare
Is over Israel's land displayed,
Whose strength the clouds declare.
They that in holy places see
Thy glory are amazed,
The God of Israel gives us strength,
His holy Name be praised.

HYMN XXXI. Psal. xcv. 1—4.

Come, let us sing with joyful noise
To our salvation's Rock,
With psalms of praise and thankful joys,
Into his presence flock.
A God, a King of great command,
A King of gods he is!
The earth's great deeps are in his hand,
The strength of hills is his.

5—7.

Dry land and seas, even both of these
His hands did form and frame;
O come, adore with bended knees
The Lord our Maker's name.
For he 's our God, and we the flock
Of whom he hath command,
His people, and his pasture-stock,
And sheep of his own hand.

8—11.

Let 's therefore hear his voice to-day,
And not hard-hearted prove,
As those that in the wilderness
Provoked God above.
They proved his power, and saw his works,
And long they grieved him there,
Till wearied with that murmuring race
He could no longer bear:
But did in just and holy wrath
By solemn oath protest,
That they should never come into
The blessed Canaan's rest.

Heb. iv. 1.

Let us then fear lest, a like rest
Being now proposed to us,
Any of us through unbelief
Come short and perish thus.

HYMN XXXII. Psal. xxxvi. 7, 8.

How excellent, Lord, is that grace
And love that from thee springs!
Therefore the sons of men do place
Their trust in thy spread wings!
With fatness of thine house on high
Thou shalt thy saints suffice,
And make them drink abundantly
The river of thy joys.

9, 10.

Because the springs of life most pure
Do ever flow from thee;
And in thy light we shall be sure
Eternal light to see.
To those who thus esteem thy love,
Thy kindness still impart,
And all thy promises fulfil
To men of upright heart.

—— lxxxix. 15, 16.

Blest is the people that doth know
And hear the joyful sound,
Thy beams shall light them as they go,
And shine about them round.
The expressions of thy wondrous love
Will constant joys create;
And thou the glory of their strength,
Wilt crown their low estate.

——lxv. 4; xli. 13

They with the goodness of thy house
Shall feast their appetites;
Full of the joys thy temple yields,
And ravished with delights.
The Lord, the God of *Israel*,
Be praised eternally,
From age to age, for evermore,
Amen, amen say I.

HYMN XXXIII. Psal. cxxiii. 1; xxvi. 8; v. 7.

To thee, O Lord, to thee alone
Do I lift up mine eyes,
O thou the high and lofty One,
That dwellest above the skies.
The habitation of thine house,
Lord, I have loved well,
And that sweet place so glorious,
Where thy renown doth dwell.
And to that house will I draw near
In thine abundant grace,
And worship with an awful fear
Towards thine holy place.

——cxix. 5, 11, 12, 18, 19.

Assist me therefore, O my God,
And so direct my way,
That I may keep thy holy word,
And never go astray.
Let it be hid within my heart,
From sin to keep me free:
A blessed one, O Lord, thou art,
Thy statutes teach thou me.
Open mine eyes, that I may see
The wonders of thy law:
For being a stranger here, I must
From thence my comfort draw.

24, 54.

And these thy testimonies are
My heart's entire delight,
Nor need I other counsellor
To guide my ways aright.
For every where thy statutes are
My comfortable songs,
Whilst in my pilgrimage I am
Exposed to griefs and wrongs.

HYMN XXXIV. Psal. cxix. 68, 73.

Lord, thou art good, and thou dost good,
All graces flow from thee;
Teach me to know thy testaments,
How good and just they be.
Thy hands have made and fashioned me,
Thy grace on me bestow,
To know thy precepts what they be,
And practise what I know.

105, 106, 108.

For of my life they are the guide,
And to my paths give light;
I 've sworn to keep thy righteous laws,
Which I 'll perform aright.
The free-will offerings of my mouth
I pray thee, Lord, accept,
And teach me now which way and how
Thy judgments may be kept.

109, 111.

My soul is ever in my hand,
Exposed to dangers great,
Therefore the precepts of thy word
I never will forget.
Thy statutes are the heritage
Whereof I have made choice
To my last day, for those are they
That make my heart rejoice.

112, 96.

I have inclined my heart to keep
The laws thou didst decree,
And by thy grace will cleave to them
Even till I come to thee.
For, Lord, of all perfection here
I soon discern an end;
But to all times and states of life
Thy perfect laws extend.

HYMN XXXV.

Psal. cxix. 137, 138, 162, 163.

Thy nature, Lord, and thy commands
Exactly do agree;
Holy, and just, and true thou art,
And such thy precepts be.
I have rejoiced at thy word
As one that finds a prize;
And I do love thy law, O Lord,
But hate the way of lies.

164, 165, 140.

Seven times a day I 'll give thee praise
For thy just judgments' sake,
Great peace have they that love thy ways,
And no offence they take.
Thy word indeed is very pure,
As silver tried by fire,
Therefore thy servant will be sure
To love it with desire.

17, 132.

Deal bounteously in gifts of grace
With me thy servant, Lord,
That I may live, and run my race,
And keep thy holy word.
Look on me in thy mercy, Lord,
And grant me of the same,
As thou art wont to deal with those
That love and fear thy name.

133, 171.

Let all my steps by thy just word
Exactly ordered be,
That no iniquity may have
Dominion over me.
And then my lips shall be prepared
To offer thankful praise,
When unto me thou hast declared
And taught me all thy ways.

HYMN XXXVI. To the tune of Psal. lxvii.

Psal. lxiii. 1, 2.

O God, thou art my God,
I 'll seek thee earnestly;
My soul in me thirsts after thee,
Here in the deserts dry:
That I might see thy power,
And thy most glorious grace,
As I sometimes have seen it shine
Within thy holy place.

3, 4, 8.

That loving-kindness, Lord,
Which I will ever praise,
Is better far than life itself,
Though filled with prospering days.
Thus while my life doth last
I will extol thy fame,
My heart and hands will I lift up
In thy most holy name.
My soul is pressing on
To follow after thee,
And still I stand by thy right-hand,
For that upholdeth me.

—— cxxii. 1, 2, 4—7.

Therefore will I rejoice
When they to me shall say,
Unto the house of God let us
Together take our way.
For there will we be found,
Where Israel's tribes attend
Upon the lively oracles
Joint praise to heaven to send.
Pray for Jerusalem's peace,
And for my brethren dear;
Peace be in Sion's sacred walls,
Prosperity be there.

For Lord's-day Noon and Evening.

HYMN XXXVII. Psal. xxxiii. 1—4.

Ye righteous in the Lord rejoice,
For praise becomes the saints;
Praise God with psaltery, harp, and voice,
And ten-stringed instruments.
Sing to the Lord aloud with praise,
With skilful songs and new,
Because his word, his works, and ways,
Are holy, just, and true.

—— xl. 5; xxii. 9; lxxi. 17.

Many are those most wondrous works
Which thou (my God) hast wrought;
Many thy gracious purposes
Which are to us-ward thought.
I have been cast upon thy care
Even from my birth till now,
And from the womb that brought me forth,
My God, my guide art thou.
Yea, from my tender infancy
I have by thee been taught,
And so have told continually
What wonders thou hast wrought.

—— civ. 33—35.

Therefore to God will I sing praise,
While I have life and breath,
And glorify him all my days,
And honour him till death.
My thoughts of him shall be so sweet
As nothing else can be,
And all the streams of joy shall meet,
When, Lord, I think on thee.
Let sinners perish from the earth
And wicked be no more:
But thou, my soul, God's praise set forth,
Praise ye the Lord therefore.

HYMN XXXVIII. Psal. lxxi. 8, 14.

Lord, let my mouth be filled with praise,
That I with pleasure may
Thine honour to the world proclaim,
And publish all the day.
For I with never-fainting hope
Thy mercies will implore,
And celebrate with thankful heart
Thy praises more and more.

15, 16.

Thy righteous acts and saving grace
I daily will declare,
Though the one half cannot be told,
So numberless they are.
Depending on thy strength, O Lord,
I will go boldly on;
Thy righteousness shall be my plea,
Thy righteousness alone.

19—21.

Thy righteousness, O God, exceeds
In the most high degree;
Thou hast performed wondrous deeds,
Who can compare with thee?
Thou who hast showed me troubles sore,
Shalt raise me from the ground,

With boundless joys and endless peace
Thou shalt enclose me round.

22, 23.

I will instruct each warbling string
To make thy praises known;
Thy truth and goodness I will sing,
O Israel's Holy One!
A multitude of joys shall throng
Upon my lips to sit,
While my glad soul breathes out a song
To him that ransomed it.

HYMN XXXIX. Psal. cvi. 1, 2.

O RENDER thanks unto the Lord,
For kind he is and good;
His mercies still continue sure,
As they have ever stood.
What language can his mighty deeds
Deservedly proclaim?
What tongue can sing the immortal praise
Due to his sacred name?

—— cv. 2, 3.

Therefore let us in thankful songs
Our great Redeemer bless;
And what his mighty hand hath wrought
With joyful tongues express.
O make your boasts with one accord
In God's most holy name;
Let every soul that seeks the Lord
Be joyful in the same.

5, 7, 8.

O let the works that he hath done
Your admiration move;
Think on the judgments of his mouth,
And wonders of his love.
It is our glory and our joy,
That this great God is ours,
His judgments pass through all the earth
With never-failing powers.
His covenant to his people sealed,
He ever calls to mind,
And will his promises fulfil
To ages yet behind.

—— cvii. 21.

O that all men would praise the Lord
For his great goodness then,
And for his works most wonderful
Unto the sons of men.

HYMN XL. Psal. cxiii. 1—3.

PRAISE ye the Lord, praise ye his name,
Ye servants of the Lord:
His name be now and ever blest
Of all with one accord.
Even from the rising of the sun,
Unto his going down,
Must we proclaim the Lord's high praise,
And give his name renown.

4, 5, 6.

Above all nations he's advanced;
His fame surmounts the sky;
And who is like the Lord our God,
Whose dwelling is on high?
Yet humbleth he himself to see
Things done in heaven above,
And what is done on earth beneath,
Where we poor mortals move.

—— cxi. 2, 7, 8.

Great are the works of our great God,
And every one, no doubt,
That takes true pleasure in the same,
With care doth search them out.
Faithful and just are all his ways,
His word for ever sure,
When once his promise is engaged,
Performance is secure.

9, 10.

Holy and reverend is his name,
And to be had in dread;
This true religious fear of God
Is wisdom's well-spring head.
Good understanding have they all
That carefully endeavour
To practise his commandments;
His praise endures for ever.

HYMN XLI. Psal. cxxxv. 1, 2.

SING Hallelujah, ye that serve
The God by us adored;
O bless the high and glorious name
Of our Almighty Lord.
O ye that are admitted thus
Within his house to stand,
And in his holy courts attend
The word of his command,

3, 4.

Praise ye the Lord, for he is good;
Sing praises to his name;
For it is sweet to be employed
His praises to proclaim.
For God hath chosen to himself
Beloved Jacob's race,
And Israel the chief treasure is
Of his peculiar grace.

5, 6.

For well I know the Lord is great,
And that this Lord of ours
Transcends all gods, and hath his seat
Above all sovereign powers.
His word created all at first,
His pleasure rules them still:
His sovereign uncontrolled mind
Heaven, earth, and seas fulfil.

19—21.

O Israel's house, bless ye the Lord,
With them of Levi's tribe;
All that devoutly fear the Lord,
Due praise to him ascribe.
Let us all now in Sion's courts
The Lord's high praise record,
Who dwelleth at Jerusalem:
Praise ye, praise ye the Lord.

HYMN XLII. To the tune of Psalm lxvii.

Psal. cxxxvi. 1—3.

O RENDER thanks to God,
For he is very good;
His mercies sure do still endure,
And have for ever stood.
The God of gods proclaim,
The Lord of lord's great name;
His mercies sure do still endure
Eternally the same.

4—9.

Who wondrous things hath done,
Made earth and heaven alone;
His mercies sure do still endure
To ages all made known.
Gave sun and moon their light,
To rule both day and night;
His mercies sure do still endure,
For they are infinite.

10—14, 16.

Who Egypt's first-born slew,
And thence his Israel drew;
His mercies sure do still endure,
And ever so shall do.
Led them through parted seas,
And deserts' unknown ways;
His mercies sure do still endure,
Worthy eternal praise.

17—19, 22—24.

That famous kings destroyed,
Whose land Israel enjoyed;
His mercies sure do still endure,
And evermore abide.
Our lost estate he knows,
Redeems us from our foes;
His mercies sure do still endure,
A spring that overflows.

25, 26.

Who still provideth meat,
Whereof all flesh may eat;
His mercies sure do still endure
For ever full and great.
The God of heaven therefore
With thankful thoughts adore;
His mercies sure do still endure
Henceforth for evermore.

HYMN XLIII. Psal. cxlvi. 1—4.

SING Hallelujah, O my soul,
To the eternal King;
Yea, whilst I any being have,
His praises I will sing.
Trust not in kings, though ne'er so great,
Nor in man's mortal seed,
Whose power is not sufficient
To help you in your need.
Because his breath doth soon depart,
Then turns he to his clay,
And all the counsels of his heart
Do perish in that day.

5, 6.

Happy is he whose certain help
From Jacob's God descends;
Thrice happy he whose fixed hope
On God, his God, depends.
Who formed the earth, and heavens' high frame,
Who made the swelling deep,
And all that is within the same;
Who truth doth ever keep.

7, 8.

Who with right judgments still proceeds,
For those that be opprest,
Takes care that hungry souls be fed,
And prisoners be released.
The Lord doth give the blind their sight,
The bowed-down doth raise;
In righteous men he takes delight,
And loveth them always.

9, 10.

Strangers and widows he preserves,
The orphan's cause doth own,
But as for sinners' prosperous state,
He turns it upside down.
The Lord shall reign eternally;
Thy God, O Sion hill,
Shall reign to all posterity;
O praise him, praise him still.

HYMN XLIV. Psal. cxlvii. 1—3.

PRAISE ye the Lord, for it is meet
Our God's due praise to sing,
For the employment is most sweet,
And praise a comely thing.
The Lord builds up Jerusalem,
His out-casts he restores;
With comfort heals the broken hearts,
And bindeth up their sores.

5, 6, 11.

Unsearchable his wisdom is,
His power admits no bound;
He raiseth up the humble souls,
Treads sinners to the ground.

The Lord's entire delight and joy
Is ever in the just,
In them that fear him faithfully,
And in his mercy trust.

12—14.

O praise the Lord, Jerusalem,
Thy God, O Sion, praise,
Who makes thy bars, and strengtheneth them,
Wherewith thy gates he stays.
Thy children in thee he hath blest,
Makes in thy borders peace;
He fills thee with the very best
Of all the fields' increase.

19, 20.

The secret dictates of his lips
He hath to Jacob shown;
His statutes and his judgments are
To chosen Israel known.
He hath not dealt so favourably
With any land beside,
Nor have they known his judgments; so
The Lord be magnified.

HYMN XLV. Psal. cxlviii. 1, 2, 4.

Sing Hallelujah, praise the Lord,
Even from the heavens high,
And from the heights his praise proclaim
Above the starry sky.
His angels all his praise begin,
And all his hosts of might;
Praise him both sun and moon; praise him
O all ye stars of light.

4—10.

Ye heaven of heavens, and waters there,
Praise your Creator's name,
For by his great decree you do
Continue still the same.
Praise God from the earth, ye whales and deeps,
Fire, hail, and stormy wind,
Hills, trees, and cattle, worms and fowl,
Each in your several kind.

11—13.

Kings of the earth, and people there,
Princes and judges all,
Young men and maidens every where,
Old men and children small:
O let them praise the Lord's great name,
For that excels alone;
His glory is above the frame
Of earth, and heaven's high throne.

——cxlix. 1, 2, 4, 5.

But above all, let Israel's saints
Of their Redeemer sing,
And let the sons of Sion hill
Be joyful in their King.

For God takes pleasure in his saints,
Will crown the humble heads,
Therefore let them triumph in him,
And sing upon their beds.

——cxlviii. 14.

For he exalts his Israel's horn,
And all his saints doth raise;
A people near and dear to him;
O give the Lord his praise.

HYMN XLVI. Psal. xlvii. 6, 7, 9.

Sing praise to God, sing praise with joy,
Sing praises to our King;
For Christ is King of all the world;
All skilful praises sing.
With shouts of joy he is gone up
To his imperial throne;
Our Lord is with the trumpet's sound
To heaven in triumph gone.

——ii. 8; xxii. 27.

At his request is given to him
The privilege of his birth;
For his the heathen lands shall be,
And utmost parts on earth.
The kindreds of the nations all
Shall worship in his sight;
For he must govern great and small;
All nations are his right.

lxxii. 2, 4, 6, 7, 11.

With justice shall he judge the poor,
Set the oppressed free;
Like showers of rain to parched ground
Shall his dominion be.
The just shall flourish in his days,
And all shall be at peace,
Until the very moon decays,
And all her motions cease.
Yea, all the kings and higher powers
Shall kneel before his throne;
All nations, and their governors,
Shall serve this King alone.

18, 19.

Praise ye the Lord of hosts, and sing
To Israel's God each one;
For he doth every wondrous thing,
Even he himself alone.
And blessed be his glorious name
All times eternally;
Let the earth be filled with his fame;
Amen, amen say I.

HYMN XLVII. Psal. lxxxix. 1, 19.

The eternal mercies of the Lord
My song shall still express;
My mouth to ages shall record
Thy truth and faithfulness.

For thou hast laid our help upon
A Prince of mighty power;
A chosen one thou hast advanced
To be the Saviour.

20, 21, 27—29.

With sacred oil thou didst anoint
David, whom thou hadst found;
He 's girt with strength for saving work,
His head with glory crowned.
Mercies through him are kept for us,
And promises are sure;
His sacred seed and sovereign throne
For ever shall endure.

30—34.

But if his seed transgress the laws
And statutes of their God,
Then wilt thou visit their offence
With a correcting rod.
Yet wilt not quite withdraw thy love,
Nor let thy promise fade;
Thy covenant thou wilt never break,
Nor change what thou hast said.

35, 52.

Having confirmed it by an oath,
A sacred oath, and high;
Thy faithful ones are well assured
Thou wilt not, canst not lie.
Blessed for ever be the Lord,
And blest be God again;
And let the church with one accord
Resound, *Amen, amen.*

HYMN XLVIII. Psal. cx. 1—3.

Jehovah to my Lord thus spake,
Sit thou at my right hand,
Until I make thy baffled foes
Subject to thy command.
God shall from Sion send that rod
In which thy strength appears;
Thy people in that day of power
Shall all be volunteers.
Moved with the beauties of thy church
Young converts then shall come,
As numerous as the pearls of dew,
That drop from morning's womb.

4—7.

The Lord a solemn oath hath sworn,
Which he will never break,
Thou art an everlasting Priest,
As was Melchizedeck.
And being thus raised to his throne,
Kings that his reign oppose,
With all the adverse heathen powers,
Shall perish as his foes.

Because he shall vouchsafe to taste
The brook that 's in the way;
Thus shall the Lord lift up his head
To triumph and bear sway.

Rev. v. 12; ix. 13.

Therefore to thee, O Lamb of God,
Riches and power belong,
Wisdom and honour, glory, strength,
And every praising song.
Thou as our sacrifice wast slain,
And by thy precious blood,
From every tongue and nation hast
Redeemed us unto God.
Blessing and honour, glory, power,
From all in earth and heaven,
To him that sits upon the throne,
And to the Lamb be given.

Hymns for some Particular Occasions.

HYMN XLIX. Psal. civ. 24, 27, 28.

PROPER TO BE SUNG AFTER MEALS.

How many are thy works, O Lord,
In wisdom all composed!
The earth by thee is richly stored
With treasures there enclosed.
On thee do all the creatures wait,
And as expectants stand,
To have their seasonable food
From thy dispensing hand.
That which thou givest as thou seest best
They gather for their food;
Thy liberal hand thou openest,
And they are filled with good.

14, 15.

For cattle thou makest grass to spring,
And herbs for man's own use;
Convenient food for every thing
Thou makest the earth produce.
To glad man's heart the fruitful soil
Brings forth the grape for wine,
Heart-strengthening bread, and precious oil,
Which makes his face to shine.

—— xxii. 26; ciii. 22.

The meek shall eat and be sufficed,
And those that do endeavour
To know the Lord, shall praise his name;
Your hearts shall live for ever.
O bless the Lord, ye works of his,
Wherewith the world is stored,
Wherever his dominion is,
My soul, bless thou the Lord.

HYMN L.

FOR THE SAME OCCASION.

Psal. cxlv. 1, 2, 9.

THY sacred name I will advance,
My King and God of love;
I 'll bless thee now, 'twill be my work
Eternally above.
The Lord is very good to all,
As we do daily find,
For all his works, in every place,
Taste of his mercies kind.

10, 15, 16.

Therefore from all thy works thou dost
Tributes of praise receive;
But saints much more with thankful hearts
Their adorations give.
All creatures do expect from thee
Supplies of daily food;
Thine open-handed bounty fills
All their desires with good.

—— cxi. 5; xxxvii. 19.

Chiefly to them that fear his name
He giveth meat good store,
Because he will be mindful of
His covenant evermore.
They shall not blush in evil times,
Nor hang their drooping head;
When famine reigns they shall not want,
But be sufficed with bread.

—— cxv. 21.

My thankful mouth shall be employed
God's praises to proclaim;
Let all the world adore his power,
And ever bless his name.

HYMN LI.

PROPER TO BE SUNG AT FAMILY CATECHISING.

Psal. xxxiv. 11—14. 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

COME children, with a willing heart
Unto my words give ear,
I will instruct you what it is
The eternal God to fear.
Who is the man that would live long,
And lead a blessed life?
See thou restrain thy hasty tongue
From all deceit and strife.
Depart from evil, and do good,
Seek peace, and peace pursue;
Be of one mind, and dwell in love,
And God shall dwell with you.

Psal. ii. 11; cxix. 9.

See that you do yourselves employ
In God's true service here;
Mix trembling always with your joy,
And worship him in fear.
For how shall young men cleanse their way,
To walk before the Lord;
Surely by taking heed thereto
According to his word.

The second part.

Psal. xc. 16; cii. 28.

Thy great and blessed work, O God,
Unto thy servants show,
And let their tender children too
Thy grace and glory know.
So shall thy joyful servants' race
In happy state remain,
And the blest issue of their loins
Thy favour shall sustain.

—— xxii. 30, 31.

And thus a seed shall serve the Lord,
Accounted and foreknown,
A generation of the Lord's,
Which he himself doth own.
They shall arise with joy to tell
His righteousness to those
Who shall be born when we are gone,
That God did thus dispose.

—— lxxxix. 29.

And so shall David's spiritual seed
Be made to last always;
And his established throne abide
As heaven's eternal days.

HYMN LII.

PROPER TO BE SUNG WHEN A CHILD IS BORN INTO THE FAMILY.

Psal. cxxviii. 1—3.

BLEST is the man who fears the Lord,
And therefore him obeys,
That keeps his feet within the paths
Of his prescribed ways.
Thou shalt with pleasure eat the sweet
Of what thy pains have got;
Prosperity shall gild thy days,
And crown thy happy lot.
Thy wife shall like the spreading vines
With choicest fruit abound;
Thy children like green olive-plants
Adorn thy table round.

—— cxxvii. 3—5.

For children are an heritage
Which from the Lord doth come;
And his reward by marriage
Is every fruitful womb.
As arrows fitted to the bow
Are in a strong man's hand;
So children of the growing youth
Their parents' glory stand.

That man enjoys a happy state,
Whose quiver's thus supplied;
He needs not fear whene'er his cause
Shall in the gate be tried.

—— cvii. 41; cxiii. 9.

Thus God the poor doth set on high,
And from all harm doth keep,
And multiplies his family
Like to a flock of sheep.
The solitary wife he makes
A housekeeper well stored,
With joy to breed her faithful seed;
Wherefore praise ye the Lord.

HYMN LIII.

ON OCCASION OF SICKNESS IN THE FAMILY.

Psal. cxix. 75, 67, 71.

I KNOW, O Lord, and do confess,
That just thy judgments be;
And that in love and faithfulness
Thou hast afflicted me.
For foolishly I went astray
Before I was chastised,
But now thy holy word and way
I have observed and prized.
Therefore I count it good for me
That I have felt thy rod,
That I might better learn and keep
The statutes of my God.

—— xxxviii. 1; cxix. 76; xxxv. 9.

But do not chasten me in wrath,
For then I can't bear up;
Nor let thine anger be infused
Into the bitter cup.
But now let thy compassions kind
Come to thy servant, Lord,
For comfort to my troubled mind
According to thy word.
And then my soul shall joy in thee,
Thy help, O Lord, to find;
And thy salvation sure will be
A cordial to my mind.

HYMN LIV.

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

Psal. lv. 1, 2.

VOUCHSAFE, O God, my prayer to hear,
Turn not away thy face
From me, thy poor petitioner,
Now begging for thy grace.
Attend unto my sad complaints,
And hear my humble moans,
Whilst before thee my soul 's poured out
In doleful sighs and groans.

—— vi. 2—5.

Pity me, Lord, for I am weak,
Help me, and make me whole;
When wilt thou come to the relief
Of my distressed soul?
Return, O Lord, our health restore,
And save us graciously;
For who can praise, or think on thee,
When dead in grave they lie?

—— xli. 3, 4.

But the good man, when he lies sick,
The Lord will sure sustain,
And make his bed in such a sort
As best may ease his pain.
Trusting in this, to thee, my God,
My prayer shall be addressed,
For mercy sake, Lord, heal my soul,
Though I have oft transgressed.

—— xxv. 18; cxix. 175.

With tender eyes behold the pain
And troubles I am in,
But above all, remove the sting,
By pardoning all my sin.
And let my soul before thee live,
And it shall give thee praise;
And unto me thy judgments give,
To guide me all my days.

HYMN LV.

ON OCCASION OF RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS

Psal. xxx. 1; xxxi. 22.

I 'LL study, Lord, to raise thy name,
For thou hast raised me;
From racking pains and threatening death
I have been saved by thee.
I said in haste, I am removed,
And banished from thine eyes;
Yet still thou hadst me in thy thoughts,
And heardst my prayers and cries.

—— cxviii. 17, 18.

Surely I shall not die but live,
And living will declare
The gracious works of God, my God,
How manifold they are.
The Lord, indeed, hath chastened me,
Chastened me sore,
Yet hath not he abandoned me
To death, when at death's door.

—— cvii. 17—20.

When fools for their transgression were
With bands of sickness tied,
So that they loathed dainty meats,
Then unto God they cried.
He sent his word of grace and power,
And did them heal and save,

And brought them in the dangerous hour
Up from the very grave.

21, 22.

O that all men would praise the Lord
For his great goodness, then,
And for his works most wonderful
Unto the sons of men.
And let recovered ones present
The sacrifice of praise,
And with rejoicing hearts declare
His gracious works and ways.

HYMN LVI.

ON THE SAME OCCASION. HEZEKIAH'S THANKSGIVING FOR HIS RECOVERY. TO THE TUNE OF PSALM C.

Isa. xxxviii. 10, 11.

Counting on nothing else but death,
I said, I must go down to the grave;
I am deprived of all those years
Of joy on earth I hoped to have.
I said, I shall no more behold
The temple of the Lord most high;
Nor be admitted to converse
With sons of men as formerly.

12—14.

Final farewells I gave to life,
Thinking I had cut off its thread,
This sickness sure will mortal be,
And the next night will see me dead.
Expecting all my bones would break,
Dove-like I mourned out every word;
My failing eyes did seem to speak,
"I am oppressed, ease me, Lord."

17, 18.

But thou in kindness to my soul
Hast saved it from corruption's pit,
For thou hast cast behind thy back
My sins, my sins that threatened it.
The land of silence cannot praise,
Nor the forgetful grave record,
Nor can the helpless dead expect
The comforts of thy faithful word.

19, 20.

But living, living men shall praise
Thy holy name, like me this day,
The fathers to their wondering seed
Thy truth shall publish and display.
The Lord was nigh at hand to save,
Therefore we will with songs of praise
Exalt his name in God's own house,
And in this work spend all our days.

HYMN LVII.

PROPER TO BE SUNG WHEN DEATH IS IN THE FAMILY, OR IN THE FAMILY OF ANY NEIGHBOUR OR RELATION.

Psal. cii. 11; ciii. 16.

The days wherein my life doth pass
Are like the evening shade;
And I am like the withering grass
Which suddenly doth fade:
For it is gone, and quickly too,
When some bleak wind goes o'er,
And then the place whereon it grew
Shall never know it more.

——xxxix. 4—6.

Lord, make me understand my end,
And days' uncertain date,
That I may clearly apprehend
The frailty of my state.
Behold, thou hast my days reduced
Unto a narrow span;
Mine age to thine as nothing is;
Vain at the best is man.
The worldling walks in a vain show,
Vexeth and toils in vain;
He heaps up wealth, but doth not know
To whom it will remain.

The second part.

7, 8.

And now, O Lord, what wait I for?
What are these hopes at best?
My hopes in thee, Lord, only are,
On thee my soul doth rest.
Break thou these cords of sin and guilt,
Wherewith my soul is tied;
Let me not be the scorn of fools,
That piety deride.

9, 11.

When thou my comforts didst remove,
I spake not, but was dumb,
Because I knew my sufferings, Lord,
From thy good hand did come.
When thou for sin dost man correct,
His beauties fade and die,
Like garments fretted by the moth;
Sure all are vanity.

12, 13.

My mournful state, O Lord, regard,
And to my cry give ear;
I am a stranger here on earth,
As all my fathers were.
O spare me, Lord, and give me space,
My strength and peace restore,
Before I go away from hence,
And shall be seen no more.

HYMN LVIII.

FOR THE LIKE OCCASION.

Psal. xci. 1—4.

Lord, thou hast been in changes past
Our refuge and abode,
From age to age, beyond all time,
Thou art eternal God.

When thou recallest man to dust,
He can no longer stay,
A thousand years are in thy sight
Passed off as yesterday.

5, 9.

Swept with a hasty torrent hence,
Like a vain dream we pass,
Spring up, and grow, and wither soon,
As doth the short-lived grass.
For in thy wrath our sinful days
To a swift period tend:
Our years, by us unheeded, like
An idle story end.

10, 12, 14.

Our age to seventy years is set,
Or if we do arrive
To fourscore years, it's all but grief,
We rather die than live.
Lord, teach us this religious art,
Of numbering out our days,
That so we may apply our heart
To sacred wisdom's ways.
O fill us early with thy grace,
That so we may rejoice,
And all our days, to the last breath,
Triumph in heart and voice.

HYMN LIX.

PETITION FOR THE CHURCH OF GOD, AND FOR THE NATION.

Psal. lxxiv. 12; xliv. 4; vii. 9.

Lord, thou art Israel's King of old,
Thou hast salvation brought;
Command thou that deliverance now
For Jacob may be wrought.
Let sinners' sin come to an end,
But 'stablish stedfastly
The righteous men, O righteous God,
That heart and reins dost try.

—— lxxxv. 9; lxxx. 3.

Let thy salvation be at hand
To those that do thee fear,
That glory may adorn our land,
And be a dweller there.
Turn us, O God, to thee again,
For we too long have swerved;
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And we shall be preserved.

—— cxxvi. 4—6.

Thy captived churches, Lord, restore
As streams in southern parts;
For they that sow in tears are sure
To reap with joyful hearts.
He that his precious seed bears out,
And tears behind him leaves,
Shall come again with joy, no doubt,
And with him bring his sheaves.

—— xiv. 6.

O that the sweet salvation then
Which Israel waits for still,
Were fully come to all good men,
From out of Sion hill.
When God his people's bondage turns,
That freedom once is had,
Then Jacob shall rejoice, that mourns,
And Israel shall be glad.

HYMN LX.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

Psal. li. 1—3.

According to thy love and grace
Take pity, Lord, on me:
Blot out my sins for mercies' sake,
Mercies so great and free.
O wash and cleanse my guilty soul
From mine iniquity;
For I acknowledge mine offence,
'Tis ever in my eye.

4, 5.

Against thee, Lord, and in thy sight
I did my sins commit;
For which if thou condemnest me,
Thou must be clear and quit.
Corrupt and guilty in thine eyes
My nature I received;
And when my mother gave me life,
I was in sin conceived.

7, 8.

With hyssop sprinkle me, and then
I shall be clean, I know;
And make me, with my Saviour's blood,
Whiter than driven snow.
Make me to hear, amidst my moans,
The comfortable voice
Of joy and gladness, that the bones
Now broken may rejoice.

The second part.

10, 11.

Create in me a clean heart, Lord,
Unspotted in thy sight,
And let thy grace renew in me
A spirit pure and right.
O cast me not away from thee,
And though thy Spirit was grieved,
Yet of his comfort and his grace
Let me not be deprived.

12, 13.

Thy saving joys, which now I 've lost
Restore to me again;
And with thy free and princely spirit
My drooping soul sustain.

Transgressors then shall learn of me
To dread the paths of sin,
And those that strayed, encouraged be
To turn to thee again.

15, 16.

Open, O Lord, my praying lips,
Now closed with guilt and shame;
And then my mouth shall freely speak
The praises of thy name.
Didst thou desire it, I would give
The richest sacrifice,
But that 's of very small account,
And value, in thine eyes.

17, 18.

Thine offering is a humble soul,
That is for sin in pain,
A broken and a contrite heart,
Lord, thou wilt not disdain.
Do good in thy good pleasure, Lord,
Do good to Sion hill,
Build up Jerusalem's broken walls,
And dwell among us still.

HYMN LXI.

FOR A THANKSGIVING DAY FOR PUBLIC MERCIES.

Psal. xlvii. 1—4.

Ye people all, clap hands with joy,
To God in triumph sing;
For he 's a high and dreadful one,
A universal King.
He shall subdue the heathen lands,
And all our battles fight,
And make the place of our abode
The place of his delight.

—— xlviii. 1; lxxv. 1.

Great is the Lord, his praise no less,
For so we must record,
Here, in his hill of holiness,
And city of our Lord.
O God, we render thanks to thee,
To thee we give the same,
For by thy wondrous works we see
The nearness of thy name.

—— lxxvi. 4, 7.

Much brighter is thy glorious crown,
More excellent each way,
More to be praised, and feared, by far,
Than all the mounts of prey.
Thus thou alone commandest fear
With thy most piercing eyes;
Who dares approach, who dares appear
When once thy wrath doth rise?

8—11.

From heaven thou mad'st thy terror known,
The earth was silent then,
When God arose to judge and save
The meek and humble men.
Surely man's wrath shall praise thy name,
Held in by thy restraints.
Vow to the Lord your God, and pay,
All ye his faithful saints.
Let all about him stand in awe,
And daily presents bring;
To him that even with a look,
Can daunt the proudest king.

HYMN LXII.

PRAISE FOR HARVEST MERCIES.

Psal. xxxvi. 6; cxlvii. 8.

Thy justice, Lord, is high and plain,
Thy judgments are most deep,
And, Lord, thy providential care
Both man and beast doth keep.
Thy goodness covers heaven with clouds,
And gentle rain bestows;
And thence the grass on fruitful hills
With wondrous plenty grows.

—— lxv. 9, 11.

The craving earth thou dost enrich,
And waterest with thy care;
The corn which furrowed fields produce
Thou dost for us prepare.
Thy grace doth the returning year
With great abundance crown;
In all thy paths, thy goodness, Lord,
Distils its fatness down.

—— lxvii. 6, 7,

Thus while the earth in various fruits
Yields her desired increase,
Let God himself, even our own God,
Bless us and give us peace.
Yea, God shall on his people dear
His spiritual blessings shower,
And all the earth shall stand in fear
Of his almighty power.

Four Hymns of Instruction.

HYMN LXIII.

Psal. i. 1, 2.

The man is blest that doth not lend
To ill advice his ear,
Nor stands in sinners' wicked way,
Nor sits in scorner's chair:
But in the law of God the Lord
Doth set his whole delight,

And in that law doth meditate
Devoutly day and night.

3, 4.

He shall be like the flourishing tree
Set by the river side,
In season yielding plenteous fruit,
Whose leaf shall fresh abide.
The Lord shall prosper all he doth;
The ungodly are not so,
But like rejected worthless chaff,
Which winds drive to and fro.

5, 6.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand
In day of judgment clear,
Nor with the just at God's right hand
Shall wicked men appear.
Because the way of saints, though strait,
The Lord with favour knows;
Whilst sinners' self-deceiving path
Unto destruction goes.

HYMN LXIV.

Psal. xv. 1, 2.

LORD, who shall have a blest abode
Within thy tents of grace?
And who shall dwell with thee, O God,
In thy most holy place?
The man who walketh uprightly,
And doth the thing that's just,
Whose words agreeing with his heart,
One may securely trust.

3, 4.

He that backbites not with his tongue,
Nor doth his neighbour hurt;
That neither raises, nor receives,
A slanderous report.
Who looks on vice, in all its pomp,
With generous neglect,
But piety, though clothed in rags,
He greatly doth respect.
Who to his plighted vows and trust
Hath ever firmly stood,
And though he promise to his loss,
Yet makes his promise good.

5, 6.

Who to oppressing usury
His money hath not lent,
Nor can be brought by bribery
To wrong the innocent.
The man who thus his course doth steer,
By God and men approved,
Is safe and good, above the fear
Of being ever moved.

HYMN LXV.

Psal. xxxvii. 1, 3.

FRET not thyself, nor be incensed
At such as do transgress,
Nor be thou envious against
Workers of wickedness.
Trust in the providence of God,
Abound in doing good,
And thou shalt have a fixed abode,
And be assured of food.

7, 8.

Rest on the Lord, with patience wait,
And do not vex thy mind,
When prosperous sinners do effect
The ills they have designed.
Let not rash anger in thee rise;
Ungoverned passions shun;
Fret not thyself in any wise,
Though evil things be done.
For meek men shall have sweet and sure
Enjoyment of the earth;
And shall delight themselves in peace
And sanctified mirth.
They that are merciful and kind,
And charitably lend,
Abundant blessings leave behind,
Which to their seed descend.

27—30.

Depart from evil, and do well,
Lay up good works in store;
And then thou shalt be sure to dwell
In peace for evermore:
Wisdom is in the just man's mouth,
His tongue of judgment talks,
The law of God is in his heart,
And steadily he walks.

34, 39.

Wait still on God, and keep his path
And thou shalt surely find
In troublous times a present help,
A strength and Saviour kind.

HYMN LXVI.

Psal. cxxxiii.

O HAPPY families on earth,
Resembling that above,
Where brethren peacefully unite
In sweet accord and love.
'Tis like the precious ointment poured
On Aaron's sacred head,
Which down his face and garments rich
Its fragrant odours spread.
'Tis as the dew which melting clouds
On Hermon's top distil,

Or fruitful showers which Heaven lets fall
On Sion's holy hill.
For there the God of love commands
And pours out blessings' store,
The comforts of this present life,
And life for evermore.

Hymns of Praise, to be sung in the Tune of the 100*th Psalm, and the* 148*th.*

HYMN LXVII.

Psal. ix. 1, 7, 8.

With my whole heart I'll bless thee, Lord,
And all thy mighty works proclaim,
My joy in thee shall fill my soul,
Whilst I sing praises to thy name.
The almighty ever-living God
Hath fixt his throne in heavenly light;
When he appears to judge the world,
His sentence will be just and right.

10, 11, 14.

All those that know thy faithful name,
Their hope and trust in thee will place;
For never didst thou, Lord, forsake
Any that duly sought thy face.
Sing praises to the Holy One,
Who said he would in Sion dwell;
Therefore in Sion's daughter's gates
With joy his great salvation tell.

—— cxxx. 7, 8.

Let us depend on God alone,
Because with him rich mercy is,
And full redemption from all sin
He gives with plenteous grace to his.

HYMN LXVIII.

Psal. xlv. 2—4.

O glorious King! thy form divine
All earthly beauties doth outshine;
Into thy lips all grace is poured,
On thee eternal blessings showered.
Gird on thy sword, and in thy might
For wronged truth and justice fight,
That all the world may understand
The terror of thy conquering hand.

6, 7.

Thy throne, O God, doth still endure,
Thy sceptre is most just and pure,
That which is right thou lovest best,
But wickedness thou dost detest.
And therefore God, thy God hath shed
Such oil of gladness on thy head,
As hath preferred thee far before
The highest angels evermore.

9, 11, 13, 17.

The queen and her attendants stand
To worship thee at thy right hand.
Her clothing of wrought gold is seen,
But all her glory is within.
In all succeeding times thy name
Shall be preserved with lasting fame:
Whilst thy glad followers shall crown
With endless praise thy high renown.

HYMN LXIX.

Psal. xlvi. 1, 2.

God is our refuge and defence,
Our hope is in his providence,
Which still affords a present aid,
When greatest troubles do invade.
Therefore we shall not need to fear,
No, though the earth removed were;
Or, though the hills and mountains steep
Lay buried in the angry deep.

3—5.

Although the raging waters make
The mountains with their swelling shake,
Yet calmer rivers do embrace
God's city, his fair dwelling-place.
Whose tabernacles by his love
Are kept that they can never move;
For he in times of great distress,
His early succour will address.

6, 7, 9—11.

The threatening tempest he allays,
And is his people's strength and praise;
He maketh strife and wars to cease,
And crowns the trembling earth with peace.
This is our God, whose awful sway
Both heaven and earth must still obey,
The Lord of hosts is with his own,
And Jacob's God their refuge known.

HYMN LXX.

Psal. xciii. 1.

The Lord doth reign, and like a king,
Puts on his robes of glorious light:
Tremble thou earth, when he appears
Clothed and girt with boundless might.

2.

Under his rule the unquiet world
Will gain establishment and peace;
Of old his empire did begin,
And, like himself, shall never cease.

3.

In vain the world's rebellious powers
In tumults and commotions rise,
Like the enraged floods that swell,
And bid defiance to the skies.

4.

The Lord on high is mightier far
Than all this loud and threatening noise;
And the proud sea's unruly waves
Are stilled by his commanding voice.

5.

Lord, as thy power can never fail,
So all thy promises are sure;
'Tis thy perfection to be true,
And theirs that serve thee to be pure.

HYMN LXXI.

Psal. xviii. 1, 2.

No change of times shall ever shock
My firm affection, Lord, to thee;
For thou hast always been a rock,
A fortress, and defence to me.
Thou my deliverer art, my God,
My trust is in thy sovereign power,
Thou art my shield from foes abroad,
At home my safe-guard and my tower.

6, 30.

To God I made my mournful prayer,
To God addressed my humble moan,
Who graciously inclined his ear,
And heard me from his holy throne.
For God's designs shall still succeed,
His word will bear the utmost test,
He 's a strong shield to all that need,
And on his sure protection rest.

31, 46.

Who then deserves to be adored,
But God, on whom my hopes depend?
For who, except the mighty Lord,
Can with resistless power defend?
Let the eternal Lord be praised,
The Rock on whose defence I rest,
O'er highest heavens his name be raised,
Who me with his salvation blessed.

HYMN LXXII.

Psal. lxxxix. 5, 6.

The wonders of thy power and grace
Angels admire in heaven above;
Whilst congregations here below
Still celebrate thy truth and love.
For they in heaven above know none
That can with thee, O God, compare;
To vie with thee for light and power,
Which of the mighty angels dare?

7, 8.

And by assembled saints on earth
Thou must be eyed with holy fear,
And reverendly must they adore
That to thy throne of grace draw near.
Lord God of hosts, what Lord is he
With whom such strength and power is found?
Who true and faithful art thyself,
With faithful guards encompassed round.

9, 10, 11.

Thou rulest the raging of the sea,
And quietest its rolling waves;
Thy conquered foes by thee are made
Like still inhabitants of the graves.
The splendid, spacious heavens are thine;
The earth, and all its stores, thine own;
The world and all its fulness is
Founded and kept by thee alone.

13, 14, 18, 52.

Thy sovereign and resistless power
With an unerring justice reigns,
Thy ruling hand, though strong and high,
Yet truth and mercy still maintains.
The Lord, even Israel's Holy One,
Is our Protector and our King,
Blest be the Lord for evermore,
Amen, with hallelujah's sing.

HYMN LXXIII.

Psal. civ. 1, 2.

My soul, bless thou the Lord most high,
My God, thou art exceeding great;
Thou clothest thyself with majesty,
Such as becomes thy heavenly seat.
With a transcendant dazzling light
Thou art encompassed round about,
And the vast roof of heaven bright,
Thou like a curtain stretchedst out.

3, 4.

His royal chamber's beams he lays
In the celestial water-springs,
He makes the clouds his chariot wheels,
And walks on winds' outstretched wings.
A spiritual host of angels bright
About his throne humbly attends,
Swifter than winds, purer than flames,
Ready to fly whither he sends.

—— ciii. 20, 22.

And since our praises fall so short,
Bless him ye angels, bless him still.
Ye that excel in strength to praise,
And all his orders do fulfil.
Let every creature bless the Lord,
And let my joyful, thankful heart
In humble songs with them accord,
And in this concert bear its part.

HYMN LXXIV.

Psal. c. 1—3.

With one consent let all the earth
To God their cheerful voices raise;

Serve ye the Lord with awful mirth,
And sing before him songs of praise.
The Lord, ye know, is God alone,
Who us without our aid did make,
Us for his flock vouchsafes to own,
And for his pasture-sheep to take.

4, 5.

O enter then his temple-gate,
And to his courts devoutly press,
And still your grateful hymns repeat,
And still his name with praises bless.
For he 's the Lord supremely good,
His mercy is for ever sure;
His truth, which always firmly stood,
To endless ages shall endure.

HYMN LXXV.

Psal. cxvii. 1, 2.

Let all mankind express their mirth
Unto the Lord in joyful songs,
And tender him from all the earth
The homage that to him belongs.
For from his plenteous mercies' store
He doth continual grace afford,
His truth likewise lasts evermore:
For ever therefore praise the Lord.

HYMN LXXVI.

Psal. cxxxiv. 1—3.

Behold, ye servants of the Lord,
Which in his house by night do stand
Bless ye his name, his praise record,
Devoutly lifting up your hand.
I' the sanctuary bless his name,
Praise him, O praise him thankfully:
The Lord that heaven and earth did frame,
From Sion bless us plenteously.

HYMN LXXVII.

Psal. cl. 1, 2, 6.

O praise the Lord in that blest place
From whence his grace and glory flows;
Praise him in heaven, where he his face
Unveiled in perfect glory shows.
Praise him for all the mighty acts
Which he on our behalf hath done;
His kindness this return exacts,
With which our praise should equal run.
Let all that vital breath enjoy,
The breath he doth to them afford
In thankful songs of praise employ;
Let every creature praise the Lord.

HYMN LXXVIII.

THE VIRGIN MARY'S SONG.

Luke i. 46, &c.

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And with great joy my Saviour praise,
Who from a low estate was pleased
Me and my name highly to raise.
His name is holy, and his grace
Is upon them that fear him still:
With strong out-stretched arm he hath
Dispersed the proud, and crossed their will.
He hath exalted humble souls,
Whilst lofty ones he did abase;
He fills the hungry with good things,
But from the rich withholds his grace.
His servant Israel he hath helped,
Remembering what he spoke before
In mercy to our ancestors,
And to their seed for evermore.

HYMN LXXIX.

THE SONG OF ZECHARIAS.

Luke i. 68, &c.

Blessed for ever be the Lord,
The God and King of Israel,
Who hath his people visited,
Redeeming them from sin and hell.
He hath advanced in David's house
Salvation plentiful and strong,
As by his prophets he foretold
From the beginning all along.
That we being safe from enemies' hands,
Might serve and eye him without fear,
Still living holy righteous lives,
During our short continuance here.
The great salvation long desired
He now hath let his people know,
By the remission of their sins,
Which they to sovereign mercy owe.
Whereby the Day-spring from on high
Brings welcome light, which shall increase
For them that in death's shades did lie,
To guide them in the paths of peace.

HYMN LXXX.

THE SONG OF THE ANGELS, AND OF SIMEON.

Luke ii. 14, 29, 32.

The First-begotten being brought
Into the world, the angels then
Sang, Glory unto God most high,
Peace upon earth, good will towards men.

And since my waiting eyes have seen
With joy thy great salvation, Lord,
I now can leave the world, and die
In peace, according to thy word.
To welcome him who comes to be
To Gentile lands a guiding light;
And to his people Israel's tribes
Their crown of praise and honour bright.
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The God whom heaven and earth adore,
Be glory, as it was of old,
Is now, and shall be evermore.

HYMN LXXXI.

Rev. i. 4, 5, 17, 18.

All glory now be given to him,
Who was, and is, and is to come;
And to the seven spirits of grace,
Which always are before the throne.
And to our Saviour Christ, who is
A witness true of heavenly things,
The First-begotten from the dead,
And sovereign Prince of earthly kings.
Who loved us at so high a rate,
And washed us in his precious blood
From all our sins, that we might be
As kings and priests unto our God.
To him who is the first and last,
And liveth, though he died to save;
Behold, he lives for evermore,
And has the keys of death and grave.

—— vii. 12.

Blessing and glory, wisdom, thanks,
With honour, power, and boundless might,
Be to our God for evermore,
Let all say, *Amen*, with delight.

HYMN LXXXII.

Rev. iv. 8, 11.

Most holy, holy, holy Lord,
The Almighty and Eternal One,
Worthy thou art to be adored
Who madest all for thyself alone.

—— v. 9, 12, 13.

Worthy art thou to take the book,
And break the seals, O Lamb of God,
For thou wast sacrificed for us,
And hast redeemed us by thy blood.
Worthy's the Lamb that thus was slain,
For ever worthy to receive
The power, and wealth, and all the praise,
That either heaven or earth can give.
All blessing, honour, glory, strength,
With thankful songs be given therefore,
To him that sits upon the throne,
And to the Lamb for evermore.

HYMN LXXXIII.

Rev. xi. 17.

We give thee thanks, almighty God,
Who art, and wast, and wilt be still,
For thou hast taken thy great power,
And reigned according to thy will.

—— xii. 10—12; xv. 3, 4.

Now is the strong salvation come,
The glorious reign of God and Christ,
For the accuser is cast out,
That did our brethren still resist.
But his assaults they overcame
By the Lamb's blood, and by their own;
Loved not their lives unto the death,
Nor would the word of truth disown.
Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and say,
Thy works (O Lord) are marvellous,
Thy ways almighty King of saints,
Are great, and true, and righteous.
Who shall not fear thee, O Most High,
And glorify thy sacred name,
Which doth alone for holiness
Deserve eternal praise and fame?
For all the nations of the earth
Shall come and bow before thy throne;
Because thy judgments are set forth,
So plainly seen, so fully known.

HYMN LXXXIV

Psal. cxxxvi. 1, 2.

Give laud unto the Lord,
For very good he is,
The God of gods record,
And praise that name of his:
For certainly
His mercies sure do still endure
Eternally.

3, 4.

Give thanks, O every one,
Unto the King of kings,
For he, and he alone,
Hath wrought such wondrous things;
For certainly
His mercies sure do still endure
Eternally.

23, 24.

Who did remember us
When our estate was low,
And hath redeemed us
From the oppressing foe:
For certainly
His mercies sure do still endure
Eternally

25, 26.

To him give praises due,
Who gives all flesh their food;

O give ye thanks unto
The God of heaven so good;
For certainly
His mercies sure do still endure
Eternally.

HYMN LXXXV.

Psal. cxlviii. 1, 2.

Ye boundless realms of joy
Exalt your Maker's fame,
His praise your song employ
Above the starry frame:
Your voices raise,
Ye cherubim, and seraphim,
To sing his praise.

3, 4.

Thou moon that rulest the night,
And sun that guidest the day;
Ye glittering stars of light
To him your homage pay:
His praise declare,
Ye heavens above, and clouds that move
In liquid air.

5, 6.

Let them adore the Lord,
And praise his holy name,
By whose almighty word
They all from nothing came:
And all shall last
From changes free; for his decree
Stands ever fast.

11, 12.

Let all of royal birth,
With those of humbler frame,
And judges of the earth,
His matchless praise proclaim:
In this design
Let youths, with maids, and hoary heads,
With children join.

13, 14.

United zeal be shown
His wondrous fame to raise,
Whose glorious name alone
Deserves our endless praise.
Earth's utmost ends
His power obey; his glorious sway
The sky transcends.
His chosen saints to grace,
He sets them up on high;
And favours Israel's race,
Who still to him are nigh:
O therefore raise
Your grateful voice, and still rejoice
The Lord to praise.

HYMN LXXXVI.

Psal. lxxv. 1.

To thee (O God) we bring
A crown of living praise;
To thee our thanks we sing,
And hearts devoutly raise:
Though thou art high,
Thy wonders show, that we may know
Thy name is nigh.

—— xxxiii. 4, 5.

The word of God is right,
His works therewith agree,
And pleasing in his sight
Shall truth and justice be:
The earth so wide
Is evermore with goodness' store
Richly supplied.

8, 9.

Let all the spacious earth
Its great Creator fear;
And men of mortal birth
This mighty Lord revere;
At whose command
All things were made, and still are staid
By his strong hand.

12.

That nation happy is
To whom the Lord is known,
And whom he doth for his
Peculiar people own:
In every age
They 're blest whom he doth choose to be
His heritage,

18, 19.

On them that do him fear,
He casts a gracious eye,
Who with a hope sincere
On his rich grace rely,
Sure food to give,
And from the grave their souls to save,
And keep alive.

20—22.

Our soul with joy expects
The help our God shall send,
Who as a shield protects
All that on him depend:
Lord, let thy grace
Upon us be, as we on thee
Our hope do place.

HYMN LXXXVII.

Psal. cxxviii. 1, 2.

That man God's blessing hath
Whose heart his fear doth awe;

That walketh in the path
Prescribed by his law:
For thou shalt feast
Upon the gains thou gettest with pains,
In plenty blest.

3, 4.

Like vines with fruit well stored,
Thy loving wife shall be,
Thy children round thy board
Like plants of olive-tree:
Lo, thus shall he
That fears the Lord, and keeps his word,
Still blessed be.

5, 6.

The Lord from Sion hill
His blessings choice shall give,
And whilst thou livest still
Jerusalem shall thrive:
Thy seed's increase
Shall please thee well, whilst Israel
Abides in peace.

HYMN LXXXVIII.

Psal. cxlv. 1, 2.

O LORD, my God and King,
Thy glory I will raise,
And evermore will sing
Thy name's deserved praise:
Each day will I
Thy praise proclaim, and bless thy name
Eternally.

5, 7.

Thy glorious majesty
With honour we 'll declare,
Thy works we 'll magnify,
And all thy wonders rare:
Our joyful tongues
Shall still express thy righteousness
In praising songs.

8, 9.

In grace the Lord excels,
And great compassions hath,
Much mercy in him dwells,
And slow he is to wrath:
His tender love
His creatures all in general
Do daily prove.

18, 21.

To those that on him call
The gracious God is near,
To help and save them all
That pray with heart sincere:
I 'll speak his praise,
And let all flesh concur to bless
His name always.

HYMN LXXXIX.

Rev. xix. 5, 6.

PRAISE to our God proclaim,
O ye his servants all,
And ye that fear his name,
Together great and small:
Hallelujah,
For God supreme with power doth reign,
And bears the sway.

9, 1.

O they be ever blest
That shall be called unto
The Lamb's great marriage-feast;
These are God's words most true:
Hallelujah,
Strength, glory, power, and praise to our
Lord God alway.

—— xi. 15.

The kingdoms of this world
Shall every one become
The kingdoms of the Lord,
And of the Christ his Son;
And he alway
Shall reign on high with majesty,
Hallelujah.

To God the Father, Son,
And Spirit, ever blest,
Eternal Three in One,
All worship be addressed,
As heretofore
It was, is now, and shall be so
For evermore.

HYMN XC.

PART OF THE HYMN OF ST. AMBROSE, CALLED, TE DEUM.

O GOD, we praise thee, and we own
Thee to be Lord and King alone;
All things were made to honour thee,
O Father of eternity.

To thee all angels loudly cry,
The heavens and all the powers on high,
Cherubs and seraphims proclaim,
And cry, thrice holy to thy name.

Lord God of hosts, thy presence bright
Fills heaven and earth with beauteous light;
The apostles' glorious company,
And prophets' fellowship praise thee.

The crowned martyrs' noble host,
The holy church in every coast,
Thine infinite perfections own,
Father of majesty unknown.

Giving all adoration
Unto thy true and only Son;
And to that blest remembrancer
The Holy Ghost, the comforter.

O Christ, thou glorious King, we own
Thee to be God's eternal Son;
Who, our deliverance to obtain,
Didst not the virgin's womb disdain.

When, death's sharp sting destroyed by thee,
Thou gainedst a glorious victory,
Heaven's gate, that entrance had denied,
Was to believers opened wide.

At God's right hand thou, Lord, art placed,
And with thy Father's glory graced,
And we believe the day will come
When thou, as Judge, shalt pass our doom.

From day to day, O Lord, do we,
Highly exalt and honour thee;
Thy name we worship and adore
World without end, for evermore.

GREAT BRITAIN'S PRESENT JOYS AND HOPES;

DISPLAYED

IN TWO SERMONS,

PREACHED IN CHESTER.

THE FORMER ON THE NATIONAL THANKSGIVING DAY, DECEMBER 31, 1706. THE LATTER THE DAY FOLLOWING, BEING NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

PSALM lxv. 11.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness.

AMONG other feasts of the Lord, which the Jewish church was appointed to observe, (and many annual feasts they had for one fast,) one is called, *The feast of in-gathering at the end of the year*,[a] according to the civil computation of their year. The feast we are, this day, solemnizing with joy, in communion with all the religious assemblies of our land, being appointed by authority on the last day of the year, according to the vulgar reckoning, may be looked upon as our feast of in-gathering: in it we appear before the Lord, in whom all our joys must terminate, and to whom all our trophies must be consecrated. Remember therefore the law of those feasts, that none must appear before the Lord empty: if our hearts be here empty, what will it avail us that our congregation is full? It is the soul that appears before God: if that be empty of holy joy in God, and holy concern for the welfare of the public, which ought to fill us on such occasions, it is but the carcass and shell, without the life and kernel, of a Thanksgiving-day.

Let this feast at the end of the year be kept to the honour of that God who is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *First and the Last;* both the spring, and the centre, of all our glories. As we must begin every day and year with him, so with him we must end both. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things.*

Praise is waiting for God this day in our English Zion, and to him must the vow be performed;[b] the vow of thanksgiving to God for his mercies to the land of our nativity; in the peace whereof we have our share; and in the praises whereof we are unworthy of the name of Englishmen, if we do not cheerfully bear our part. And how can we sum up our acknowledgments of God's favours to our nation, in more proper words than those of my text, *Thou crownest the year with thy goodness.* Common providence crowns every year with the goodness of God; but special providences crown some years more than others with it.

I. Every year is crowned with God's goodness. We of this land have as much reason to say so as any other people; for, like Canaan, it is a land which the eyes of the Lord our God are always upon, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.[c] He who appoints the bounds of men's habitations, has appointed very well for us: *The lines are fallen to us in* such *pleasant places*, as forbid us to envy the situation of any of our neighbours, or of any nation under heaven.

As we have *daily* mercies to give thanks for, in the close of every day; so we have *yearly* mercies to give thanks for, in the close of every year, even the blessings of "Heaven above," and the "Earth beneath;" for both which we are indebted to him who made heaven and earth, and continues the ordinances of both for the benefit and comfort of that mean, unworthy creature,—man.

1. The annual revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the benefit we receive by their light and influences, in the several seasons of the year. Summer and winter crown the year; God made both, and both for the service of men,—as well as night and day.[d] The shadows of the evening are not more acceptable to the weary labourer,[e] than the winter

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[a] Exod. xxiii. 16. [b] Ps. lxv. 1. [c] Deut. xi. 12. [d] Ps. lxxiv. 16. [e] Job vii. 2.

quarters of refreshment are to fatigued armies; and then the spring, that time when kings go forth to war,[f] is as welcome to the bold and faithful soldier, as the morning is to the honest and industrious husbandman, who then goes forth to his work and to his labour.[g]

And he who made summer and winter, has made both very easy and comfortable to our land. So very temperate is our climate, and so well secured from both extremes, that the inconveniences neither of the heat in summer, nor of the cold in winter, are intolerable, nor such obstructions to business and intercourse as they are in some other countries, no farther north than Russia, nor south than Spain. So that if our land produce not such furs as the north does, and such silks as the south, we ought not to complain: nature did not provide them, because it had better provided that we should not need them. We can bid both summer and winter welcome; each are beautiful in their season, and neither are a terror to us. May the happy temper of our climate be infused into our minds, and our moderation be known unto all men!

God's covenant with Noah and his sons, by which the seasons of the year were re-settled after the interruption of the deluge, is the crown and glory of every year: and the constant and regular succession of summer and winter, seed-time and harvest,[h] in performance of that promise, is an encouragement to our faith in the covenant of grace, which is established firmly as those ordinances of heaven![i]

2. The annual fruits and products of the earth, grass for the cattle, and herbs for the service of men,[k] with these the earth is every year enriched for use; as well as beautified and adorned for show. The harvest is the crown of every year, and the great influence of God's goodness to an evil and unthankful world. And so kind and bountiful is the hand of providence herein, that we are supplied not only with necessary food, for the support of nature, and the *holding of our souls in life*; but with a great variety of pleasant things for ornament and delight. Our soul is as happy as our climate, and like that of Asher, yields royal dainties.[l]

Though all years are not alike plentiful, yet—through the wise disposal of Providence, that great house-keeper of the universe—one year serves to help out another, and so to bring in another; so that when we gather much, it proves there is not much over, and when little, there is no great lack. Or, one country supplies another; so that the extremities of famine have never sent us from our *Canaan* to sojourn in any *Egypt* for bread, but either we have had it among us, or have been able to fetch it.

It is from the goodness of God that we have our yearly corn, and out of that our daily bread, which even after a plentiful harvest we might come short of, if when we *bring it home* God did *blow upon it*.[m] In these things God does good to all, and gives them witnesses of his being and providence, his power and bounty, sending rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.[n] And these witnesses to us, will be witnesses against us, if we serve not the Lord our God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, in the abundance of the good things he gives us; but make those things the food and fuel of our lusts, which were given us to be oil to the wheels of our obedience.

Let us thank God for all the blessings of this kind, with which every year of our lives has been crowned; and let not the commonness of them lower their value with us, nor lessen our grateful sense of God's goodness to us in them; nor because they have been hitherto constant, let us therefore imagine that they come of course, or that to-morrow must needs be as this day, and much more abundant: but let the praise of all those blessings which we enjoy by the constant course of nature, be given to the God of nature; to him let us own our obligations for what is past, and on him let us own our dependence for the future, lest we provoke him to *take away our corn in the season thereof*.

II. Some years are, in a special manner, crowned with the goodness of God more than other years; *Thou wilt bless the crown of the year with thy goodness*, so the Seventy read it. This year, in which by extraordinary instances, not to be paralleled in the events of former years, thou hast made known thy goodness; things which the former years expected not, and which the following years cannot forget, and will reap the benefit of. This year, which thou hast made—to excel other years, and to out-shine them in the historian's annals as much as crowned heads transcend common persons—by *reviving the work in the midst of the years*,[o] when we were ready to ask, *Where are all the wonders which our fathers told us of?*[p] And to speak of *the years of the right hand of the Most High*,[q] as what we have heard and read of, and what our fathers have told us of, but which we expected not to see in our time.

Every year was crowned with God's goodness, but not so as the sixth year was, when God made the earth to bring forth fruit three years,[r] which were to live upon the products of that. Every year was not a year of release, much less a year of jubilee. The great God never does any thing mean or little; even the common works of nature, and the common course of providence, give proofs of the infinite power and goodness of the Creator and Director of the universe: but sometimes the arm of Omnipotence is in a special manner made bare, and the treasures of divine bounty opened, in which, though

f 2 Sam. xi. 1. g Ps. civ. 23. h Gen. viii. 22.
i Jer. xxxi. 35. k Zech. ix. 17. l Gen. xlix. 20.
m Hag. i. 9. n Acts xiv. 17. o Hab. iii. 2.
p Judg. vi. 13. q Lev. xxv. 21. r Ps. lxxvii. 10.

God never out-does himself, (as men are sometimes said to do upon extraordinary occasions,) he out-does what he used to do, that he may awaken a stupid and unthinking world, to see the goings of our God, our King, in his sanctuary,[s] and may proclaim himself glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, working wonders.[t]

Some expositors apply the year, here said to be crowned with God's goodness, to the year of gospel grace, in which redemption was purchased for, and published to, a poor captive world, which is called, *The acceptable year of the Lord.*[u] That was indeed the year of God's goodness, when the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared so clear, so bright; that was indeed a crowned year, not to mention the crowns of common years, the fruitful fields and flowery meads. Even the glory of that year in which Israel was brought out of Egypt, and received the law from God's mouth, all the glory which crowned the top of Sinai's mount, was not to be compared with the glory of the everlasting gospel, that glory which *excelleth*, that crown of glory, *which fadeth not away*.

But the occasion of the day leads me to apply the text to those fruits and gifts of the divine goodness, with which our land has been crowned this year past, which the house of peers in their address have called, "A WONDERFUL YEAR;" and therefore we may take leave to call it so, who must form our ideas of public affairs very much by the sentiments of those, who are better acquainted than we can be with the particular motions of them, and have a clearer insight into their secret springs and tendencies than it is fit for us to pretend to. I know present things are apt to affect us most, and will allow for that; remembering many a thing, which we called a great and mighty thing when it was in the doing, but it afterwards dwindled, and looked very little: but not undervaluing what God has wrought for us formerly, as if there had never been the like before, nor prejudging what may yet be in the womb of a kind providence, as if we were never to expect the like again, but only giving it its due weight, and what we think it will hold to, it cannot be denied, but that God has of late done great things for us;[v] so *they say among the heathen*, and shall not we say it among ourselves?

Blessed be God for the many testimonies borne this day, by better hearts and better tongues than mine, to the glory of God's goodness; but into the great treasury of the nation's offering, into which the great men cast in of their abundance, we are here out of our poverty to cast in our mite: and the righteous acts of the Lord must be rehearsed at the *places of drawing water*,[w] which were the rendezvous of the meaner sort of people, as well as in the *palaces* of Jacob, where the princes of our people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham.[x] And we trust it shall please the Lord better than hecatombs of drink-offerings and sacrifices.

In this plain and short acknowledgment, let us therefore all join with thankful hearts, *Lord, thou crownest the year*—THIS year *with thy goodness*. Observe,

1. God and his providence must be owned in all the blessings of the year. Whatever has been or is our honour, our joy, our hope, comes from God's hand, and he must have the praise of it. We are very unthinking and unwise if we know not, and very unjust and ungrateful if we own not, that God *gives us our corn, our wine, our oils*,[y] our victories, our wealth, our peace, our all: *Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?*[z] whatever it is we glory in: *Let him that glories, therefore, glory in the Lord.*[a]

It is fit instruments should have their due praise; and the sense the nation has expressed of its obligations to those whom God has honoured in the public service, is a very good indication. It was a sign that Israel remembered not the Lord their God, when they showed not kindness to the house of Gideon;[b] but we must lift up our eyes above the hills, as high as heaven, for from thence cometh our help,[c] and our salvation. It is not from our own sword or bow, but from God's right hand and his arm, that our kingdom is great, our power victorious, and our glory bright; and therefore to him must the kingdom, the power, and the glory, be ascribed. *Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel;* for without him it never had been done, how willingly soever the people offered themselves.[d]

We believe there is a Providence that governs the world, and rules in all the affairs of it; and good men have the comfort of it every day. Even a heathen could say, Ουκ εστι ζην εν τω κοσμω κενω Θεων και κενω προνοιας—*There were no living in this world without God and his providence.* If Providence be our support in the day of our distress, let Providence have our praise in the day of our triumph. It watches us particularly, let us watch it filially; and since every creature is that to us that God makes it to be, let our thanks pass through the instruments to the great Author of all our salvation.

2. The goodness of God must in a particular manner be acknowledged, as that in which all our springs are, and from which all our streams flow. We must take notice, not only of his wisdom and power in effecting things great and admirable in themselves, but his goodness and mercy in doing that which is happy and advantageous for us; and make that the burthen of all our songs, *For he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever;* a short song,

s Ps. lxviii. 24. t Exod. xv. 11. u Luke iv. 19.
v Ps. xxvi. 2, 3. w Judg. v. 11. x Ps. xlvii. 9.
y Hos. ii. 8. z Job xii. 9. a 1 Cor. i. 31.
b Judg. viii. 34, 35. c Ps. cxxi. 1. d Judg. v. 2.

but highly honoured, when it was upon the singing of these words, that the glory of the Lord took possession of Solomon's temple.[e]

When we consider what an unworthy people we are, how ungrateful we have been for God's former favours, and what unsuitable returns we have made, we have reason to admire God's goodness, above all his attributes, in the repetition and progress of his blessings; for he is good to the evil and unthankful. If England's God and Saviour had not been a God of infinite mercy, God and not man, in pardoning sin, we had been ruined long since: but his goodness is his glory, and it is ours; in it, the power of the Lord is great, according as he hath spoken.[f]

Acts of justice to the church's enemies are acts of goodness to her friends. When *he that is mighty doth great things, and scatters the proud in the imagination of their hearts*, it is in *remembrance of his mercy*,—and *his mercy* therein *is on them that fear him from generation*[g] *to generation*. O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness! *Lord, thou art good, and dost good*, and thou, therefore, dost good, because thou art good, not for any merit of ours, but for the honour of thy own mercy.

3. These blessings which flow from the goodness of God have crowned this year; he in them has crowned it. That word shall lead us into the detail of those favours, which we are this day to take notice of, with thankfulness, to the glory of God. A crown signifies three things, and each will be of use to us. (1.) It dignifies and adorns. (2.) It surrounds and encloses. And, (3.) It finishes and completes. And accordingly this year has been dignified, surrounded, and finished with the blessings of God's goodness.

(1.) God hath dignified this year with his goodness. A crown denotes honour. Heaven itself, which is perfect holiness in everlasting honour, is often represented by a crown; *a crown of glory which fadeth not away:* and a year of honour this has been to our land; the children that shall be born will call it so.

Surely the English nation never looked greater, nor made a better figure, among the nations than it does at this day. Never did it appear more formidable to its enemies, nor more acceptable to its friends; never were the eyes of Europe more upon its counsels; never was its alliance more courted and valued, nor its influences upon all its confederates more powerful and benign; never was English conduct and English courage more admired, nor our English Jerusalem more a praise in the earth. Would to God our goodness grew in proportion to our greatness; (and that would be both the advancement and security of our greatness;) and that when God, as he promised Israel, *makes us high in praise, and in name, and in honour*, this might be the fruit of it, *that* (as it follows there) *we might be a holy people to the Lord our God*;[h] that while our forces, and those of our allies, are triumphing over the common enemy of Europe abroad, giving us occasion for one thanksgiving-day after another, virtue and serious godliness might triumph—over vice and profaneness, impiety and immorality, those common enemies of mankind—at home; that the pious proclamation of our gracious queen, and her other endeavours for the suppression of vice, and the support of religion, may not be frustrated; that all our other glories may be made substantial, and may be established—to us, and those that shall come after us, by that righteousness which exalteth a nation; and may not be withered by sin, which is a reproach to any people, especially to ours.

Two crowns are at this day the honour of our English nation, and for both we are highly indebted to the divine goodness: The imperial crown of government at home; and the triumphal crown of victory abroad.

[1.] The imperial crown of government at home is our honour and joy, and that by which we have a great deal of reason to value ourselves, and for which we have no less reason to be thankful to God, who because he loved our land,[i] and his thoughts concerning us were thoughts of good, and not of evil, to give us an expected end,[k] set such a government over us.

Which of all the crowns of Europe can pretend to outshine the English diadem at this day, which is as the sun when it goes forth in its strength? The flowers of our crown are not—like his on the other side of the water, who would be called *the king of glory*—gathered out of the spoils of ruined rights and liberties of the subjects, nor stained, like his, with *righteous blood*. The jewels of our crown are not got by fraud and rapine from injured neighbours; not, like his, seized by an unrighteous war, and a deceitful peace, in a bold and impudent defiance of all that is honourable, just, and sacred: no, the flowers and jewels of our crown are *its own* against all the world; none of all our neighbours has any demand upon us. Mercy and truth are the splendour of our crown, and justice and righteousness the never-failing supporters of our throne. The globe and sceptre, that is, the wealth and power, of the English sovereign, are both equitable beyond dispute,—who, therefore, may justly assume that motto, and abide by it, *Je mien tiendrai—I will hold my own*.

How happy, how very happy, is the constitution of our government! such as effectually secures both the just prerogatives of the prince, and the just properties of the subject; so that no good prince can

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e 2 Chron. v. 13. f Numb. xiv. 17. g Luke i. 49, 50. h Deut. xxvi. 19. i 2 Chron. ix. 1. k Jer. xxix. 11.

desire to be greater, nor any good subject desire to be easier, than the constitution of our government provides; for which, we may justly be the envy of all our neighbours; and in which, we ourselves ought to take the greatest satisfaction, sitting down with delight under the shadow of it. If there be any who are *given to change*, I am sure we have no reason to *meddle with them. O my soul, come not thou into their secret.* The ancient landmarks, which our fathers have set, and which the patriots of our own age have confirmed, are so well placed, that in kindness to posterity, as well as in honour to antiquity, we have reason to pray they may never be removed.

Thus bright does the crown of England shine:—yet this is not all the honour of our day. We have further to add, that the head that wears this crown, reflects more honour to it, than it borrows from it. A true Deborah, a mother in Israel, a prudent, careful, tender mother to the Israel of God; one who entirely *seeks the welfare of our people, speaking peace to all their seed;* who is herself a great pattern of virtue and piety, and a pattern of it in her realms; whose conduct is as pure and unexceptionable, as her title is clear and incontestable. It is with very good reason that we do so often in our religious assemblies bless God "for her, and for her wise and good government, and the tranquillity we enjoy under the protection and influences of it."

Far be it from me to *give flattering titles unto man* any where, especially in this place; in so doing *my Maker would soon take me away*;[k] but from a deep conviction of God's goodness to us, and to our land, in the present government, I think it is my duty, as a minister, to stir up myself and you, thankfully to acknowledge it to the glory of our Lord Jesus, the eternal wisdom of the Father, *by whom kings and queens reign, and princes decree justice;* and as the performance of that promise which is made to the gospel church, *Kings shall be her nursing-fathers, and queens her nursing-mothers.* Faithful is he who has promised.

I find it related concerning that holy, good man, Mr. Richard Greenham, who lived and died in the glorious reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, that "He much rejoiced and praised God for the happy government of that princess, and for the blessed calm and peace of God's church and people under it; and spake often of it both publicly and privately, as he was occasioned, and stirred up the hearts of all men what he could, to pray, and to praise God with him for it continually; yea, this matter so affected him, that the day before he died his thoughts were much troubled, for that men were so unthankful for her happy deliverance from the conspiracies of the papists against her." And I am sure we have no less reason to be thankful for the good government we are under, but much more; so far does the copy go beyond the original.

The happiness of the nation in the present ministry, the prudence of our counsellors, the confessed fidelity of those in public trusts, the harmony and good understanding between the queen and the two Houses, and their mutual confidence in each other, and that between the Houses, with the triumphs of catholic charity over bigotry on all sides, ought to be taken notice of by us with all thankfulness, to the glory of that God who has thus crowned us with the blessings of goodness.

And, lastly, the project set on foot for the uniting of the two imperial crowns in one, that England and Scotland, like Judah and Ephraim,[l] may become one stick in the hand of the Lord, which our wise men think will add greatly to the strength, wealth, and honour of this land, is one of the blessings with which this year has been crowned; though the perfecting of it is reserved to be the crown of another year, as we hope the good effects of it will crown the years of many generations, and posterity will for it call this reign blessed.

[2.] The triumphal crown of victory abroad is likewise the honour and joy of our land at this day. What a series of successes has this year been crowned with! and how glorious will the history of it appear in the book of the wars of the Lord, what he did in[m] Flanders, what in Spain, what in Italy! However it shall please God for the future to deal with us, here we must set up our Ebenezer, and say, *Hitherto the Lord hath helped us.*

It was a clear and glorious victory which opened the campaign in Flanders, when we scarce knew that the armies had taken the field, and which, through the good hand of our God upon us, was well improved. It was a happy turn that was given to our affairs at Barcelona, which if it might have been better improved afterwards, ought not to make us unthankful to God for the good footing then and there gotten. In these and other instances, the righteous God has pleaded our righteous cause, and given judgment for us.

And a righteous cause it is; it is requisite that we be clear in this, that we may make our prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, for its prosperity and success, in faith. Something it may not be improper for me to say to make it out, for the help of those of you who are not capable of getting better information.

Judge therefore within yourselves;

(i.) Is not that a righteous war, which is undertaken for the asserting the rights of injured nations, and the securing of the common interests of Europe? It is in the necessary defence of these that we

[k] Job xxxii. 22.

[l] Ezek. xxxvii. 19.

[m] Numb. xxi. 14.

appear, and act at this day, in conjunction with our allies, against the exorbitant power and boundless ambition of France, which must be reduced, which must be repressed, or we and our neighbours, we and our posterity, cannot be safe.

When proud and haughty men will aim at an universal monarchy, will oblige every sheaf to bow to theirs, will command the territories and treasures of all their neighbours, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth ;[n] it is necessary to the public safety, and is for the honour of God, as King of nations, that a check be given to their rage, *Here shall thy proud waves be stayed*, which by aiming at universal monarchy, threaten an universal deluge. He who, like Ishmael, has his hand against every man, must have every man's hand against him, and can expect no other.

War among the nations, is like the administration of justice in a particular community, it is a revenger to execute wrath upon him who does wrong ;[o] it is a terror to evil-doers, and a protection of right. There are no courts of justice in which an unrighteous king and kingdom may be impleaded, and by whose sentence restitution may be awarded, the injured righted, and wrong-doers punished: the court of Heaven therefore must be appealed to by the drawing of the sword of war, when gentler methods have been tried in vain: for it must be the *ratio ultima regum,—the dernier resort of injured nations.* In this supreme court Jephtha thus lodges his appeal, *The Lord, the Judge, be Judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.*[p] And the final determination of these appeals, no doubt, will be according to equity ; for he who sits in the throne judgeth right: though the righteous cause is not always crowned with victory at first, witness the war between Israel and the Benjamites,[q] yet great is the truth, and will prevail at last. See Job xx. 15.

The expense of blood and treasure must not be grudged, when it is necessary for the settling the balance of power, the securing of the just rights of nations, and the cutting off of those horns with which they have been wounded and scattered.[r]

And the case is very much strengthened, when acts of violence and injustice are maintained by treachery, and a perfidious violation of oaths and leagues ; when the public faith of princes and states is pawned in vain, and the most sacred cords by which conscience should be held, are snapt in sunder like Samson's bonds, only because a man thinks himself a Samson for strength: and this not once or twice, but often, then it is time to draw the sword to avenge the quarrel of the covenant. If a man despise an oath, and break through that, when lo, he hath given his hand, *As I live*, says the Lord, *he shall not escape*, but *it shall surely be recompensed* upon that faithless head.[s] War is an appeal to God's providence, as the Lord of hosts, against those who would not abide by an appeal to his ordinance, as the God of truth.

(ii.) Is not that a righteous war, which is undertaken in defence of the particular interests of our nation? If we had not helped our neighbours to quench the fire in their borders, we know not how soon it might have been kindled in our own bowels, and it might have been out of the power of our hands to extinguish it, and to prevent the ruin of all that is dear to us. It is for our people, and the cities of our God, that we engage in this war; self-preservation requires it.

How can we be safe, how can we sit still unconcerned, while so formidable a neighbour as France has been, not only harbours, but espouses, the cause, and aims at the establishment, of one who pretends to our crown, sets up a title, and makes an interest against the best of governments, and manifestly designs the ruin of our religion, rights, and liberties, and all we have that is valuable? How can we do otherwise, who must write after a *French copy*, and be governed by *French counsels?*

Did the wisdom of the nation find it requisite to oblige us, by an oath, not only to be faithful to the present government, but to maintain the succession as it is established in the protestant line; (which we pray God late to bring in, but long to continue, that it may prove a successful expedient, for the extinguishing of the hopes of our popish adversaries, and all their aiders and abettors ;) and is it not the duty, as well as interest, of the nation, in pursuance to that engagement, to take all possible precaution for the fortifying our bulwarks against every attempt upon that establishment? There is no man that has sincerely abjured the Pretender, but he must in good earnest pray against his supporters.

Well! this is the cause, the just and honourable cause, in which our banner is displayed ; for the prosperity of which we have often prayed ; and in the good success of which we are this day rejoicing, as that which is very much the honour of *this* year. If in any places which we are concerned for, there have been some losses, and disappointments,—or advances not so quick as we were apt to promise ourselves,—those need not surprise or perplex us in general, the progress of our arms has been very considerable, beyond what we could reasonably have expected, and likely to turn greatly to our advantage.

2. God has *surrounded* this year with his goodness *compassed and enclosed it* on every side. So we translate the same word, (Ps. v. 12.) *With favour wilt thou compass* (or crown) *him as with a shield.* He has

[n] Isa. v. 8. [o] Rom. xiii. 4. [p] Judg. xi. 27. [q] Judg. xx. [r] Zech. i. 21. [s] Ezek. xvii. 18, 19.

given us instances of his goodness in every thing that concerns us; so that turn which way we will, we meet with the tokens of his favour; every part of the year has been enriched with the blessings of heaven, and no gap has been left open for any desolating judgment to enter by. A hedge of protection and peculiar enclosure has been made about us on every side, and has been to us as the crown to the head; so entirely have we been begirt by it, and *comforted on every side.*[t]

Let us observe some instances of that goodness which has *gone through* the year.

(1.) It has been a year of peace and tranquillity at home, even while we have been engaged in war abroad; as, thanks be to God, the years past have been. The God of peace makes peace in our borders;[u] securing us from foreign invasions *upon* our borders, and domestic insurrections *within* our borders; and blessing the care of those, who under him are the conservators of our peace. We ought to be so much the more sensible of this mercy, and thankful for it, because so many other countries in Europe are at this time the seat of war. When we read in the public intelligences of the ruin of cities by long sieges, the putting of all to the sword, and the devastations made in those countries where armies are encamped, let us take occasion to bless God that it is not so in our land. We hear, indeed, of wars, and rumours of wars, in other countries; but at so great a distance, that they create no horror or inconvenience to us. What a consternation was the prophet Jeremiah himself put into by the noise of war? *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at my very heart, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.*[v] Thanks be to God, we are not acquainted with those frights, we see not those desolations of fire and sword, we hear not the thundering noise of the instruments of war, that breathe threatenings and slaughter.* How pleasant is the noise of yonder great guns, now they are proclaiming our victories, and celebrating our triumphs, and as it were discharging war out of our kingdom! But how dreadful would it be, how would it make our ears to tingle, and our hearts to tremble, if the noise came from the batteries of an enemy, and every shot carried with it a messenger of death flying swiftly!

The peace we enjoy is the comfort of our lives, the security of our estates, and the protection both of the civil and sacred adminstrations. War is an interruption to the course of justice, and a disturbance to its courts, an obstruction to the progress of the word of God, and a terror to religious assemblies: but, blessed be God, both are held among us *without fear*; on *all our glory* this is a defence;[w] and this makes our English Jerusalem a quiet habitation, and the cities of our solemnities doubly pleasant to us.[x] To this we owe it, that the highways are not unoccupied, that the plains are not deserted, and that our cities remain in their strength. We are *delivered from the noise of archers, at the places of drawing water: here, therefore, let us rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, even his righteous acts towards the inhabitants of his villages in Israel.*[y]

Thanks be to God, it is with us at this day, as it was with Judah and Israel in Solomon's time, when they dwelt safely, every man under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree,[z] and the property of them not questioned or invaded; what we have we can call our own; and the enjoyment of them not disturbed or imbittered to us. God grant, that security and sensuality may not be the *ill* effects of so *good* a cause, as our long peace and tranquillity!

(2.) It has been a year of plenty, and abundance of the increase of the earth. Though we of this country were threatened, and somewhat incommoded, by unseasonable and excessive rains in the time of harvest, (and it has been observed, that our land, unlike to Canaan, is in danger of suffering by too much rain more than by too little,) yet in wrath God remembered mercy, and our corn was not *taken away*, as it might have been, *in the season thereof;* but our markets are full, and a kind Providence does abundantly bless our provisions, and satisfies our poor with bread,[a] if any thing will satisfy them. It is a pity this should be complained of as a grievance by the seller, which is so great a blessing to the buyer; and that some expedient or other is not found out, in imitation of Joseph's prudence, to keep the balance somewhat even between them; that he who sells his corn, may neither have cause to complain of plenty, nor he who buys the bread, of scarcity.

Whatever complaints bad hearts may make of bad times, the scarcity of money, and the burthen of taxes, and the like; those who know the world better than I do, observe, "that whatever there are in France, in England there are no visible marks of poverty; nor any sign to be seen, either in building or furniture, either in food or clothing, no, nor in the alehouse or the tavern, (where, one would think, money, if scarce, should first be spared,) of the decay of our trade, and the expense of the war being insupportable."

(3.) It should seem to have been a year too of more trade than one would have expected, considering the war. Numerous fleets of merchantmen are come in, and our surrounding ocean is not only as a strong wall to us, but as a rich mine; so that, with Zebulun, we *suck of the abundance of the seas, and of*

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t Ps. lxxi. 21. u Ps. cxlvii. 14. v Jer. iv. 19.

* Just as these words were spoken, it happened that the cannon of the castle began to be discharged in honour of the day, within hearing of our assembly, which occasioned the following remark.

w Isa. iv. 5. x Isa. xxxiii. 20. y Judg. v. 11. z 1 Kings iv. 25. a Ps. cxxxii. 15.

treasures hid in the sand.[b] If it be complained of that we lose more ships of trade to the enemy than they to us, it must be considered, that suppose the matter of fact be so, the reason is because we have more to lose, abundantly more, and more valuable.

May our merchandise, and our hire, be holiness to the Lord,[c] that a blessing may rest upon it, as it will if we consecrate our gain unto the Lord, and our substance to the Lord of the whole earth.[d]

(4.) It has been a year of constant opportunities for our souls, and plenty of the means of grace. This, this is that which crowns the year with God's goodness more than any thing. The greatest honour of our land is, that God's tabernacle is among us, the Lord is known, his name is great. This makes it *beautiful for situation*, and *the joy of the whole earth*, and to us whose lot is cast in it, a *pleasant land* indeed: that we are a Christian nation, a protestant nation; That we have plenty of Bibles in a language we understand, and not only that we may read them without danger of the inquisition, but that we have them read to us, have stewards of God's house among us, to break to us this bread of life. *Our eyes see our teachers*, and they are not *removed into corners;* and the word of the Lord is not, *in respect of scarcity*, precious in our days; but we have *open vision*. God makes known his statutes and judgments to us, and has not dealt so with other nations. Our fleece is wet with the dew of heaven, while theirs is dry. It is our religion that is our glory; it is the fear of the Lord that is our treasure; it is God himself that is our crown and diadem of beauty.[e]

The sabbaths of the year are the crown of it. The Jews called the sabbath their *Queen:* and the crown of our sabbaths is our solemn assemblies, which we have had the comfort of throughout the year, throughout the land, without interruption, in the stated times appointed for them; it is that we have Moses and the prophets, Christ and the apostles, *read in our synagogues* every sabbath day.[f] It is a comfort to us, when we come together to worship God, that we do it not only in the fear of God, and in the faith of Christ, but *in a spiritual communion*, with *all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours;* that we worship the same God, in the same name, by the same rule of the written word, under the conduct of the same spirit, and in expectation of the same blessed hope. But our communion with the religious assemblies of our own land, both those by the legal establishment, and those by the legal toleration, is, in a particular manner, comfortable to us. Our brethren's services to God and his church who move in a higher and larger sphere, we rejoice in, and heartily wish well to; and think we have a great deal of reason to be thankful also, both to God and the government, for the continuance of our own liberties and opportunities, which we desire always to be found quiet and peaceable, humble and charitable, in the use of, and diligent and faithful in the improvement of, for the glorifying of God, and the working out of our own salvation.

Thus has the year been surrounded with the fruits of God's goodness, and we have been compassed with songs of deliverance. In consideration whereof, let us be constant and universal in our obedience to God, *steady and uniform* in our returns of duty to him, whose compassions to us *are so*, and *never fail*.

3. God has crowned, that is, he hath finished, this year with his goodness. The happy issue of an affair we call the crown of it; and the close of this year's actions may well be looked upon as the beauty of the whole year, the crown of the whole work; of which his favour has both laid the foundation, and brought forth the top-stone with shouting.

In the beginning of the year, God did remarkably precede us with the blessing of his goodness;[g] met us with a victory early in the morning of the campaign, before we were well awake, which left room for the doing of a good day's work in prosecution of it. Yet we rendered not according to the benefit done unto us; for which he might justly have turned his hand against us, and have made the latter end of the year, by some fatal disgrace or disappointment, to have undone what had been done so gloriously in the beginning of the year, so that we might have been obliged to conclude the year with a fast: but he has not *dealt with us according to our sins;* the same powerful and gracious hand that went before us then, crowns us now with honour and joy; the end of the year is of a piece with the beginning; and, in answer to our prayers on the last thanksgiving day, he has favoured us with *another* feast and a good day, in which we have light, and gladness, and joy, and honour. Thus is God known by his name Jehovah, a finishing God, a Rock whose work is perfect; and thus are we admonished, when we have begun in the spirit, not to end in the flesh.

Two things crown this year, and make the conclusion of it great; and both must be attributed to the goodness of God:

(1.) The successes of our allies abroad; the wonderful relief of Turin, and the restoration of that excluded prince to his capital, when his affairs were reduced to the last extremity, and the enemy was confident of carrying the day. And that this should be but one day's work, but two or three hours' action. This is such a loss and mortification to our adversaries, and the consequences of it, in Italy, of such

b Deut. xxxiii. 19. c Isa. xxiii. 18. d Mic. iv. 13. e Isa. xxviii. 5 f Acts xiii. 27. g Ps. xxi. 3.

vast advantage to our allies, and likely to be more so; that the year must be acknowledged to end as honourably and happily as it began. *This is the Lord's doing!*

That which magnified the mercy in the beginning of the year, was, that our expectations were in it anticipated; that which magnifies this in the end of the year, is, that our expectations in it were far outdone. In that, God was better to us than our hopes; in this, than our fears; in both, than our deserts.

(2.) The unanimity of our counsels at home. The presence of God is as much to be observed and owned *in the congregation of the mighty, and judging among the gods*,[h] as in the high places of the field, determining the issues of war, and turning the hovering scale of victory. It is he who gives a spirit of judgment to them who sit in council, as well as *strength to them that turn the battle to the gate*;[i] and in this matter, he who has all hearts in his hands, who made man's mouth, the hearing ear and the seeing eye, has done well for us, and crowned the year.

All who undertake to give the sense of the nation, or of any part of it, the lords, the commons, the convocation, all agree to admire the present happy posture of our affairs, and the flourishing state of the kingdom under this government, and in this conjuncture. Never did the English nation appear to be so universally easy, so pleased, so entirely satisfied in the public management and administration. *Happy art thou*, O England, *who is like unto thee, O people?* Never was such a hearty zeal discovered for the common cause of our religion and liberties, against the threatening power of France; nor were ever the necessary supports of that cause given so speedily, so cheerfully, and with such expressions of a willingness to continue them, till it be in our power to oblige that perfidious foe to such a just and honourable peace, as it shall not be in his power to violate. In a word, the temper and good affection of the nation at this day, seems not unlike that of the people of Israel, when Solomon dismissed them from the feast of dedication, *They blessed the king, and went unto their tents, joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people*, 1 Kings viii. 66. Long —and ever—may it be so!

Ministers (I know) are the unfittest persons, and the pulpit the unfittest place, in the world, to talk of state affairs in. You know it is not my practice; and I am sure I am most in my element when I am preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified. But I would endeavour to do the work of every day in its day, according as the duty of the day requires; and on such occasions as these, one had as good say nothing, as nothing to the purpose; and therefore, though I am not so well versed in the public affairs as to be particular in my remarks, nor such a master of language as to be fine in them; yet the hints I have given you of God's favours to our land at this day, and the great goodness with which the year we are now concluding has been crowned, will serve to answer in some measure my intention, (and it is no other than what becomes a minister of the gospel,) which is, to excite your thankfulness to so good a God, and to confirm your affections to, and satisfaction in, so good a government: and therefore, I hope, you will neither think them impertinent, nor find them altogether unprofitable.

III. Application.

That which remains, is to make some improvement of our observations concerning that goodness with which God has crowned this year, that we may go away (as we should aim to do from every sermon) some way wiser and better.

1. Has God thus crowned the year? Let us cast all the crowns of it at his feet, by our humble, grateful acknowledgments of his infinite wisdom, power, and mercy. What we have the joy of, let God have the praise of. The blessed spirits above cast their crowns before the throne,[k] and that is the fittest place for all our crowns. Let praise continue to wait on him, who, though he be attended with the praises of angels, yet is pleased to inhabit the praises of Israel.[l] Let our closets and families witness to our constant pious adorations of the divine greatness, and devout acknowledgments of the divine goodness to us, and to our land; that every day may be with us a thanksgiving day, and we may live a life of praise, that work of heaven. David did so, *Every day will I bless thee*;[m] nay, almost every hour in the day, *Seven times a day will I praise thee*.[n]

God must have the glory, particularly of all our victories; and every monument of them must be sacred to the Eternal Lord, rather than to *the eternal memory of any man*: nor ought the most meritorious and distinguished actions of the greatest heroes to be registered, without some acknowledgment to that supreme *Numen—Deity*, whose universal and overruling providence, guided their eyes, strengthened their arms, and covered their heads. *All people will thus walk in the name of their God*,[o] and shall not we? If Amalek be subdued, the memorial of it is an altar, not a triumphal arch; and is inscribed to the honour not of Moses or Joshua, but of God himself, *Jehovah nissi—The Lord my banner*.

In this, both our illustrious sovereign, and her great general, are examples to the nation; (and, as much as in other things, do real honour to it by doing honour to the religion of it;) That from him in the

h Ps. lxxxii. 1. i Isa. xxviii. 6. k Rev. iv. 10. l Ps. xxiii. 3.

m Ps. cxlv. 2. n Ps. cxix. 164. o Mic. iv. 5.

camp, immediately upon the obtaining of a victory, and from her in the church, in due time after, and from both, in the most solemn manner, the incense of praise ascends to the glory of God, as the God of our salvation. These, who thus honour God, no doubt, he will yet further honour; and make those crowns, those coronets, to shine yet more bright, which are thus laid at his feet, with *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory.*

If we be remiss to ascribe the praise of our achievements to God, we provoke him to turn his hand against us, and by some judgment or other to distrain for the rent which is not duly paid. When Samson had with the jaw-bone of an ass laid a thousand Philistines dead upon the spot, he seems to take the praise of the performance too much to himself, and to overlook the arm that strengthened him, when he called the place *Ramath-lehi—the lifting up of the jaw-bone;*[p] and, therefore—by a very afflictive thirst which seized him immediately after, and drove him to his prayers—God reduced his pride, and made him know his own weakness, and dependence upon God, and obliged him to give a new name to the place, *Enhakkore—the well of him that cried,*[q] not of him that *conquered.* The more thankful we are for former mercies, the better prepared we are for further mercies.

2. Has God thus crowned the year? Let not us then profane our crown, nor lay our honour in the dust, by our unworthy walking. Let the goodness of God lead us to repentance, and engage us all to reform our lives and families, to be more watchful against sin, and to abound more in the service of God, and in every thing that is virtuous and praiseworthy. Then, and then only, we offer praise, so as indeed to glorify God, when we order our conversation aright; and then shall we be sure to see his great salvation, and be for ever praising him.

It does indeed give both a damp to our joy, and a shock to our hopes, at this day, that notwithstanding the great things God has done for us there is yet so much wickedness to be found among us; so much impiety, so much immorality; and both arising from practical atheism and infidelity, and accompanied with a contempt of religion and sacred things. What shall we say to these things? It is some encouragement to us to hear, as we do by some, that through the pious care of the general, there is a manifest reformation of manners in the army; vice discountenanced, and virtue in reputation; God grant it may be more and more so! it would be the happiest omen of any other. It is likewise to be rejoiced in, that there are national testimonies borne against vice and profaneness, and national endeavours used for the suppressing of it; which we heartily pray God both to give success to, and graciously to accept of, that the wickedness which is not *prevented,* yet may not be laid to the charge of the land, nor bring judgments upon the community.

But it is our duty to lament *the wickedness of the wicked;* to sigh and cry for the abominations that are found among us; to witness against them in our places; and, so, to *keep ourselves pure* from them, and to do our utmost by our prayers and endeavours to bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end. And thus we may prevent the mischief of it to the nation, and empty the measure which others are filling, that there may be a *lengthening out of our tranquillity.*

Now we are reviewing with thankfulness the mercies of the year past, let us at the same time reflect with sorrow and shame upon the sins of the year past; our own sins, I mean, for it is enough for us to judge ourselves. The year has been full of goodness on God's part, but very empty on ours. He has not been as a barren wilderness to us, or as waters that fail; but we have been so to him, very careless and defective in our duty, and in many instances we have come short.

Our time has been mispent, our opportunities not improved; God has come this year *seeking fruit* among us, but how little has he found! God brings our years to an end, as a HISTORY THAT IS WRITTEN, so substantial and valuable are the gifts of his favour to us; but we bring our years to an end as a tale that is told,[r] so idle, and trifling, and insignificant are we in our carriage toward him.

4. Let God's goodness to us engage, and increase, our goodness to one another: it is justly expected, that they who obtain mercy should show mercy, and so reflect the rays of the divine goodness upon all about them; being herein *followers of God as dear children;*[s] *followers of him that is good,*[t] in his goodness.

Let God's goodness to us constrain us, as we have opportunity, to do good to all men; to do good with what we have in the world, as faithful stewards of the manifold grace of God; (charity must crown a thanksgiving day;) to do good with all the abilities God gives us, remembering that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

Let it particularly incline us to do good to those from whose sentiments ours differ in the less weighty matters of the law. This I would take all occasions to press upon myself and others, pursuant to the great royal law of charity. There is an infinite distance between God and us, and a just controversy he has with us, and yet he is kind to us, and does us good; and cannot we then be kind to one another and do all good offices one to another, notwithstanding the matters in variance between us? How ill does it become us to bear a grudge to any of the

p Judg. xv. 17. q Judg. xv. 19. r Ps. xc. 9. s Eph. v. 1. t 1 Pet. iii. 13.

children of our people, or wish ill to any, who are every day and every year crowned with the goodness of God, and are, and hope to be, forgiven of him! Let not our eye be evil one toward another, when God's eye is so good toward us all, and he does things for us, which we all come in for a share of the benefit of, and are all this day giving thanks for. Let our common success against our enemies abroad, help to stay all enmities at home; and let all our consciences be able to witness for us, that we *walk in love*, and *keep the unity of the spirit*.

4. *et ult.* Let this year's experience help to support and encourage next year's expectations. Has God crowned us with his goodness this year? let us thence infer, that if we approve ourselves faithful to God, surely goodness and mercy shall still follow us. And our hopes ought to be the matter of our praises as well as our joys. *Unto thee do we give thanks*, (says the Psalmist,) *unto thee do we give thanks; for that thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare.*[u] The wondrous works we are this day giving thanks for, are upon this account the more valuable, that they give us ground to hope, that *God's name is near*, —the advancement of his kingdom,—and, in that, the accomplishment of his promise. That comprehensive prayer, *Father, glorify thy name*, has already obtained an answer from heaven,—which true believers may apply to themselves,—*I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it again.*[v] Amen, so be it. Hallelujah.

ENGLAND'S HOPES;

A SERMON.

PREACHED

JANUARY THE FIRST, 1706-7.

ISAIAH lxiii. 4.

The year of my redeemed is come.

A NEW year is now come. The common compliment of the morning is, "I wish you a good new year;" and it is well; hearty well-wishers we ought to be to the welfare one of another. God by his grace make us all wiser and better, and give us to live better every year; better this year than we did the last,—and then it will be indeed a good new year. Good hearts will make good times and good years.

Have any of you had any good purposes and resolutions in your minds, the prosecution whereof has hitherto been delayed? put it off no longer. Is the house of God yet to be set up in your hearts, the work to be begun? begin it to-day; as Moses did, who, on the first day of the first month, set up the tabernacle.[a] Are there things amiss with you to be amended, corruptions to be purged out, and things wanting to be set in order? begin this day to reform; as Hezekiah did, who, on the first day of the first month, began to sanctify the house of the Lord:[b] so will you make this day in the best manner remarkable, and this year comfortable.

But that which at present I aim at, is to direct you —in wishing a good year—to the church of God, and the kingdom of Christ in the world; and, particularly, to the land of our nativity; to the prosperity of which, in all its interests, I hope every one of us bears a very hearty good-will, that in the peace thereof we may have peace. *For we are members one of another.*

My text would easily lead me to *foretell* a good year: but I am no prophet, nor prophet's son, nor dare I ever pretend to prediction; nor indeed, can I give heed to any other but the most sure word of prophecy in the written word, which is a light shining in a dark place.[c] Christ's parting words to his disciples at his ascension, is sufficient to silence all bold inquiries, and much more all presumptuous determinations, concerning future events; *it is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*[d] Astrological predictions I utterly condemn; I hope you know better things than to have any regard to them. The prophet Isaiah speaks of the astrologers, the star-gazers, and the monthly prognosticators, in his time, as great cheats, that imposed upon the world. *The heavens declare the glory of God;*[e] and magnify the το γνωστον τυ Θευ,—*that which* IS, and MAY BE, *known of God;* but were never intended to declare the will of God,[f] or any of those *secret things* which *belong not to us.*[g] Scripture prophecies I have a profound veneration for, and of admirable use they are to give us a general idea of the methods of Providence concerning the church, and to furnish us with a key to many of the difficulties of it, and thereby to assist our faith and hope in the worst of times. But the particular intention and application of them, till the event unfolds them, though I greatly value the labours of those who searched into them, yet to me it seems *higher than heaven, what can we do? deeper than hell, what can we know?* It is what we cannot *by searching find out to perfection*, or to satisfaction.

My design therefore, in the choice of this text today, is not to gratify your curiosity with prognostications of what *shall be;* but to direct your prayers for the church of God, and to offer something for the assistance of your faith in those prayers. *For we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.* I

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u Ps. lxxv. 1. v John xii. 28.
a Exod. xl. 2. b 2 Chron. xxix. 17.
c 2 Pet. i. 19. d Acts i. 7. e Ps. xix. 1.
f Rom. i. 19 g Deut. xxix. 29.

remember the rule long since given me, with reference to the prospects of public affairs, and shall still abide by it, "Pray, pray; and do not prophesy." We may be sure of an answer to the prayers of faith, but not of the accomplishment of the predictions of fancy.

Our Lord Jesus has taught us to pray: *Our Father who art in heaven! thy kingdom come.* And it is fit we should take our instructions in prayer from him, on whose intercession we depend for the success of our prayers. Now when we pray, *Father, let thy kingdom come,* this is one thing included in it, and intended by it, *Father, let the year of the redeemed come.* Let this therefore be our heart's desire, and our prayer to our heavenly Father, every day.

My text is part of that account which the victorious Redeemer gives of his glorious appearances against his and his church's enemies, represented by the Edomites, whom he *treads down in his anger,* and *tramples upon in his fury;*[h] and, therein, appears *more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey.*[i] Come, and with an eye of faith see the Lord Jesus, by his grace, triumphing—over sin and corruption, and all the powers of Satan—in the souls of believers, under whose feet he will shortly tread that great enemy,[k] and make him *their* footstool,[l] as he has made them *his own.* Come, and see him, by his providence, triumphing over all antichristian powers and factions in the world; and all the maintainers and upholders of the devil's kingdom; Pagan formerly, and Mahometan and papal now: putting down all oppressing rule, principality, and power, till he has completed his whole undertaking. And upon the sight of this, let every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And if you ask, why Michael and his angels push on this war so vigorously, and at such a vast expense of blood and treasure? Michael himself shall answer you in the text, *The year of my redeemed is come;* even the day appointed of the Father for this great performance; that day at which, as Mr. Norris expresses it in his paraphrase on this passage, "Fate folded down the iron leaf." Now the day prefixed is come, the work designed must be done, whatever it costs: *The Lord shall arise and have mercy upon Sion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.*[m]

Let us observe here,

1. That the church and people of God are Christ's redeemed,—*the ransomed of the Lord;* so they are called in the promise, Isa. xxxv. 10.—*the redeemed of the Lord;* so they are called upon to praise him, Ps. cvii. 2. They are his own; *he* is *entitled* to *them,* as his own; and as his own, *they* are *very dear* to *him.* He formed them for himself. He bought them for himself, and paid dear for them; shed his blood, his precious blood, to purchase them, and purify them to himself; gave his life, an invaluable price, a ransom for them. They were sold by the guilt of sin, to the justice of God; had sold themselves, by their affection to it, unto the dominion of Satan; but out of both these bonds Christ has effectually provided for their discharge and deliverance.

He calls them, here, *his redeemed*—though as yet their redemption was not wrought out, and obtained, by the bringing in of the everlasting righteousness—because he had undertaken to redeem them, and the work would as surely be effected, in the fulness of time, as if it were done already. Thus, when the gospel was first preached in Corinth, and but few of that place were effectually called, yet Christ said, *I have much people in this city.*[n] They are mine already; for *the Lord knoweth them that are his,* and will lose none of them.

It is the honour of good people that they belong to Christ:[o] they are his, and shall be owned as his in that day when he makes up his jewels; but they have no reason to be proud of this honour, for, by this, boasting is for ever excluded; That they had not been his, if he had not bought them: they must be redeemed ere they could be preferred. Where is boasting then? We are bought, and therefore still bound; bought with a price, and therefore must not be our own, but his who bought us; to him we must live, and not to ourselves.

2. That there is a time fixed, concerning them, which is the year of the redeemed; when their Redeemer will do great things for them. A year which shall introduce a bright and glorious scene; which shall be crowned with their salvation. A year of jubilee to them, (to which it seems to allude,) when they shall be discharged from their servitude, and restored to the *glorious liberty* and inheritance *of the children of God;* which will be indeed to them *the acceptable year of the Lord.*

This is fixed, in the council and decree of God; which he has *purposed in himself;* and in which he has *determined all the times before appointed;* particularly the times concerning his church, which is his garden enclosed, his Segullah, his peculiar treasure in the world, about which his providence, through all the revolutions of time, is in a special manner conversant; and therefore his purposes from eternity were so. The affairs of the church were not left to the disposal of blind chance. The wheels on which it moves are animated by *the spirit of the living creature;*[p] and there are *eyes in the wheels,* a wise providence that directs all for the best, according to the divine will, and the settled counsels of that will. The Eternal Mind never makes a transition to *new measures,* never takes up *new resolves; known unto God are all his works,* and all ours too,

h Deut. xxix. 3. i Ps. lxxvi. 4.
k Rom. xvi. 2. l Ps. cx. 1.
m Ps. cii. 13. n Acts xviii. 10.
o Mark ix. 41. p Ezek. i. 20.

the events themselves, and the times of them, *from the beginning of the world.* Which yields an unspeakable satisfaction to all those who have but so much reason and religion as to believe, that God knows what is fit to be done, and when, better than we do, and that his time is, without doubt, the best time.

The providences of God concerning Israel of old, as well as their ordinances, were typical; and *things happened to them for ensamples* or patterns of the great salvation to be wrought in and for the gospel-church. Many a time was Israel afflicted, from their youth up; many a time in the house of bondage; but still there was a year fixed for their redemption, when their warfare or appointed time should be accomplished,[q] and deliverance should be wrought for them. The year was fixed for their redemption out of Egypt; and God kept time to a day; *At the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day,* they went out triumphantly.[r] The year was likewise fixed for their return out of their captivity in Babylon; when seventy years were accomplished in the desolations of Jerusalem.[s] And the distresses of the New-Testament church are in like manner limited to *a time, times, and half a time;* which, if we know not how to compute with any certainty or exactness, yet, we may with the greatest assurance infer from it, that Infinite Wisdom has fixed the time, though it is not for us to know it. *Times are not hidden from the Almighty,* though *they that know him do not* as yet *see his day,*[t] nor foresee it.

3. That the year of the redeemed *will* come; though it may be long first, long wished for, long waited for, yet it will come at last. Concerning the thing itself, we may be clear, we may be confident, though concerning the time we may be in doubt, and in the dark. Though many years intervene between this, and the year of the redeemed, and those, perhaps, dark, and cloudy, and melancholy years, years in which we see evil,[u] yet the days of affliction and captivity will be numbered and finished, and the years of servitude will come to an end; hitherto it shall come, but no further; so long it shall last, but no longer. God will *have mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, though he* has had *indignation against them threescore and ten years;*[v] and he will *make them glad* with the joys of his salvation, in some proportion to the *days wherein he has afflicted them.*

Observe with what an air of triumph and exaltation the Redeemer himself here speaks of this great day; as one who longed to engage the enemy, and rescue the beloved of his soul, and who almost grew impatient of the delay. He cannot anticipate the time. The divine counsels are as mountains of brass,[w] which can neither move nor moulder; but when the wheels of his chariot, which have been so long in coming, arrive at last, how welcome are they! Now *the year of my redeemed is come; it is come.* And, *Lo, I come.* With this *shout* does *the Lord himself descend from heaven, ride upon the wings of the wind,*[x] and make the *mountains flow at his presence.*[y] With this does the Lord awake himself *as one out of sleep,* and like a *mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine;*[z] *The year of my redeemer is come.* Now, Χρονος ουκ εσται ετι—*Time,* that is, delay, *shall be no longer.*[a] Now will I arise; now shall the everlasting arm be made bare. *Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh.*

Now for the more distinct improvement of this, let me apply it, both to the universal church of the redeemed, the whole family, in every age; and to particular churches, and the interests of the kingdom of Christ, in some special time and place.

(1.) Let me briefly apply it to the whole mystical body of Christ, the universal church of the redeemed; in which we have cast our lot; and hope to have a place and a name in the general assembly of all who belong to it. And understanding it of this, there are two which above all the rest may be called the years of the redeemed; one long since past, the other yet to come.

[1.] The year of Christ's dying was the great year of the redeemed, and that on which all the rest depend; from the salvation then wrought, the foundation was laid on which all the other more particular salvations of the church are built. Therefore, in the Apocalypse, the Lamb that was to *make war with the beast,* and to *overcome him,* appeared as a Lamb *that had been slain.*[b] And it is *by the blood of the Lamb* that the victory is said to be obtained.[c] And many understand the text of *that* year of the redeemed, when Christ by *death destroyed him who had the power of death;* trod the winepress of his Father's wrath alone, and *stained all his raiment,* both with his own blood, and with the blood of his enemies.

Then was the price paid down; upon the undertaking of which, the great Redeemer was trusted with the salvation of all the Old-Testament saints; and for which all who in every age believe in him should be justified and accepted. Then the chosen remnant was purchased, and eternal life purchased for them; then principalities and powers were spoiled, and a show made of them openly;[d] the strong man armed disarmed, stript, and triumphed over. To that victory all the victories of faith are owing; for we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

The time was fixed for this great and glorious

q Isa. xl. 2. r Exod. xii. 41. s Dan. ix. 2.
t Job xxiv. 1. u Ps. xc. 15.
v Zech. i. 12. w Zech. vi. 1.
x Ps. xviii. 9, 10. y Isa. lxiv. 3. z Ps. lxxviii. 65.
a Rev. x. 6. b Rev. v. 6.
c Rev. xii. 11. d Col. ii. 15.

achievement; fixed in that determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, by which that sacrifice was *delivered up;* fixed in the Old-Testament predictions, from that of the "*Seed of the woman*, which should *break the serpent's head*,[e]" to that of "Messiah the Prince, who at the period of the seventy weeks should *finish transgression, and make an end of sin, by making reconciliation for iniquity*, and *bringing in an everlasting righteousness.*"[f] It was fixed to a day, it was fixed to an hour: how often did Christ speak of it with that exactness: *Mine hour is not yet come*, and when it was come, *This is your hour.*

Long was it looked for by them who *waited for the redemption;*[g] and more earnestly by him that was to *work out* the redemption, who, having this baptism to be baptized with, was even *straitened till it was accomplished.*[h] It came at last: *Blessed is he that cometh.* And of all the years that God has crowned with his goodness, that was, without doubt, the greatest of all that every day and night measured since the clock of time was set in motion. And though they who were to have the benefit of the redemption slumbered and slept, and were not duly sensible of the vast importance of what was then doing till afterwards, when the Spirit was poured out upon them, yet he that was to be at the expense of it, and foresaw how the great affair of man's redemption—and, perhaps, the angel's confirmation—was to turn upon that mighty hinge, triumphed and was transported, when he said in the beginning of the battle, *Now is my soul troubled*, but *now is the judgment of this world; now is the prince of this world cast out;*[i] and in the close of the battle, when he knew what an irreparable blow he had given to the devil's kingdom, *It is finished.*[k] This was that *year of the redeemed* which we frequently celebrate the memorial of with joy, at the table of the Lord.

[2.] The year of Christ's second coming to judge the world, is that *great year of the redeemed* which is yet to come; that true Platonic year, which will be, though not the repetition, yet the review and retribution, of all that is past. And as in our observance of the great institution of the Eucharist, that *proprium—appropriate rite*, of our holy religion, and peculiar badge of our Christianity, we look *as far back* as that year of the redeemed which is past, showing forth the Lord's death; so we look *as far forward* as that year of the redeemed which we are yet in expectation of, showing it forth *till he come.*

This year of the redeemed, which will be crowned with the *greatness* of God, as other years have been *with his goodness*, is fixed in the divine counsels; unalterably fixed, fixed to a day; for *he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness;*[l] and a great and terrible day it will be. God, by his grace, make us all ready for it, that he who shall then appear may appear to our joy. It is fixed, but it is not revealed; it is not fit it should, nor agreeable to that state of probation and expectation we are now in. It is fixed, and it will come, it will certainly come, to the unspeakable confusion of all those who slight the warnings of it, and the everlasting consolation of all those who embrace the promise of it. As sure as this year *is* come, that year *will* come, and you and I shall see it; *in our flesh* resumed *we shall see it;* shall see the terrors, shall see the triumphs, of that day, and, according as we are found then, shall certainly and eternally share either in the one or in the other.

That, that will be the year of the redeemed; in which all our hopes and prospects, which in our present state are still kept moving forward, one event serving only to raise our expectation of the next, will come to a full period. Then we shall see the final end of all those things, which here we are so solicitous and inquisitive about.[m] And a blessed end it will certainly be to all the redeemed of the Lord; who will in that day lift up their heads and hearts with joy, never to despond or be dejected again, knowing that their redemption in its open declaration, and full perfection, draweth nigh.[n]

All the redeemed who are now scattered and dispersed over the face of the whole earth, will then be gathered together into one body; and a great and glorious body it will be; to be presented to the Father *without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing;* and to grace their Redeemer's triumphs, as the trophies of his victory over the powers of darkness, that had held them captive, that he may be *glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.*[o] A general rendezvous it will be of all that ever approved themselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ, when the Captain of our salvation[p] shall produce all who were given him; they shall every one answer to their names, and not one be missing.

All the enemies of the redeemed will then be conquered and brought down, and death itself, that last enemy, shall be destroyed, and swallowed up in victory. The devil, with all those whom he has decoyed into his interest, will then, by the almighty power of that God, *whose the deceived and the deceiver are*,[q] be *cast into the lake of fire*,[r] and the redeemed will be set for ever out of the reach of all their enemies. Then shall the redemption of the soul be perfected, in the redemption of the body from the power of the grave, and *that* captivity led captive.[s]

But that which, above all, will denominate it the year of the redeemed, is, that then *the ransomed o*

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e Gen. iii. 15. f Dan. ix. 24. g Luke ii. 38. h Luke xii. 50.
i John xii. 27. k John xii. 31. l Acts xvii. 31.
m Dan. xii. 8. n Luke xxi. 28. o 2 Thess. i. 10. p Heb. ii. 10.
q Job xii. 16. r Rev. xx. 10. s Rom. viii. 23.

the Lord shall return, and come to Sion with songs of praise; everlasting joy shall fill their hearts, and crown their heads; and sorrow and sighing, those clouds which in this world are still returning after the rain, shall be finally dismissed, and flee away for ever.[t] The redeemed of the Lord, by virtue of their union with the Redeemer, will then sit down with him upon his throne, as he overcame, and is set down with his Father upon his throne, and reign with him for ever.

This is the year of the redeemed; for it is the year which their hearts are upon, which, according to the promise, they look for, and have an eye to, in all their present services, sufferings, and struggles. It will be the crown and satisfaction of their faith and hope, and the perpetual perfection of all their joys and honours.

Think, my brethren, think seriously, what that year of the redeemed will be to you. How will the archangel's trumpet sound in *your* ears? will it be a joyful or a dreadful sound? To them that obey the gospel, and live up to it, it will proclaim liberty and honour; but against them who are unbelieving and disobedient, it will denounce war and ruin. That great day will be coronation day to the former, but execution day to the latter. We none of us know but this year of which we now see the beginning may be the year of our death; if it should be so, will it be the year of our redemption? And can we, as such, bid it welcome, and heartily say farewell to this world? *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*, and then you may look for death and judgment with joy and rejoicing. Spend your time well, and then no doubt but you shall spend your eternity well; and the year of the redeemed will be the year of your eternal redemption.

(2.) Let me more largely apply it to the militant church; and the particular parts and branches of Christ's kingdom in the world, and their states and interests, those especially with which we are best acquainted, and in which we are most nearly concerned.

I was yesterday endeavouring, as well as I could, to excite your holy joys and thankful praises for the great things God has of late done for us, and our allies, whom he crowned, the last year, with his goodness: I would to-day say something for the encouragement of your faith and hope in God, concerning the events of the year ensuing, and of your earnest prayers to God that it may prove one of the years of the redeemed.

It is no new thing for the church of Christ upon earth to be in distress and bondage, and to stand in need of redemption, notwithstanding the great redemption from sin and hell, which the Lord Jesus has wrought out. It is always militant, it is often afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted; and Sion constrained to dwell with the daughters of Babylon.[u] *Israel* had many enemies, was often in the hands, often under the feet, of their enemies; and the redemption of *Israel* was often prayed for, and often promised; much more reason has the *gospel church* (that never had so many promises made to it, relating to the life that now is, as the Old-Testament church had) to expect trouble in this world; to be fought against, and to suffer persecution; in conformity to the example of its head.

The book of the Revelations gives us intimation enough of troublesome times that were to pass over the Church; and though it should be allowed doubtful who the enemy is that is there described, yet it is past dispute, that there should arise an enemy, a powerful and dangerous one, who should make war with those that keep the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ:[v] so that we are not to think it strange, no, not concerning the fiery trial, if the best of God's saints and servants be called out to it, as though some strange thing happened. Behold, Christ has told us before, that when it comes it may be no surprise or offence to us.

But there will come a year of redemption for those who suffer in the cause of Christ; God *will* not, and men *shall* not, contend for ever; nor shall the rod of the wicked rest *always* upon the lot of the righteous, though it may rest *long* there. It is the state of some of the reformed churches abroad, especially those of France, that I have upon my heart, and had in my eye in the choice of this text. The year of their deliverance, whenever it comes, I must call the year of the redeemed.

The excellent Archbishop Tillotson, in a sermon, on Rev. xiv. 13. plainly intimates his suspicion, that the French king is that second beast described (Rev. xiii. 11.) with two horns, France and Navarre, speaking like a dragon, which (says he) may point at a particular sort of armed soldiers called dragons, or *dragoons:* and the number six hundred sixty-six in the name LUDoVICUs: and that the persecution of the French protestants, in that last and great persecution, is there foretold. And in another sermon before King William and Queen Mary in the year 1692, makes him the present great supporter of the mystical Babylon. And if so, a deliverance from under his tyranny may well be prayed and hoped for, in the year of the redeemed.

[Since the preaching of this, I have with much pleasure received encouragement to my hopes, and been confirmed in my choice of this subject, for an appendix to the thanksgiving, by that excellent discourse of the worthy Bishop of Sarum, before the Queen and both Houses of parliament, on the Thanksgiving-day, in which he lays so much stress

[t] Isa. xxxv. 10.

[u] Zech. ii. 7.

[v] Rev. xii. 17.

upon the French king's barbarous usage of his protestant subjects, in his description of him as an oppressor, whom it will be the glory of a good prince to help to break in pieces: and he tells that august assembly, "That till the exiles are recalled, till the prisoners are set at liberty, till the edicts that were their inheritance are revived, and compensation is made for the precious blood that has been shed among them; till the oppressor is so bounded, that his own people are secured from oppression, and his neighbours from invasion; till this is done, it is reasonable to hope, that man will say as God has said, *There is no peace to the wicked.*" God keep that word always in the imagination of the thoughts of their hearts, to whom it was spoken, and establish their way before him.]

Four things it will be proper for us to inquire into, concerning the year of the redeemed which we are hoping, and praying, and waiting for. I. What the year of the redeemed will be, and what we expect to be included in it. II. What ground we have to believe that it *will come*, some time. III. What encouragement we have to hope that it will come quickly. IV. What is our duty in reference hereto.

I. What we may expect the year of the redeemed will be, which according to his promise we may look for. You shall see it in three things:

1. The year of recompence for the controversy of Sion, will be the year of the redeemed. Such a year we read of, (Isa. xxxiv. 8.) and it is parallel to this here, for it explains the day of vengeance, which is here said to be in the heart of the victorious Redeemer. Therefore *the sword* that is *bathed in heaven*, shall *come down upon Idumea, the people of God's curse*, because it is the year of recompence for the controversy of Sion.

God espouses Sion's cause, does and will plead it with jealousy:[w] his church is dear to him as the apple of his eye,[x] and, therefore, he has a controversy with those who are injurious to his people; and sooner or later he will reckon with them, and will avenge his own elect, who cry day and night to him, though he bear long.[y] He has a righteous quarrel with them, and he will avenge that quarrel. Barbarous and unrighteous wars fill the measure of a nation's sins; and are that *fourth transgression*, for which, when it is added to *other three*, God *will not turn away the punishment* of a people, as is intimated, (Amos i. 6, 9, 11, 13.) where for three transgressions, and then this as the fourth, God will reckon with Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab, because they had *delivered up the whole captivity*, had *pursued with the sword*, and *cast off all pity*, particularly had *ript up the women with child:* would not God visit for these things, should not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this? But barbarous persecutions for righteousness' sake, are yet more provoking: all innocent blood is precious to God, and inquisition will be made for it; but the blood of the saints, and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, is in a special manner precious to him, and not a drop of it shall be shed but it shall be reckoned for.

The great day of recompence for Sion's controversy will be at the end of time, *in the valley of decision*,[z] when the long depending controversy, after many struggles, will at length be determined; when everlasting tribulation shall be recompensed by the Lord Jesus, to them that troubled his church, and to them who were troubled, everlasting rest.[a] The Lord hasten that glorious day, and make us ready for it!

But we may expect that it will be done, in part, in this world. When God shall have performed his whole work upon mount Sion, and upon Jerusalem, his humbling, reforming work *upon* them, he will then perform his saving work *for* them, and will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks:[b] the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this. All the wrongs done to Sion will be returned to those who did them, and the cup of trembling will be taken out of the hand of the oppressed, and put into the hand of the oppressor.[c] The arm of the Lord will awake as in the days of old, and will put on strength; that mighty arm that humbled Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, Julian, and other the proud enemies of his church, will be made bare, in our day, against the successors of these sons of pride and violence. The papal kingdom in general, that has for many ages been so barbarously oppressive to the faithful worshippers of God, and the French tyranny in particular, that has been remarkably so in our days, are the enemies, with whom, I think, God has a controversy on Sion's behalf, and the day will come that he will plead it.

His controversy is,

(1.) *For* the sons of Sion, whom they [the persecutors] have abused; the precious sons of Sion, comparable to fine gold; who have not only been despised and thrown by as vessels in which there is no pleasure, but trodden down and broken to pieces as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter.[d] How many excellent ministers and Christians have been sacrificed to the pride and malice of the church of Rome, and with a rage reaching up to heaven, *numbered to the sword* as sheep for the slaughter! and the survivors either miserably enslaved in the galleys, and there *dying daily*, or buried alive in dungeons, or forced to beg their bread in strange countries: and shall not this be recompensed?

(2.) For the songs of Sion, which they have pro-

w Zech. i. 14. x Zech. ii. 8
y Luke xviii. 7. z Joel iii. 14.

a 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. b Isa. x. 12.
c Isa. li. 22, 23. d Lam. iv. 2.

faned. This head is suggested by that instance of the Babylonians' insolence, and contempt of the Jews and their religion, when they upbraided them in their captivity with the songs of Sion: and, for this, it follows, *Daughter of Babylon, thou art to be destroyed.*[e] The contempt cast upon the pure worship of God as heretical, and the jest made of sacred things, is what God will reckon for.

(3.) For the powers of Sion's king, which they have usurped. All the anointed offices of our Lord Jesus are boldly invaded by the papacy. His prophetical office, by setting up an infallibility in pope or councils; his kingly office, by setting up the supremacy of the bishop of Rome over all churches, and giving him the power of Christ's vicar, or his rival rather, upon earth; and his priestly office, by making the mass a propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and saints and angels mediators between God and man. And shall not the crown of the exalted Redeemer be supported against these usurpations?

(4.) For the pleasant things of Sion's palaces which they have laid waste. God will reckon for the many churches they have demolished, the solemn assemblies they have scattered, the administration of ordinances they have restrained, and the fountains of living water they have stopped up. God keeps an account of all the mischief of this kind done at any time by the papal power and its adherents, and will bring it all into the reckoning when the year of recompences comes.

2. The year of release for God's captives, will be the year of the redeemed; and this is the year we are waiting for. While we enjoy our liberties and opportunities, in peace and without check, we ought to remember them who are in bonds, and to pray for the *turning again of their captivity as the streams in the south.*

(1.) Oppressed consciences, we long to hear of the release of. Of the many that through the force of persecution have been brought to put forth their hands unto iniquity, we hope there are some who have not put forth their hearts to it; but if the force were taken off, would return to the true religion, which they have in word renounced. The triumphs of tyranny over those pretended converts cannot be thought of by any good Christian, without the utmost indignation; for the worst of tyranny is theirs, who take a pride in saying to men's souls, *Bow down, that we may go over;*[f] insulting over conscience, and pretending to command that: and though the utmost point they can gain by all their violence, is that, as it follows there, *men lay their body as the ground, and as the streets to them that go over*, by external compliances, while the soul remains unbended; yet this being a most grievous affliction, (as it is there spoken of,) the freeing of the oppressed from this force will be a most glorious deliverance. We long to hear of the breaking off the yoke from off their necks, that they may no longer be compelled to give that honour to the creature that is the Creator's due, against the conviction of their consciences; but may be brought up out of that Egypt, to sacrifice unto the Lord with freedom, though it were in a wilderness. For, Is Israel a servant? Is conscience a home-born slave, that it is thus spoiled,[g] thus imposed upon? No; it is God's Son, it is his first-born, and he will maintain its privileges. *Lord, bring their souls out of prison, that they may praise thy name.*[h]

(2.) Oppressed confessors, we also long to hear of the release of. Humanity obliges us much, and Christianity much more, to pity the distressed state of those who are in bonds and banishment, in dungeons and in galleys, *for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.* When will the time come that the house of the prisoners shall be opened, and every man's chains fall from his hands, that a spirit of life from God shall enter into the dry bones, that they may live? The account we had some years ago of the brave and daring struggles of the Sevennois, was such a *noise and a shaking*, as we thought portended the *return of bone to his bone*, and a glorious resurrection of God's witnesses; but that affair, for aught we hear, is now asleep: God himself revive that work in the midst of the years, and so hasten the year of the redeemed!

3. The year of the revival of primitive Christianity in the power of it, will be the year of the redeemed. This we wish, we hope, we long to see, both at home and abroad; not the establishment and advancement of any party, but the extinguishing and swallowing up of all parties in the prevalence of *pure religion, and undefiled*, and the dominion of serious godliness in the hearts and lives of all who are called by the Christian name.

When the bounds of the church will be enlarged by the conversion of Pagan and Mahometan nations to the faith of Christ, and the spreading of the gospel in foreign parts; when the enlargement of trade and commerce shall be made serviceable to the interests of Christianity, as it is to our secular interests, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, and the Redeemer's throne shall be set up where Satan's seat is, then will the year of the redeemed come.

When what is amiss in the churches of Christ shall be amended, mistakes rectified, corruptions purged out, and every plant that is not of our heavenly Father's planting, shall be rooted up, and the plants that are, shall be fruitful and flourishing; when the Lord of the temple shall sit as a refiner, and shall purify the sons of Levi, and all the seed of Israel, then shall the year of the redeemed come.[i]

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e Ps. cxxxvii. 3, 8. f Isa. li. 23. g Jer. ii. 14. h Ps. cxlii. 7. i Mal. iii. 3.

When the word of the Lord shall have a free course; when vice and profaneness shall be suppressed, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth;[k] when virtue and piety shall be not only generally praised, but generally practised; when in every place the spiritual incense shall be offered, and a pure offering with pure hands, and the principles of our holy religion shall be copied out into men's hearts and lives, then shall the year of the redeemed come.

When the divisions of the church shall be healed, and the unity of the Spirit kept entirely in the bond of peace, so that Ephraim shall no longer envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim; when all shall agree to love one another, though they cannot agree in every thing to think with one another; when the Lord shall be one, and his name one, and all who profess his name one in Christ, the great centre of unity, then shall the year of the redeemed come.

In a word, when the Spirit shall be poured out upon us from on high,[l] so that knowledge shall triumph over ignorance, truth over error, devotion over profaneness, virtue over all immoralities, justice and truth over treachery and all unrighteousness, and Christian love and charity over schism, bigotry, and all uncharitableness; then shall the year of the redeemed come. But alas! *Who shall live when God doeth this?* The Lord hasten it in its season.

II. What ground we have to believe that the year of the redeemed, even the year of recompences for the controversy of Sion, will come some time, whether we live to see it or no.

That which I build upon is,

1. The justice and righteousness of that God who governs the world, and whose kingdom ruleth over all. If men are unrighteous, they shall find to their cost that God is not. If men make nothing of their word, God makes something of his; and the unbelief of men shall not make it void and of none effect. Though clouds and darkness are round about him,[m] so that we know not the way that he takes, verily he is a God who hideth himself; yet judgment and justice are the habitation of his throne; and so will it appear when the mystery of God shall be finished, and the heavens shall declare his righteousness, and neither earth nor hell shall have any thing to object against it. Sooner or later the Lord will be known by the judgment which he executes.

Look up, (my brethren,) look up with an eye of faith to heaven above, and see the Lord God Omnipotent upon a throne, high and lifted up;[o] the throne of glory, the throne of government, which he has prepared in the heavens,[p] and established there, though the heathen rage, and the floods lift up their waves:[q] and hence let us take encouragement to hope, that in due time we shall see an effectual check given to the "boundless ambition of France," as the proclamations often call it. The universal Monarch will not suffer himself to be rivalled and insulted by a bold pretender to an universal monarchy; nor will he, who alone is absolute, have the flowers of his crown plucked by a pretender to absolute sovereignty. The humbling and abasing of such proud men, treading them down, and hiding them in the dust together, by which the great Jehovah proves himself to be God; and in which he glories, above any thing, in his discourse with Job, out of the whirlwind: *Do thou do so* (says he) *and then will I also confess unto thee.*[r] And will he not do it in our day?

Look abroad, (my brethren,) look abroad with pleasure upon this earth, and see it, as wild as it is, and as bad as it is, under the government of a righteous God, whose eyes run to and fro through it, and who does according to his will, not only in the armies of heaven, who are not too high to be above his control; but among the inhabitants of the earth, who are not too mean to be below his cognizance. They are mistaken who think God has forsaken the earth,[s] and that he cannot judge through the dark cloud;[t] who say in their hearts, *God hath forgotten*, and, *Thou wilt not require it.* The day is coming when it shall be so evident, that every man will own it: *verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.*[u]

Suppose we could not read the doom of the papacy, and the French tyranny, out of the depths of the Apocalypse, we may read it out of the Proverbs of Solomon, the plainest book in all the Bible; for there we are told, *men's pride will bring them low; wealth gotten by vanity will be diminished; he that seeketh mischief it shall come upon him; and whoso doth violence to innocent blood, shall flee to the pit, and no man shall stay him.* And no word of God shall fall to the ground.

The tender concern God has for his church and people. His redeemed are very dear to him, and he is jealous for them, as his portion, and peculiar treasure; he takes pleasure in their prosperity, and in all their afflictions he is afflicted; and he takes what is done against them as done against himself and shall not he avenge his *own elect*, because they are *his own?* He who purchased *the soul of his turtle dove* with the blood of his Son, will not deliver it into the *hand of the multitude of its adversaries.*[v]

Especially, considering how much his own honour is interested in the concerns of his church and people. If they be abandoned and cast out of his care what will the Egyptians say; it will for ever disgrace the throne of his glory, and be the reproach of his government; so that how mean soever they are and unworthy he should do any thing for them; yet

k Ps. cvi. 42. l Isa. xxxii. 15. m Ps. xcvii. 2.
n Ps. l. 6. o Isa. vi. 1. p Ps. ciii. 19.
q Ps. xciii. 2, 3. r Job xl. 12—14. s Ezek. ix. 9.
t Job xxii. 13. u Ps. lviii. 11. v Ps. lxxiv. 19

no doubt, he will work for his own name, his own great name, that that may not be polluted among the heathen.

The many exceeding great and precious promises which he has made in his word concerning his church, and on which he has caused us to hope: on these our faith must build, and we shall find them a firm and never failing foundation. God has spoken in his holiness,[w] and we will rejoice in what he has promised, it is all our own. He has promised, that *he will judge for his people, and repent himself concerning his servants, when he sees that their strength is gone.*[x] *That for the oppression of the poor,* and *the sighing of the needy, he will arise and set them in safety.*[y] That the *Redeemer shall come to Sion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob.*[z] That there shall be no more *any pricking brier or grieving thorn, nor any to hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain.*[a]

It was shown in vision to the prophet Daniel what great havoc would be made, by persecuting powers of the church in the latter times of it; but at the same time, the deliverance of the church and the destruction of its enemies is foretold. *Antiochus shall be mighty, and shall wonderfully destroy the people of the Holy One: and through his policy he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and he shall magnify himself in his heart; and by peace* (more than by war) *he shall destroy many,* (who can avoid thinking of the French king at the reading of this?) *but he shall be broken without hand;*[b] or, as it is in a parallel place, *he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.*[c] And of another great enemy, arising out of the fourth kingdom, which seems to be the papacy, it is said, that he shall *wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws* by an unlimited power; and *they shall be given into his hand,* by the divine permission, for wise and holy ends, *until a time, times, and the dividing of time.*[d] But what will come of him at last? Shall he reign thus for ever, because he clotheth himself with cedar?[e] No, the judgment shall sit, and they shall *take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.* The God of truth has said it, and shall stand firm, *He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity; and he that killeth with the sword, shall be killed by the sword, when his day shall come to fall:* and in the mean time, here is the patience and the faith of the saints.[f]

2. The performance of these promises to the church in all ages: God has often delivered, always delivered at last, and, therefore, we trust he does and will deliver. After Israel's long affliction in Egypt, at that house of sore bondage, at length God came down to deliver them, and gave an emblem of their condition in a bush that burned, and yet was not consumed. In the times of the judges, first one enemy, and then another, mightily oppressed them, for so many years; but in due time God raised them up a deliverer, and sent from heaven to save them. The captivity in Babylon came to an end at the set time. The treading under foot of the sanctuary, by Antiochus, was limited to a certain number of days, and then the sanctuary was cleaned.[g] Thus the Jewish nation, as long as it continued the church of God, though often distressed, was still delivered, till by rejecting Christ and his Gospel, they threw themselves out of the church; and now they wait in vain for redemption from their present dispersion, and cannot expect it till they shall look unto him whom they pierced.

The Christian church has been often afflicted from its youth up, groaned long under the yoke of the pagan powers; but in Constantine's time the year of the redeemed came, when the great red dragon was cast out, and his angels who adored him were cast out with him; when idolatry was abolished, and persecution came to an end, and that voice was heard in heaven, *Now is come salvation, and strength, the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ.*[h] —Many have been the troubles of the followers of Christ; but the Lord has delivered them out of them all. Now, God is the same *yesterday, to-day, and for ever;* he is God, and changes not; his arm is not shortened, his ear is not heavy, his love is not spent, nor are his counsels changed: and, therefore, we are sure, the year of the redeemed will come in due time, and though it tarry we will wait for it; for *the vision is for an appointed time, and at the end it shall speak, and shall not lie.*

III. What encouragement we have to hope that the year of the redeemed will come shortly; that the rescue of the oppressed and the ruin of the oppressor is not far off; that the progress and advancement of the protestant religion in Europe, with the reviving and flourishing of serious piety in all the churches of Christ, are blessings at the door.

As to this, let me premise, that we ought to be very sober and modest in our conjectures concerning the time of the accomplishment of Scripture prophecies. Buxtorf, I remember, somewhere quotes a saying of the Jewish rabbins, *Rumpatur spiritus eorum qui supputant tempora—Calculating the times breaks the spirit.* They have so long and so often looked for the coming of the Messiah, and been disappointed, that they curse him who fixes the time of his coming. We despair not of the things themselves that God has promised; but we *presume not* to limit the Holy One of Israel, or to set him his time; we wrong the promise by doing so, and are tempted to think, when Providence breaks our measures, it is the breaking of God's word,—and nothing tends more to the breaking of our spirits: whereas

w Ps. lx. 6. x Deut. xxxii. 36. y Ps. xii. 5.
z Rom. xi. 26. a Isa. xi. 8. b Dan. viii. 24, 25.
c Dan. xi. 45. d Dan. vii. 25, 26. e Jer. xxii. 15.
f Rev. xiii. 10. g Dan. viii. 14. h Rev. xii. 9, 10.

he that believeth doth not make haste. Many who have been peremptory in foretelling the time when the year of the redeemed would come, have had the mortification of living to see themselves mistaken.

If we look into ourselves, we shall find a great deal to discourage us, and make us fear that this glorious year is yet a great way off; so conscious are we to ourselves of a frame and disposition of soul that renders us utterly unmeet to share in the joys of such a day. Our faith is weak; our spirits are narrow; our prayers are cold and customary; our conversation loose and careless; and the *things which remain* among us *are ready to die.* Iniquity abounds, and the love of many is waxen cold. Our own private interests, it is to be feared, lie nearer our hearts than the great and general interests of the kingdom of God among men. Our divisions are very threatening, especially the mismanagement of them: these are ill omens, and occasion many a melancholy thought to those who seek the good of the gospel Jerusalem. We now think ourselves within sight of Canaan: but how justly might God for our unbelief and murmuring hurry us back into the wilderness again, and swear in his wrath that we should never enter into his rest? We should have the more reason to fear these fatal consequences of our present distempers, but that it is intimated to us, that the Son of man will come at a time when he shall find little faith on the earth,[j] that the divine fidelity be the more magnified.

But for all this, we are not altogether without hope, that the year of the redeemed may come shortly: who knows but that this year, which we are now brought to the beginning of, may in some instances go far toward it? Though if it should set us back, and prove a year of disappointment, we must own that God is righteous; yet if it should set us forward, and make large advances towards it, we shall have this to add to the comfort of it, that it will be the answer of our prayers, and the crown of our hopes in God at the beginning of the year.

I dare not build much upon the opinion of Mr. Joseph Mede, and other learned men, (though I have a great value for their judgment,) who compute the period of 1260 days, that is, years, so often spoken of in the Revelation, which should end in the resurrection of the witnesses, and the downfall of Babylon, to fall not many years hence. However that be,

1. It is plain that the measure of the iniquity of the church's enemies fills apace: the powers we are contesting with, after all the mortifications they have been under, as if they had bid defiance to repentance, seem to grow more and more false and treacherous, cruel and barbarous; which cannot but ripen their vintage apace for the great wine-press of the wrath of God.[k] That which hastened the descent of the king of Babylon down to the sides of the pit, was, not only that he had made the earth to tremble, and shaken kingdoms; that he had made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; but, which was worst of all, he opened not the house of his prisoners,[l] that is, God's Israel, whom he detained in captivity, those poor to whom Daniel counselled him to show mercy, that it might have been a lengthening of his tranquillity.[m]

Well, when he who *spoileth* though he *was not spoiled*, and *dealt treacherously* with those who *dealt fairly* with him, shall *cease to spoil*, and shall *make an end to deal treacherously*;[n] not in a way of reformation, that we have more reason to pray for than hope for, but so as that his measure shall be full; then expect that he shall be spoiled, and men shall deal treacherously with him, that is, shall show him that he has wretchedly deceived himself. Babylon's doom is, *Reward her as she rewarded you.*[o]

2. The present posture of affairs gives us a very hopeful prospect. The pride of the French king has been much humbled of late, and his power broken; and (which is very encouraging) the great things done against him, have been done chiefly by protestant armies, which, we hope, will animate protestant princes and states to unite for the support of the reformation, that it may recover the ground which in many places it has lost, and may gain more; for many, we hope, will join themselves to us, when they see that God favours our righteous cause, and that he is with us of a truth.

For our future safety, Manoah's wife shall be my prophetess: *If the Lord had been pleased to kill us,* he would not thus have accepted and answered our prayers, *nor would he, as at this time, have showed us such things as these.*[p]

And for our further success and victory, even Haman's wife shall be my prophetess: *If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall,* there is no remedy; the seed of the Jews will without fail be victorious, whenever the scale turns in their favour; *thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.*[q] As for God, his work is perfect; when he begins he will make an end. What we have received from God imboldens us to expect more; when God *brake the heads of Leviathan*[r] *in pieces, he gave him to be meat* to the faith and hope of his *people inhabiting the wilderness*, and so encouraged them to expect, that they should inhabit Canaan shortly. God is plainly selling *Sisera into the hand of a woman.*

IV. Nothing remains now, but to tell you in a word or two, what is our duty in reference hereunto. Have we all this reason to think that the year of the redeemed will come, that surely it will come quickly?

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j Luke xviii. 8. k Rev. xiv. 19. l Isa. xiv. 17.
m Dan. iv. 27. n Isa. xxxiii. 1.
o Rev. xviii. 6. p Judg. xiii. 23
q Esth. vi. 13. r Ps. lxxiv. 14.

1. Then let us be very earnest with God in prayer, to hasten this glorious year. When Daniel understood by books that the seventy years of Jerusalem's desolations were just expiring, then he set his face with more than ordinary fervour and fixedness to seek the Lord God by prayer and supplication, with fasting.[s] When we see mercies coming toward us, let us go forth to meet them, with so much the more cheerfulness, by our prayers. *Men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*[t] but, especially, at such a time, that when God's *beloved is delivered*, and he *saves with his right hand*, we each of us may have the pleasure of saying, with the Psalmist, God has therein *answered me*.[u]

Let our closets and families witness for us, that we pray, that we pray daily, that we pray earnestly, for the peace of Jerusalem, as those who prefer it before our chief joy. Pray for the uniting of protestants at home, and for protestant princes and states abroad; pray for the prosperity of our armies and navies, and those of our allies; pray for the pouring out of the Spirit upon us from on high, and then the year of the redeemed would soon come.

2. Let us prepare ourselves for the comfort of those great things, which we hope God will do for his church in our days, by bringing every thought within us into obedience to those two royal laws of holiness and love. When we expect God to do wonders among us, it concerns us to sanctify ourselves.[v] Let us carry on the holy war in our own bosoms against sin and Satan, the world and the flesh, with vigour, and pursuant to our baptismal vow, fight manfully under the banner of the Lord Jesus; then may we hope that our prayers for the prosperity of the war our nation is engaged in, will be acceptable, and prevalent in heaven. But what joy can we have of our triumphs over the French, if we suffer our own lusts to triumph over us? If indeed we desire the progress of the reformation in the churches of Christ, let us show it by carrying on the reformation of our own hearts and lives and families. Remember that law of Moses, *When the host goeth forth against the enemy, then keep thyself from every wicked thing*, lest you undo by your sins what they do by their swords.

3. Let us with patience wait for the year of the redeemed. If the days of our brethren's affliction should yet be prolonged, and their deliverance be deferred, yet let us not be weary, nor faint in our minds. Though the year of the redeemed come not in our time, the time we looked for it, yet believe, it will come in the best time, the time that infinite wisdom has appointed; and when it does come, it will abundantly recompense us for all our waiting. The longest voyages make the richest returns; and the church's triumphs are the most welcome, when they are the crown of great and long expectations: *So, this is our God, we have waited for him.*[w] Let us not upon every disappointment, arraign either the providence of God, or the conduct of those in public trusts. Leave it to God to govern the world, and to the queen and her councils under him, to govern the realm; and let us in our obscurity be easy and satisfied, and believe that all will end well at last.

But if the year of the redeemed should not come in our days; if the carcasses of this generation should fall in this wilderness, as justly they may for our unbelief and murmuring, and we should not go over Jordan to see that goodly mountain, and Lebanon: yet let it suffice us, that those who shall come after us shall enter into that rest. Joseph dies in Egypt, but lays his bones in confidence that God will surely visit Israel. Let us give all diligence to make sure our eternal redemption, and then we shall be happy, though we live not to see the glories of the year of the redeemed on earth; and may depart in the prophet Daniel's dismission, *Go thou thy way till the end be, for thou shalt rest;* and, whatever thy lot be on earth, thou shalt stand in thy lot, (and it shall be a blessed lot,) in the end of the days.[x]

s Dan. ix. 2. t Luke xviii. 1. u Ps. cviii. 6.

v Josh. iii. 4. w Isa. xxv. 9. x Dan. xii. 13.

A SERMON

CONCERNING THE

WORK AND SUCCESS OF THE MINISTRY;

Preached at the Tuesday Lecture, at Salters' Hall, June 25, 1710.

LUKE x. 5, 6.

And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the Son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall return to you again.

PROSPECT of success, as it is the spring of action, so it is the spur to industry and resolution. Issachar, that tribe of husbandmen, would never bow his shoulder to bear, and couch, as he does, between two burthens, much less could he rejoice in his tents of labour, but that he sees the land is pleasant,[a] and from it he hopes to reap the precious fruits of the earth: nor would Zebulun, that tribe of merchants, be a haven of ships, and rejoice in his hazardous going out, but that he expects to suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.[b] Whatever business a man has, he cannot long oblige himself to abide by it, unless he can promise himself to get by it.

Now it is worth while to inquire, what is the gain, and what the success, which we, who are ministers, have in prospect, and which we bear up ourselves in our work with the prospect of. What is it which we may feed ourselves with the hopes of?

1. Worldly advantages we must not promise to ourselves, in common with the children of this world: for the soldiers of Jesus Christ, though they walk in the flesh, do not war after the flesh;[c] they negociate the affairs of a kingdom that is not of this world.

They who deal in secular business, think they succeed well and gain their point, if they raise an estate, and advance their families, and make to themselves a name among the great ones of the earth; they rejoice because their wealth is great, and their hand has gotten much, and say, *Soul, take thine ease.* But the ministry, though it is the best calling, is the worst trade, in the world; that is, it will prove so to those who make a mere trade of it, looking no further than to get money by it, and to enrich themselves.

We cannot propose to ourselves advantages of this kind, for the same Lord who ordained, that they *who preach the gospel should live of the gospel*,[d] and live comfortably, has also told them, *In the world ye must have tribulation.*[e] Nay, we may not make these things our end in undertaking or prosecuting this work: we debase our calling and contradict our profession if we do. Shall we, who preach the great things of another world to others, so far forget ourselves as to seek great things to ourselves in this world, when God in saying to Baruch has said to all his servants the prophets, *Seek them not?*[f]

2. Spiritual and eternal advantages in the other world, if we be faithful, we may hope for, and encourage ourselves with the prospect of, in common with all good Christians. If we be sincere, and diligent in our work, and our hearts upright with God, we shall have the favour of God, and the testimony of our consciences for us, and eternal life in its earnests and first-fruits abiding in us; and it is much our own fault, if we excel not in graces and comforts, by our constant converse with divine things. And if through grace we endure to the end good and faithful servants, our Master's "*Well done*," the *joy of our Lord* into which we shall enter, and the *crown of life*[g] which we shall receive when the chief Shepherd shall appear,[h] will be an abundant recompence for all our services and sufferings and we shall then say, we have had good success in our work.

Let us therefore fear, lest such a rest, such a glory

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a Gen. xlix. 14, 15.
b Deut. xxxiii. 19.
c 2 Cor x. 3.
d 1 Cor. ix. 14.
e John xvi. 33.
f Jer. xlv. 5.
g Matt. xxv 21.
h 1 Pet. v. 4.

being set before us, any of us should seem to come short of it,[j] and lest while we preach to others, and show them the way to heaven, we ourselves should be shut out, and become cast away at last;[k] and, being moved with this fear, let us walk very circumspectly, and take heed to ourselves, that we may not only save those who hear us, but ourselves in the first place. But,

3. There is a particular good success besides this, which faithful ministers have in prospect, which they aim at, and animate themselves with, in their work, and that is, doing good to the souls of men; and, as instruments in the hand of God, serving the interests of Christ's kingdom in the world. We are shepherds, we are vine-dressers, and we reckon we have good success, if the flock increase, and the vineyard flourish, and be fruitful, to the honour of him who is the great Owner of both. We are Christ's soldiers, and if we be instrumental to curb and restrain the enemies of his kingdom, and to reduce and protect the subjects of it; if by the blessing of God on our ministry the ignorant be instructed, the simple made wise for their souls and eternity, and the wise made to increase in learning; if the bad be made good, and the good made better; then do we prosper, and then have we good success. This is that we should have in our eye, and which we should lay near our hearts, with seriousness and concern to the last degree. That is that, for the compassing of which we should study and use the most apt and proper means, and should willingly spend and be spent; it is that fruit of the travail of our soul, which, if we *see* it, will be abundantly to our satisfaction,[l] and the pain will be forgotten for joy of it; but if we see it not, the case is more sad than that of a miscarrying womb and dry breasts,[m] and because of it we go on in heaviness, nay, in bitterness of spirit.[n]

But though so much of our comfort is bound up in the success of our labour, yet we lie under this disadvantage, above those of other professions, that we are at great uncertainty concerning it, and for the most part very much in the dark. The physician knows whether he cures his patient or no, and the lawyer whether he carries his client's cause or no: but we preach, from day to day, to *work upon* the hearts of men; and though sometimes the effect is visible either one way or the other, *some men's sins are open beforehand*, and the *good works of some are likewise manifest beforehand*,[o] some are much our joy and crown, others much our grief and shame;—yet more often it is not so; we cannot tell who are savingly wrought upon, and who are not: but this makes the foundation of God to stand sure, *The Lord knows them that are his*,[p] whether we do or no. And in this matter, which cannot but be very much upon our hearts, this text will give us both direction and satisfaction: for it shows us how we must do our duty, and then leave the success with the grace of God,—as in the affairs of this life, we are to leave it with the providence of God.

The text is part of the *instructions* which our Lord Jesus gave to the seventy disciples, when he gave them their *commission*; for those two will go together: Christ sends none on his errand, whom he does not give in some measure to understand their message. These instructions here are much the same with those he gave to the twelve apostles; and what he said to them both in exhortation and encouragement, he says in effect to all his ministers, excepting some few things that were peculiar to the state and work of those first preachers of the gospel.

My text will give us not only a fair occasion, but good help too, to consider two things:

I. The work and office of ministers; wherever they come, they are to say, *Peace be here.*

II. Their success in the discharge of this office; which is according as they do or do not meet with the sons of peace. And the opening of these two things, I trust, by the blessing of God, may be of some use both to ministers and people.

I. We may observe here, what the charge and work of gospel ministers is, and what they are warranted and instructed to do; they are appointed by the Prince of peace to be the messengers of peace, and wherever they come, they are to say, *Peace be here.* If a minister be asked, as Samuel was, *Comest thou peaceably*, he may answer in the name of him who sent him, *Yes, peaceably*;[q] and such their temper and behaviour ought to be, as to be able to answer so for themselves. They are heralds indeed to proclaim war against sin; but to the children of men they are sent as ambassadors preaching peace by Jesus Christ;[r] who himself first came (as one pleased he had such an errand to perform) and preached peace to them that were afar off, and to them that were nigh;[s] and has appointed his ministers as residents to negociate this great affair, while time lasts, for so long the treaty will continue.

1. The ministers whom Christ here sends forth are supposed to enter into private houses; and *that* under the character of Christ's ambassadors, and in the execution of their office,—the business of which they must be carrying on, not only into whatsoever *synagogue*, but into whatsoever *house*, they enter. We shall find them in *private houses*, either because thither their public preaching will be driven, or because thither they themselves will carry it.

(1.) Sometimes they were forced into such corners. Though the message they brought had every thing in it to recommend them to an universal acceptance, yet it is probable, in many places they were not permitted to preach in the synagogues; the rulers

j Heb. iv. 1. k 1 Cor. ix. 27. l Isa. liii. 11. m Hos. ix. 14. n Ezek. iii. 14.

o 1 Tim. v. 24, 25. p 2 Tim. ii. 19. q 1 Sam. xvi. 5. r Acts x. 36. s Eph. ii. 17.

there who had a jealous eye upon them would take care to keep them thence; and they then retired into private houses, and preached to as many as would come to hear them there. Those who cannot do what they would for God and the souls of men, must do what they can, and God will accept of them.

The gospel of Christ is never the less honourable in itself, nor should be ever the less acceptable to us, for any disadvantageous circumstances of this kind, which the preaching of it may be at any time reduced to. It is not the place but the heart that God looks at.[t] It was in the house of Cornelius that the Holy Ghost first descended, in the dew of Peter's preaching upon the Gentiles. The master of the feast sent his servants into the highways and the hedges, to invite guests to the wedding supper.

And those who, in such a cloudy and dark day, open their doors to God's ministers and people, out of a sincere love to Christ and his gospel, whatever inconvenience they may sustain, shall be no losers by it in the end; sure a church of Christ brought into a house (and we often in the New Testament meet with a "church in the house") cannot but bring as valuable a blessing along with it, though perhaps not so sensible a one, as the ark of God brought into the house of Obed-edom.[u] Simon Peter was soon repaid with a great draught of fishes, for lending Christ his boat to preach a sermon out of,[v] and (which was a better reward) was made a fisher of men.

We have reason to be thankful to God that we are not reduced to such straits as our suffering brethren in France are at this day reduced to; but it is our wisdom to prepare for changes, and to resolve, that whithersoever the ark removes, we will remove and go after it.[w]

(2.) They always embraced such opportunities of spreading the gospel, and doing good to the souls of men, as visiting people at their houses gave them. Our Lord Jesus preached wherever he visited. Mary heard his word, and Martha should have heard it, in their own house.[x] St. Paul, at Ephesus, taught not only publicly in the synagogue, and the school of Tyrannus, but from house to house;[y] and the apostles, at Jerusalem, not only in the temple, but *in every house* continued to teach and preach Jesus Christ.[z]

Private and personal application would make our public work the more successful; and some, perhaps, will give a more earnest heed to that which is spoken to them, by themselves, about their souls and their salvation, than to that which they only hear in common with others. Peter must not only cast a net, but sometimes cast a hook, into the sea, with which the fish may be caught that had escaped the net.[a] And if the words of the wise be as *nails*, this will help to fasten them, as *nails in a sure place*.[b] Hereby we may come to know what people have to say against being religious, and what their excuses are with which they support themselves in a sinful way; and by giving suitable answers to both, may help them over the particular difficulty that lies in their way.

Thus, we may express more condescension and compassion (two excellent principles in a minister) than we can in our public administrations. Thus, we may give more particular reproofs and admonitions, counsels and comforts, suited to the case of each person and family; may, with that which is indeed the tongue of the learned, speak a word in season;[c] and may learn the better how to direct the arrow in public, that it may not always come from a bow *drawn at a venture*.

But if the priest's lips should *keep knowledge*, and have it ready to impart upon all occasions, the people should seek the law at his mouth,[d] and desire instruction. Ministers would gladly give you the best advice they can about your spiritual concerns, if you would *ask it*, or *give them an opportunity for it;* and, when they come to your houses, or you are in company with them, would ask, (as of old they used to do of the prophet,) *What hath the Lord answered thee?* and, *What hath the Lord spoken?*[e] *Watchman, what of the night?* They who would have the benefit of an oracle must consult it.

2. They are instructed to say, *Peace be to this house;* that is, to the inhabitants of it; to all under this roof; to the master of the family, for be he ever so great he needs this blessing; and to all the members of the family, for be they ever so mean they are not excluded from this blessing. In Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free. Ignatius's bishop was to take cognizance even of the servants of the families that belonged to his charge.

Peace be to you, was a common form of salutation among the Jews; but no doubt it is here intended for more than a compliment, or a piece of civility and good manners: it does indeed well become Christ's ministers to be very respectful and obliging to all. The just and undissembled expressions of honour and tenderness to those with whom they converse, will not only be an ornament to their profession, but may help to gain them an interest in the affections of people, improvable to the best purposes as on the contrary, their ministry may be prejudiced more than they are aware of, by a rude and morose behaviour. But these words here, are to be used by them in the same sense, and with the same solemnity that Christ used them to his disciples, after his resurrection, when he stood in the midst, and said unto them, once and again, *Peace be unto you*;[f] by

t Acts i. 24. u 2 Sam. vi. 12. v Luke v. 3, 4. w Josh. iii. 3. x Luke x. 39. y Acts xx. 20. z Acts v. 42.

a Matt. xvii. 27. b Eccl. xii. 11. c Isa. l. 4 d Mal. ii. 7. e Jer. xxiii. 37. f John xx. 19, 21.

which he lodged this peace with them, as a sacred deposit, to be communicated by them, as his agents, to the church: *Peace be to you*, and, in you, to all believers. Receive the olive-branch of peace, and carry it with you to all nations; receive from him who has authority to give it, and who can command peace to be the fruit of the lips, the fruit of *your* lips.[g] They were to go into all the world, with these words in their mouths, *Peace be unto you.* They were for peace; but when they spake, the world was for war[h]—with them, with Christ himself.

Now the gospel they preach was an everlasting gospel,[i] and Jesus Christ is, in it, the same *to-day* that he was *yesterday*;[k] and, therefore, what *they* were to say, in the same name, *we* are to say, *we* do say: *Peace be unto you.* I say, (the unworthiest of all who are employed on this great errand,) *Peace be to this congregation;* Peace to every one who hears me this day. *For my brethren and companions' sake, I will now say, Peace be unto you.*[l] That is,

(1.) We are to preach peace to all; to publish and proclaim the gospel of peace; to notify to the children of men the covenant of peace; to invite them to come and take the benefit of it, and for their greater satisfaction to administer the seals of it. When the first-begotten was brought into the world, the angels of heaven, in token of their communion with the church militant, sang, *Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace*;[m] and when he was brought into *Jerusalem*, the disciples on earth, in token of their communion with the church triumphant, sang, *Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest*;[n]—so that both the upper and lower world share in, and give thanks for, this peace. The ministers of the gospel bring good tidings, for they publish peace.[o] We are warranted to make a general offer of peace to all, upon easy and reasonable terms: PEACE, that is,

[1.] Reconciliation,—and no war. The case is plain that sin has been the parent of disagreement between God and man. As soon as ever man had eaten the forbidden fruit, his God, who made him, became his enemy and fought against him;[p] in token of which, a cherubim was set, with a flaming sword that turned every way, threatening death, while he kept the way of the tree of life.[q] The quarrel is hereditary; we are by nature children of wrath, because children of disobedience; the broken law lays us under the curse, and sets the terrors of God in array against us. And if God proceed in his controversy with us, it will certainly terminate in our endless ruin; for who knows the power of his anger?

But is the breach wide as the sea, that it cannot be healed? Is the case desperate? Blessed be God, it is not; the gospel we preach shows us that God's thoughts toward us are thoughts of peace;[r] that Christ undertakes to be our peace;[s] and thus the counsels of peace were *between them both.*[t] It discovers to us how satisfaction was made for the violation of the first covenant, and a foundation laid for a treaty of peace; how the enmity was slain by the cross of Christ, and a happy expedient found to bring God and man together again in a new covenant. Behold, *we bring you glad tidings of great joy*, the best news that ever came from heaven to earth, that *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.*[u] There is not only a cessation of arms, and a truce for a time, but methods proposed for a lasting, an everlasting, accommodation; Infinite Wisdom having found a ransom.

Now when we say, *Peace be unto you*, we thereby proclaim to the rebellious children, That whoever will may come and take the benefit of this act of indemnity; conditions of peace are offered them, which they cannot with any colour of reason except against; God is willing to be reconciled to you upon gospel terms; and, therefore, we as ambassadors for Christ beseech you in his stead to be reconciled to him.[v] You deceive yourselves into your own ruin, if you say you shall have peace though you go on still in your sins;[w] but we court you to your own happiness, when we tell you you shall have peace, if you return, and repent, and yield yourselves to the Lord. The great God, by his prophet, has assured us, that he is not implacable, for fury is not in him;[x] (righteous he is, but not furious;) yet withal that he is irresistible, and we are unable to stand before him, for *who would set the briars and thorns against him in battle?* which will be so far from giving check to a consuming fire, that they will bring fuel to it; he will *go through them, yea, he will burn them together.* What must a man do then who sees himself ready to be swallowed up by the divine wrath? The God of heaven tells him what he must do: *Let him take hold on my strength*, (take hold by a lively faith on Christ crucified, who is the power of God, and his arm revealed,) *that he make peace with me;* let him submit, and return to his allegiance, accommodate himself to his God, and to his duty, and *he shall make peace with me; he* shall have the comfort of it, and all shall be well.

[2.] Riches,—and no want. It is not only the extinction of an unhappy controversy, but the settling of a happy correspondence; *Peace be to you*, is as much as *All good be to you.* When the Psalmist prayed for *peace within Zion's walls*, he explained himself in the next words, *prosperity be within thy palaces*;[y] and meant no less, when, for his brethren and companions' sake, he said, *Peace be within thee.* So when we say, *Peace be to this assembly*, we make

g Isa. lvii. 19. h Ps. cxx. 7. i Rev. xiv. 6. k Heb. xiii. 8. l Ps. cxxii. 8. Gal. vi. 16. m Luke ii. 14. n Luke xix. 38. o Isa. lii. 7. p Isa. lxiii. 10.

q Gen. iii. 24. r Jer. xxix. 11. s Eph. ii. 14. t Zech. vi. 13. u 2 Cor. v. 19. v 2 Cor. v. 20. w Deut. xxix. 19. x Isa. xxvii. 4, 5. y Ps. cxxii. 7, 8.

you in God's name a fair offer of life and all happiness; of all that which is agreeable to the nature of your souls, as you are rational and immortal creatures,—and to their necessity, as you are guilty and sinful; of the benefit of all those exceeding great and precious promises, which will make a portion for you, a *portion for ever*, for the life that now is, and that which is to come.

Peace be to you, that is, prosperity, soul prosperity, all the welfare of both worlds, the *unsearchable riches of Christ*,[a] and all that substance which they who love wisdom are made to inherit;[b] not only food that you may live, but gold tried in the fire that you may be rich.[c] All the treasures that are hid in the new covenant, in that abridgment of it, *God will be to you a God;* they are all your own, if you please to make them so by a lively faith. This spiritual wealth and riches shall be in that house on which this peace rests, even righteousness that endures for ever.[d]

Peace be to you, that is, comfort and joy, and a holy serenity and satisfaction of soul, such as the smiles of the world cannot give, nor its frowns take away; that peace which is the effect of righteousness, even quietness and assurance for ever;[e] everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace. This is that wine and milk, that nourishment and refreshment for the soul, which are to be bought without money and without price;[f] that water of life, of which we may take freely, abundantly, and free of cost.[g] *This day is* SALVATION *come to this house*,[h] so our Saviour himself explains this comprehensive word: PEACE *be to this house*, all the THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION.

We are in God's name to make a general offer of this peace to all, not knowing to whom it belongs, or who will accept of it: as Cyrus proclaimed liberty to all the children of the captivity, though none shook off their chains, but those *whose spirits God raised to go up*. The offer is made to you this day, and we *beseech you that you receive not the grace of God herein in vain*. You are not sure that ever you shall have another offer made you, and therefore, for the Lord's sake, do not reject this.

(2.) We are to pray for peace to all; not only to make a tender of it, but to seek unto God for it. *Peace be unto you* is the benediction, which with *grace*, necessarily prefixed, the apostle Paul gives to all his friends to whom he directs his epistles, *Grace be unto you, and peace*. And all the ministers of Christ must give themselves to prayer as well as to the ministry of the word,[k] must speak *to God for you*, as well as *from God to you*. The priests under the law were not only to teach the people the good knowledge of God, but to bless them in the name of the Lord, to bless them with this blessing in the text, *The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace*.[l]

Our prayers should be mixed with our preaching, as St. Paul's are with his writing, in all his epistles. A devout and pious ejaculation in the midst of a discourse, may help to raise the hearts of those we speak to, as well as our own. However, our preaching must be both prefaced and attended with our prayers, else we do but half our work, nay, we do none at all to any purpose. The watchmen on Jerusalem's *walls* must give God no rest, but continue instant in prayer:[m] and certainly we shall do so if we be in good earnest in our work, and desire to see the fruit of it; for it depends entirely on the divine blessing. We labour in vain, if God say of us as he did of some of the prophets of old, *they shall not profit this people at all*:[n] nor will our pains in dressing the vineyard turn to any account, if God *command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it*.[o] And the dews of this blessing must be fetched down by prayer. *God will for it be inquired of*, and it is fit he should.

It is certain that God's grace can bring people to heaven without our preaching: but our preaching can never bring people to heaven without God's grace; and, therefore, we should be as much in care, as much in earnest, to pray for the operations of grace, as to *propose* the offers of grace; and may better expect in that way to succeed. If we cannot preach people to Christ, let us endeavour to pray them to Christ; for in vain do we merely prophesy upon the dry bones, saying, *O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord*, for though the effect of it may be a noise and a shaking, yet still there is no breath in them; we must therefore look up, by prayer, to the Spirit, as the prophet did, *Come, O breath, and breathe upon these slain*;[p] and if a spirit of life from God enter into them, then, and not till then, we gain our point. God can persuade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem,[q] when we cannot.

Let us therefore pray for the peace of the church—the house—the heart—into which we enter with the gospel: that is,

[1.] We must earnestly desire the welfare and salvation of precious souls; and not be cold and indifferent about it. We know not God's secret will, and therefore must concur with his revealed will; by which it appears, not only that he does not desire the death of sinners, but that he most pathetically wishes their life and happiness; *O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandment!*[r] says he; *O that Israel had walked in my ways!*[s] And when they promised fair, *O that there were such a heart in them!*[t] And thus should we stand affected:—"Here are precious souls, capable of eternal bliss, but in danger of eternal ruin; O that we could prevail with

a Eph. iii. 8. b Prov. viii. 21. c Rev. iii. 18. d Ps. cxii. 3. e Isa. xxxii. 17. f Isa. lv. 1. g Rev. xxii. 17. h Luke xix. 9. i Ezra i. 3, 5. k Acts vi. 4.

l Numb. vi. 26. m Isa. lxii. 6. n Jer. xxiii. 32. o Isa. v. 6. p Ezek. xxxvii. 7—10. q Gen. ix. 27 r Isa. xlviii. 18. s Ps. lxxxi. 13. t Deut. v. 29.

them to flee from the wrath to come, and to lay hold on everlasting life! O that we might be instrumental to snatch them as brands out of the burning, and to present them as living sacrifices to God!"

We should earnestly desire the *salvation of all*, and the *success of the gospel in the hands of others*; St. Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles; and yet his heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, That they may be saved,[u] and that the apostles of the circumcision might see of the fruit of their labours. But we should, in a special manner, be solicitous for the spiritual welfare of those *to whom we are sent*, and with whom *we deal*; the flourishing of the vineyards which we are made the keepers of. *These* were to the apostle as his children, his little children, whom he had a particular tenderness for, and of whom he even travailed in birth again to see Christ formed in them;[v] he was even pained to see the accomplishment of his desires and hopes concerning them. How greatly did he *long after them all in the bowels of Christ Jesus*.[w] The Lord fill all his ministers with such a love as this to precious souls; that, as Titus did, we may walk in the same spirit, in the same steps, with blessed Paul; being willing and glad, as he was, to spend and to be spent for their good.[x]

[2.] These desires of the salvation of souls must be offered up to God in prayer. We must look up to God, and beg of him to pity and help those whom we pity, but cannot help without his grace, that are yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, and to deliver them from going down to the pit. We bring them the means of grace; but we must look up to him for a blessing upon those means, and for grace to go along with them, to make them effectual. When as friends of the bridegroom, we court the affections of souls for him, that they may be espoused to him, we must do as Abraham's servant did, look up to heaven for success: *O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day*;[y] let the message of peace be entertained, and that faithful saying, which is so well worthy of all acceptation, be believed and accepted.

When we say, *Peace be unto you*, we mean, *The Lord of peace himself give you peace*, true peace, all peace, *always, by all means*;[z] that peace of God which will rule in your hearts,[a] and make them holy, and which will keep your hearts and minds,[b] and make them calm and easy. We can but *speak the words of peace*, it is God only who can *speak peace*, that can *create peace*, and in his hands therefore we have the work. We do but go, as Gehazi, with Elisha's staff, which will not awake the dead child: nay, Elisha can but stretch himself upon the child; he must look up to the God of life for the spirit of life to enter into him.[c] We cannot by any power of our own make dead sinners alive, or drooping saints lively; we must therefore have our eyes up to the Lord, to *say unto them* "*Live*,"[d]—to say, as one having authority, (for *we* can only show our good will,) *Peace be unto you*.

[3.] It is good to let those we preach to know that we pray for them. We must not only say to God, *Peace be to this house*, but we must say it in the hearing of those that dwell in it. St. Paul, in his epistles, often tells his friends what those things were for which he prayed for them, that they might be encouraged to hope they should obtain those blessings in answer to his prayers, and might with the more boldness ask them of God for themselves. The blessings which Christ's ministers pronounce on the congregations of his people, is not to be thought lightly of, but to be reverently waited for, and gladly received, because God, in it, puts his name upon them.[e] And if we in faith say *Amen* to it, we may hope that God will, and then we are blessed indeed.

We should take all opportunities to make those we preach to sensible, how truly and earnestly desirous we are of their eternal peace and welfare; that, if possible, we may awaken them to a due concern about it, and convince them that we love them, which will very much facilitate the entertainment of our message. We should make it appear, even to those who turn a deaf ear to our calls, that nevertheless we dare not *sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for them*. Our Lord Jesus by his tears and good wishes testified his good will to Jerusalem, even when the things which belong to her peace were hid from her eyes.[f]

We now see our work, and something of the meaning of the words here put into our mouths; *Peace be to this house*, Peace be to this congregation. The Lord help us to carry them through all our preaching, and praying, with a sincere love to Christ and souls.

II. What the success of ministers is, and is likely to be, in their preaching and praying; what is the fruit of their labour, and what the effect of their going thus from place to place, speaking *peace* wherever they come, *peace and truth*.

As to themselves:—If they be faithful in the trust reposed in them, and their hearts upright with God in the discharge of it, whatever acceptance they and their message meet with among men, they are sure to be accepted of the Lord,[g] and that they are ambitious of, and labour for. *We are a sweet savour unto God in those that perish, as well as in those that are saved*,[h] if we be sincere in doing our part. Though we should not gain our point, yet we shall in no wise lose our reward; though it be not well succeeded, if it be said, "*Well done thou good and faithful servant*," we shall *enter into the joy of our Lord*.[i]

u Rom. x. 1. v Gal. iv. 19. w Phil. i. 1. x 2 Cor. xii. 15, 18
y Gen. xxiv. 12. z 2 Thess. iii. 16. a Col. iii. 15.
b Phil. iv. 7. c 2 Kings iv. 31, 34. d Ezek. xvi. 6. e Numb. vi. 27.
f Luke xix. 41. g 2 Cor. v. 9. h 2 Cor. ii 15. i Matt. xxv. 21

Our Master himself, though as to the chosen remnant, he was sure to see of the travail of his soul[i] to his satisfaction; yet, as to others, he had recourse to this for his comfort, *Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious.*[k] As we must deliver our message to those with whom we deal, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear,[l] so when we come to return an answer, if we have delivered it faithfully, we shall give up an account of ourselves with joy, though of many we give up our account with grief. Though Wisdom herself calls, and yet is refused, she will be justified of all her children,[m] and glorified of God; and so shall Wisdom's maidens. But,

As to those to whom we minister:—the success is varied; not the same with all. On some, the peace comes which we preach and pray for; on others, it does not. Some are the better for our preaching and praying: to them the word is a savour of life unto life,[n] of life spiritual unto life eternal; they are our comfort, and will be our crown. But others get no good at all by the instructions given them, and the pains we take with them; even the word of life is to them a savour of death unto death; instead of making them better it makes them worse, hardens their hearts, and aggravates their corruption, and so they are twice dead.[o] Those of the same family, the same fraternity, who have had the same education, have sitten under the same ministry, and have given to each other the right hand of fellowship, may yet experience the effects of the word thus vastly different. *Two in a bed together,—one taken* for life, *the other left* to perish.[p]

We are ready to think the case is so plain on religion's side, that with all to whom it is fairly stated it should of itself carry immediate conviction; that Christ and holiness have such beauty in them, without comparison, and without controversy, that all we preach to should presently be brought to be in love with them. But, alas, it is not so; after all, many do not believe our report;[q] nay, few in comparison do. As it was among Pharaoh's servants, some took the warning given of the impending plague of hail, and housed their cattle;[r] others did not, but left them in the field; so when St. Paul preached, some believed the things that were spoken,[s] but others believed not, though they were spoken with such convincing evidence. Thus it has been constantly from the days of the prophets unto this day; and thus *it will be:* the good seed of the word falls on some ground where it is lost and thrown away; on other, where it takes root and brings forth fruit. The preaching of Christ and the apostles, was acceptable and profitable to some, while others contradicted and blasphemed it. And if we see the like still, we are not to marvel at the matter.

2. It is unknown to us what the success of our ministry *will be*, and perhaps what it is. When the disciples were to say, *Peace be to this house*, they could not tell whether the Son of peace were there or no; nay, it may be when they became better acquainted with the house, yet they could not with certainty discover whether their peace did rest upon it, or no: *The Lord knoweth them that are his*,[t] but we do not. God did indeed assure Paul, for his encouragement to preach the gospel at Corinth, that he had much people in that city.[u] But, ordinarily, we cast the net into the sea, not knowing whether any thing will be enclosed; nay, oftentimes we toil all night, and catch nothing, when we promised ourselves a full draught.[v] And, on the other hand, after many disappointments, at Christ's word we let down the net, and enclose a great multitude.

Sometimes we meet not with the success we hoped for. Those who seemed very willing to hear us, yet we cannot persuade to heed us, nor to mix faith with what they hear. We are to them as a lovely song,[w] but that is all. Paul was called, by vision, to Macedonia; and yet, at his first coming, there appeared but a slender harvest to be gathered in. Nay, those with whom we thought we had gained our point, sometimes disappoint us, and prove not as we expected; the hopeful buds and blossoms are blasted, and no fruit is brought forth to perfection. Those who seemed enclosed in the gospel net, slip through again and are gone; and after they had escaped the corruption that is in the world, are again entangled therein, and overcome;[x] and forfeit the peace we hoped should have rested upon them. It was Christ's prerogative to know what was in men, and what they would prove.

Sometimes ministers have better success than they looked for. Nineveh repents at the preaching of Jonah; and the publicans and harlots were wrought on by John the Baptist's ministry, notwithstanding the great austerity of his conversation. The church has sometimes been herself surprised with the multitude of her converts, and has asked, *Who hath begotten those?*[y] *Who are these that fly as a cloud?*[z] The beginning perhaps was small, and as a grain of mustard seed; but the latter end greatly increases. The seed that seemed lost under the clods, springs up a great while after. One labours, and another enters into his labours;[a] one hand lays a foundation, and another builds upon it. John the Baptist was sent to *prepare* the way of the Lord, and much of the good effect of his ministry appeared when he was gone. Many a minister does more good than he thinks he does, more than he can know, and more than perhaps it is fit he should know. It will be all in good time to know what fish are enclosed

i Isa. liii. 11. k Isa. xlix. 5.
l Ezek. ii. 5. m Prov. i. 24. n 2 Cor. ii. 16.
o Jude 12. p Luke xvii. 34. q Isa. liii. 1
r Exod. ix. 20. s Acts xxviii. 24. t 2 Tim. ii. 19.
u Acts xviii. 10. v Luke v. 5. w Ezek. xxxiii. 32.
x 2 Pet. ii. 20. y Isa. xliv. 21. z Isa. lx. 8. a John iv. 38.

in the net when it is brought to shore. There is a day in which the secrets of all hearts will be manifested; and let us judge nothing before that time.

3. The success of our ministry will be *according as people are.* So much is intimated in the text; according as the inhabitants are sons of peace, or not, accordingly our peace will, or will not, rest upon the house. The physic operates according to the constitution of the body; the same sun softens wax, and hardens clay; *recipitur ad modum recipientis—the effect depends upon the temper with which it is received.* The same parables which made divine truths more plain and familiar to those who were humble and willing to be taught,[b] made them more obscure to those who were proud and prejudiced, and willingly ignorant.[c] Christ himself is a precious stone to them who believe; but to them who be disobedient he is a stone of stumbling. There are scorners, who, when we have said all we can, will delight in scorning, and fools who will hate knowledge;[d] but there are Bereans, who are more noble and better disposed,[e] wise just men, who will receive instruction, and will be yet wiser, and increase in learning.[f] If our gospel be hid, it is hid from those whose minds Satan has blinded.[g] If it be revealed, it is to those who have the spirit of wisdom and understanding though they be but babes.[h]

4. The success of our ministry will be *as God leases;* according as he gives, or withholds, his grace. The word of God, like the rain, shall accomplish that for which he sends it,[i] and causes it to come, *whether* (as Elihu says of the rain) *it be for correction, or for his land, or for mercy;*[k] but whatever errand it is sent upon, it shall not return to him void. If Lydia attend to the things that are spoken by Paul, it is not because *he* is an eloquent preacher, or because *she* is a considerate hearer, but because the Lord opens her heart.[l] *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God only that giveth the increase.*[m]

We have but the dispensing of the means of grace; and we must be careful and faithful in doing it; but we have not the dispensing of the grace which is necessary to make those means effectual; God reserves that in his own hand, and dispenses it according to his own pleasure, as it is fit he should, for it is his own. In this, our blessed Saviour himself acquiesced; and thereby has taught us to do so; *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*[n] *Hath not the potter power over the clay?*

As to our success:

(1.) The text gives us encouragement to hope, that some shall be the better for our praying and preaching; we shall meet with those who are sons of peace, who are disposed to submit to the commands, and qualified to partake of the privileges, of the gospel peace. As Wisdom is said to be justified by her children, so peace, to be welcomed by her sons; and on the houses where these sons of peace are, our Master does us the honour to tell us, that *our peace shall rest.* It is *his* peace; but he is pleased to call it *ours*, because we are concerned, in the first place, to make sure an interest in it ourselves; and because we are intrusted to make a tender of it to others. It is our peace, in the same sense that St. Paul calls the gospel *my gospel,*[o] because he was a minister and messenger of it. If the master of the family be a son of peace, your peace shall rest upon the whole house; they will all fare the better for his acceptance of your ministry; *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*[p] And the more diffusive your benign influences are, the more satisfaction it will be to you. We may comfort ourselves with this, as St. Paul does, that we so run, not as uncertainly, we so fight, not as those that beat the air;[q] though some reject our message, to others it will be acceptable; so that whatever our melancholy fears sometimes may be, we shall not labour in vain, nor spend our strength for nought and in vain. But,

Who are the sons of peace, on whose heads, and hearts, and houses, the blessings of peace shall come? I answer,

[1.] Those who are so by the designation of the divine counsel; the chosen of God, whom he hath set apart for himself to be vessels of mercy.[r] We read of those whom God has as his people, and whom Christ has as his sheep,[s] who are yet to be effectually called, and brought home. As a son of death is one destined to death, so a son of peace is one predestined to peace. The elect are sons of peace; for they are heirs of it, and were from eternity, in the covenant of redemption, given to Christ who is our peace, and the Prince of peace, to be his children, to bear his image, partake of his nature, and be under his tuition, and as such to be presented to the Father; *Behold I and the children which God has given me.*[t] *My peace I leave with you.* The covenant of peace between God and man, is grounded upon the counsel of peace which was between the Father and the Son[u] from eternity, concerning the salvation of the chosen remnant.

Now it is certain, that all who were given to Christ, shall come unto him, and none of them perish;[v] for he will be able to give a good account of them all in the great day, and none of them shall be missing. Therefore it is, that as many as were ordained to eternal life shall infallibly believe,[w] for the election shall obtain, though the rest be blinded,[x]

b Matt. xiii. 13, 16. c 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8. d Prov. i. 22.
e Acts xvii. 11. f Prov. ix. 9. g 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.
h Matt. xi. 25. i Isa. lv. 10, 11. k Job xxxvii. 13.
l Acts xvi. 14. m 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7. n Luke x. 21.

o Rom. ii. 16. p Acts xvi. 31. q 1 Cor. ix. 26.
r Acts xviii. 10. s John x. 16. t Heb. ii. 13.
u Zech. xvii. 13. v John vi. 39, 40.
w Acts xiii. 48. x Rom. xi. 7.

because the foundation of God stands sure, and none of his purposes are abortive. Those whom God has ordained to glory shall be brought to it by the ordinary means of grace and peace; and ministers are sent in pursuance of that design, that the purpose of God according to election may stand.[y]

[2.] Those who are so by the operations of the divine grace. They are the sons of peace, in whom God has wrought a gracious readiness to admit the word of the gospel in the light and love of it; whose hearts are made soft to receive the impressions of it, so that they are turned as clay to the seal. Those come to Christ, and so come under the dominion of this peace, whom the Father draws[z] by preparing grace, and whom, though unwilling, he makes willing in the day of his power,[a] by opening their understandings, and making their hearts to burn within them; of which two great works of divine grace, one on the intellectual, the other on the active, powers of the soul, our Lord Jesus gave remarkable specimens while he was here upon earth, after his resurrection, Luke xxiv. 32, 45.

They are the sons of peace; that is, qualified to receive the comforts of the everlasting gospel; in whom there is a good work of grace wrought, that whereas they were by nature vain, and carnal, and worldly, are become serious, and holy, and heavenly; who are born again, born from above, and partake of a new nature. To those who are sanctified, and to those only, we are commissioned to speak peace. Therefore the apostolical benediction puts grace before peace; *Grace be unto you, and,* then, *peace.* Those only who have received the spirit of holiness, are entitled to the consolations of God.

(2.) Wherein shall those who are thus the sons of peace be the better for our ministry? We are here told, that our peace shall rest upon them, that is,

[1.] Our *prayers* for them shall be heard. And even with an eye to our prayers, and in answer to them, as well as to his own promises, and in performance of them, God will bestow upon them all that good which is necessary, and will be sufficient, to make them happy for ever and easy now. When we bespeak peace *for* them, God will speak peace *to* them, he will bless his people with peace;[b] will pay out the legacy which Christ has left, by his last will and testament, to all who are his disciples indeed, upon our suing it out for them,—even his peace.[c] This is an encouragement to us to pray particularly for good Christians who are troubled in mind, and are of a sorrowful spirit; and to be humbly earnest with God in prayer for them, when it may be they cannot with any confidence pray for themselves—that it is here promised that peace shall be given, to all those to whom it belongs, in answer to our prayers; so that the effectually fervent prayer of a righteous man may avail much:[d] and what a joy may it be to us, if we thus become helpers of the joy of the Lord's people! And though the answer of peace does not come quickly, we must continue to pray and wait, and hearken what God the Lord will speak; for, sooner or later, he will speak peace to his people and to his saints.[e] Light is sown for them,[f] and in due time it will come up in a harvest of joy, though it may be it was sown in tears.

When we pronounce the blessing of peace upon a *mixed* congregation,—as to them who are indeed the sons of peace, God will say *Amen* to the blessing, will put his *fiat—let it be done,* to it, "They are blessed and they shall be blessed." We pray for *all,*—God will hear us for those who are the *children* of the covenant, and the promise; as Abraham prays for Ishmael,[g] and God hears him for Isaac. As the hand of his wrath shall find out all his enemies;[h] so the hand of his grace and blessing shall find out all his friends, wherever they are, none of them shall be lost in the crowd.

[2.] Our *preaching* to them shall answer the end, and be effectual. If they be the sons of peace, the glad tidings of peace we bring shall instruct them, and increase their knowledge; shall invite them to Christ, and strengthen their faith in him; shall work upon their affections, and inflame their love to him; shall govern them, and influence their whole conversation; shall comfort them, and enlarge their hearts to run the way of God's commandments. Our peace shall come upon them as a light shining from heaven to guide their feet *into* the paths of peace, and *in* those paths; nay, it shall come upon them as power from on high, both to rule their hearts,[i] and give law to them; and to keep their hearts,[k] and give comfort to them. It shall come upon them, as the rain comes copiously upon the earth to water it, and they shall drink in this rain, and bring forth *herbs meet for them by whom they are dressed.*[l]

But O what a comfort is it, to be instrumental in furthering the holiness, and joy, of the sons of peace; in carrying the heirs of heaven forward toward their inheritance! Herein, we have the honour of *being workers together with God;* and are under shepherds, serving the gracious purposes of the chief Shepherd, who gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom.[m]

[3.] The fruit of *both* shall *remain;*[n] your peace shall not only come, but rest, upon the sons of peace; it shall continue with them, and they shall never lose the power and benefit of it; it is a good part which shall never be taken away[o] from those who have it; this peace shall take such deep rooting in

y Rom. ix. 11. z John vi. 44. a Ps. cx. 3.
b Ps. xxix. 11. c John xiv. 27. d James v. 16.
e Ps. lxxxv. 8. f Ps. xcvii. 11.
g Gen. xvii. 18, 19. h Ps. xxi. 8. i Col. iii. 15.
k Phil. iv. 7. l Heb. vi. 7. m Isa. xl. 11.
n John xv. 16. o Luke x. 42.

the soul that it shall never be extirpated; it shall be a well of living water which shall still spring up to life eternal.[o] Our Saviour encouraged his disciples with this, when he sent them forth into his harvest,—That they were gathering fruit unto life eternal;[p] in which both he who sows and they who reap shall for ever rejoice together.

(3.) The text also shows us that we ought not to be overmuch discouraged in our work, though there be many who are never the better for our praying and preaching. If the sons of peace be not among those to whom we bring the glad tidings of peace; if those to whom we minister be wilful and obstinate, and turn a deaf ear to the calls of the word, and will not hearken to the voice of the charmer; if we cannot fasten any thing upon them, to convince them of their folly in a sensual indulgence of the body, and a senseless neglect of their souls;—they who *were* filthy, are filthy still; and all the day long do we stretch out our hands in vain to a rebellious gainsaying people.

In this case, our own hearts suggest to us many sad thoughts: It is a temptation to us to question the credibility and acceptableness of the truths we preach, when there are so many who cannot be brought to entertain them, and submit to them; to question whether it be any advantage to have the oracles of God and the means of grace, and whether it were not as good be without them, since to so many who have them they are in vain. But we have ready an answer to this temptation, *What if some did not believe?* (Nay, what if many did not?) *Shall their unbelief* invalidate the covenant of grace and peace, and *make the truth of God of none effect? God forbid!*[q] We are told, previously, that so it would be; and, therefore, it ought not to be a stumbling-block to us. And the reason why they do not believe, and are not sons of peace, is not because there wants any thing to recommend this peace to them, but because their minds are *blinded* by the love of the world and the lusts of the flesh, and they will not come to Christ for eye-salve, will not come to him that they might have life.[r]

It is likewise a temptation to us to question, Whether we have the presence of God with us in our ministry, or no? We are ready to say, as Gideon did, *If the Lord be with us, where are all the wonders that our fathers told us of?*[s] the wonders that were wrought by the powers of the word, in casting down imaginations, and bringing high thoughts into obedience to Christ:[t] we now see not such signs; there are no more any converts; or, very few like the grape-gleanings of the vintage.

As to this, the text intimates that which may encourage us, and give us satisfaction. If we meet with those who are not the sons of peace,

[1.] It is true that our peace shall not come, or rest, upon them, as it does upon them who are the sons of peace; our prayers are not heard for them. We know not who have sinned unto death, while there is life there is hope, and therefore we are to pray for the worst; but if we did know, concerning any, as certainly as Samuel did concerning Saul, that God had rejected them, we should have very little reason to pray for them. *There is a sin*, a sinner, *unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it.*[u] Our preaching speaks no comfort to them; for we are to separate between the precious and the vile. And at the same time we say, *God has redeemed his servant Jacob*, and *they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts*, we must add, yet *there is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.*[v] When this blessing is pronounced upon the congregation, those in it who are not the sons of peace have no part or lot in the matter,[w] it is not designed for them. *Behold*, my servants *shall eat, but* ye *shall be hungry.*[x] It is true, that grace and peace shall be with them all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;[y] but it is as true, that if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, he is, and shall be, *anathema: maran-atha—accursed: the Lord comes.*[z] The blessing that rests upon the sons of peace shall never come upon the sons of Belial.

In God's name I therefore testify, to all who hear me this day, If you do not submit your souls to the sanctifying, commanding power of the gospel truths, they speak, they bring, no peace to you. You have no right to the blessings of the covenant, nor can lay any claim to its comforts, unless you come up to the terms of the covenant, and come under the bonds of it. Those and those only shall find rest for their souls[a] in Christ, who are willing to take his yoke upon them. You have many excellent ministers, and a great deal of lively, serious, powerful preaching; you have precept upon precept, and line upon line: but all this will bring no peace to you, if you continue under the power of a vain and carnal mind,—nay, it will but aggravate your condemnation another day.

We dare not speak peace to those to whom the God of heaven does not speak peace; nor tell those who go on still in their trespasses, they shall have peace notwithstanding; we should be false to God and your souls if we did. However you may flatter yourselves, we dare not flatter you, in a sinful way; we have not seen visions of peace for you, and therefore must not speak words of peace to you. To what purpose would it be to *daub a wall with untempered mortar*,[b] which would soon fall and bury you, and us too, in the ruins of it? We must say to every impenitent sinner, as Jehu did to Joram's messenger, *What hast thou to do with peace?*[c] True peace

o John iv. 14. p John iv. 36. q Rom. iii. 3. r John v. 40. Jud. vi. 13. t 2 Cor. x. 5. u 1 John v. 16. v Isa. xlviii. 20—22.

w Acts viii. 21. x Isa. xlv. 13. y Eph. vi. 24. z 1 Cor. xvi. 22. a Matt. xi. 29. b Ezek. xiii. 10, 16. c 2 Kings ix. 18.

thou canst not have without holiness. Be willing therefore, and obedient; and now at length, in this thy day, understand the *things which belong to thy peace;* for, (blessed be God!) yet, they are not hid from thine eyes.

[2.] The peace that does not find sons of peace to rest upon shall turn to us again. And this ought to satisfy us; as it quieted David, when he prayed for his persecutors, that though his kindness did not work upon them, nor were his prayers heard for them perhaps, yet they returned into his own bosom.[d]

Our peace shall turn to us; that is,

(1.) We shall have the comfort of having done our duty to God, in discharge of our trust; and of having done our part toward their salvation, in love to their souls. This will be peace to us, though it be not peace to them. Abundance of peace we may have in our own bosoms, if we have the testimony of our consciences for us, that we have dealt plainly with them, have given them fair warning of their misery and danger by reason of sin, have said again and again, *O wicked man, thou shalt surely die;*[e] have endeavoured to open to them the remedial law of repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; and have not wilfully kept back any thing that was profitable to them;[f] though we have piped to them and they have not danced, have mourned unto them, and they have not lamented.[g] We have done what we could, to frighten them from sin with the terrors of the law, and to allure them to Christ with the comforts of the gospel; but all in vain, they have not been wrought upon either by the one or by the other: yet their infidelity and obstinacy shall be no bar to our acceptance with God, who will have an eye to our sincerity, not to our success.

This peace will be our peace still, if we have some good hope, through grace, that though we cannot prevail with others to come to Christ, yet we have ourselves an interest in him; that we shall save ourselves, though we save not all who hear us;[h] that whatever becomes of them, we shall not be cast away at last. If *others* be not the better for our labours, the peace may return to ourselves, if we be the better; for we preach to ourselves, and must edify ourselves; and the less good we think we do to others' souls, the more good let us endeavour to get to our own souls, and then take the comfort of it. When those disciples returned, to whom Christ gave these instructions in the text, though they had had wonderful success, even beyond their own expectation, yet Christ directs them to rejoice more in the assurances they themselves had of their own bliss, than in their triumphs over Satan in others: *In this rejoice not, that the devils are subject to you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.*[i] And this cause for joy every faithful minister has, though he has not the success he wishes for.

(2.) We shall have commission to go on in our work notwithstanding. Our peace shall turn to us again; not only to be enjoyed by ourselves, but to be bestowed upon others, and communicated to them, to the next we meet with who are sons of peace. If one will not be wrought upon, it is to be hoped another will. Though many disbelieve our report, yet all do not; there are some who will bid it welcome. Though the body of the Jewish nation rejected the gospel of Christ, yet *at this present time,*[k] (says the apostle,) when the ferment is at the highest, and the opposition given to the gospel is most violent, yet *there is a remnant according to the election of grace,* a remnant even of that nation, who are sons of peace. And when the Jews thrust the kingdom of God away from them by their unbelief, the Gentiles embraced it with both arms. The peace which the apostles made a tender of to them, but they refused, was still in their hands, to carry to the Gentiles: *Lo, we turn to them.*[l]

It is indeed a temptation to us, when our message is slighted, to say, We will go no more on this errand; as Jeremiah was ready to say, when his ministry was ridiculed, *I will not make mention of the Lord, nor speak any more in his name:*[m] but we must never yield to any temptation of this kind, for woe unto us, if we preach not the gospel, *as we have opportunity,* whatever the issue be. If men will not hear us, our God will; and will crown humble, honest labours in his service with comfort and glory though they should not be crowned with any remarkable success.

(3.) We shall be witnesses against those who refuse so fair an offer. Our peace shall return to us again, as the summons is returned to the officer, if the party summoned is not to be found, that it may be produced in evidence, that he was legally summoned. The gospel is a testimony *to* us;[n] but if we receive it not, it will be a testimony *against* us. And the ministers of that gospel, who now follow you with importunity from day to day, beseeching you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God, but all in vain, will give up a sad account concerning you; and you will be upbraided with all the pains they have taken among you; it will all be brought into the account, with a "*Son remember;*" that will enhance the reckoning, and inflame the torment. The servant who was sent to invite the guests to the wedding supper, when he met with a repulse, came and showed his lord all these things.[p] Ministers bring in an account of the fruit of their labours. While the sons of peace will be their joy and crown of rejoicing, those who continue in a state of enmity will be for ever struck speechless by their test

d Psalm xxxv. 13. e Ezek. xxxiii. 8. f Acts xx. 20, 21.
g Matt. xi. 17. h 1 Tim. iv. 16. i Luke x. 20.
k Rom. xi. 3. l Acts xiii. 46. m Jer. x. 9.
n Matt. xxiv. 14. o Matt. x. 18. p Luke xiv. 21.

mony against them: "Lord, we called, but they refused; we warned them, day and night, with tears, but they stiffened their necks and hardened their hearts, and sent us away grieved." Many a time they complained of it at the throne of grace, and it made their work go on heavily upon their hands, their souls wept in secret for it; but when they shall testify it before the throne of judgment, they will awfully applaud and acquiesce in the sentence past upon them, and be content to see them perish.

Let us now make some application of all briefly.

1. Let this awaken us who are ministers to be faithful, and serious, and diligent *in* delivering our message; as those who are in some measure sensible of the vast importance of the work we are employed in, and the dispensation that is committed to us. O that I could stir up my own heart, and yours, duly to consider the inestimable value of that treasure which is lodged in us, though we are but earthen vessels;[q] that peace which we are to bring in God's name to mankind; those talents with which we are to trade till our Lord comes. Let us think who we are in trust for: for Christ and his honour, and the interests of his kingdom among men; for precious souls, and their everlasting welfare. We deal in matters of life and death; O let our care and zeal be proportionable; and let us make a business of our ministry, let us wait upon it,[r] and give ourselves wholly to it,[s] as those who must give account,—that our Lord when he comes may find us doing, *so* doing.

If we be unskilful, and know not how to divide the word of truth and peace aright;[t] if we be unfaithful, and soothe men up in their sins, or any way handle the word of God deceitfully, seeking our own things more than the things of Christ; if we be slothful, and unwilling to take pains, not affected ourselves with the great things of God with which it is our business to affect others; if we be lifeless and careless in praying and preaching, and defeat the end of the matter of both by the slight manner of the performance;—we shall have a great deal to answer for another day. If the watchmen do not give warning, or not so that it is likely to be heard or heeded, the sinners will perish; but their blood will be required at the watchmen's hands.[u]

And let us remember that we are to bring peace with us in all our ministrations, that peace of God which passeth all conception and expression; and therefore we ought to apply ourselves to that business, and not meddle with things that belong not to us. We are ambassadors of peace; let us not then sow discord, nor foment divisions; for if we do, we contradict our character, and forfeit the honour of it. Let us be at peace among ourselves, and covet the blessedness of those who are peace-makers.

2. Let us, when we have done what we can, look up to God for the success. We ought earnestly to desire that our labour may not be in vain, and to be in care that nothing may be wanting on our part, in order to the good effect of it; we should do more good if we were but more solicitous to do good, and set ourselves to devise things proper for that end, to choose out words wherewith to reason with people about their souls. But still we must depend upon the blessing of heaven for their success; and must be earnest in prayer for that blessing. We can but speak to the ear, it is God only that can teach the heart, and seal the instruction there.

When we go to study, let us pray to God to put a word into our mouth that shall suit the case, and reach the consciences, of those to whom we are to speak; to direct us both in the choice and management of our subjects, to fill our hands, (as the Hebrew phrase for consecration,) that we may fill the people's hearts, when we go to preach. Still we need help from heaven to deliver our message as becomes the oracles of God; with purity, gravity, and sincerity; with an air of tenderness and humility, as those who know the worth of souls, and our own unworthiness; and yet with an air of assurance, as those who are confident of the truth of what we say, and who know whom we have trusted. When we have preached, we have but sown the seed; still we must look up to God to water it, and to give to every seed its own body. When we proceed to pray, we must fetch in the influences of the blessed Spirit, to help us against our praying infirmities. Nay, we must look up to God for a blessing upon every word of advice, reproof, and comfort that we give, that it may answer the end.

And as we are to pray for the success of our own endeavours, so likewise we must be earnest with God in prayer for the concurrence of his grace with the labours of others. Thus we *must* help one another; and thus we *may*, though we are at a great distance from each other, and cannot otherwise be helpful. When the apostle forbids wishing "good speed" to those who bring any other doctrine,[v] it is intimated, that it was usual with the primitive Christians and ministers to bid those "God speed" who brought the true doctrine of Christ. Those who labour in Christ's harvest should be prayed for, as of old the reapers were, by them who passed by; *The blessing of the Lord be upon you; we bless you in the name of the Lord.*[w] God speed the gospel-plough!

3. Let us be very careful that we do not, by any irregularity in our conversation, hinder the success of our praying and preaching, and defeat the ends of them. If we be proud and vain, and loose in our walking; if we be intemperate, and indulgent of the flesh; if we be covetous, selfish, and worldly; if we be contentious, peevish, and passionate; or if any corrupt communication proceed out of our

q 2 Cor. iv. 10. r Rom. xii. 7. s 1 Tim. iv. 15. t 2 Tim. ii. 15. u Ezek. xxxiii. 6. v 2 John 10. w Ps. cxxix. 8.

mouth;—we pull down with one hand what we build up with the other; and not only tempt people, but even force them, to think, that we *ourselves* do not believe what we would persuade them to believe; and when we appear most serious in our public performances, do but act a part, and talk thus only because it is our trade: we do also provoke God to withdraw his presence from us, and to say, as he does of those prophets who walk not in his counsels, *They shall not profit this people at all.*[x]

Let our conversation be not only blameless and harmless, but exemplary for every thing that is virtuous and praise-worthy; thus let our light shine, that others may be taught, and guided and quickened, by it. Then may we hope it shall be with us as it was with Levi of old, who, while he walked with God in peace and equity, turned many away from iniquity.[y]

4. What success of our labours we have the comfort of, let God have all the glory of. Do we meet with any of those to whom we minister in holy things, who are awakened to a concern about their souls and eternity, and are asking the way to *Zion* with their faces thitherward?[z] Are there any of the children we have catechized who hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love, and have we the satisfaction of seeing them walk in the truth? When we look into the vineyards we are made the keepers of, do we find that the vines do in any measure flourish, and the tender grapes appear;[a] that the souls we watch over prosper and are in health? We cannot but rejoice herein, rejoice greatly; yet let us rejoice with humility; for I am sure we have nothing to be proud of, nothing to boast of, but a great deal to be ashamed of, and great reason to admire God's gracious condescension, that he is pleased thus far to own us, to honour us, though most unworthy. Let us rejoice with thankfulness, with many thanksgivings to God, whose strength is perfected in weakness, and his praise ordained out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. St. Paul, in his epistles, gives thanks to God for those churches that he had comfort in, and hopes of.

But let us rejoice with trembling, lest those whom we think espoused as chaste virgins to Christ should yet be beguiled, as Eve was, by the subtilty of the tempter; and let us always be jealous over them, as Paul was over his friends, with a godly jealousy,[b] lest it should prove at last we have bestowed upon them labour in vain.[c]

5. What disappointments we meet with, let us bear them patiently. Let us inquire whether we have not been wanting in our duty, and be humbled for our defects, and acknowledge that the Lord is righteous. St. Paul owns, that by the miscarriages of those among whom he had laboured, his God humbled him among them;[d] and the same good use we should make of the same trial, let it help to hide pride from us, and oblige us to depend upon the sufficiency of divine grace, and not upon any thing in ourselves, for without Christ we can do nothing.

When we suspect we do little good, yet let it be a comfort to us that we are going on in the way of our duty; that we are presiding in solemn religious assemblies, *from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another*, and so are serving Christ and his glory in the world. Good may be in operation, and we not aware of it; the gospel works like leaven, silently and insensibly;[e] and like the seed cast into the ground, which grows up (we know not how) while we sleep, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.[f] Nor let it be any uneasiness to us, that we are kept in doubt and in the dark concerning the success of our labours. When the net is drawn to shore we shall see what is enclosed; what good fish, and what bad:[g] and let us judge nothing before the time; the great day will clear all, and we must wait till then.

But if there be those whose sins go before unto judgment, who manifestly hate to be reformed, and will go on frowardly in the way of their heart; though we cannot but look upon them many a time with a sad heart, yet in this we must be satisfied, that *God will be glorified:* if God be not honoured by them, he will get him honour upon them, as he did on Pharaoh. They to whom our labour is in vain are not sons of peace; and, therefore, it should not be expected that our peace should rest upon them; Christ will see his seed, and we must not think to see any other for ours. If divine mercy be not glorified in their salvation, divine justice will be glorified in their destruction; and they will have nothing to say for themselves, nor will their ministers have any thing to say for them: the dresser of the vineyard who had interceded for the barren fig-tree, will be pleased, if at length it bear fruit, but if not, he gives it up, *Then after that thou shalt cut it down.*[h]

To conclude: Let this be an awakening word to all of you. You are, in this world, probationers for eternity; accordingly as you are, now, sons of peace or not, it is likely to be with you for ever. Are your ministers desirous to have their peace rest upon you, and are not you desirous of it? Are they in care about your souls, and will not you be in care about them? You have life and death, good and evil, set before you: choose life, that you may live, may live for ever. But if you will not come up to the terms of peace, but will perish in your rebellion, you cannot say but you have had fair warning given you of the consequences of it, so that your watchmen have delivered their souls, and left your blood to lie upon your own heads.

x Jer. xxiii. 32. y Mal. ii. 6. z Jer. l. 5.
a Cant. vii. 12. b 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3. c 1 Thess. iii. 5.
d 2 Cor. xii. 21. e Matt. xiii. 33. f Mark iv. 26—28.
g Matt. xiii. 48. h Luke xiii. 19.

A SERMON

ON

THE PROMISES OF GOD.

PREACHED MAY THE 7TH, 1710.

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2 COR. vii. 1.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

IT is the unspeakable privilege of all believers to have, as a certain possession, the precious promises of God. But under what notion have we the promises of God?

1. We have them as manifest tokens of God's favour towards us; and every one of them are yea, amen, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. We have them as fruits of Christ's purchase. The Lord having purchased us with his own blood, we have these promises produced by that inestimable grace.

3. They are plain and ample declarations of the good-will of God towards men, and therefore as God's part of the covenant of grace.

4. They are a foundation of our faith, and we have them as such; and also of our hope, on these we are to build all our expectations from God; and in all temptations and trials we have them to rest our souls upon.

5. We have them as the directions and encouragements of our desires in prayer. Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. Wherefore they are the guide of our desires, and the ground of our hope in prayer.

6. We have them as the means by which the grace of God works for our holiness and comfort, for by these we are made partakers of a divine nature, and faith, applying these promises, is said to work by love.

7. We have the promises as the earnest and assurance of future blessedness. By these eternal life and glory is secured to all true believers.

And now, having observed these things, let us review the blessed promises of God; and

The first is,—He hath promised that we shall be his people.

The Scripture,—*Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine,* Exod. xix. 5.

The second promise,—That all our sins shall be pardoned.

I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins, Isa. xliii. 25.

The third,—That our corruptions shall be subdued.

For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. vi. 14.

The fourth,—That the Spirit of grace shall be given us, to enable us for our duty in every thing.

I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them, Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

The fifth,—That God will put it particularly into our hearts, or circumcise our hearts to love him.

The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live, Deut. xxx. 6.

The sixth,—That he will give us the knowledge of his truth, and the comfort and the benefit of it.

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free, John viii. 32.

The seventh,—That he will unite our hearts to himself and to each other.

I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them, Jer. xxxii. 39.

The eighth,—That he will be tender of those that are weak.

He shall feed his flock like a Shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young, Isa. xl. 11.

The ninth,—That he will direct us in the way of our duty.

Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way, Ps. xxv. 8, 9.

The tenth,—That he will protect us from every thing that is really evil.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and even for evermore, Psa. cxxi. 7, 8.

The eleventh,—That he will supply us with all good.

The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing, Ps. xxxiv. 10.

The twelfth,—That he will answer our prayers.

Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son, John xiv. 13.

The thirteenth,—That he will silence our fears.

I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, I will help thee, Isa. xli. 13.

The fourteenth,—That he will bear us up under our burthens.

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms, Deut. xxxiii. 27.

The fifteenth,—That he will give us a sure and lasting peace.

The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever, Isa. xxxii. 17.

The sixteenth,—That he will admit us into fellowship and communion with himself.

Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple, Ps. lxv. 4.

The seventeenth,—That he will give us the comfortable enjoyment of ourselves.

His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth, Ps. xxv. 13.

The eighteenth,—That he will deliver us in and under our troubles.

Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him, Ps. xci. 14, 15.

The nineteenth,—That he will affect us in measure and in mercy, when we have need of it.

I will be his Father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee, 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15.

The twentieth,—That he will spare us with the tenderness of a fatherly compassion.

They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him, Malachi iii. 17.

The twenty-first,—That he will not persist in his controversy with us.

I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made, Isa. lvii. 16.

The twenty-second,—That he will speak comfort to us when we are in sorrow.

I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly, Ps. lxxxv. 8.

The twenty-third,—That he will proportion our trials to our strength.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. x. 13.

The twenty-fourth,—That he will put true honour upon us.

Them that honour me I will honour, 1 Sam. ii. 30.

The twenty-fifth,—That he will feed us with food convenient for us.

Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed, Ps. xxxvii. 3.

The twenty-sixth,—That he will clear up our injured reputation.

He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day, Ps. xxxvii. 6.

The twenty-seventh,—That he will comfort and relieve us in sickness.

The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness. Ps. xli. 3.

The twenty-eighth,—That he will prevent our apostasy from him.

I will make an everlasting covenant with them, and I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me, Jer. xxxii. 40.

The twenty-ninth,—That he will make all events conduce to our real welfare.

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, Rom. viii. 28.

The thirtieth,—That he will perfect the work of grace in us.

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, Phil. i. 6.

The thirty-first,—That he will be with us when we are old, to bear us up under all our infirmities

Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoary hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you, Isa. xlvi. 4.

The thirty-second,—That he will never desert us in any exigence whatsoever.

For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, Heb. xiii. 5.

The thirty-third,—That he will give us victory over our spiritual enemies.

The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly, Rom. xvi. 20.

The thirty-fourth,—That he will recompense our charity to the poor.

He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again, Prov. xix. 17.

The thirty-fifth,—That he will make up all our losses for his name's sake.

Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life, Matt. xix. 29.

The thirty-sixth,—That he will let us live long enough in this world, and give us a comfortable prospect of a better.

With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation, Ps. xci. 16.

The thirty-seventh,—That he will be with us when we come to die.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me, Ps. xxiii. 4.

The thirty-eighth,—That he will receive our souls into the arms of his love.

But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah! Ps. xlix. 15.

The thirty-ninth,—That he will take care of our posterity when we are gone.

The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee, Ps. cii. 28.

The fortieth,—That he will raise our bodies to life again.

This is the will of him that sent me, That every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day, John vi. 40.

The forty-first,—That he will own us in the judgment of the great day.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven, Matt. x. 32.

The forty-second,—That he will put us into possession of everlasting bliss.

And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life, 1 John ii. 25.

Repetition Text.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

And now what shall we say to these things?

I.—1. Let us be thankful to God for all these great and precious promises, that God should not only do us good, but engage himself by promises to do so.

2. Let us be ashamed of ourselves that we have not lived more upon these promises.

3. Let us encourage ourselves with these promises to go on cheerfully and resolutely in the way of our duty.

4. Let us acknowledge the truth of God, and his faithfulness to his promises. *There hath not failed one word of all his good promise, &c.* 1 Kings viii. 56.

5. We are concerned to treasure up these promises, that we may have them ready to use when we have occasion for them, to silence our fears, and to strengthen our faith.

6. Behold, what need we have to live by faith, through which, and by which, we make use of these promises. God gives by promise that we may take by faith; therefore set about that work, and be much in the exercise of it.

II. Here is our duty inferred from this privilege. Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit: by which is understood,

1. We must abhor that which is evil, and abandon all sin with an holy detestation.

2. We must cleave to that which is good; we must perfect holiness in the fear of God. Observe, The consideration of God's promises to us should strongly engage us against all sin, and to all duty. To show you what strength there is in this argument taken from the promises, to abhor that which is evil, observe, (1.) We are bound in gratitude to please him who has given us so many, so great and precious, promises, Ps. cxvi. 12. What shall I render? Oh, how great is his goodness which he hath laid up for them that fear him! God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoice, Ps. cviii. 7. Observe, (2.) We forfeit the benefit of God's promises if we do not make conscience of, and endeavour to keep, his commands. Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it, Heb. iv. 1.

III. We are taught the blessed fruits of these promises.

1. These promises furnish us with strength and grace sufficient against sin, and for duty. Turn you at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you.

2. These promises speak the language of Caleb and Joshua, who said, We are well able to overcome

the people, when they are about to enter into Canaan; while the other spies discouraged the tribes. Thus we may say, through the strength of divine grace, we shall be well enabled to overcome all our spiritual enemies, namely, the world, flesh, and devil, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Observe it.

3. God is faithful to these promises which he has made to us. Therefore we must not be false to those promises which we have made to him, Heb. x. 23. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised.

4. In having these promises we have great honour put upon us, and we ought to carry it as becomes us. God has promised to be to us a faithful God, a loving, a tender Father. Let us not wander out of the way of duty. If we have received the promise, as Abraham did, we ought to do some great act, in our obedience to his commands, as he did.

5. The promises secure to us an abundant reward for our obedience; therefore let us be stedfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 58.

And now having observed these things concerning the promises, let us explain fully the duty which is inferred. It contains two parts,

I. To be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.

II. To perfect holiness in the fear of God.

I. We must be cleansed, &c.

1. Therefore let us look upon sin as filthiness; let the grace of God, and the purity, not only of his nature, but also of his word and promises, make sin more odious and terrible than in the threatenings it appears dangerous. In the promises, sin appears loathsome, and filthiness itself. For, observe, (1.) It is odious to God, contrary to that purity of nature which appears in his promises, which should deter us from sin, Jer. xliv. 4. Oh! do not this abominable thing that I hate, Gen. xxxix. 9. How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God! Observe, (2.) Look upon sin as that which unfits us for communion with God; therefore, upon this account, let sin become odious to us. Observe, (3.) Sin in Scripture is called and compared to a wound, to a plague, to leprosy, &c. and all to make us fear and loathe it.

2. Let us cleanse ourselves from this filthiness, by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ; for it is he that is made to us both righteousness and sanctification. It is our duty to cleanse ourselves, but we cannot do this without God's grace, and he will not do it without our endeavours. This implies, (1.) That we truly repent of the sins which we have committed, and loathe ourselves for them. Whenever we go to worship God, we must lie down in our shame, and abhor ourselves, repenting in dust and ashes. (2.) That by faith we apply the blood of Christ to our consciences, and sprinkle them with it, and that we wash in that fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. We read that the Ammonites made themselves odious in the nostrils of David, and so they hardened themselves, that is, strengthened themselves, against him. Let us not act so against God, but let us lie low before the Lord, and make the Lord Jesus Christ our friend to reconcile us to God.

3. Let us mortify the habits of sin, and purge out the old leaven, both in the head and in the heart. Get clear of our bad principles, that we may not make so light of sin as we have done; cleanse ourselves from corrupt fancy, cleanse ourselves from all filthiness that is in the imagination. Great pains must be taken with the heart, to get it clear of all corrupt inclinations. Wash ye, make ye clean, indulge no evil thoughts in your hearts.

4. Let us watch against all occasions of sin, that is, all those things by which you have contracted pollutions. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. Keep at a distance from every thing which has the appearance of evil.

5. Let us resolve for the future to have no more to do with sin. Refrain from all acts of sin. Let him that has stole steal no more, Eph. iv. 28. Let him that has been drunk or unclean, be so no more, Isa. iv. 4. When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning, that is, by a saving knowledge of, and a sincere love to, God and his commandments, submit to the Spirit's influences, or you will never get the mastery over your sins and corruptions. Therefore you must put on a holy resolution, and take the kingdom of heaven by violence, for the violent take it by force.

6. Our care herein must be universal. We must cleanse ourselves, (1.) from all filthiness of the flesh from slothfulness and the love of ease, from sensuality and the love of pleasure, from gratifying the desires of the body with forbidden fruit, or indulging them too much, to the damage of the soul; for even lawful pleasures may turn into sin without due care and watchfulness over ourselves, such as gluttony, drunkenness, or seventh-commandment sins. (2.) We must cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the spirit; from pride, covetousness, and the love of the world, from fraud, deceit, and injustice, Job xxxi. 7. from all sinful anger, malice, hatred, and desire of revenge; for these are spiritual filthinesses, from all which we must be cleansed.

II. We must perfect holiness in the fear of God.

1. We must be holy.

That is taken for granted; for we cannot perfect holiness unless we begin it. We must be holy. What is that? (1.) We must be devoted to God, as

all holy persons and things under the law were. We must be holiness to the Lord. (2.) We must be conformed to God's likeness, and to his will. God's holiness is his agreement with himself; our holiness is our agreeableness to him. We must act in every thing as becomes our relation to God, Col. i. 10. That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, &c. and the image of God must be renewed upon us; be ye holy, saith the Lord, for I am holy. (3.) We must be employed in the services and worship of God; we must engage our hearts in all our approaches to him; we must employ our minds, and all the powers of our souls, in all the inward acts of inward worship, and in all outward worship also we must not only bow the knee, but also the heart, before the Lord; for heartless worship is vain worship, God will not accept it, and we ourselves shall be no gainers by it, so it must be in vain. (4.) We must be engaged in the interests of God's kingdom amongst men. To be holy, is to be on the Lord's side, and to espouse his cause, to be his witnesses, to be courageous and valiant for the truth, to contend earnestly for it, for great is the truth and it shall prevail; God will own and honour those that do own and honour him.

2. We must be sincere in our holiness, or perfecting holiness. For sincerity is our gospel perfection, as a good man said. I know no religion but sincerity, this is uprightness. Walk before me and be thou upright. By this is understood, (1.) We must be sanctified throughout. The whole man must be sanctified. The understanding must be enlightened, the will bowed and brought into obedience to the will of God, both to the will of his precepts to command them, and to the will of his providences to submit to them; and thus we stand complete in the whole will of God, that we may be sanctified in body, soul, and spirit, and so be perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2.) The whole law of God must be regarded, and a respect had to it. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments, Ps. cxix. 6. Let my heart be sound in thy statutes that I be not ashamed, *v.* 80. I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way, *v.* 128. O let us labour to be sincere to the day of Christ, like good and faithful servants waiting for the coming of the Lord.

3. We must be growing and making progress in holiness; though we cannot perfect it in this world, yet we must be perfecting it, that is, adding a greater degree to a lesser, pressing forwards towards perfection. (1.) The habits of grace must grow more confirmed and rooted, our resolutions against sin more settled, and our resolution for God and duty more steady. This is to perfect what is lacking in our faith, 1 Thess. iii. 10. (2.) The actings of grace must grow more and more vigorous and lively. We must be more ready for every good work. We must have more spiritual success in a lively exercise to resist sin, and all temptations that would insnare us. (3.) We must be more and more watchful, and upon our guard. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. Therefore be not high minded, but fear, Rom. xi. 20. We must never think ourselves good enough, and safe enough, but must be still growing wiser and better. (4.) We must be actuated and animated therein by the fear of God. That is, [1.] We must keep up a constant worship of God in our families, and in our closets; we must be frequent in holy adorings and admirings of God. This will be a good means of perfecting holiness, to be in the fear of the Lord every day, and all the day long. [2.] We must maintain a reverent regard to his majesty and authority, and this will keep us from sin; when others make bold with sin, we must stand in awe of God, as Nehemiah did, *ch.* v. 15. But so did not I, because of the fear of God. 3. We must have a continual dread of his wrath and vindictive justice. A fear of God's wrath and displeasure will be a means of keeping ourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

To conclude. The apostle directs his exhortation to his dearly beloved, so do I to you, my dearly beloved.

1. Apply the promises to yourselves, live upon them, take them to be your heritage for ever. Both you that are young, and you that are old, treasure up the promises. 2. Apply the precepts to yourselves, and live up to them, and be holy in all manner of conversation. Keep a conscience always void of offence both towards God and towards man.

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, Acts xx. 32. And may you be always looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith, till you come to be for ever with him. Amen.

DISPUTES REVIEWED:

IN

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE EVENING LECTURE, AT SALTERS HALL, ON LORD'S DAY, JULY 23RD, 1710.

MARK ix. 33.

——*What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?*

OUR Lord Jesus is here calling his disciples to an account about a warm debate they happened to have among themselves, as they travelled along, upon a question often started, but not yet determined, *Which of them should be the greatest?* They thought no other but that their Master should shortly enter upon the possession of a temporal kingdom, and all the pomp and grandeur of it, and they should be preferred with him; but they could not agree who should be prime-minister of state, and have the first post of honour. It is a sad instance of the remainders of corruption in the hearts even of good people; and shows that pride, ambition, and affectation of worldly honour, are sins that do most easily beset even Christ's own disciples; which, therefore, we should all carefully watch and strive against.

Probably our Lord Jesus overheard some words that passed in this dispute; for those who are hot upon an argument are apt to speak louder than becomes them; and when the temper is not kept within due bounds, commonly the voice is not. But whether he overheard them or no, he knew very well what they had been talking of, and every word that had been said, and, which was more than any *man* could know, from what principle it was said, and what more they would have said; for as there is not a word in our tongue, so there is not a thought in our heart, though newly risen and started there, though industriously suppressed and stifled there, but he knows it altogether.[a] He is that essential, eternal Word of God, who is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and before whom all things are naked and open.[b] Let all the churches take notice of this, That our Lord Jesus not only knows our work, but is he who searches the reins and hearts.[c]

And yet, though Christ knew what his disciples had been talking of, he asked them what it was, because he would know it from *them*, and would have them to confess their fault and folly in it; that from thence he might take occasion to rectify their mistakes, and to instruct and reason them into a better temper.

Think not that my design from this text is to arraign, examine, or inquire into any disputes or contests that may be among you, of any kind; for as (blessed be God) I know of no *particular* occasion for it, nor have any thing else in my eye, in the choice of this subject, but what is *common to all*; so if there were, I should think myself the unfittest man in the world to be a judge or a divider. And besides, if I should thus go about to take my Master's work out of his hands, I should contradict that which is my design—in putting this question to you *What was it that you disputed among yourselves by the way?*—and that is, to show you that our blessed Lord Jesus does and will inquire into these matters, and bind you over to his judgment.

Four things this text teaches us, who are all in profession *disciples* of Christ, as we are baptized Christians.

I. That we must all expect to be called to an account by our Lord Jesus.

II. That we must, in a particular manner, be called to an account about our discourses among ourselves.

III. That, among our discourses, we shall especially be called to an account about our disputes.

IV. That, of all our disputes, we shall be most strictly reckoned with for our disputes about precedency and superiority.

I. We must all expect to be called to an account

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a Ps. cxxxix. 4. b Heb. iv. 12, 13. c Rev. ii. 19, 23.

shortly, by our Lord Jesus, concerning the temper of our minds, and the course and tenor of our lives, now we are *in the way*.

1. We are all now *in the way*, following Christ, as his disciples here, in *consort*. We are *viatores —travellers*, under the conduct of our great Master, towards the better country. And here we are upon trial; it is the state of our probation; and according as our steps are, while we are in the way, our rest will be when we are at our journey's end. It concerns us therefore, what we have to do, to do it while we are yet in the way;[d] and whatever we do while we are in the way, to do it with an eye to our end.

2. There will be a review of what passes *in the way*;[e] it will all be called over again; every work and every word will be brought into judgment, will be weighed in a just and unerring balance, will be produced in evidence for us or against us. There will not need any repetition, every thing is now recorded in the book of God's omniscience; and it is enough that, in that day, the *books will be opened*, and all will be *judged out of those things which were* found *written in the books, according to their works*.[f] It concerns us therefore, whatever we do *in the way*, to do it as those who must give account, and to consider how it will pass in the account; how it will look in the review; that we may dread doing that which will make against us then, and may abound in that which will be *fruit abounding to our account*,[g] and which we shall meet again with comfort, on the other side death and the grave.

3. The account in the great day must be given up to our Lord Jesus, for we call him *Master and Lord*, as these disciples did; and to him therefore we are accountable, as *scholars* and *servants*, how we spend our time. He is our Judge, for he is our Law-giver;[h] and to him the Father has committed all judgment,[i] particularly that in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he has ordained.[k] Christ shall have the honour of it, and let all good Christians take the comfort of it, that he who is an advocate for all believers will be their judge: but withal, let it oblige us to the utmost care and circumspection in our walking: we must therefore labour to be accepted of the Lord, and approve ourselves to him in our integrity, because we shall all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ,[l] to give account of every thing done in the body. God made the world, by his Son; and by him, as the fittest person, he will judge the world.

Now this is a good reason,

(1.) Why we should judge ourselves, and prove our own work, and see that our matters be right and good against that day. Let us examine ourselves concerning our spiritual state, that we may make sure work for our own souls; and often call ourselves to an account concerning the way we are in, and the steps we take in that way, that we may renew our repentance for whatever we find to have been amiss, and make our peace with God in Christ. And *if we would* thus *judge ourselves, we should not be judged*[m] of the Lord. When we come to our journey's end, it will be asked, how we carried ourselves *in the way*. Let us therefore carry ourselves accordingly, and *ponder the path of our feet*.

(2.) It is a good reason why we should not judge one another, or be severe in our censures one of another: we thereby invade Christ's throne, for it is his prerogative to call his disciples to an account; and though he designed them to be one another's helpers, he never intended they should be one another's judges. *We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ*, and therefore must not judge one another. We must be judged ourselves; and may expect to be judged with severity, if we be severe in judging our brethren, for the measure we mete will be measured to us.[n] Our brethren likewise must be judged by the Lord Jesus, and, therefore, if we pretend to judge them, they are *coram non judice—before a judge without authority*. Who are we that we should judge another man's servant? *to his own master he stands or falls*,[o] and to his judgment it is fit we should leave him.

II. Among other things that pass *in the way*, we must expect to be called to account for what we have talked *among ourselves*. We are apt to make a light matter of this; and when we have talked at random, what comes uppermost, without regard to God or man, we think to turn it off with an excuse that it was but talk, and *words are but wind:* but we wretchedly mistake, and put a cheat upon ourselves, if that be true which our Saviour has told us, and undoubtedly true it is, that not only for every profane and wicked word, for every false and spiteful word, but *for every idle word that men speak*, they must *give account in the day of judgment;* nay, and so shall their doom be, for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.[p] Christ takes notice of what we say, now; and we should think we hear him say to us when we are in conversation, as he did to the two disciples going to Emmaus, *What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad*,[q] or, as ye sit and are merry? Are they such as become Christians? Are you not saying that which must be unsaid again by repentance, or you will be undone? And as Christ takes notice of it now, so he will call it over again in the day of account.

What we talk *among ourselves* with the usual freedom of conversation we do not expect to hear

d Matt. v. 25. e Eccl. xii. 14. f Rev. xx. 12. g Phil. iv. 17. h Isa. xxxiii. 22. i John v. 22. k Acts xvii. 31. l 2 Cor. v. 9, 10. m 1 Cor. xi. 31. n Matt. vii. 1, 2. o Rom. xiv. 4. p Matt. xii. 36, 37. q Luke xxiv. 17.

of again; it is *inter nos—between ourselves*, and therefore we think we may allow ourselves a liberty. What is said under the seal of conversation, we think almost as safe in point of honour, as what is said under the seal of confession; none but a tale-bearer, that great mischief-maker, will reveal such secrets;[r] but though it be talked *among ourselves*, it cannot escape either the cognizance or the judgment of our Lord Jesus.

1. If we talk any thing which is good among ourselves, and which is to the use of edifying;[s] which manifests grace in the speaker, and ministers grace to the hearers; Christ takes notice of that, and we shall hear of it again to our comfort, in that day when those who thus confess Christ before men[t] shall be owned by him before his Father, and the holy angels. When they who *feared the Lord spake often one to another*, for their mutual encouragement to hold fast their integrity in a time of general apostasy, *The Lord hearkened and heard it*, as one greatly well pleased with it, and *a book of remembrance was written before him*, in which were entered all those pious conferences *of them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name*;[u] and the day will come when this book, among the rest, shall be opened.

There is not a good word coming from a good heart, and directed to a good end, but it is heard in secret, and shall be rewarded openly, though, perhaps, there are those now who ridicule and banter such language. What is spoken for the edification of others, will turn to a good account to ourselves: and it will add to our joy in heaven, to have been any way instrumental to help others thither. Nay, if it should not reach their hearts for whom it is designed, yet the comfort of it will return into our own bosoms; and what was well intended for the honour of Christ, shall not be overlooked in the day of account.

This should engage and encourage us to keep up religious discourse, that it will be remembered to our advantage in the accounts shortly, though we may forget it; as the righteous could not say that ever they saw Christ hungry, and fed him, or thirsty, and gave him drink;[v] yet Christ will not forget it, but will place it to account, as an acceptable service done to him.

2. If we talk any thing that is ill among ourselves; if any corrupt communication proceeds out of our mouths, dictated by the corruption of our minds, and which has a tendency to corrupt the minds and manners of others; Christ observes that too, is displeased with it,—and we shall hear of it again, either by the checks of our own consciences, in order to our repentance, or in the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, when, according to Enoch's prophecy, the Lord shall come[w] to reckon with sinners, not only for all their ungodly deeds, but for all their hard speeches, spoken against him. It will be asked sooner or later, What was it that you said such a time, proudly, vainly, filthily, that foolish talking and jesting which is not becoming? What was it that you said in such and such company by way of reproach to your neighbour, when you sat deliberately, sat magisterially, and spoke against your brother, and slandered those,[x] whose good names you ought to have protected? or, which aggravates it, by way of reflection on your superiors; reviling the gods, and speaking evil of the rulers of your people,[y] little thinking that a bird of the air may carry the voice?[z] Let this consideration oblige us all to take heed to our ways, that we offend not with our tongue, and to keep our mouth as it were with a bridle,[a] that we may say nothing but what we can bear to be told of again. And we have need to beg of God, that by his grace he would *set a watch before the door of our lips*,[b] a double watch upon the door of our hearts, *out of the abundance of which the mouth speaks*, that nothing may proceed from them to his dishonour.

III. As our other discourses *among ourselves by the way*, so especially our disputes, will all be called over again, and we shall be called to an account about them. *What was it that ye disputed among yourselves?* What was the subject of the dispute? and how was it managed? Disputing supposes some variance and strife, and a mutual contradiction and opposition arising from it. Disputing by the way is falling out by the way, a thing directly contrary to the charge which Joseph, as a type of Christ, gave to his brethren, *See that ye fall not out by the way*;[c] and therefore we may expect to be reproved for it.

There are disputes that are of use among the disciples of Christ, and which in the review we may reflect upon with comfort. Did we dispute—For the conviction of atheists and deists, and other the enemies of our holy religion; or for the confirmation of those who were in danger of being drawn away by their delusions? Did we contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,[d] and with meekness and fear both instruct others that oppose themselves,[e] and give a reason of our own hope that is in us?[f] Did we, fairly and calmly, discuss lesser matters in difference between us and our brethren, that we might find out the truth, and have our mistakes rectified; or, if we cannot, hereby, come to be of the same mind, yet we may see that even those we differ from have so much colour of reason on their side, as that they may still differ from us, and yet not forfeit their reputation either for wisdom or honesty? Did we, with prudence and mildness, debate our cause with our neighbour himself, and not go forth hastily to strive;[g] did we tell him his fault between us and

r Prov. xi. 13. s Eph. iv. 29. t Matt. x. 32. u Mal. iii. 16.
v Matt. xxv. 37. w Jude 15. x Ps. l. 20. y Exod. xxii. 28.
z Eccl. x. 20. a Ps. xxxix. 1. b Ps. cxli. 3. c Gen. xlv. 24.
d Jude 3. e 2 Tim. ii. 25. f 1 Pet. iii. 15. g Prov. xxv. 8, 9.

him alone,[h] before we told it to the world or the church, in order to a friendly accommodation? These are disputes which will pass well in the account, when they come to be called over again.

But our disputes are too often such, that when we come to be asked about them, as the disciples were here, we shall, like them, hold our peace, as being ashamed to have them spoken of again, and having nothing to say in our own vindication: and (as the town-clerk of Ephesus apprehended) when we are called in question for the uproar, can show no justifiable cause, whereby we may give an account of it.[i]

Three things may occasion disputes among Christians, among ministers, neighbours, friends, relations, which, perhaps, when they come to be reflected upon, as here, will be found to have a great deal in them that was culpable: different opinions, separate interests, and clashing humours.

1. Disputes commonly arise from *difference of opinion*, either in religion and divine things; (about which oftentimes the disputes and contests are most violent;) or in philosophy, politics, or other parts of learning; or in the conduct of human life. While men differ so much in capacity, temper, genius, and education, and different sentiments are received by tradition from our fathers, it cannot be expected that men should all agree in the same notions. The same thing seen with different eyes, and by different lights, may appear to one true and very good, and to another false and very bad, though both employ their faculties about it with equal diligence and sincerity. This cannot but give rise to disputes, for we are naturally forward (and sometimes over-forward) to clear ourselves, and convince others; and have such a conceit of our own judgment, as to think that every body ought to be of one mind, and that if they will be ruled by reason, they will be so: for vain man would be wise, would be thought to be so, though he be born as the wild ass's colt.[k]

But these disputes are often such as we may justly be ashamed of, when we come to look back upon them.

(1.) Upon account of the matter of them. What was it that we disputed among ourselves? What was it we were so hot and eager about?

Perhaps it was something *above us*, about the nature and attributes, the counsels and decrees, of God; and the operations of his providence and grace; and the person of the Mediator: those *secret* things which belong not to us:[l] things which we did not understand, nor could: things which it was presumption for us to dispute about; for the angels with an awful reverence humbly desire to look into them,[m] as not pretending to be masters of them. And the great apostle, who had been in the third heavens, not only owned that the words he heard there were unspeakable,[n] but was so much at a loss to express himself concerning the work of redemption, though it is in some measure revealed, that despairing to find the bottom, he sits down at the brink, and adores the depth of that mystery: *O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God!*[o] O what reason have we with Job to abhor ourselves, and to repent in dust and ashes, because, like him, in our disputes with our friends,[p] concerning the reasons and methods of God's proceedings, we have darkened counsel by words without knowledge; and have uttered that which we understood not, things too wonderful for us.

Perhaps it was something *below us*, not worth disputing about, especially, with so much warmth and violence: it was a trifle, a mere strife of words,[q] a dispute *de lana caprina—about a thing of no value*; as if the matter were started only for want of something to wrangle about; so inconsiderable a thing, that which way soever it goes, the costs are much more than the damage. In the reflection, we may justly blush to think that we should make so much ado, so great a noise, about nothing.

Perhaps it was something *foreign to us*, that we were no way concerned in; some matter of politics it may be, which belongs not to those of our rank and station, but must be left to wiser heads, whose business it is to deal in things of that nature. Our Lord Jesus after his resurrection twice checked his disciples for a vain curiosity:—once in inquiring concerning one another's affairs; when Peter asked concerning John, *What shall this man do?* Christ answered him, *What is that to thee? Follow thou me?*[r] —and another time in inquiring concerning God's counsels, *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons.*[s]

Perhaps it was something *indifferent*; like the controversy among the primitive Christians concerning the observing of days, and making a distinction of meats,[t] which the apostle himself does not think fit to determine, but leaves each side to practise according as their judgment was, without imposing upon either, since they might be of either mind, and yet be accepted of God; only he forbids them to fall out about it, or to despise or judge one another.

(2.) Upon account of our management of them. When our disputes among ourselves by the way come to be reviewed, it will be found that the mischief was done not by the things themselves, concerning which we differed, but by our mismanagement of the controversy.

Our Master will be displeased with us if it be found that we have been hot and fierce in our disputes, and have mingled our passions and peevish resentments with them; if a point of honour has governed us more than a point of conscience, and

h Matt. xviii. 15. i Acts xix. 40. k Job xi. 12.
l Deut. xxix. 29. m 1 Pet. i. 12. n 2 Cor. xii. 4.
o Rom. xi. 33. p Job xlii. 3, 6. q 1 Tim. vi. 4.
r John xxi. 22. s Acts i. 7. t Rom. xiv. 2, &c.

we have contended more for victory and reputation, than for truth and duty; if we have contended about things of small moment for, or against, them, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law and gospel; if we have spent more of our zeal on matters in difference than they deserve; and have lost the vitals of religion, in our heat about circumstantials, and have disputed away our seriousness and devotion, *What then shall we do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall we answer him?*[u]

If in our disputes for the truth, we lie against the truth, and *speak deceitfully for God*, the good intention will be so far from justifying the lie, that the lie will condemn the good intention, and convict it of hypocrisy; for if the intention were really good, such a practice would be abhorred. If we have the itch of disputing, and a spirit of contradiction, that is certainly one of those foolish hurtful lusts, from whence come wars and fightings. If we receive our brethren who are weak *to doubtful disputations;*[v] and love to perplex and puzzle them, and run them aground with objections against what they and we believe; it shows a great contempt both of the truth and of their souls, and is a jesting with both. If we judge, and censure, and condemn our brethren who are not in every thing of our mind, and though we call ourselves disciples, set up for masters, many masters;[w] if we give reproachful language, and call foul names, which commonly betrays the weakness of the cause, and is ingloriously pressed into the service to make up the deficiency of argument; we shall have a great deal to answer for, when all our disputes shall be called over again by our Master.

2. Many disputes arise from *separate and interfering interests in this world.* Neighbours and relations quarrel about their rights and properties, their estates and trades, their honours and powers and pleasures; *Meum* and *Tuum—My rent* and *Thy bond*, are the great subjects of dispute, and engage people in endless strifes. The first dispute we read of in the primitive church was about a money-matter; the Grecians quarrelled with the Hebrews *because* they thought their *widows were neglected in the daily ministration.*[x] Many disputes of this kind happen, which will be inquired into as well as those about differences in opinion; and therefore it concerns us to reflect upon them, that whatever we find to have been amiss in them may be repented of.

We may, in godly sorrow, quarrel with *ourselves*, and justly, for our unjust, unbecoming quarrels with *our brethren:*

Ask then,—What was it that you disputed about with such a neighbour, or such a friend, at such a time? Perhaps you disputed that which you ought to have yielded without dispute, a just debt or a rightful possession, which you thought to have carried, by dint of opposition, against equity. Perhaps you disputed about something very trivial, and of small value, which was not worth controverting, but which if the right were indeed of your side, you might have receded from it for peace' sake, without any detriment to yourselves or families. Perhaps the dispute might have been prevented, or when it was began, might quickly and easily have been accommodated, with a little wisdom and love; as the strife between Abraham and Lot was soon ended, and the matter compromised by Abraham's prudent condescension.[y] A little yielding would pacify great offences, and put an effectual stop to that threatening mischief which sometimes a little fire kindles.

Review your law-suits. And it may be you will find, that how stiff soever you were in the heat of the prosecution of them, your cooler thoughts tell you they were not managed as become Christians; you did not try to end things, as you ought to have done, in an amicable way. Perhaps they were begun rashly, and in passion; and then no wonder if they be carried on unfairly, and that which was a hasty, sudden passion in the beginning of the quarrel, is in danger of ripening into a rooted malice before the end of it, and they who at first pretended that they designed only to *right themselves*, at length, as their resentments have grown more and more keen, are not ashamed to own that they are resolved to *avenge themselves.*

These disputes, as they are most common, so they are most scandalous, among relations, and those who are under particular obligations to love one another. And whatever keeps brethren from dwelling together in unity, is very provoking to Christ, who has made brotherly love the livery of his family: and it is very hardly removed; for a *brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their contentions are as the door of a castle;*[z] witness Jacob and Esau.

3. Some disputes, and hot ones too, arise merely from *passion and clashing humours*, where really there is nothing of judgment or interest in the case. Some indulge themselves in a crossness of temper, that makes them continually uneasy to their relations, the nearest, the dearest, and to all about them. They love to thwart and disagree, and to dispute every thing, though ever so plain, or ever so trifling. Many make their lives, and the relations wherein they stand, uncomfortable by this; especially when both sides are of such a spirit: one will have their humour, their saying, and the other will have theirs, and so they are ever and anon disputing which shall be greatest, and instead of aiming to please, are contriving to displease and contradict one another.

But do such consider, that they must give an ac

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u Job xxxi. 14. v Rom. xiv. 1. w James iii. 1. x Acts vi. 1. y Gen. xiii. 8, 9. z Prov. xviii. 19.

count to Christ for all these *disputes among themselves by the way*; that they will all be called over again? How ill does it become the disciples and followers of the humble Jesus to carry things with a high hand, imperiously and with rigour, toward their inferior relations; not suffering them to speak for themselves, nor willing to hear reason from them. How ill does it become the worshippers of the God of love to be envious, and spiteful, and ill-natured, and quarrelsome with all they have any dealings with! The father of the prodigal, when his elder son was out of humour, angry, and would not come in, did not dispute with him, chide him, and threaten him, though he very well deserved it; but he went out and entreated him,[a] spoke to him smoothly, and so brought him into good temper again: which is written for our *learning*, that we may go and do likewise, but withal for our *shame* that we have not done so. By the account which the Scripture gives of some peevish passionate disputes, it appears that notice is taken of the height to which the ferment of the spirit rises at such a time. When the men of Ephraim quarrelled with Gideon upon a point of honour, it is left upon record, that they did *chide with him sharply*,[b] though by his exemplary mildness, as well as by his eminent services, he deserved better at their hands. When, in a like case, Judah and Israel fell out, it is observed, that *the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel*.[c] And if it be so indeed, that an account *is* kept of the sharpness of our chiding, and the fierceness of our words, we are concerned by true repentance to judge ourselves for it, that we may not be judged of the Lord.

And whatever we find has been amiss in our disputes of any kind, let it be amended for the future.

(1.) As far as we are able to make a judgment, let us see to it that we have truth and right on our side, in all our disputes, and not be confident any further than we see just cause to be so. We must not only never contend for that which we know to be false and wrong, but also never for that which is doubtful, or which we do not know to be true and right. Let us not wrong our consciences in any of our contests; nor say we believe that to be true, and therefore dispute for it, which really we do not believe to be so; nor demand that *as* our own, which we know or have reason to suspect we have no good title to; nor deny that to another which we cannot but think is justly his.

And if, in the progress of any dispute or controversy, it be made to appear to us, at length, that we were mistaken, and in the wrong, we must be ready to acknowledge it, thankful to those who have discovered it to us, and not ashamed to let fall the controversy. And we have a false notion of honour, if we think this will be any real disparagement to us; for certainly St. Paul showed more true courage, and merited more true praise, when he said, *I can do nothing against the truth*,[d] than Goliah did, when he defied all the armies of Israel.

(2.) In matters of doubtful disputation: while we are contending for that which we take to be right, let us at the same time think it possible that we may be in the wrong. When we contend for the great principles of religion, in which all good Christians are agreed, we need not fear our being in a mistake; they are of undoubted certainty, *We know and are sure that Jesus is the Christ*. But there are many things that are not so clearly revealed, because not of so much moment, in which the truth indeed lies but on one side, and yet wise and good men are not agreed on which side it lies. Here, though we both argue and act according to the light that God has given us, yet we must not be over-confident of our own judgment, as if wisdom must die with us. Others have understanding as well as we, and are not inferior to us;[e] nay, perhaps, they every way excel us, and, therefore, who can tell but they may be in the right? However, they argue and act according to the light they have, which we ought to pay a deference to, so as not to condemn all those for weak men, or bad men, who are not in every thing of our mind, and will not say as we say. Job in dispute is not unwilling to put the case, *Be it that I have erred*.[f]

In matters of fact on which right depends, it is possible we may be mistaken; *Humanum est errare —to err is human*. Words may be misunderstood and misapprehended; and the wisest, and most cautious and observing, may be guilty of an oversight, and may forget something that would very much alter the case; and, therefore, it will be no credit to our wisdom and goodness to be too positive, too peremptory, as long as there is a possibility of our being deceived. Never let our assertions go beyond our assurances, nor let us give that as certain and great, which was given us doubtful and little; but be very wary in what we maintain, not only for our reputation's sake, lest our neighbour search us and put us to shame, but for conscience' sake, toward God, who hates a proud look, and a lying tongue;[g] two very bad things, that commonly go together, to support one another.

(3.) Let us keep the full possession and government of our own spirits, in all our disputes. Let us carefully suppress all inward tumults, whatever provocation may be given us; and let our minds be calm and sedate, whatever argument we are engaged in. Let no contradiction put us into a heat or disorder; for when passion is up, we are not so capable as we ought to be, either to hear reason or to speak

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a Luke xv. 28. b Judg. viii. 9. c 2 Sam. xix. 43.

d 2 Cor. xiii. 8. e Job xii. 2. f Job xix. 4. g Prov. vi. 17.

it, nor is it likely we should either convince or be convinced of truth and right. Meekness and mildness of spirit do as much befriend a cause, as they are the beauty and ornament of its advocates.

If we contend for that which is wrong, the more passionate we are, the greater is the sin of the contention, and the more there is of the image of the devil upon it, who is not only the *father of lies* and falsehoods, but a *red dragon*, and a *roaring lion*. But if we have truth and right on our side, that needs no intemperate heats and passions for the support of it, nor can have any real service done it by them. The cause of heaven can never be pleaded with any credit or success by a tongue set on fire of hell. *The wrath of man works not the righteousness of God.*[h] Parties may be served by fury and violence, but the common interests of pure Christianity will certainly be prejudiced by it. Christ was therefore fit to teach us, and we are invited to come and learn of him, it is not said, because *in him were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, though that is certainly true, but *because he is meek and lowly in heart,*[i] *and can have compassion on the ignorant;* and herein all who undertake to instruct others must study to imitate him. And this is the likeliest way to gain our point, if indeed we be in the right; for *the words of the wise are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that rules among fools.*[k]

(4.) Let us never lose the charity we ought to have for our brethren in our disputes of any kind, nor violate the sacred laws of it. Our Lord Jesus foresaw, and foretold, that the preaching of his gospel would occasion much division, that it would set men at variance,[l] and be the subject of much dispute; and therefore he thought it very requisite to bind the command of mutual love so much the more strongly upon his followers, because there was danger lest it should be lost in these disputes: he makes it one of the fundamental laws of his kingdom, the *new commandment, That we love one another;* and the livery of his family, by which all men might know who are his disciples. *See how these Christians love one another.*

Let us, therefore, in all our disputes keep ourselves under the commanding power and influence of holy love; for that victory is dearly purchased, that is obtained at the expense of Christian charity. Let us honour all men, and not trample upon any, nor set those *among the dogs of our flock*, whom, for ought we know, Christ has set with the lambs of his. Let us never bring a railing accusation against any:[m] Michael the archangel, though he was sure in the dispute he had right on his side, and the glory of God was nearly concerned, and it was with the devil that he contended, yet he would not thus attack his adversary. The scourge of the tongue has driven more out of the temple than ever it drove into it. Let us always put the best construction on men's words and actions that they will bear, not *digging up mischief*, as evil men do, nor *rejoicing in iniquity*, but *rejoicing in the truth*, hoping the best as far as we can. Let us not aggravate matters in variance, nor by strained inuendos and misrepresentations make either side worse than it is; for that is a method which may harden one side, but can never convince the other, nor can be used with any other design but to make the contending parties hate one another; and whose kingdom that serves the interests of it, it is easy to say,—not Christ's, I am sure. Let us not judge of men's spiritual and eternal state, and send men to hell presently as reprobates, because they are not in every thing of our mind, or cannot fall in with our measures. They who do so usurp a divine prerogative, take the keys of hell and death out of the hands of Christ, and show themselves to be as destitute of the fear of God, as they are of love to their neighbour.

(5.) Let us often think of the account we must shortly give to our great Master of all our disputes with our fellow-servants by the way. Let us consider how our disputes will look in that day, and what our own reflections will be then upon them. When the apostle asks, *Where is the disputer of this world?*[n] "Perhaps (says the excellent Archbishop Tillotson) he intends to insinuate, that the wrangling work of disputation hath place only in this world, and upon this earth, where only there is a dust to be raised; but will have no place in the other, where all things will be clear, and past dispute: and a good man would be loth to be taken out of the world reeking hot from a sharp contention with a perverse adversary, and not a little out of countenance to find himself in this temper translated into the calm and peaceable regions of the blessed, where nothing but perfect charity and good-will reign for ever."

Let our *moderation* therefore *be known unto all men*,[o] moderation in all disputes, because *our Lord is at hand;* nor let us *grudge one against another, because the Judge standeth before the door:*[p] and we may tremble to think what our doom will be, if we be found *smiting our fellow-servants*;[q] and how we shall answer it, if it be proved upon us, who have had so much forgiven us by our Master, that, for a small matter, we have *taken them by the throat.*[r] But seeing we look for a day of account, in which there will be a review of disputes, let us give diligence, that we may be found of Christ in peace.[s] When Job and his friends had maintained a long dispute, in which many hasty peevish words were exchanged, God at length interposed as moderator, and gave judgment upon the debate, That they were all to be blamed, and had taken a great deal of pains (as most

h James i. 20. i Matt. xi. 29. k Eccl. ix. 17.
l Luke xii. 51. m Jude 9. n 1 Cor i 20
o Phil. iv. 5. p James v. 9. q Matt. xxiv. 49.
r Matt. xviii. 28. s 2 Pet. iii. 14.

disputants do) to make work for repentance; and, therefore, the contending parties must ask pardon of God and one another, must forgive and forget, and live in love for the future. And this is the best end of controversies; happy were it if they were all brought to this issue now: to this issue all the controversies that are among good men will be brought at last, when they shall meet in the world of everlasting light and love.

IV. Of all disputes, Christ will be sure to reckon with his disciples for their disputes about precedency and superiority. That was the dispute here, *Who should be greatest;* and Christ does not *determine* the matter, as it might justly be expected he should have done, if he had intended that Peter, or any other of them, should have a primacy and supremacy above the rest; no, he is displeased with them for starting such a question, and disputing about it, because it was an indication that they all aimed at being great in the world, and were ambitious of it; and whenever preferments were to be had, they would quarrel among themselves, which should get the best; notwithstanding the meanness of their first education, when they were bred fishermen, which might have done *something* to curb aspiring thoughts; and the goodness of their late education, when they were trained up to be apostles, which might have done *much more*.

Now there are five reasons why this disposition of theirs was very displeasing to our Lord Jesus.

1. Because it came from a *mistaken notion of his kingdom*, which they had learned at the feet of their scribes, and had not yet unlearned, though they had sat so long at Christ's feet, so hard is it to conquer the power of prejudice. The Jews, misunderstanding many of the prophecies of the Old Testament, which spake of the Messiah and his kingdom; expected him to appear in external pomp and splendour, and to exercise a temporal jurisdiction, to break the Roman yoke from off their necks, and give them dominion over the neighbouring nations. The disciples had imbibed this notion from infancy, and imagined (as should seem by many instances) that our Lord Jesus, though he appeared meanly at first, would soon by it thus reign; and that this was the kingdom of heaven, which they were to preach as at hand: and this they had an eye to, when they strove who should be the greatest.

Now this was a great mistake, and the constant tenor and tendency of Christ's life and doctrine might have convinced them that it was so, that Christ's kingdom was not to be of this world,[t] but was intended to be all spiritual; the laws and powers of it, the rewards and punishments of it, all spiritual; the weapons of our warfare are not carnal;) that the Messiah was to rule by his Spirit in the spirits of men. The design of it was to refine men from the dross and dregs of worldliness and sensuality; and to raise them up to a holy, heavenly, spiritual, divine life; and to teach them to look down upon all earthly things with a gracious and generous contempt. Such as this was the constitution and complexion of Christ's kingdom, and therefore, it could not but be displeasing to him, for them to dote on earthly greatness.

2. Because it was directly contrary to the two great lessons of his school, and laws of his kingdom, humility, and love. It is against the law of humility to covet to be great in this world, and against the law of love to strive who shall be greatest. Had not Christ taught them both these lessons, both by precept and by example? Had he not made it the first condition of discipleship, that whosoever would come after him must deny themselves? Does not the great law of love oblige us in honour to prefer one another,[u] and to give place to our brethren? What unapt scholars then were they, who had not learned such plain and needful lessons as these! How well is it for us that we have a kind Master, who does not expel out of his school dull scholars, but gives them his Spirit to open their understandings, and bring things to their remembrance.

When we are eager in our pursuits of the world, and seek and aim at great things in it; when we are quarrelsome with our brethren, and carried out into indecencies by our contests and passions; let us think how unbecoming Christians this is, how contrary we walk to the laws of that holy religion we make profession of. And can we glory in the honour of it? Can we, with any confidence, plead the promises of it, or please ourselves with the privileges of it, or feed ourselves with the hopes of it, when we have so little regard to the precepts of it? Will those be willing to lose their lives for their religion, who cannot deny themselves the gratification of a foolish lust or passion for it?

3. Because it was utterly repugnant to the example which Jesus Christ himself had set them, and the copy he had given them to write after. The word of command which he gave them when he called them to be his disciples, was, *Follow me;* do as you see me do. But when they were disputing who should be greatest, and each setting up a title to worldly pomp and power, they were far from resembling him, who was among them as one that served,[v] and came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.[w] The same mind should have been in them, that was in him; who was so great an example of humility and love, condescension and affection; who *emptied himself*, and *made himself of no reputation*;[x] who, not only in the general scheme of his undertaking, but in the particular passages of his life, gave such instances of self-denial, as justly

t John xviii. 36. u Matt. xvi. 24. v Luke xxii. 27. w Matt. xx. 28. x Phil. ii. 7.

are the wonder of angels; who, to teach them this lesson, and oblige them to learn it with this very argument, not long after this washed their feet, and bid them do as he had done.[y] Could the followers of such a Master contend for precedency, and not blush at the reflection upon their own folly and unworthiness?

Let us shame ourselves out of our pride, and passion, and affectation of worldly honour, and inordinate pursuit of worldly wealth, with this consideration: Shall I set my heart upon that which my Master was dead to, and denied himself in, and for my sake too? Am I not a Christian, a follower of Christ? I must then either change my name, or recover a better temper. Ought I not to walk in the same spirit, in the same steps?

4. Because it would render them very unfit for the services which he had appointed them to. It was very absurd for them to strive who should be greatest, who should live most at ease, and most in state, who should have the most power and the largest command, when they were all to labour and suffer reproach,[z] to live in meanness and poverty, to be loaded with disgrace and ignominy, and *counted as the off-scouring of all things*; nay, to *be killed all the day long*, and devoted to death, *as sheep to the slaughter*, and *ruled with rigour*. Such dispositions and expectations as these would be but a bad preparative for sufferings. They who would approve themselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ must endure hardness,[a] and not affect greatness.

And, therefore, though this infirmity, and the mistake it was grounded upon, seems by many instances after this, to have continued as long as they had Christ's bodily presence with them; yet, before they *launched out into the deep* of their service, they were perfectly cured of it, by the pouring out of the Spirit upon them; after which, we have them no more dreaming of a temporal kingdom, nor striving who should be greatest; for those whom God designs to employ in any service for him, he will either find them fit or make them so: and *as the day, so shall the strength*, so shall the spirit, be. And if we would be ready for all the will of God, and stand complete in it, so as not to be driven from our work by the difficulties we may meet in it, we must be dead to worldly wealth and grandeur, and live above them, as those who look beyond them.

5. Because it was a corrupt temper that would be, more than any thing, the bane of the church in after-times; would be the reproach of its ministry, an obstruction to its enlargement, the disturbance of its peace, and the original of all the breaches that would be made upon its order and unity. Our Saviour foresaw this, and, therefore, took all occasions to check and repress it in his disciples, for a warning to all others; that all who are called by his name, and profess relation to him, may be jealous over themselves with a godly jealousy, and may look diligently, lest this root of bitterness spring up and trouble both themselves and others, and thereby many be defiled[b] and disturbed.

When we see how early in the primitive times the mystery of iniquity began to work in strifes among ministers, who should be the greatest; in Diotrephes, who loved to have the pre-eminence;[c] and in the man of sin, who, by degrees, under the influence of this principle, came to usurp an universal authority, and to exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;[d] let us acknowledge with what good reason Christ so often cautioned his disciples against this, and lament the mischief that is done by it to the church. It must needs be that such offences would come; and we are told of them before, that we may not be stumbled at them; but woe to those by whom they do come. The prevalency of such a temper as this, as far as it appears, is very threatening. But when the Spirit shall be poured out upon us from on high, there shall be no more such disputes as these; and then the wilderness shall become a fruitful field.[e]

Upon the whole matter, therefore, let our strife be, Who shall be best, not who shall be greatest.

1. Let us never strive who shall be greatest in this world; who shall have the best preferment; who shall be master of the best estate, or make the best figure; but acquiesce in the lot Providence carves out to us, not aiming at great things, or striving for them.

Consider what worldly greatness is:

(1.) What a *despicable* thing it is to those who *have their eye upon another world*. All who by faith have seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, who are acquainted with the grandeur of the upper and better world, and are conversant with that world, have laid up their treasure in it, and set their hearts upon it, and hope shortly to share in the enjoyments of it; what a poor thing are the pomps and pleasures of this world to them! how easily can they write *Vanity* upon them! for they know better things. What are purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day, to one who is clothed with the robes of righteousness and garments of salvation, and has a continual feast upon the promises of the new covenant? What are titles of honour, or splendid attendance, to one who is called a friend of God, and about whom the holy angels encamp? What are the fading, withering glories of time, in comparison with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that is to be revealed? Let us be ashamed then to strive, or seem to strive, for that which, if we act as becomes our character, we

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y John xiii. 4—15. z 1 Tim. iv. 10. a 2 Tim. ii. 3.

b Heb. xii. 15. c 3 John 9. d 2 Thess. ii. 4. e Isa. xxxii. 15.

cannot but look upon with a holy contempt and indifference.

(2.) What a *dangerous* thing this worldly greatness is to those who have *not their eyes upon another world;* how apt it is to keep their hearts at a distance from God, and from the consideration and pursuit of a future blessedness; and to fix them to this world, and make them willing to take up with a portion in it: and, especially, what a strong temptation it is to break through all the sacred fences of the divine law to compass it. The devil would not have tempted Christ to worship him, with a promise of all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, but that he had caught many a one with that bait. As they who will be rich, so they who will be great, and cannot think themselves happy unless they be, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts:[f] let us, therefore, never court our own trouble; nor covet to enter into temptation, as they do, who, when they are as great as God saw fit to make them, are still aiming to be greater, and striving to be greatest.

2. Let all our strife be *who shall be best*, not disputing who *has been best*, that is a vain-glorious strife, but humbly contending *who shall be so;* who shall be most humble, and stoop lowest, for the good of others; and who shall labour most for the common welfare. This is a gracious strife; a strife that will pass well in our account, when all our disputes will be reviewed. If we will covet, let us covet earnestly the best gifts,[g] covet to be rich in faith, and rich in good works. If we will be ambitious, let it be the top of our ambition to do good, and therein to be accepted of the Lord.[h] If we will aim to excel, let it be in that which is virtuous and praise-worthy, and in a holy zeal for the honour of God, and the advancement of the true interests of Christ's kingdom. Herein let us strive to excel others, and to do more good than they do; not that we may have the praise of it, but that God may have the glory of it, and that we may provoke others to love and to good works;[i] not that we may be many masters, but that we may make ourselves *servants of all.* Let us go before—in zeal, and yet be willing to come behind—in humility and self-denial; do better than others, and yet, in love and lowliness of mind, esteem others better than ourselves.[k]

But especially let us strive to *excel ourselves*, and to do more good than we have done. Let it be a constant dispute with our own souls, Why we do not lay out ourselves more for God. And when we remember the kindness of our youth, and the love of our espousals, instead of leaving that first love, and cooling in it, let our advanced years contend earnestly to excel our early ones, that our last days may be our best days, and our last works our best works. *Forgetting the things that are behind*, let us still *press forward* toward perfection; press forward *toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling*,[l] that at length we may have not only an entrance, but *an abundant entrance, ministered to us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*[m]

f 1 Tim. vi. 9.
h 2 Cor. v. 9.
g 1 Cor. xii. 31.
i Heb. x. 24.
k Phil. ii. 3.
l Phil. iii. 13, 14.
m 2 Pet. i. 11.

FAITH IN CHRIST INFERRED FROM FAITH IN GOD:

IN

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE TUESDAY LECTURE, AT SALTERS HALL, MAY 29TH, 1711.

JOHN xiv. 1. latter part.

——*Ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

A DOMINION over your faith[a] is what your ministers are far from pretending to; but the direction of your faith is what they are intrusted with, that thus they may be *helpers of your joy*, for *by faith you stand*. What is Paul himself, or what is Apollos,[b] those great men? not masters in whom ye believed, but ministers only, by whom ye believed; not oracles, but stewards of the oracles of God. Now how can we better direct your faith, nay, how dare we otherwise direct it, than as we have received direction from the Lord Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith, the Foundation and Fountain of it? And in the text we have his law concerning it, the rule of faith he prescribes to us. What he said here to those who were his immediate followers, he says to all, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

This is here recommended in particular to the disciples of Christ; as a sovereign antidote against trouble of mind, proper to fortify the soul against the invasions of grief and fear, when they are most violent and threatening, and all other supports and succours fail. Christ was now leaving those who had left all to follow him, and he told them that whither he went they could not follow him yet;[c] which seemed to bear hard upon them, that they who had followed him in his sorrows, might not follow him to his joys; nay, must be left behind as sheep in the midst of wolves. Because of this, *sorrow filled their heart*. And though in Christ's departure from them there seems to be enough to justify their sorrow, yet there really is enough to pacify; and therefore, with good reason, as well as with good authority, he commands down those boisterous winds and waves, saying, *Peace, be still.* Let the sinners in Zion be afraid, and let fearfulness surprise the hypocrites, but let not your hearts be troubled. Though trouble surround you on every side, yet be wise, be watchful, and keep trouble from your hearts: and that you may do so, *believe in God*, and in his providence; *believe also in me* and in my grace. And you will be kept from fainting by believing;[d] but if you will not believe, surely you shall not be established.[e]

But that which is here intended as a cordial in time of trouble, will not be so, unless it be our practice, for it is certainly our duty at all times the duty of all those who hear the joyful sound of the everlasting gospel, not only to believe in God but to believe also in Jesus Christ. And therefore I shall take it more generally, not only as an antidote against trouble of mind, but a caveat against practical deism.

1. Our Lord Jesus does here take it for granted concerning his disciples, that they did believe in God, and that in the belief of him they paid him the adorations due to his name, and the submissions due to his government, and that that faith was so firmly fixed in them, that it would not be shocked by any event of Providence, though ever so grieving, ever so frowning. *You believe in God*, that is, you receive and embrace natural religion, you admit the light of it, you submit to the laws of it. You believe the perfections of God, that he is infinitely and eternally wise and holy, just and good; you believe his relations to his creatures, as their Protector and Benefactor, their Owner and Ruler; his relations to his own people, as their Father and Felicity; you believe his providence, that it extends itself to all the creatures, and all their actions, to you, and all your affairs, with a certain cognizance, and a faithful steady conduct. Nay, you go further, you not only believe in the Lord your God, but you belie

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a 2 Cor. i. 24. b 1 Cor. iii. 4. c John xiii. 36. d Ps. xxvii. 16. e Isa. vii. 9.

his prophets;[f] you receive the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and subscribe to them: and you do well. Observe here,

(1.) That our Lord Jesus knows who believe in God, and who do not; for all hearts are open to his view, and he knows what is in man. When with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,[g] it is to give honour to him, not to inform him what the heart believes; for he knows it before we tell him, and better than we can tell him. That which is the prerogative of the Eternal Mind, is one of the flowers of the Redeemer's crown: *I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts.*[h] He knows the sincerity of some, whom men suspect and reproach, and the insincerity of others, whom men confide in and applaud. We read of some who professed to believe in Jesus Christ, when they saw the miracles which he did; but *Jesus did not commit himself to them,* did not *believe* them, so the word is, *because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man.*[i] He knew that his disciples here did believe in God, and witnessed for them that they did so. And because he does thus infallibly know every man's true character, he is therefore fit to be the Judge of all at the great day, and to pass the definitive sentence upon every man's everlasting state; for we are sure that his judgment is according to truth, and cannot mistake.

(2.) That our Lord Jesus is highly well pleased with those who believe in God, and will take notice of it to their comfort and honour. He came into the world to reveal and reconcile God to us, and to reduce and restore us to God, not to draw us *from* him, but to draw us *to* him; and nothing is more acceptable to him than our believing in God, nor shall any thing be more comfortable to us. Christ fortifies us with this faith against all assaults: *Let not your hearts be troubled,* for ye *believe in God.* And those who believe in God need not be cast down and disquieted; as those have reason to be who are strangers to him, who have no dependence on him, or communion with him. They who believe in God, according to his word, have reason to rejoice in him with joy unspeakable; for their confidence in him shall not *make them ashamed.* They *know whom they have believed.*

2. He calls upon them who believe in God, to believe in him too. But did not the disciples believe so in Christ? No doubt they did; else they had not so easily left all to follow him, and continued with him in his temptations. When St. Peter, in the name of the rest, gave this for the reason why they would never quit their Master, *We believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,*[k] they all subscribed to it as the confession of their faith, except Judas, whom Christ at that very time particularly excepted. And yet, Christ saith to them, *Believe also in me:* use the faith you have, set it on work, exert it, employ it, that by it you may keep your minds composed and quiet at this time. *Believe in me,* that is, live by faith in me. Even those who believe, as they have need to be prayed for, that God would help their unbelief, and increase their faith, so they have need to be preached to, and called upon to exercise their faith: *These things are written to you who believe* in Christ, *that you* MAY *believe* in him;[l] may be confirmed in your faith, and have the comfort of it.

Believing in God is a very great duty, and there are few but what profess at least to do it. They who have little else to say for themselves, will say this, "We trust in God:" and O that there were *such a heart* in all them that say so! But from those who believe in God, there are two things further required: *One* is a dictate of the light and law of nature; we have it given in charge by St. Paul to Titus, *This is a faithful saying, (and these things I will that thou affirm constantly;*[m] let it be frequently inculcated, and earnestly pressed upon all Christians,) *That they who have believed in God must be careful to maintain good works:* for *faith without works is dead;*[n] *it doth no good to others,*[o] and therefore will do *us* no good.—The other is a dictate of revealed religion, and we have it here in the text, "Ye believe in God, *believe also in me.*"

DOCT. It may justly be expected, and required, from those who believe in God, that if they are within the sound of the gospel, they should believe also in Jesus Christ.

I speak to those who are favoured with the gospel, who see that joyful light, who hear that joyful sound, and who are therefore concerned in this doctrine. As for those who enjoy it not, we cannot say it is required of them to *believe* in Christ; for *how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard?*[p] Yet we cannot say, it is impossible for any of them, though they live up ever so closely to the light they have, to be saved by Christ they never heard of. It is *out of our line* to judge concerning them, for it is not *in our Bibles;* but let us judge this rather, that we who enjoy the gospel shall find it more intolerable for us in the day of judgment, than they will, if we obey not the gospel. As for them, it becomes us rather to leave them to God's uncovenanted mercy, than to his unpacified justice. For our own part, whatever favour they may find who are destitute of the light of Christianity, I see not how they can expect it, who rebel against that light, and reject the counsel of God against themselves.[q] The case is plain,—It is *good* to believe in God; but that is *not enough,* we must believe also in Jesus Christ. It is not sufficient to our acceptance with God that we

f 2 Chron. xx. 20. John ii. 23—25. g Rom. x. 10. h Rev. ii. 23. k John vi. 69. l 1 John v. 13.

m Tit. iii. 8. n James ii 17. o James ii. 14. p Rom. x. 14. q Luke vii. 30.

embrace natural religion, though it is indispensably necessary that we do so; but we must go further, we must admit the light, and submit to the laws, of the Christian religion likewise, which is consonant to, and perfective of, natural religion, and helps us out where that leaves us at a loss. And this is that which I am here to-day to press upon you, with all seriousness, that you sink not into a practical deism, as many do into a practical atheism; but, in every thing wherein you have to do with God, you may have a believing regard to Jesus Christ. *You believe in God, believe also in Jesus Christ.*

I shall here endeavour to explain,

I. The *objects* of this faith, and what that is which those who believe in God are to believe also concerning Christ.

II. The *acts* of this faith, and what that regard is which we must give to God, and must give also to Jesus Christ.

III. The connexion between these two, and how necessarily it follows, that those who truly believe in God will readily believe in Jesus Christ, when he is made known to them. And then make application.

1. Let us inquire, *what* man is to believe concerning God; and compare with that, *what* he is also to believe concerning Jesus Christ; and see, *what relation they have* to each other.

1. Do we believe in God, as the *Father Almighty?* We must believe in Christ, as his *only-begotten Son;* for Father and Son correlates. By the prescribed form of baptism, that great foundation on which the doctrine of the Trinity is built, we are directed to devote ourselves to the Father and Son; which plainly speaks a divine relation, not to us, (for though God may be said to be a Father to us, and a Holy Spirit to us, yet he can in no sense be said to be a Son to us,) but a relation to one another; and therefore they must be distinct persons; and so, as that the Son is the *express image of the Father's Person.* We cannot believe in God as the *Father,*[r] but we must believe in him who is the *Son of the Father,*[s] who is the *only-begotten of the Father,*[t] and therefore of the same nature with him. If any *deny the Son,* though they say they believe in God, as the Creator of heaven and earth, yet really *they have not the Father,* they have not the knowledge of him, nor an interest in him, as the *Father;* for they only who by faith continue in the *Son,* so continue *in the Father.*[u] Shall we think that God has the title of the Father ascribed to him so frequently, so solemnly, only as he is the Fountain of being to the creatures which are infinitely below him? (So the heathen called him the Father, so he is *Father of the rain, and hath begotten the drops of the dew.*[v]) No, he himself plainly intimated why he is called the *Father,* when he said to the Redeemer, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;*[w] which must be understood in a far higher sense than that of creation; for when the apostle would prove that Christ has obtained a more excellent name than the highest rank of created beings, he thus argues: *To which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?*[x] They were *sons of God* who *shouted for joy, when the foundations of the earth were fastened;* he was the *Image of the invisible God,* that existed *before all things.*[y] It is not, as some would have it, that he WAS *flesh,* and WAS MADE *God,* only as Moses was made a god to Pharaoh; for the Scripture says quite the contrary, that Θεος ην—*he* WAS *God,*[z] and σαρξ εγενετο—WAS MADE *flesh.*[a] This mystery we firmly believe the *truth* of, but awfully adore the *depth* of.

2. Do we believe in God as the *Eternal Mind?* We must also believe in Christ as *the Eternal Word and Wisdom.* God is an Infinite Spirit, and as such is to be adored by every one of us; and he has told us that the Redeemer we are to believe in is the *Logos,* that *in the beginning, was with God; and was God,*[b] in the constitution of all things. And (to show that he is the *Omega* as well as the *Alpha*) we find that in the consummation of all things, when he obtains a final victory over all the enemies of his kingdom, he appears and acts under the same title; his name is called, *the Word of God.*[c] It signifies both *Ratio* and *Oratio,* a word *conceived,* and a word *uttered.* Christ is both; as the thought is one with the mind that thinks it, and yet may be considered as distinct from it, so Christ was and is *one with* the Father, and yet *distinct* from the Father.

In all the divine counsels, Christ is the *Eternal Wisdom,* that when God *prepared the heavens,* and *laid the foundations of the earth,* and made man who is *the highest part of the dust of the world,* was *by him as one brought up with him:*[d] he is the *Wonderful Counsellor,* in whom are *hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* Between the Father and the Son there is a perfect mutual consciousness, and particularly in the affair of man's redemption. *No man knows the Son but the Father, neither knows the Father save the Son.*[e] The counsel of peace is between them both.[f]

In all divine revelations, Christ is *the Word* of the Father; that Word of God which is quick and powerful, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.[g] He only having lain in his bosom from eternity, none but he could declare him: and though it is in these last days, that he has in more especial manner spoken to us by his Son, yet the Spirit, in the Old-Testament prophets, was the Spirit of Christ.[h] And as he was the Maker and

r Heb. i. 5. s 2 John 3. t John i. 14.
u 1 John ii. 23, 24 v Job xxxviii. 28. w Ps. ii. 7.
x Heb. i. 5. y Col. i. 15, 16. z John i. 1.
a John i. 14. b John i. 1. c Rev. xix. 13.
d Prov. viii. 26, 30. e Matt. xi. 27. f Zech. vi. 13.
g Heb. iv. 12. h John i. 18. i 1 Pet. i. 11.

Mediator, so he was the *Messenger of the Covenant*, the *Amen*, the *faithful and true Witness*.

3. Do we believe that *God made the world, and governs it?* We must believe also that he made it, and governs it, by his Son, who is not only the *wisdom of God*, and his eternal word, but the *power of God*, and his almighty *right hand*. *The Father worketh hitherto*;[k] we believe he does, that he is the Fountain of all being, and the Spring of all life, power, motion, and perfection: but the Son has told us withal, that he worketh, and that *what things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise*.

Nothing appears more evident, by the light of nature, than that God made the world, and all things therein, that by his power, and for his pleasure and praise, they are and were created: nor does any thing appear more evident, by the light of the Gospel, than that God *made the worlds by his Son*,[l] that he *created all things by Jesus Christ*,[m] *that all things were created by him and for him*, and that *he is before all things, and by him all things consist*,[n] nay, *that without him was not any thing made that was made*.[o] So that if we receive the gospel, we must discern even in the things that are seen, not only the eternal power and godhead of the Father, but the universal agency and influence of the Son, and particularly with reference to the children of men, with whom his delights were; for in him, in a special manner, was that *life which is the light of men*.[p] Therefore he is called the Ἀρχη—*The principle* (so it might better be read than *The beginning*) of the creation of God.[q] And hence arises his sovereignty over all the creatures, and his property in them. He is *the first-born of every creature*;[r] that is, as the apostle himself explains it, he is *the heir of all things*;[s] and has not only by purchase, but *by inheritance, obtained* the *more excellent name*.

We are satisfied that God governs the world, and in abundant satisfaction it is to us that he does so, that his kingdom ruleth over all; but we must also be assured, and it will add greatly to our satisfaction, that the administration of the kingdom of providence is put into the hands of our Lord Jesus, and is united to the mediatorial kingdom; that he has an incontestable title to all, *All things are delivered to him by the Father*,[t] and for this reason, because *he loves him*;[u] that he has an uncontrollable dominion over all. Things are not only given into his hand, but put under his feet;[v] not only great power, but all power, is given unto him, both in heaven and in earth; and he is not only head of the church, but *head over all things to the church*. All the angels in heaven are his active servants, all the devils in hell are his conquered captives: the kingdoms of the earth are his, and he is the Governor among the nations;[w] *By him kings reign*, for to him the Father has committed not only the future judgment, but *all judgment*.[x]

4. Do we believe that God is our owner by right of *creation?* We must believe also, that Christ is our owner by right of *redemption;* and yet we have not two masters to serve; Christ and the Father are one, as to us. Nor do these properties stand in competition with each other: no, Christ owns his property to be derived, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me*,[y] and yet withal it is acquired.

As to God we owe our *being*, because he made us, and not we ourselves, therefore we are not our own but his; so to Christ we owe our *well being*, our recovery from that deplorable state, unto which by sin we were fallen, and our restoration to the favour of God, and an eternal happiness in him. Thus, besides the original right he has to us as our Maker, he has an additional right by purchase; a right to command us, a right to dispose of us; we are his servants, for he has loosed our bonds; not only born in his house, but bought—not with his money indeed, but with that which is infinitely more valuable, his own most precious blood: and therefore we are delivered out of the hands of our enemies, that we might be devoted to him, to serve him without fear.[z] We are not our own but his, for *we are bought with a price;* more was paid for us a great deal than we were worth; and it was paid to him into whose hand our all was forfeited, so that no dispute can be made of his interest in us, and the authority he has to demand our best affections and services. As *one is our Father*, even God, so *one is our Master, even Christ:*[a] he is our Lord, and we are bound to worship him.

5. Do we believe that God is our *Judge*, to whom we must every one of us give an account of ourselves? We must believe also, that Christ is our *Advocate* with him, and that he is the *propitiation for our sins*. We are all conscious to ourselves that we are sinners, that we are guilty before God, have incurred his wrath, and laid ourselves open to his curse; and from him our judgment must proceed, a judgment against which there will lie no exception, and from which there will lie no appeal; a judgment which in its *inquiries* will look back as far as our beginning, for *God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing:*[c] and which in its *decisions* will look forward as far as our everlasting state, which must by it be irreversibly determined.

Now, whenever we think of giving an account to God, we must have an eye to the Lord Jesus, as the one only Mediator between us and God, that blessed *Days-man* who has *laid his hand upon us both;* who is *our peace*, who arbitrates matters in variance be-

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j John v. 17, 19. k Heb. i. 2. l Eph. iii. 9. m Col. i. 16, 17.
n John i. 3. o John i. 4. p Rev. iii. 14.
q Col. i. 15. r Heb. i. 2, 4. s Matt. xi. 27.
t John v. 22. u John xvii. 6. v Ps. xxii. 28.
w Matt. xxviii. 18. x John v. 22. y Luke i. 74, 75.
z Matt. xxiii. 8, 9. a Ps. xiv. 11. b Eccl. xii. 4.

tween us and God; who takes up the quarrel, slays the enmity, and, in whom God was so far reconciling the world unto himself, as that all those who perish in the quarrel, have their blood upon their own heads. And he is our Advocate, who having *made* peace for us, *speaks* peace for us in the intercession which he EVER *lives to make*, in the virtue of the satisfaction he ONCE FOR ALL *died to make*. It is he who interposed between us and God, by whom God speaks to us, and we plead with God; who appears for us, acts for us, answers the charges exhibited against us, and sues out the blessings purchased for us, and promised to us. This is his office, and he attends continually to this very thing.

6. Do we believe that *God is our end*, and that in his favour our happiness is bound up? We must believe also, that *Christ is our way*, and that we cannot obtain the favour of God, but in and through him. If we know ourselves, and the nature and capacities of our own souls, we cannot but know that he who made us, is he whom we are made for, and is alone able to make us happy, and not the world, which was made for us; that he who is the Fountain of our being, is the alone Felicity of it; that his loving-kindness is therefore better than life, this natural life, because it is the life of the soul, it is our spiritual and eternal life.

It is certain those are happy whom God loves; but the question is, how we poor sinners may come at this happiness? The gospel will resolve that question, for it tells us that Christ is the *true and living way* to the Father;[d] the old way, the new way, the only way: that there is no coming to God as a Father, but by Jesus Christ the Mediator. That he is the door by whom we enter into covenant and communion with God; that he is the light to guide us in the way; that he is our High Priest, who is *ordained for men in things pertaining unto God*, and, as the forerunner, is for us entered; that it is by him that we have access to God,[e] are introduced into his presence, and recommended to his favour and grace, and may come boldly to the throne of his grace: and as such a one we are to believe in him.

II. I come now to show, that the *acts* of this faith in Christ must be the same with the acts of our faith in God. The same word is used concerning both, signifying the same thing. We believe in God, we must believe also in Jesus Christ; that is,

1. *We acquaint ourselves with God*, we must *acquaint ourselves also with Jesus Christ*. Grace and peace are multiplied to us through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,[f] through that faith which arises from right knowledge, and presses after more knowledge; for as knowing is necessary to our believing, so believing is necessary to our further knowing. We think we are concerned to know the only true God; we are so, but that will not be life eternal to us, unless withal we know Jesus Christ; whom he has sent,[g] to acquaint us with him, and lead us back to him, and make us happy in him. It is the knowledge of Christ which blessed Paul saw such a transcendent excellency in, and for which he was willing to suffer the loss of all things:[h] he desired, he *determined* to *know nothing but Christ, and him crucified*,[i] because he knew that Christ's death is our life. Those therefore are grossly ignorant of God and themselves, (however they may boast of their knowledge,) who desire not to be acquainted with Jesus Christ, but make light of the knowledge of him. Let us then who follow on to know the Lord, follow on to know the Lord Jesus, to know yet more and more of him. We know something of God by the light of nature, but much more by the light of divine revelation; and by that light we come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ too: so that in studying that, we get and grow in the knowledge both of God and Christ, that is, of *the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*.[k]

2. We adore *God*, we must also *adore Jesus Christ*. They who believe in God as a being infinitely bright, and blessed, and glorious, and the Sovereign Lord of all, will see themselves obliged to give him the glory due to his name, and to profess their faith in him, by paying their homage to him, and seeking to him for mercy and grace. And thus we must express our faith in Christ, as that blind man, the eyes of whose mind were opened with those of his body; and then he said to Christ, *Lord, I believe; and he worshipped him*.[l] It is the will of God that *all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*, that they should give him divine honours, as one with the Father. And our confessing that he is Lord redounds to the glory of God the Father, whose person he is the express image of.[m] All the angels of God were appointed to worship him,[n] even when he was brought into this lower world,[o] and they did so. Much more reason have we to do it, now he is entered into his glory; we who lie under greater obligations to him than the angels do. And every creature is brought in ascribing the same *blessing, and honour, and glory, and power*, both *to him that sits upon the throne and to the Lamb*.[p] Do we express our faith in God by praying to him? We do so; for as we cannot call on him in whom we have not believed,[q] so we cannot but call on him in whom we have believed. Thus, therefore, we must express our faith in Christ, we must pray to him, as many did when he was here upon earth, and none in vain. It is made the description of Christians, that they *call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*,[r] because they trust in that name. Stephen testified his faith in Christ, when he prayed, *Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit*.

d John xiv. 6. e Eph. ii. 18. f 2 Pet. i. 2. g John xvii. 3. h Phil. iii. 8. i 1 Cor. ii 2. k 2 Cor iv. 6.

l John ix. 38. m Phil. ii. 11. n Heb. i. 6. o Luke ii. 14. p Rev. v. 13. q Rom. x. 14. r 1 Cor. i. 2.

3. *We stand in awe of God*, we must also *stand in awe of the Lord Jesus*. Faith and fear go together; Noah by faith was moved with fear. If we believe the majesty of God, we shall tremble at his presence, and be afraid of falling under his displeasure, much more of remaining under it. Let us also believe in Jesus Christ, and thus express it. Let us have awful thoughts of him, and of that authority which he is invested with, as Lord of all, and our Judge. Let us rejoice in him with a holy trembling, and kiss the Son with a religious fear, lest he be angry, and we perish from the way,[s] and be undone for ever; lest we be found among his enemies, that he will order to be brought forth and slain before him; among those rebels who shall be tormented *in the presence of the holy angels*,[t] *and in the presence of the Lamb*,[u] even he looking on and reckoning himself glorified in the final rejection of those who rejected him. For whether he be feared now or no, the day is coming when even the great and mighty men would be glad to hide themselves, not only from the face of him that sits upon the throne, but from the wrath of the Lamb;[v] finding to their confusion, that this Lamb is the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*, whose wrath more than that of any earthly king is as the *roaring of a lion*, and as *messengers of death*. Justly therefore is the kingdom of the Messiah introduced with this command, *Fear before him all the earth*,[w] for he is great, and greatly to be feared.

4. We *study to do the will of God;* all who believe in him do so; we must also *study to do the will of Jesus Christ*, and in the temper of our minds, and the tenor of our lives, to comply with it. Faith in God produces obedience to him. Those do not really give credit to his promises, whatever their professions and pretensions are, who are not willing to come up to the conditions of them; for so truly rich, so very rich, are the blessings proposed, and so very easy and reasonable are the duties required, to which those blessings are annexed, that those who will not be brought to the duties, must be looked upon as not believing either the truth of the promise, or the value of the things promised. But those who really believe that *God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him*,[x] will set themselves to seek and serve him; and thus faith in Christ will produce obedience to him. It is for the obedience of faith that the gospel is made known to all nations;[y] and it is in vain to call Christ Lord, if we do not the things that he saith;[z] in vain to call him our King, if we conform not to the laws, and serve not the interests, of his kingdom; in vain to expect from him the privileges of adoption, if we do not, as obedient children, fashion ourselves[a] according to the spirit of his family, and the rules by which it is governed. If we do indeed believe in Christ as the *author of eternal salvation to all those that obey him*,[b] and to those only, and believe that salvation is from everlasting misery, and to everlasting blessedness, surely we shall make no difficulty of obeying him, yea, though his precepts be to deny ourselves, and to take up our cross daily.[c] If we do indeed believe that Christ loved us and gave himself for us, and that we owe our all to his love, surely it will be an easy thing to us to love one another,[d] in conformity to his example, and in obedience to that new commandment which he has given us. If we do indeed believe that Christ sits at the right hand of God, and has there prepared a place for us,[e] we shall thereby find ourselves strongly engaged to set our affections on things above.

5. We *delight ourselves in God*, and rejoice and triumph in him; we must *also delight ourselves in Jesus Christ*, and rejoice and triumph in him. *We believe in God*, and therefore take a complacency in him, in contemplating his beauty, participating of his bounty, and in the relishes of that benignity of his, which is better than life. Our souls not only return to him, and repose in him as their rest, but please themselves in him as their *exceeding joy*,—the *gladness of their joy*,[f] so the word is. And thus we must make it appear that we believe also in Jesus Christ; we must take a pleasure, a transcendent pleasure, in the views of his loveliness in himself, and his love to us. Our meditation of God must be sweet, and so must our meditation of Jesus Christ: we must love to think of him, as of one we love and have an interest in. They are the circumcision,[g] they are indeed the children of the covenant who rejoice in Christ Jesus;[h] who in his name lift up their banners; who glory in the Lord,[i] who glory in his cross, so far are they from being ashamed of it. In him shall *all the seed of Israel be justified*;[k] and, as a fruit and evidence of it, *in him they shall glory*,[l] in him as *The Lord their righteousness*.

If, believing, we rejoice in God,[m] believing, we must rejoice also in Jesus Christ; for in him dwell not only all the awful, but all the amiable, perfections of the divine nature. Is God light? Christ is the light of the world, and a pleasant thing it is with the eye of faith to behold the Sun of Righteousness. Is God love? in nothing does it more appear that he is so than in sending his Son to die for us: in him he commended his love.[n] Nor could we, in our guilty and polluted state, delight ourselves in a just and holy God, no, nor think of him without terror, if there were not a Mediator between us and him. It is in Christ Jesus that we rejoice, and in God through him.

6. We depend upon God, and put our confidence

s Ps. ii. 11, 12. t Luke xix. 27. u Rev. xiv. 10. v Rev. vi. 16. w Ps. xcvi. 9. x Heb. xi. 6. y Rom. xvi. 26. z Luke vi. 46. a 1 Pet. i. 14. b Heb. v. 9. c Matt. xvi. 24. d John xiii. 34. e Col. iii. 1, 2. f Ps. xliii. 4. g Phil. iii. 3. h Ps. xx. 5. i 1 Cor. x. 3. k Gal. vi. 14. l Isa. xlv. 25. m 1 Pet. i. 8. n Rom. v. 8.

in him; let us also depend upon Jesus Christ, and put a confidence in him. We believe in God, that is, we trust in him, we rely upon his wisdom to direct us, his power to support and strengthen us, his goodness to pity us, and his all-sufficiency to give all that *to us*, and work all that *in us*, and *for us*, which the necessity of our case calls for. And we therefore refer ourselves to him, and encourage ourselves in him; now let us thus believe also in Jesus Christ, and make him our hope. As we confide in the providence of God for all things that relate to the natural life; and cheerfully submit ourselves to the conduct of that providence, hoping by it to be carried comfortably through this world; so we confide in the grace of the Lord Jesus for all things relating to the spiritual life, and cheerfully submit ourselves to the operations of that grace, hoping by it to be carried safely to a better world; desiring not more to secure our present and future welfare, than to have the *grace of the Lord Jesus Christ with our Spirit.*[o] Our dependence must be upon Christ both for righteousness and strength,[p] the two great things we stand in need of; from a full conviction of our own guilt and weakness, and of his ability and willingness to save us from sin and wrath, we must venture all our spiritual concerns with him. In every thing wherein we have to do with God, we must make mention of his righteousness, and make use of his grace,—and, of both, as all-sufficient for us; must depend upon him to bring us safe through this wilderness to the heavenly Canaan; and having done this, as those who know whom we have trusted, we must be willing to venture all our temporal concerns for him, to leave, and lose, and lay out all for his sake, being well assured, that though we may be losers for him, we shall not, we cannot, be losers by him in the end.

III. I come in the next place to show the necessary connexion that there is between these two great duties, of believing in God, and believing also in Jesus Christ; and how the latter will follow of course, if the former be sincere, in all those to whom the glad tidings of the gospel-salvation are brought. They must needs embrace the Christian religion, who cordially entertain natural religion; and they who do not believe in Christ, whatever they pretend, do not indeed believe in God: for,

1. If we *believe in God*, we must believe in him who is *One with him, the Brightness of his glory*, and *the express Image of his Person.*[q] Christ in his gospel has expressly told us, *I and my Father are one.*[r] And when he says, *My Father is greater than I*,[s] the comparison is not between the person of the Father and of the Son, but between the Son's state of exaltation with the Father and his present state of humiliation; as *plainly* appears, because it comes in as a reason why the disciples should not mourn, but rejoice rather, in his departure from them, because he had told them he was to go to the Father, where his state would be not only more glorious to himself, but of greater capacity to serve them, than his present state was. When he was entering upon his sufferings, he comforted himself with this, that *he and his Father were one, Thou, Father art in me and I in thee*,[t] and therefore he has reason to expect, that *the world will believe*, that *they who believe in God*, will believe also in him. So much are the Father and the Son *one*, that Christ says, *He that has seen me, has seen the Father.*[u] We come to the knowledge of God, by the knowledge of Jesus Christ, for the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ; and, therefore, he who believes in the *Father*, as far as the *Son* is revealed to him to be one with the Father, will believe also in him: and by that faith we come to be one *with* the Father and the Son, and one *in* them.[v] And thus, by keeping Christ's commandments *we abide in his love*, even as he kept his Father's commandments, *and abode in his love.*[w] Such a close and inseparable union the gospel all along shows us between the Father and the Son, as that we cannot divide them in our belief. The heathen worshipped their idols as rivals with God, we worship Christ as one with God: *Believe me*, says Christ, that *I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* So let us believe in him.

2. If we *believe in God*, we must believe also in him who is *sent by him*, has a *commission from him*, and to whom he has *given testimony.* We do not believe in God, unless we believe what he has said concerning his Son, and rest upon it; what he said by the prophets of the Old Testament, who all bare witness to him. And those predictions of theirs were all exactly and completely accomplished, which had reference to his estate of *humiliation*, and the afflictions of it; not one iota or tittle of them fell to the ground. Christ himself observed this when he said, *It is finished:* which ratifies those predictions that had reference to his estate of *exaltation*, the honours of it, and the graces that flow to us from it; for *the Spirit of Christ, in them, testified beforehand* both *of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory that should follow.*[x] We must also believe, what he said by a voice from heaven concerning him, once and again, *This is my beloved* Son, *in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him*;[y] and must concur with him by a sincere declaration, *This is my beloved* Saviour, *in whom I am well pleased, and whom I will hear.*[z] Thus we set to our seal that he is true,[a] and subscribe to the record we have received in the everlasting gospel, which we are willing to venture our souls and our salvation upon, that *God has given to us eternal life*, and *this life is in his Son*; which if we receive not

o Gal. vi. 18. p Isa. xlv. 24. q Heb. i. 3. r John x. 30.
s John xiv. 28. t John xvii. 21. u John xiv. 9.
v John xvii. 21. w John xv. 10. x 1 Pet. i. 11.
y Mat. iii. 17. z Matt. xvii. 5. a John iii. 33.

we make God a liar,[b] we not only declare that we do not believe in him ourselves, but that he is not fit to be believed by any one else. Justly therefore has Christ said, *He that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me;* as an affront done to an ambassador, is justly construed an affront to him who gave him his character and credentials.

We must also, if we believe in God, give credit to the many confirmations which we have of his testimony to his Son; the many miracles which were wrought to prove his divine mission, miracles of mercy, healing mercy, which served likewise to explain and illustrate it; especially the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, by which he was declared to be the Son of God with power,[c] and in which God gave him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God;[d] that believing in him whom he raised from the dead, our faith and hope in him might be both evidenced and encouraged. The pouring out of the Spirit likewise, both in his gifts and in his graces, is a further attestation given to Christ's mission, for in them God bare him witness;[e] nay, the Holy Ghost whom God gave to them who believed in Christ, and obeyed him,[f] is said to be his witness; so that if we believe in the Spirit of God, we must believe also in Christ, and, therefore, the imputing of Christ's miracles, which were wrought by the Spirit of God, to Beelzebub the prince of the devils, is justly reckoned an *unpardonable blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.*

3. If we *believe in God*, we must *give honour to him*, by *believing also in Jesus Christ;* for thereby he reckons himself honoured. If *we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord*, it is to the *glory of God the Father.*[g] It is certain, there is nothing in which the glory of God, and of all his attributes, shines more bright, or more strong, than in the great work of our redemption wrought out by Jesus Christ; and therefore, when the First-begotten was brought into the world, the angels who were charged to worship him sang, *Glory to God in the highest*, because, in Christ, there was *on earth peace, and good-will towards men:*[h] so that, unless by faith in Christ we receive that peace and good-will, and the record given concerning it, we do not as we ought give unto God the glory due to him, from that greatest of all the works of wonder by which he has made himself known. Do we believe in God? We ought then to give him the glory of all that infinite wisdom which contrived our redemption in such a way, that divine justice might be satisfied, and yet sinners saved; this is the *wisdom of God in a mystery, hidden wisdom, manifold wisdom, ordained before the world for our glory.*[i] We ought also to give him the glory of that kindness and love of God which designed this salvation, those tender mercies, whereby the Day-spring from on high visited us; love without precedent, love without parallel, whereby God so loved the world, as to give his only-begotten Son for us. But how can we say we believe in him, which is giving glory to him, if we rob him of so great a part of his glory, by not believing in Jesus Christ, in whom his glory shines in a special manner?

4. If we *believe God speaking by Moses and the prophets*, we must believe also in Jesus Christ; for to him bare all the prophets witness, and in all the ceremonies of the Mosaic institution, he was typified: if we believe the Old Testament, we must also believe the New; for such an exact correspondence and agreement is there between them, as between two tallies. The same grace which the Old Testament represents in shadows, promises, and predictions, the New Testament produces in the substance and accomplishment, so that they mutually confirm and illustrate one another. This our Lord Jesus insisted upon, as one of the strongest proofs of his divine mission, that the Scriptures of the Old Testament *testified of him;* and therefore he tells the Jews, who set up Moses in opposition to him, that Moses, instead of condemning him, condemned them for not believing in him; for, says he, *Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me.*[k] In *the volume of the book,*[l] εν κεφαλιδι—*in the head* of it, (so the word is,) in the very beginning of the book of Moses, it was written of Christ, that as *the seed of the woman*, he should *break the serpent's head.* It is plain, therefore, ye *believe not his writings*, because ye *believe not my words.* Christ blamed the two disciples, and afterwards all the rest, for their slowness to believe what was written concerning him in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, all which was to a tittle fulfilled in him.[m] They who believed in the God of Israel, and received the oracles which by him were committed to them, knew very well that there was a salvation to be revealed in the last times; that a Messiah should come, to be a prophet like Moses, a priest like Aaron, a king like David,—and, like the sacrifices, to make reconciliation for iniquity; and that he should be cut off, not for himself, but for the sins of his people.[n] And do we not see all this abundantly made good in the Lord Jesus? Has he not done, has he not suffered, all that which it was foretold he should do and suffer? If, therefore, we believe that a Messiah was to come, we must believe that *this was he that should come, and we are not to look for any other.* The apostles therefore all along appealed to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, *saying no other things than those which Moses and the prophets said should come,*[o] and putting the unbelief of the Jews to their ignorance of *the voice of the prophets*, though they were *read among them every sabbath*

b 1 John v. 10, 11. c Rom. i. 4. d 1 Pet. i. 21. e Heb. ii. 4.
f Acts v. 32. g Phil. ii. 11. h Luke ii. 14.
i 1 Cor. ii. 7. k John v. 45—47. l Heb. x. 7.
m Luke xxiv. 25, 27, 44. n Dan. ix. 26. o Acts xxvi. 22.

day.[p] So that, in short, if we believe that there is such a thing as a divine revelation, that God has made a discovery of himself, and of his will and grace, to the children of men, we must believe the gospel, and the testimony it bears, *God has sent his son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might have* righteousness and life.

5. If we rightly apprehend how matters stand between God and man since the fall, as those must do who believe in God, who believe his holiness and justice, and his relations to man, we shall readily receive the notice which the gospel gives us of a Mediator between God and man; not only because we shall soon perceive how desirable it is that there should be such a Mediator, (and we are easily brought to believe what is for our honour and advantage, *quod volumus facile credimus—what we wish we easily believe,)* but because we shall perceive, likewise, how probable it is that a God of infinite grace and mercy should appoint such a Mediator, and make him known to us. It is a great confirmation of the truth of the Christian religion, that it not only agrees with, and is a ratification of, the principles and laws of natural religion, and is an improvement and advancement of them, but that it supplies the deficiencies of it; it takes us up and helps us out, where that fails us and leaves us at a loss. So that if we make just reflections upon ourselves, and our own case as it appears to us by the light of nature, there cannot but be a disposition in us to receive and embrace the gospel, and to entertain it not only as a faithful saying, but as well worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. If we rightly believe in God, and withal rightly understand ourselves, we cannot but perceive our case to be such as calls for the interposition of a Mediator between us and God; and we are undone if there be no such a one; and we will therefore cheerfully receive him.

(1.) We cannot but perceive that man has in a great measure lost the knowledge of God, and therefore should gladly believe in him who has revealed him to us. It is certainly the greatest satisfaction and best entertainment to our intellectual powers, to know God the author and felicity of our beings. The understanding of man cannot *rest* short of this knowledge; but we find that by the entrance of sin, our understandings are darkened,[q] and the children of men are generally alienated from the divine light and life, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: *The world by wisdom knew not God,*[r] and *the things of God* are *foolishness to the natural man.*[s] Are we sensible of this as our misery, that we cannot by any researches of our own come to such a knowledge of God, as is necessary to our communion with him? If we are so, we shall readily embrace Christ as a prophet, who having lain in the bosom of the Father from eternity, has declared him[t] to the children of men, and has brought into this dark world the light of the knowledge of this glory, with such convincing evidences of a divine truth, and such endearing instances of a divine grace and love in this light, as are abundantly sufficient both to captivate the understanding and engage the affections. This is the true light, which is sufficient to *lighten every man that cometh into this world,*[u] and to direct him through it to a better world. And shall we not open our eyes to such a light? Can we be such strangers, such enemies, to ourselves, and our own interests, as to love darkness rather than this light?[v]

(2.) We cannot but perceive, that there is an infinite distance between God and man, and therefore should gladly believe in one, in whose person the divine and human natures are wonderfully united. The light of nature shows us the glory of a God above us; *as heaven is high above the earth,* so are his *thoughts and ways above ours:* whence we are tempted to infer, that there is no having any communion with him, that he is not conversable with us, and that we cannot expect that he should take any cognizance of us. Shall we not therefore welcome the tidings of a Mediator between God and man, even the Man Christ Jesus? Shall we not be glad to hear, that this God *above us* is, in Christ, *Immanuel, God* with *us,*[w] God in our nature, *God manifested in the flesh;* the Eternal Word incarnate, which will facilitate our communion with God, and represent it to us as a thing possible? When we look upon God as the almighty Creator and Sovereign of the world, a being of infinite perfection and blessedness, we are tempted to say, *Will* this *God in very deed dwell with men,* with mean and sinful worms *on the earth?* But when we look upon the Son of God clothed with a body, and visiting in great humility this remote corner of the universe, which God has let out to the children of men, as a vineyard to unthankful husbandmen, we are encouraged to say with triumph, *Behold the tabernacle of God is with men,* and *his sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.*[x] We are quite lost in our thoughts, when we come to meditate seriously on the divine perfections, for they are an unfathomable depth, which we cannot find out, concerning which we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness; *If a man speak surely he shall be swallowed up:*[y] but when we come with an eye of faith to see the Father in Christ, who is both God and man, and are brought by faith to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and through him to God the Judge of all,[z] this makes his glory the more intelligible, *(he that hath seen me,* says Christ, *hath seen the Father,)* his example the more

p Acts xiii. 27. q Eph. i. 18. r 1 Cor. i. 21.
s 1 Cor. ii. 24. t 1 John i. 18. u John i. 9.
v John iii. 19. w Matt. i. 23. x Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27.
y Job xxxvii. 20. z Heb. xii. 23, 24.

imitable, his favour the more attainable, and man's communion with him the more practicable.

(3.) We cannot but perceive the matter to be yet worse;—that there is a quarrel between God and man by reason of sin; that the God who made us is not only a God *above us*, but a God *against us*; and therefore we should gladly believe in him by whom that quarrel is taken up, in whom God was reconciling the world to himself,[a] and who is our peace. *You believe in God*, your great Lord and Lawgiver; and do you not believe, that he requires of you an exact conformity to the law of your creation; that since he made you for himself, to show forth his praise, you should accordingly live to his honour; that he who endued you with the powers of reason, designed that your appetites and passions should always act under the direction and dominion of those powers? Does not even the light of nature tell you, that God, who is the *best* of beings, is to be loved and delighted in *above all*; that all the gifts of his bounty are to be received by us with thankfulness, and all the rebukes of his justice submitted to with patience? These are the rules which you know you should have been ruled by: but you know you have come short of these rules; that those affections of your souls have been set upon the world and the flesh, which should have been set upon God only; that the appetites of a mortal body, by which you are allied to the earth, have been indulged, to the unspeakable disgrace and detriment of an immortal spirit, by which you are allied to the upper world. It is not only the Scripture, but even natural conscience, that has concluded us all under sin. Those who had not the law, yet showed the accusing, convincing work of the law written in their hearts.[b] And will not your own hearts tell you likewise, that you having offended God, he is displeased with you, and you lie under his wrath? If God be infinitely perfect, as certainly he is, he is infinitely just and holy; and as the Governor of the world, is engaged in honour to punish sin, that his law may not be trampled on, and his dominion made contemptible. Do you believe *this* concerning God, and *this* concerning yourselves? and will you not welcome the tidings of a reconciliation between you and God, and gladly believe in him who was made sin and a curse for us, that we through him might have righteousness and life? Was Christ slain as a sacrifice to slay this enmity between us and God, and shall not we by faith lay our hands on the head of this sacrifice, and apply for an interest in it? Shall not the Prince of peace be our peace? Shall not we receive the atonement,[c] consent to it, confide in it, and take the comfort of it, when it is an atonement which God himself has appointed and accepted? When we see that God contends with us, and that it is in vain for us to think of contending with him; *with ten thousand* we dare not meet him that *comes against us with twenty thousand*;[d] it is like setting briers and thorns before a consuming fire, which are fuel to it, instead of being a fence against it; sure we shall see it is our interest to take hold on his strength, that we may make peace with him; especially when this method of reconciliation is not an uncertain thing, for he has told us *we shall make peace with him.*

(4.) Yet this is not the worst of it: we cannot but perceive that we are corrupt and sinful, that our nature is depraved and vitiated, and wretchedly degenerated from what it was, as it came out of God's hand; and, therefore, we should gladly believe in him who is *made of God to us not only righteousness but sanctification*,[e] and who came into the world, not only to restore us to the favour of God, but to renew his image upon us. Do we not sensibly find by daily experience, that our minds are alienated from God, and there is in them a strong bias toward the world and the flesh; that we are not of ourselves either inclinable to, or sufficient for, any thing that is good, but continually prone to that which is evil? And being thus *sick*, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot distempered, shall we not rejoice to hear of *balm in Gilead*, and a *Physician there?* And shall we not apply that balm, and put ourselves under the care of that Physician? If you believe in God, you believe that as he is holy so you should be holy: but you find you are not so, nothing of his resemblance appears upon you, and therefore you cannot expect he should put you among his children, or give you the pleasant land.[f] Will you not then believe also in him, who has undertaken not only to show us the glory of the Lord, but by his Spirit to change us into the same image from glory to glory;[g] and is able to make good his undertaking? For therefore *it pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell*, that *from his fulness all we might receive, and grace for grace*;[h] that being grafted into that good olive, we might partake of his root and fatness; and though severed from him we can do nothing, yet we may be able to do all things through Christ strengthening us.[i] If it be indeed, as it ought to be, our shame and sorrow, that we are by nature so much under the dominion of a vain and carnal mind,—no saying will appear to us so well worthy of all acceptation, as this, that Christ Jesus came to *save his people from their sins*,[k] and to *purify* them *a peculiar people to himself, zealous of good works.*[l]

(5.) If we believe that God is the Father of our spirits, we cannot but perceive that they are immortal, that they must shortly return to God who gave them, and that we are made for another world,—and therefore will gladly believe in one who will be our

a 2 Cor. v. 19. b Rom. ii. 14, 15. c Rom. v. 11. d Luke xiv. 31. e 1 Cor. i. 30. f Jer. iii. 19.

g 2 Cor. iii. 18. h John i. 16. i Phil. iv. 13. k Matt. i. 21. l Tit. ii. 14.

guide to that world, who will stand our friend in the judgment, and secure our welfare in the future state. Do we not find our souls strongly impressed with a belief of their own existence in a state of separation from the body? The thinking part, even of the heathen world, did so. Natural conscience, which is either a *heaven* or a *hell* in men's own bosoms, plainly intimates to them, that there is a state of rewards and punishments on the other side death, and a righteous doom of every man to the one or to the other: but when we come to inquire, "How shall we make the Judge our friend? What plea will bring us off in the judgment? What is the happiness that is set before us in another world? And what course shall we take to make it sure to ourselves?" When we ask "What shall we do to get above the fear of death?" (we see its stroke inevitable;) "what have we wherewith to arm ourselves against its terror? From what advances here can we take a comfortable prospect of our state hereafter? We must shortly be stript of all our enjoyments in this world; what is there that will befriend us in our removal to another world?" Here the light of nature leaves us quite at a loss. Neither the philosophers with their wisest considerations, nor the infidels with their boldest contradictions, could ever reconcile men to death, or enable them upon any good grounds cheerfully to quit this world. *Animula vagula, blandula*, (said one of the wisest of the heathen upon his death-bed,) *quæ nunc abibis in loca?—Whither art thou now going, O my poor soul?* Death, with a noted atheist, was a *great leap in the dark*. It is certain, nothing but Christ and his gospel can furnish us with such comforts, as will carry us without the fear of evil through the valley of the shadow of death. Shall we not then readily believe in Christ, and bid his gospel welcome into our hearts, that light by which such clear and full discoveries are made of life and immortality? Shall we not depend upon him with an entire satisfaction, and give up ourselves to his conduct, who has enabled us to triumph over death and the grave, and to say, *O death, where is thy sting*, where is thy terror? Have we not reason to entertain that institution as of a divine original, which is so wisely, so kindly, suited to our case in the last and greatest exigence of it; which shows us the way, through this wilderness, to an everlasting rest for souls; which divides Jordan before us, and makes a path through it for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over? Do we believe that our souls must go to God? and shall we not believe in him who will introduce us, who will receive our spirits, and present them to the Father, and lodge them in the mansions which he himself has prepared in his Father's house? How forward should dying creatures be to embrace a living Saviour, who is and will be life in death to all who by faith are united to him, and who has said, *Because I live ye shall live also.*[m]

Now lay all this together, and then tell me, whether those who believe in God have not a great deal of reason to believe also in Jesus Christ; not only to desire such a Saviour, but to depend upon the Lord Jesus, as every way fitted to be the Saviour, and able to save to the uttermost.

And now will you hear the conclusion of the whole matter?

1. Let us be more and more confirmed in our belief of the principles of natural religion, which Christianity supposes, and is founded upon. Let the dictates of the light and law of nature be always sacred with us, and have a commanding sway and empire in our souls. So agreeable is revealed religion to right reason, and the established rules of good and evil, that what contradicts and violates them, how plausible soever its pretensions may be, ought to be rejected, as no part of Christianity.

Therefore they who, under colour of zeal for Christianity, hate and persecute their brethren, kill them, and say they do God good service, or under that pretence despise dominion, resist the powers that are ordained of God, break the public order, and disturb the public peace, who think no faith is to be kept with those they call heretics, and that it is lawful to lie for the truth; these put a high affront upon the Christian religion, and do it the greatest wrong and injury imaginable. To such we may say, You profess to believe in Christ, but do you believe in God? *Is Christ the minister of sin?* If he came not to *destroy the law and the prophets*, but to fulfil them, can we think he came to set up a religion that should be served and advanced by a flat contradiction to those principles and rational instincts, (if I may so call them,) which were prior and superior even to the law of Moses and the prophetical inspirations? Christ came to renew the tables which sin had broken; not to blot out any thing that was engraven in the heart of man by nature, but to write upon the tables *according to the first writing*, and to *add thereto many like words*. If it *became Christ*, no doubt it becomes Christians, to *fulfil all righteousness*;[n] for we may say of the principles of natural religion, as St. Paul does of the law of Moses, *Do* we make them *void* by the faith of the gospel? God forbid; nay, we *establish* them.[o]

2. Yet let us not rest in a mere natural religion, and a compliance with it, but let us, with the fullest conviction and highest satisfaction, embrace and firmly adhere to the principles of revealed religion, and submit to the commanding, constraining power and influence of them. Let pure Christianity govern us in every thing, and both give law to us and give peace to us. Let faith be our guide with relation to another world, as sense and reason are with relation to this world; and then we shall be led into the paths, and brought under the dominion, of Christ's

m John xiv. 19.

n Matt. iii. 15.

o Rom. iii. 31.

holy religion. If there be any divine revelation in the world, it is in the Holy Scripture, on which Christianity is built; and *there* certainly it is, for we cannot think that God has put fallen mankind upon a new trial, (which he has not done for fallen angels,) and given him no new rule of duty and expectation, accommodated to that state of trial. The Scripture, therefore, is that which we are to believe, into which we must search, and on which we must build, for that is it that testifies of Christ. Christ therefore is he to whose conduct we must entirely devote ourselves, and on the all-sufficiency of whose mediation we must rely; else we are unworthy to bear the name of Christians, and wear the livery of his family.

As there is a practical atheism, which they are chargeable with who profess to know God, but in works deny him; so there is a practical deism, which they are chargeable with, who profess to believe in Christ, and yet have no regard to his mediation between God and man: and both the one and the other are no less dangerous than the speculative, and so much the worse, that they carry in them a self-contradiction.

Let us who are ministers make it our business to advance the honour of Christ, and to bring all to him; as faithful friends of the Bridegroom, who *rejoice greatly to hear the Bridegroom's voice*,[p] and to serve his interests; else we do not answer the character we are dignified with, as *his* ministers. Blessed Paul, though he was a great scholar, determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified,[q] counting all but loss for the excellency of that knowledge;[r] and he did as he determined, for "in all his writings" (as one of the ancients observes) "he breathes nothing but Christ." "Preach Christ, brother," (said the famous Mr. Perkins, to a young minister who asked his advice,) "preach Christ, brother." It is the language of all faithful ministers, *We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for his sake.*[s] It is the character of Christians, that they have learned Christ:[t] but how shall they learn him, if their teachers do not preach him? The whole gospel centres in Christ; in him therefore let all our preaching centre. Let us preach down sin as an enemy to Christ, and that which he died to separate us, and so to save us, from: let us press duty with an eye to Christ, in compliance with him, and gratitude to him. Let us prescribe comforts fetched from Christ, and founded upon his mediation. Do we aim at the conversion of sinners? Let us call them to Christ, persuade them to come and take his yoke upon them, and recommend them to him as the best Master. Do we aim at the edification of saints? Let us lead them into a further acquaintance with Christ, that they may grow up into him[u] in all things, as their Head and Root. Are we God's mouth to his people? Let us do as God did when he spake from heaven, give honour to Christ, and direct all to hear him.[v] Are we their mouth to God? Let us offer up all the spiritual sacrifices upon this altar, that sanctifies every gift. Let this golden thread run through the whole web of our praying and preaching; and in every thing let precious Jesus ever have the pre-eminence.

Let us all, both ministers and Christians, make Jesus Christ all in all to us; to us *to live must be Christ:* and *as we have received him* by our profession of his name, we must so *walk in him;* and whatever we do in word or deed, do all in his name, with an eye to his will as our rule, and his glory as our end, depending upon him both for strength and righteousness, and continually rejoicing and glorying in him.

It is to be feared, there are some even within the pale of the church, who seem to have some little religion, but they forget Christ, and leave him out of it. If we come to talk with them about their souls, and their eternal salvation, we find they have a reverence for God, and a sense of their duty to him, which they speak of with some clearness and concern; they have right notions of justice and charity, fidelity, patience, and temperance, yea, and of devotion to God, and invocation of him; and are under convictions of the necessity of these, for they believe in God: but when we speak to them also of believing in Jesus Christ, of their coming to God as a Father by him as Mediator, of the need they have of him in every thing wherein they have to do with God, and the constant dependence they ought to have upon him, they are ready to say, as the people did of Ezekiel, *Doth not he speak parables?*[w] This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that among those who are called Christians, there should be those found who are strangers to Christ, and are content to be so; to whom the *Light of the world* is as a *lamp despised*, and the *Fountain of life* as a *broken cistern;* and who are ready to say to Christ, *Depart from us*, and, *What can the Redeemer do for us*, which we cannot do for ourselves? We *pity* those who never heard of Christ, whom this Day-spring from on high never visited; for, *How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* But *we are* justly *angry* at those to whom the great things of the gospel are preached, and yet they are accounted by them as strange and foreign things, and things that they are no way concerned in. It is an amazing infatuation, and what we may stand and wonder at. Be astonished, O heavens, at this!

(1.) It is strange, that any who are baptized, and are called Christians, can forget Christ, and leave him out of their religion; surely they must have

p John iii. 29. q 1 Cor. ii. 2. r Phil. iii. 8. s 2 Cor. iv. 5. t Eph. iv. 20. u Eph. iv. 15. v Matt. xvii. 5 w Ezek. xx 49.

forgot their Christian name, for they have wretchedly forgot themselves. What? a Christian, and yet a stranger to Christ! *Aut nomen, aut mores mutа—Either change thy name, or change thy spirit.* Is not the whole family, both in heaven and earth,[a] denominated from him, as having a necessary and constant dependence upon him? and yet he shall be out of mind, because for the present he is out of sight. Shall he be made a cipher of, who is to us the only figure, and who in the upper world makes so great a figure? Were not we baptized into his name; and by our baptism entered into his school, hired into his family, and enlisted under his banner; and yet shall we set him aside, as if we had no occasion for him! If circumcision was to the breakers of the law made uncircumcision,[b] shall not baptism be nullified, and made no baptism, to the contemners of the gospel?

(2.) It is strange, that any who are convinced of sin, and see themselves, as all the world is, guilty before God, can forget Christ; and leave him out of their religion, as if they could do well enough without him. What? a sinner, and yet make light of the Saviour! A dying perishing sinner, and yet not believe in him, whose errand into the world was to redeem us from all iniquity! Is the avenger of blood in pursuit of us, and just at our back, and shall not the city of refuge be ever in our eye? Can we see our misery and danger by reason of sin, (and we are shamefully blind and partial to ourselves, if we do not,) and not be continually looking unto Jesus, the great propitiation? Can we read the curse of the law in force against us! can we see the fire of God's wrath ready to kindle upon us? and not be glad to accept of Christ upon his own terms, Christ upon any terms!

(3.) It is strange that any who desire to have communion with God, to hear from him, and speak to him, and in both to obtain his favour, should forget Christ, and leave him out of their religion. I hope none I speak to are of those who say to the Almighty, *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways*:[c] but that you will each of you say, with David, *It is good for me to draw near to God.*[d] Do you indeed think it so? Is that your choice? Is that your delight? Is this the thing you labour after, and are ambitious of, that *whether present or absent you may be accepted of the Lord?*[e] You know not yourselves, you know not your God, if it be not: and if it be, how can you expect to be accepted, but in the Beloved;[f] and that the holy God should be well pleased with you who are unholy creatures, but in and through a Mediator? It is by his Son that God does in these last days[g] speak to us, and it is by him that we are to speak to God; so that we cannot with any confidence approach to God, nor have any comfortable communion with him, out of Christ. If we neglect him, we come without our errand, and shall be sent away without an answer.

(4.) It is strange, that any who are in care about their souls and another world, should forget Christ, and leave him out of their religion. Brethren, you see yourselves dying daily, death is working in you; and you know that after death is a judgment, which will fix you in an unchangeable state of happiness or misery in perfection; you are standing upon the brink of an awful eternity, and are just ready to step in; now how can you hope to escape everlasting misery, much less to obtain everlasting happiness, unless you secure your interest in, and keep up your correspondence with, him, to whom all judgment is committed, who has the keys of hell and death in his hand, and is himself the resurrection and the life? Are we not concerned still to make mention of him, to whom the Father has given power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as were given him,[h] and who opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers. How dare we venture into another world, without being fixed on this foundation? Were our eyes opened, and our consciences duly awakened, the very thoughts of dying and going to judgment, would make such a terror to ourselves, as nothing could relieve us against, but a believing sight of Christ sitting at the right hand of God, ready to receive the souls that are in sincerity committed to him, to *redeem them from the power of the grave*, and to *present them to his Father*.

3. Let us all make it to appear in all our devotions, and in our whole conversation, that we not only believe in God, but that we believe also in Jesus Christ. Let our spirits be purely Christian; leavened with the gospel of Christ, and partaking of its relish and savour; delivered into it as into a mould, receiving its shape and impression, and in every thing conforming ourselves to it. The poor are said to *receive the gospel*:[i] they are *evangelized*—*euaggelizontai*, so the word is. What will it avail us in the gospel, to behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, unless we be changed into the same image, and reflect that light which shines upon us, so that all who converse with us, may take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus,[j] and that he dwells in our hearts by faith.

Let Christ be our plea for the pardon of sin, the plea we always put in, and firmly rely upon; let us never expect redemption but through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins; therefore we hope it is God who does and will justify, because it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again; and therefore we hope he will be our advocate with the Father, and a righteous, gracious advocate for us, because he is the *propitiation for our sins*. Let us

[a] Eph. iii. 15. [b] Rom. ii. 25. [c] Pet. Jerem. 29. [d] 2 Cor. v. 9. [e] Eph. i. 6. [f] Heb. i. 1. [g] John xvii. 2. [h] Matt. xi. 5. [i] Acts iv. 10.

make him our plea, and he will himself be our pleader.

Let Christ be our peace, and our peace-maker. When our consciences are offended and quarrel with us, when our hearts reproach us, and are ready to condemn us; let the blood of Christ, by which we are reconciled to God, be effectual to reconcile us to ourselves, and let nothing else avail, or be admitted to do it. What satisfied God, let that, and that only, satisfy us; and let that pacify our consciences which will also purify them. Let him also be our peace among ourselves. Let all good Christians, however differing in other things, be *one in him*, as he has prayed they may be: and let him who is the centre of their unity, be the powerful cement of their affections.

Let Christ be our prophet, and by him let us ask counsel of the Lord, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*[g] Let him be our oracle, and by him let us be determined; let the mind of Christ be our mind in every thing, and in order to it let his word dwell richly in us.[h]

Let Christ be our priest, and into his hand let us put all our services, all our spiritual sacrifices, to be offered up to God, because through him only they are acceptable.[i] By this name let us ever know him, let us ever own him, *The Lord our righteousness*.[k]

Let Christ be our pattern; let our spirits be renewed in conformity to his death and resurrection, and let us be so planted together in the likeness[l] of both, that it may be truly said, Christ is formed in us,[m] Christ lives in us,[n] and we are the *epistles of Christ*.[o] Let our whole conversation be governed in conformity to his example, which he has left us on purpose that we might follow his steps.[p] Let us so bear about with us continually the dying of the Lord Jesus, as that the *life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal body*.[q]

Let Christ be the beloved of our soul, and let us make it appear that he is so, by our delight in his presence, our grief for his withdrawings, our constant care to please him, and fear to offend him, and our diligence to approve ourselves to him, as one we esteem and love. Let us have such a constant regard to him, to his will as our rule, and to his glory as our end, that we may truly say, *To us to live is Christ*,[r] and to us living and dying he is gain.

Let Christ be our hope, let him be our joy; and let us make it to appear he is so, by such a holy cheerfulness of spirit, as will be a continual feast to us. Let us see, let us find, enough in Christ to silence all our fears, and to balance all our griefs, and so to keep us always calm and easy. Do we believe in God? Do we believe also in Jesus Christ? Then let not our hearts be troubled, whatever happens to us, but let us be kept in perfect peace.[s]

Let Christ be our crown of glory,[t] and our diadem of beauty; let us value ourselves by our interest in him, and relation to him. At his feet let all our crowns be cast; let boasting in ourselves be for ever excluded, and let him that glories glory in the Lord, in the Lord Jesus.

Let Christ be our heaven; let us reckon it one of the chief joys of glorified saints in the other world, that they are gathered to Christ[u] there, they see his glory,[v] and share in it, they sit with him at his table, sit with him on his throne. And let us therefore not only be willing to die when God calls us, but be desirous to depart and to be with Christ,[w] to be together for ever with him, which will be best of all.

To conclude. Let that be the language of our settled judgments, which a learned and religious gentleman of the last age took for his motto, wrote in his books, contrived to have continually before him, and ordered to be engraven in the rings given at his funeral; "CHRIST IS A CHRISTIAN'S ALL."* And let that be the language of our pious affection, with which one of the martyrs triumphed in the flames; "NONE BUT CHRIST, NONE BUT CHRIST."

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g Acts ix. 6. h Col. iii. 16. i 1 Pet. ii. 5.
k Jer. xxiii. 6. l Rom. vi. 5. m Gal. iv. 19.
n Gal. ii. 20. o 2 Cor. iii. 3. p 1 Pet. ii. 21.
q 2 Cor. iv. 10. r Phil. i. 21. s Isa. xxvi. 3.
t Isa. xxviii. 5. u 2 Thess. ii. 1. v John xvii. 24.
w Phil. i. 23.

* Judge Warburton.

A SERMON,

CONCERNING THE

FORGIVENESS OF SIN AS A DEBT,

PREACHED IN LONDON, JUNE 1ST, 1711.

MATT. vi. 12. *And forgive us our debts.*

COMPARED WITH

LUKE xi. 4. *And forgive us our sins.*

FROM this petition in the Lord's prayer, thus differently expressed by the two evangelists, we may easily observe, (for prayer may preach, this prayer preaches,)

I. That sin is a debt to God Almighty; nay, it becomes us to express it with application, (for, so such truths as these look best,) *Our* sins *are our debts.*

II. That the pardon of sin is the *forgiveness of this debt*, and the discharge of the debtor from it: and as the former must be thought of with a penitent application, confessing and bewailing our sins, as our debts, so this with a believing application. This is a privilege offered to us in the gospel: O that we might partake of it!

Repentance and remission of sins, are the two great things which ministers are appointed to preach, in Christ's name, to all nations; and which Christ is himself exalted to the right hand of the Father to give,[a] else our preaching them would be in vain. I am here this day to *preach* them, depending upon divine grace to *give* them; as an ambassador for Christ, to beseech you, by repentance for sin, to be reconciled to God,[b] that by the remission of sin he may be reconciled to you. Brethren, these are matters of life and death, matters of everlasting concern; and therefore challenge your serious attention.

Many of you have a prospect of drawing nigh to the Lord, and having communion with him at his table: and what better service can I do you, than to assist your repentance in your preparations for that ordinance, and to assure you of pardon, upon repentance, in your attendance upon it? To show you sin, that in reflection upon it you may sow in tears; and to show you Christ, that in dependence on him you may reap in joy,[c] and by him may have your tears wiped away.

This similitude, which represents sin as a debt, and the pardon of sin as the forgiving of that debt, our Saviour often used: and it is a proper one, and very significant, and I hope by the blessing of God may be of use both to let us into the understanding of this great concern, and to affect us with it.

I. The sins we are to repent of are *our debts to God.*

There is a debt to God, which arises from the command of the law, and we do not pray to be discharged from that: a debt of duty, which we always owe, and must be always paying in the strength of his grace; a yoke so easy, that we cannot desire to be eased of it; a service so reasonable, as that, if we understand ourselves aright, we cannot but be reasoned into it.

We are debtors, not to the flesh,[d] says the apostle; we are under no obligation to serve it and please it, and make provision for it; which intimates that we are debtors *to God:* that which is said to be our *duty to do,*[e] is ὁ ωφειλομεν ποιησαι, that which *we owe the doing of.* We owe adoration to God, as a Being infinitely bright, and blessed, and glorious. We owe allegiance to him as our Sovereign Lord and Ruler. We are bound in honour and duty, in gratitude and interest, to observe his statutes, and to keep his laws; are bound by all the relations we stand in to him as our Creator, Owner, and Benefactor, to love and fear him, and under the influence of those two commanding principles, to serve and obey him: and we must reckon it our happiness, that we are thus obliged, and labour to be more and more sensible of the obligations. The loosing of our other bonds

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a Luke xxiv. 47. Acts v. 31. b 2 Cor. v. 20. c Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. d Rom. viii. 12. e Luke xvii. 10.

strengthens these; so the Psalmist thought, when in consideration thereof he said, *O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant*, for thou hast *loosed my bonds*.[f]

There is likewise a debt we owe to one another, which we must not pray to be discharged from, but always kept under the bonds of, and that is, brotherly love. When we are commanded to render to all their due, so as to owe no man any thing; yet we are told we must still owe this, *to love one another*;[g] which when we do we pay a just debt, and yet must still abound more and more.[h]

There is a debt to God, which arises from the curse and condemnation of the law, which we are fallen under, by our breach of the command of the law; and this is that which we here pray to be discharged from: the debt of punishment, that death which we are told is the *wages of sin*.[i] It is a penal bond, by which we are obliged to our duty; so that for non-performance of the duty we become liable to the penalty: and thus our sins are our debts; and being all sinners, we are all debtors. Know then that the Lord has a controversy[k] with you, an action against you, an action of debt, wherein—in his name—I here arrest you all, pursuant to the great intention of the Spirit, which is to convince the world of sin,[l] to charge men with a debt to God, and to prove it upon them.

In prosecution of this, I shall endeavour to show,

1. How we come to be in debt to God, how this debt is contracted, and what is the ground of the action. That I may keep to the comparison, not forcing it, but fairly following it, you shall see that we run in debt to God, as the children of men run in debt to one another.

(1.) We are in debt to God, *as a servant is indebted to his master*, when he has neglected his business, and wasted or embezzled his goods. Our Saviour represents our case like that of a servant to a king, who when he came to be reckoned with, (probably the revenues of the crown passing through his hands,) was found in debt to the king his master *ten thousand talents*;[m] and that of a steward who was *accused to his lord that he had wasted his goods*,[n] either through sloth and negligence, not taking the care and pains about them, that by the duty of his place he ought to have done; or through dishonesty, converting them to other uses than they were intended for, and serving himself with them.

We are servants to God, and have work to do for the advancing of the interest of his glory and kingdom in the world, and in our own hearts. This work is undone; we have stood all the day idle, and have done nothing, or next to nothing, of the great work we were sent into the world about; nothing to answer the ends of our creation and redemption, and in pursuance of the intentions of our birth and baptism; and so we become to be in debt, and deserve, not only to have our wages stopt, but to lie under the doom of the unprofitable servant, who is therefore called *wicked*, because slothful.[o]

We have been intrusted with talents,[p] which were put into our hands with this charge, *trade till I come*; make use of them in your Master's service, and for his honour: but we have not improved these talents for the end for which we have been intrusted with them, we have hid our Lord's money, have buried our talent, and so we come to be indebted. Time is a talent, it ought to have been filled up with duty; but we have mispent it, and trifled it away, and have not done the work of each day in its day, according as the duty of the day required: we are therefore so much in debt for lost time, time that can never be recalled. Opportunity is a talent, time fitted for the doing of that which will not be done at all, or not so well done another time. The time of youth, sabbath-time, the seasons of grace—the minutes of these are in a particular manner precious; but we have not improved these; we have received the grace of God in them in vain, have had many *a price put into our hands to get wisdom*,[q] which for want of a heart, *a heart at the right hand*, for want of skill, and will, and courage, we have not made the right use of. Our reason is a talent, with all its powers and faculties, which should have been employed in honouring God, but has been so wretchedly misemployed, that *the world by wisdom* (reason doing its best, as it thought) *knew not God*. Our limbs and senses, our bodily health and strength, are talents; for it is designed we should glorify God with our bodies:[r] but the members of our bodies have been instruments of unrighteousness[s] to his dishonour; and for this abuse of them we are indebted. What estate we have in the world, what interest we have in others, or influence upon them, is a talent, puts us in a capacity of serving God, and doing good. But have we done so? No, we have all come short, far short of the glory of God, have come short of glorifying him, and therefore deserve to come short of being glorified with him.[t]

We are stewards of the manifold grace of God:[u] a good stewardship it is, an honourable place, and very profitable. But have we been good stewards? It is *required of stewards that they be faithful*;[v] but when instead of living to God, and doing all to his glory, we live to ourselves,[w] eat and drink to ourselves, when self in every thing must be gratified, and self glorified, and our own things sought more than the things of Christ,[x] then, like unfaithful stewards, we convert that to our own use which should

f Ps. cxvi. 16. g Rom. xiii. 8. h 1 Thess. iv. 1.
i Rom. vi. 23. k Mic. vi. 2. l John xvi. 1.
m Matt. xviii. 24. n Luke xvi. 1. o Matt. xxv. 26, 30.
p Luke xix. 13. q Prov. xvii. 16. r 1 Cor. vi. 20.
s Rom. vi. 19. t Rom. iii. 23. u 1 Pet. iv. 10.
v 1 Cor. iv. 2. w Zech. vii. 6. x Phil. ii. 21.

have been laid out for our Master's honour; and upon this account we are in debt.

(2.) We are indebted to God, *as a tenant is indebted to his landlord*, when he is behind of his rent, or has committed waste upon the premises. We are all tenants to God Almighty, tenants at will; all things we have, pertaining both to life and godliness, which contribute to the welfare both of body and soul, we hold by, from, and under him; ever since we came into the world we have breathed in his air, gone upon his ground, and lived upon the gifts of his providence; nay, we have not only been, as creatures, his tenants on the common, poor cottagers, but, as Christians, he has let out his vineyard to us, as to husbandmen, that he might receive the fruits of it,[y] and that we also might share in its products, and might have the comfort of it, which we gave him the glory of. If Solomon have a thousand pieces of silver from his vineyard at Baal-hamon, they who keep the fruit thereof shall have two hundred.[z]

We have no reason then to complain of a hard bargain; we are not tied to a rack-rent, it is only a chief; it is only a part of the fruits of the vineyard itself; yet this rent has been unpaid, or not paid in current coin. Our love to him (that is the rent demanded) has been cold, it is well if it have not been counterfeit. It is required, that as tenants we do homage to our Lord; (*I become your man*, that is the form;) but we have not done it, or not done it from the heart, which he looks at, and requires; but (as among men) it degenerates into a mere formality. There are services to be performed, neither hard nor dishonourable; for what greater honour can we do ourselves than to honour him? and yet those services have been neglected, and left undone. God has come to his vineyard *looking for grapes*, but *behold wild grapes*.[a] Upon these accounts we are indebted, and are liable to be distrained upon, and all we have seized. Our lives and beings, and all our comforts, are forfeited into the hands of divine justice; and, if we had not had a very patient landlord, the forfeiture had been taken long ago, and we had been broke, and for ever ruined.

When Belshazzar, the greatest monarch upon earth in his time, is (if I may so say) served with an ejectment by the prophet Daniel, in God's name; and, for arrears of rent to the King of kings, has a vast and rich kingdom subjected to an extent, by the mystic characters, *Mene, Mene*—it is *numbered and finished*, it is thine no more, but it is to be put into other hands; (and yet even this comes short of making good the arrears, for still he is *Tekel—weighed in the balances, and found deficient*,[b] insolvent;) one would think surely the debt was very extraordinary: and yet that which the declaration upon this ejectment charges him with, is the same that we are every one of us chargeable with: *The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified*;[c] thou hast not rendered to God the things that are his, nor paid thy rent, and therefore art turned out.

Our own souls are the vineyards which are let out to us; we are made keepers of these vineyards, are obliged to keep them in good repair, and by constant watchfulness to keep up the fences about them; but we have neglected them, and they have been like *the field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the man void of understanding, all grown over with thorns*: the fruits of the curse, and the stone wall thereof broken down.[d] All our enjoyments we receive from God, and they also have been wasted and misemployed. That has been made the food and fuel of our lusts, which should have been oil to the wheels of our obedience. Thus we have forfeited our own souls, and deserve to be put out of the possession and enjoyment of them: *This night shall thy soul be required*.[e] What shouldst thou do with a soul, who knowest no better what to do with it? Thus all our enjoyments are forfeited. When Israel prepared for *Baal* the corn, and wine, and oil which *God* gave them, he justly threatens to return and take it from them, and to "recover it:"[f] it is a law term: he will recover it, as the lord in an action of waste recovers *locum vastatum—waste land*; for when God judges, he will overcome.

(3.) We are indebted to God, *as a borrower is indebted to the lender*. God has bestowed many mercies upon us, has been loading us with his benefits all our days; that is, he has been lending to us according as the case has required. Our natures are necessitous, and continually depending upon the divine providence: the new nature is always craving from the divine grace. God has lent us health, estate, relations, and comfort in them. He has lent us the means of grace, Bibles, ministers, sacraments, and the consolations of his Spirit. He has never been to us as a wilderness, or a land of darkness, or as waters that fail.

But what have we rendered to the Lord for all his benefits toward us?[g] What grateful acknowledgments have we made for his favours to us? Alas! we have all reason to reproach ourselves for that which Hezekiah is charged with, that we have not rendered again according to the benefit done unto us.[h] And thus we come to be in debt. God has sown plentifully upon us, and yet hath reaped sparingly from us; has *given us richly all things to enjoy*,[i] and yet we have served him very poorly. The series of God's mercies has been constant, but the course of our duties has been interrupted, and frequently broken off. When we reflect upon the goodness and mercy which has followed us all the days of our

y Matt. xxi. 33, 34. z Cant. viii. 11, 12. a Isa. v. 2.
b Dan. v. 26, 27. c Dan. v. 23. d Prov. xxiv. 30, 31.
e Luke xii. 20. f Hos. ii. 8, 9. g Ps. cxvi. 12.
h 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. i 1 Tim. vi. 17.

life, and come to ask, *What honour and what dignity hath been done*[k] to our great Benefactor for all this; we find our returns of duty and thankfulness no way answerable to our receivings of mercy, and so we become to be in debt.

This debt is still the greater, in that we have made not only poor returns, but ill returns, to the God of our mercies: he has nourished and brought us up as children, and yet we have rebelled against him;[l] he has loaded us with benefits, and yet we have loaded him with our iniquities: thus have we requited the Lord, like foolish people and unwise.[m] Much of our debt is contracted by the most base ingratitude imaginable to the best of friends, the best of fathers; and if you call a man *ungrateful*, you can call him *no worse*.

(4.) Our debt to God is, *as the debt of a trespasser to him upon whom he has trespassed*. Our sins, which are here in the Lord's prayer called, *our debts*, in the verses following are called παραπτωματα—our trespasses,[n] and thence we commonly use that word, in repeating the Lord's prayer. An action of damage differs not much from an action of debt, and this action lies against us as sinners.

We have broken through the fences and bounds which God by his commands has set us, and by which our appetites and passions should have been restrained and kept within compass; and so we are trespassers in debt to God, for trampling his law under foot, and his authority, as if we were resolved to be like our forefathers at Babel, from whom *nothing would be restrained that they imagined to do*.[o]

Nay, we have broken in upon God's rights, have invaded his prerogatives, by taking that praise to ourselves which is due to him only. We have gone upon forbidden ground, and like our first parents have eaten the fruit of the forbidden tree, by enriching ourselves with unlawful gains, and indulging ourselves in unlawful pleasures, meddling with that of which the Lord our God has said, *Ye shall not eat of it*,[p] *neither shall ye touch it*. By presuming on comforts which we were not entitled to, we become trespassers; as he was that intruded into the wedding-feast, not having on a wedding-garment: *Friend, how camest thou hither?*[q]

By those trespasses upon the divine authority, we have injured God, have injured him in his honour. (And the creature cannot otherwise be injurious to the Creator but in his honour; *If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him?*)[r] By this, we are indebted to him; satisfaction is demanded for the injury: for *Shall a man rob God*,[s] and never be called to an account for it? trespass upon him, impeach his honour, and invade his property, and never hear of it?

(5.) Our debt to God is *as the debt of a covenant breaker*, who entered into articles, and gave bond for performance, but has not made good his agreement, and so has forfeited the penalty of the bond, which is recoverable as far as the damage goes, by the non-performance of the articles. An oath is called a "Bond upon the soul," because it was commonly made with an imprecation of evil, if the promise was not performed; so that he who broke his promise so ratified, could not but feel himself under the burthen of his own curse.

This is our case; we are bound out from all sin, and bound up to all duty, not only by the bond of a command, but by the bond of a covenant, to which we have ourselves subscribed with the hand; we have by solemn promise engaged ourselves to be the Lord's, to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes;[t] our baptism was an early and lasting obligation upon us to be religious: but we have broken our covenant with God, have violated our engagements, and thereby have not only forfeited the blessings of the covenant, but made ourselves obnoxious to the curses of it; and so we are in debt to God, as they were who transgressed the covenant which they made before God when they cut the calf in twain,[u] wishing that they might so be cut asunder, if they did not deal faithfully. This is assigned as the ground of God's controversy with the world of mankind, and for which they are all laid under the arrest of his curse; they have *changed the ordinance*, and *broken the everlasting covenant, therefore hath the curse devoured the earth*.[v]

(6.) Our debt to God is *as the debt of a malefactor, to the law and to the government*, when he is found guilty of treason or felony, and consequently the law is to have its course against him. And this is the most proper notion of the debt of sin; for though our Saviour in his parables alludes to money-debts, yet the case between God and man is not as that between debtor and creditor in commerce: for God is our Sovereign, and we are his subjects; he is our Law-giver, and we are bound by his laws. The primary obligation is the command of the law, to obey that; which if we fail in, we fall under a secondary obligation to the curse of the law; and therefore as many as being sinners are under the law, are under the curse, for so it is written, *Cursed is every one, that continues not in every thing that is written in the book of the law to do it*.[w] But God knows, and our own hearts know, that we have not continued, no not in any thing; we are all guilty before God,[x] subject to his judgment. The Scripture hath *concluded us all under sin*; shuts us up as debtors and criminals are shut up in prison, that the law may have its course.

We have all broken the commands of the law, and so are become liable to the sentence of it, *The*

k Est. vi. 3. l Isa. i. 3. m Deut. xxxii. 6.
n Matt. vi. 15. o Gen. xi. 6.
p Gen. ii. 7. q Matt. xxii 12.
r Job xxxv. 6. s Mal iii. 8. t Deut. xxvi. 17.
u Jer. xxxiv. 18. v Isa. xxiv. 5, 6.
w Gal. iii. 10. x Rom. iii. 19.

soul that sins shall die:[a] shall die, as a soul can die: shall be made completely miserable. Our blessedness is forfeited, as the life, honour, and estate of a traitor is to the public justice, to which he is thus to make the uttermost satisfaction he is capable of making: the case is ours, and a deplorable case it is. As the corruption of our nature makes us odious to God's holiness, so our many actual transgressions make us obnoxious to his justice; and thus we are debtors to him.

(7.) To make the matter yet worse, there is a debt we owe to God, which is *as a debt of an heir-at-law upon his ancestor's account*, of a son who is liable to his father's debts, as far as what he has by descent will go, and as far as he has any assets in his hand. By Adam's disobedience we were all made sinners,[b] were all made debtors; and laid under this charge, *That we are a seed of evil doers*.

The human nature comes to us by descent from our first parents, and it comes to us not only distempered but attainted by law; as the blood of a traitor is corrupted by his attainder. When those are under the dominion of death who yet never sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,[c] and God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, we must own ourselves indebted on the score of those who are gone before us.

(8.) There are debts of ours, likewise, which are *as the debt of a surety upon account of the principal*. I mean the guilt we have contracted by our partaking of other men's sins,[d] and making ourselves accessary to them, as if we had not had guilt enough of our own to answer for.

We have, by the influence of our example, by advice or encouragement, by contributing to their temptations, or exciting their corruptions, or by a consent and approbation *ex post facto—after the deed has been done*, made ourselves partners with others in sin, and have had *fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*, which we should rather have reproved; and so must answer not only for our doings, but for the fruit of our doings.

Having opened to you the several ways how we come into this debt to God, let us next inquire, what kind of debt sin is.

(1.) It is an *old debt*, it is an early, nay, it is an hereditary, encumbrance upon our nature. The foundation of this debt was laid in Adam's sin, we are in debt for the forbidden fruit he ate, so high does the account begin, and so far back does it look. We were born in debt, were *called*, and not miscalled, *Transgressors from the womb*:[e] debtors from the womb; we began betimes to go astray from God, and so to run further and further into debt: it has been long in the contracting, and continual additions have been made to it, by renewed acts of rebellion against God. Job when he is old is made to *possess the iniquities of his youth*, and Ephraim *bears the reproach of his youth*.[f] And how earnestly does David pray, *O remember not the sins of my youth*.[g]

(2.) It is a *just debt*, and the demand of it highly equitable. We cannot say that we are charged with more than is meet;[h] no, how high soever the penalty is with which we are loaded, certainly it is less than our iniquities have deserved.[i] It is divine justice, the eternal rule and fountain of justice, that charges us with this debt, and brings this action against us; and we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth; nor is he unrighteous who takes vengeance.[k]

(3.) It is a *great debt*, more than we imagine. It is represented by our Saviour as a debt of ten thousand talents.[l] In the computation of money, a talent is the highest denomination, it amounts to above 187 pounds of our money; multiply that by ten thousand, and what an immense sum does it come to. This is designed to show us what a great deal of malignity there is in every sin, how heinous it is in its own nature, it runs us a *talent* in debt; and withal how numerous our sins are, how many, how very many, our actual transgressions, they are *ten thousands*, more than the hairs on our heads. Well might the master say to that servant, when he upbraided him with his pardon, *I forgave thee that great debt*.

(4.) It is *a growing debt*; a debt we are still adding to, as a tenant who is behind of his rent, every rent-stage makes the debt more: till we return by repentance, we are still running further upon the score; still taking up upon trust, and treasuring up unto ourselves guilt and wrath against the day of wrath.[m]

3. Having seen what kind of debt sin is, let us next see what kind of debtors sinners commonly are; and we shall find them like other unfortunate debtors, that are going down in the world, and have no way to help themselves.

(1.) Bad debtors are oftentimes very *careless* and unconcerned about their debts; when they are so embarrassed and plunged that they cannot *bear* the thought of it, they contrive how to *banish* the thought of it, and live merry and secure; to laugh away, and drink away, and revel away the care and sorrow of it. Thus sinners deal with their convictions, they divert them with the business of the world, or drown them in the pleasures of sense. Cain endeavoured to shake off the terrors of conscience, by building a city.[n] It was once said of one who died over head and ears in debt, "Surely his pillow had some extraordinary virtue in it to dispose a man to rest, else one in that condition could not repose himself upon it." One would wonder what pillows sinners lay their heads on, who have been so *long* in debt, who

[a] Ezek. xviii. 4. [b] Rom. v. 19. [c] Rom. v. 14. [d] 1 Tim. v. 22. [e] Isa. xlviii. 8. [f] Job xiii. 26. [g] Jer. xxxi. 19.

[h] Ps. ciii. 10. [i] Job xxxiv. 23. [k] Job xi. 6. [l] Rom. ii. 2, 3, 5. [m] Matt. xviii. 24. [n] Gen. iv. 17.

are so *deep* in debt to the justice of God, and never lay it to heart, nor inquire into the things which belong to their peace. O what multitudes of precious souls are lost, and perish for ever, through mere carelessness!

(2.) Bad debtors are commonly very *wasteful*, and when they find they are in debt more than they can pay, care not how much further they run into debt. How extravagant are sinners in spending upon their lusts! What waste do they make of their time and opportunity, and of the noble powers and faculties with which they are endued! like the prodigal son, who, when he was run away from his father's house into a far country, there wasted his substance with riotous living. So true is that of Solomon, *One sinner destroys much good*,[o] with which he might honour God, and do service to his generation; and runs through a great deal of valuable treasure.

(3.) Bad debtors are commonly very *shy of their creditors*, and very loth to come to an account. Thus sinners care not how little they come into the presence of God, but rather say to the Almighty, *Depart from us;* they take no pleasure in hearing from him, in speaking to him, or in having any thing to do with him; they desire not the knowledge of his good ways, lest thereby they should come to the sight of their own evil ways. They are shy of communion with their own hearts, and looking into their consciences, because they are not willing to know the worst by themselves. God hearkens and hears, but they speak not aright;[p] they do not take the first step toward repentance and conversion, for they make no serious reflections upon themselves, they never ask, *What have I done?* But the case of those tradesmen is justly suspected, who are strangers to their books, and are afraid of knowing what posture their affairs are in.

(4.) Bad debtors are sometimes *timorous;* and though they strive to cast off all care about their debts, yet, when they are threatened, their hearts fail them, they are subject to frights, and are ready to think every one they meet is a bailiff. Thus sinners carry about with them a misgiving conscience, which often reproaches them, and fills them with secret terrors, and a bitterness which their own heart only knows. When Cain was under an arrest for that great debt he contracted by the murder of his brother, what a terror was he to himself, crying out, *My punishment is greater than I can bear*,[q] though it was much less than he deserved. When Herod heard of Christ's miracles, he presently cried out, *It is John the Baptist whom I beheaded*, he is certainly risen from the dead. The wicked are sometimes made to flee where no fear is, much more where there is fear.

(5.) Bad debtors are apt to be *dilatory* and *deceitful*, to promise payment this time and the other, but still to break their word, and beg a further delay. It is so with sinners; they do not say they will never repent, and return to God, but not yet: *The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built*,[r] but they will assure you, that some time or other it shall be built. They are called to come to an account with their own consciences, to search and try their ways; and they are forward to promise that they will do it; nay, they will set the time when they will do it. The servant that owed ten thousand talents thought he needed not be beholden to his master for a pardon of the debt, only he begged forbearance: *Have patience with me and I will pay thee all.*[s] They shake off their convictions, and elude them, by shifting off the prosecution of them, like Felix, to a more convenient season, which season never comes; and so they are cozened of all their time, by being cozened of the present time.

4. To affect you the more with the misery of an impenitent, unpardoned state, having showed you what your debt is, I shall next lay before you the danger we are in by reason of this debt. Many who owe a great deal of money, yet are furnished with considerations sufficient to make them easy, but they are such as our case will not admit.

(1.) *An exact account is kept of all our debts.* Some who are in debt please themselves with hopes that their debts cannot be proved upon them, and so they shall escape harm by them: but this will do us no service; all our sins will be proved upon us. *These things thou hast done:*[t] it is in vain to deny it, or to avoid the action by pleading *Non est factum—It is not thy deed.* If the debtor keep not an account of his debts, yet the creditor does; they are all booked, all kept on record, laid up in store with God, and sealed among his treasures.[u] Job speaks of his transgressions as sewed up in a bag,[v] as the indictments are upon which the prisoners are to be arraigned; or, as bonds and notes are carefully tied up together to be produced when there is occasion. It will be to no purpose to contest the account, when the omniscience of God will attest it. *Went not my heart with thee?*[w] says the prophet to his servant. Was not God's eye upon us, when our backs were upon him, and we were running from him into by-paths? Were not all our ways, our sinful ways, ever before him? They were, without doubt they were; but therefore sinners are secure, and see not their danger, because (says God) *they consider not in their heart that I remember all their wickedness.*[x] But consider this, ye who forget God,[y] and his goodness, that God does not forget you and your wickedness. Our sins are never *cast behind his back*, till we have set them *before our faces.*

(2.) *We are utterly insolvent, and have not where-*

o Eccl. ix. 18. p Jer. viii. 6. q Gen. iv. 13.
r Hag. i. 2. s Matt. xviii. 29. t Ps. l. 21.
u Deut. xxxii. 34. v Job iv. 17. w 2 Kings v. 26.
x Hos. vii. 2. y Ps. l. 22.

withal to pay our debts. If a man be much in debt, yet if he knows he has wherewithal to answer all his creditors, he needs not much perplex himself, especially, if he can discount with his creditors themselves: and there are those who flatter themselves with a conceit, that this will help them in their dealing with God. For being ignorant of his righteousness, of the strictness of the demands of his justice, they go about to establish a righteousness[z] of their own, and are willing to hope that their good qualities, and their good deeds, will atone for their bad ones, and be a competent satisfaction to the demands of divine justice. Thus it is common for foolish debtors to talk big, as if they had wherewithal to give every body their own, and nobody should lose by them, when, perhaps, their all is nothing, or next to nothing. Laodicea thought herself rich and increased in goods, when she was wretchedly and miserably poor and naked,[a] but withal blind, and would not see.

But what good will it do us thus to deceive ourselves? Can the all-seeing God be deceived? It is certain we owe more than we are worth; whether our debt be more or less, five hundred pence, or fifty, we are not able to pay it.[b] We cannot plead that we have, by any services to God, or sufferings for him, made satisfaction for any part of our debts; nor can we promise that we will; for whatever good there is in us, it is God's own gift, it is his own work, for which we are yet more indebted to him. Whatever good is done by us, it is what we are already bound to. And though a tenant should pay his rent for the future, yet that will not discharge his old scores. We are become bankrupts, must own ourselves so, and for ever undone, if the debt we owe be exacted; for if God enter into judgment with us, and deal with us in strict justice according to our deserts, we are not able to answer him for one of a thousand.[c] *In thy sight,* Lord, *shall no flesh living be justified.* We have no oil to sell, as the prophet's widow had, wherewith to pay our debt; no equivalent to offer, nor any thing wherewith to make a composition. We are debtors to God, but he is no debtor to us, nor is he ever behind-hand with those who do any service for him: none has first given to him, that it should be recompensed to him again, Rom. xi. 35. There were those indeed who thought they had made God their debtor by their devotions. *Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not?*[d] But when the matter comes to be looked into, it appears that they are debtors to God, by reason of the wickedness of their conversations: *Ye fast for strife and debate.*

(3.) We have no friend on earth who can or will pass his word for us, or be our bail. Many poor debtors encourage themselves with this, that they have some kind relations, who will stand by them, and appear for them, and help them in a time of need: but poor sinful men can have no such prospect, since all their kindred are in the same helpless condition with themselves, as deep in debt as they are. The wealthiest worldlings, who have most money, cannot with it undertake to pay our debts to God: no, *we are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold.*[e] Pardons are those gifts of God, which are not to be purchased with money in the court of heaven;[f] those, therefore, that are so purchased in the court of Rome, are but sham pardons; even those who boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, yet none of them can by any means redeem his brother.[g] The wisest virgins, who have most grace, have most oil, yet have none to spare, there is not enough for us and them. If God contend with us, no man on earth, or angels in heaven, can undertake to arbitrate the matter, or as a *Days-man, lay his hand upon us both;* can undertake to open the book by which we stand charged, or to loose the seals; none can do it but *the Lion of the tribe of Judah.*[k]

(4.) We are often put in mind of our debts by the providence of God, and by our own consciences. Some who are in debt hope to have benefit by the statute of limitations, and that the debt will be dropt for want of being demanded; but the debts we owe to God are ever and anon demanded, and the right is kept up by a continual claim. God makes it to appear that he takes notice of them, for he frequently gives us notice of them. Conscience is a standing monitor in our own bosoms, to put us in mind of our sins, and of the danger we are in by reason of them, and to stir us up to think of agreeing with our adversary in time. For this reason, they who resolve to go on in sin, and to have peace (such as it is) though they go on, do all they can to stifle the suggestions of their own consciences, and turn a deaf ear to them; as those who are in debt avoid them by whom they are dunned, and keep out of their way. But sooner or later conscience will be heard, and will force sinners to say, as Joseph's brethren did long after they had contracted the debt, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother.*[k]

Afflictions are messengers sent to us on this errand, to remind us of our debts, by awaking our consciences, and setting our sins in order before us: when bitter things were written against us, it is with this design, to make us possess our iniquities.[l] When God distrains upon our comforts, and removes them from us, it is to remind us of the arrears of our rent. *Art thou come to call my sin to my remembrance,*[m] (said the widow of Sarepta,) *and to slay my son?* These sharp methods, which God takes to put us in mind of our sins, are intimations how severe the

z Rom. x. 3. a Rev. iii. 17. b Luke vii. 41, 42. c Job ix. 3. d Isa. lviii. 3, 4. e 1 Pet. i. 18. f Acts viii. 20
g Ps. xlix. 6, 7. h Job ix. 33. i Rev. v. 5. k Gen. xli. 21. l Job xiii. 26. m 1 Kings xvii. 18.

reckoning will be, if we never take care to get them pardoned.

(5.) *Death will shortly arrest us for these debts*, to bring us to an account. It is a sergeant, whose office is to require the soul, to strip it of the body, and to bring it to him who gave it, and to whom it is accountable. The authority of this officer is not to be disputed, nor his power resisted. When we are summoned by death to come to an account, we shall find there is no discharge in that war,[n] no remedy, but we must yield. *The wages of sin is death*,[o] and its constant attendant ever since it first entered.[p] Death is our discharge from other debts; in the grave the prisoners rest together, and hear not the voice of the oppressor,[q] but it lays us more open than ever to these debts, for "*After death the judgment.*" It is a maxim in our law, *Actio moritur cum personâ*—*The action dies with the person*; but it will be of no use to us in this case, for God, the creditor, never dies, and sinners, the debtors, are by death fetched in to appear before him.

(6.) *A day of reckoning will come*, and the day is fixed. As sure as we see *this* day, we shall see *that* day, when every man must give an account of himself unto God,[r] *and every work shall be brought into judgment, with every secret thing.*[s] The young man who indulges himself in carnal mirth and sensual pleasures, is told that *for all these things God shall bring him into judgment.*[t] Though it is after a long time, yet it is in the set time, that the Lord of the servants, to whom the talents were committed, comes and reckons with them.[u] The God to whom we stand indebted, is one with whom we now have to do;[v] for we live upon him, and subsist by him, and have continual business with him, which should make it the more uneasy to us to think of lying under his displeasure. But that is not all, he is one προς ὀν ἡμιν ὁ λογος (as some read those words)—*to whom for us there is a reckoning*; we now have an account *with* him, and must shortly give up our account *to* him. How careful should we be so to judge ourselves, that we may not be judged of the Lord;[w] so to state our accounts, and balance them with the blood of Christ, that when the day of reckoning comes, we may give up our account with joy, and not with grief![x]

(7.) *Hell is the prison* into which those debtors will at length be cast, who took no care to make their peace, and there are the tormentors to which they will be delivered.[y] This our Saviour gives as a reason why we should agree with our adversary quickly, while we are in the way, because, if the matter be left to run on, we shall be delivered to the judge, to the officer,[z] to him who has the power of death; and so be cast into prison, into *chains of darkness*, a prison, the miseries of which are *endless* and *easeless*. It is a pit in which there is no water, not the least mixture or allay of comfort, not a drop of water, so much as to cool the tongue.[a] Some prisoners for debt live so merrily, that one would think their prisons were designed for their protection rather than their punishment; but hell is no such prison; there is nothing there but *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth*, and the more for the many fair warnings given those prisoners not to come into that place of torment. It is a pit out of which there is no redemption; the debtor shall not depart thence till he has paid the last mite; which will never be, no, not during the endless ages of eternity.

And now, sirs, what say you to these things? You are many of you great dealers in the world; what a consternation would you be in, if upon casting up your books, you should discover yourselves to be in debt a great deal more than you are worth? You see you are so to God, and does it make no impression upon you? are you in no care, no concern about it? Is all I have said to you for your conviction of sin, and of your misery and danger because of sin, but as a tale that is told? If so, all I have to say concerning the pardon of sin, will be but *as a lovely song of one that can play well on an instrument.* But I trust you have laid, and will lay, these things to heart, that the debt of sin is really a burthen to you, under which you labour, and are heavy laden; and if so, the doctrine of the remission of sins will be to you *glad tidings of great joy*, and as *life from the dead.* Nor would I have taken this pains to show you your sins, if your case had been desperate, and I could not at the same time have showed you the great salvation from sin, which the Redeemer has wrought out by bringing in an everlasting righteousness.

II. The sins we are to repent of, being our debts to God, *the mercy we are to pray for is the forgiveness of these debts.* It is to God we are indebted, and therefore to him we must address ourselves for a discharge from the debt; for none can forgive sins, but God only, and therefore to him only must we go for that forgiveness. Having opened the wound, and showed you how dangerous it is, you will be ready to ask, *Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?* Yes, blessed be God, there is. The same messengers that God sends to put you in mind of your debts, are appointed to put you in the way of obtaining the remission of them: and this is that which, in Christ's name, is preached to all nations;—it is now preached to you.

1. Let us inquire, *what is included in this mercy* of the forgiveness of sin as a debt, and what steps God graciously takes therein toward us, when we repent, and return, and believe the gospel. He acts as a merciful and compassionate creditor toward a poor debtor who lies at his mercy.

n Eccl. viii. 8. o Rom. vi. 23. p Rom. v. 12. q Job iii. 18. r Rom. xiv. 12. s Eccl. xii. 14. t Eccl. xi. 9.

u Matt. xxv. 19. v Heb. iv. 31. w 1 Cor. xi. 31. x Heb. xiii. 17. y Matt xviii. 34. z Matt. v. 25. a Luke xvi. 24.

(1.) He stays process, and suffers not the law to have its course. Judgment is given against us; but execution is not taken out upon the judgment. The sinner is arrested by his own conscience as a debtor, and cried out against himself, *I have sinned*, and deserve to die. But pardoning mercy unties the knot between sin and death, and says, as Nathan to David, *The Lord has taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die*;[b] thou shalt not come into condemnation, thine iniquity is become thy grief and shame, and therefore fear not, it shall not be thy ruin. Thou shalt not have all thou hast seized on, thou shalt not go to prison, as thou deservest. The debt shall not be laid to thy charge.

The sinner is arrested by affliction, it may be, as Elihu's penitent is, and is alarmed by it to expect a much sorer punishment; *He is chastened with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain*;[c] and then, under the sense of guilt and dread of wrath, counts upon nothing else but that his life shall go to the destroyers.[d] But he has a friend with *him, an interpreter, one among a thousand*,[e] who shows him God's uprightness; his hatred of sin; and yet his readiness to pardon sinners. This he begins to give heed to, and take hold of, and thinks of returning to God, as the prodigal to his father's house; and then *he is gracious to him*;[f] meets him in his return, and says, *Deliver him from going down to the pit*; let him be discharged from these pains, from these terrors, for *I have found a ransom*, a ransom for the soul. The sinner has said unto God, *Do not condemn me*;[g] and God has said, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*.[h] They in their repentings condemn themselves; men in their reproaches condemn them; and it cannot be denied, but that there is that in them which deserves condemnation. But *it is God that justifies*, and then *who is he that shall condemn?* Christ died, and therefore the believer shall not: he is afflicted and chastened of the Lord, but he shall not be condemned with the world,[i] that lies under the curse.

Well, this is a good step toward the forgiving of the debt; now there begins to be hope in Israel concerning this thing; herein appears the divine pity and compassion, God's slowness to anger, and readiness to show mercy; and this long-suffering of the Lord is salvation.[k] But the proceedings may perhaps be stopt for the present, and yet may be revived another time; a judgment that has long lain dormant may come against a man when he least thinks of it, and therefore God in forgiving these debts goes further; for,

(2.) He *cancels the bond*, vacates the judgment, and disannuls the hand-writing that was against us, that was contrary to us, and takes it out of the way.[l] He pardons sin thoroughly and fully, so as to remember it no more[m] against the sinner. He casts it behind his back,[n] as that which he is determined never more to inquire after; casts it into the depths of the sea,[o] as that which shall never more appear or come to light, as it might at low water, if it were cast near the shore side. The iniquity of Jacob shall be sought for and not be found;[p] therefore God is said to blot out[q] the iniquities of poor penitents, as the memorandum of a debt is blotted out when it is paid or pardoned; he not only crosses the book, which leaves it legible, but blots it out, not to be read; for so is the promise to a true penitent, *All his transgressions that he hath committed shall not be mentioned unto him*,[r] he shall not be so much as upbraided with them. It is *blotted out as a cloud, as a thick cloud*, by the heat of the sun; it is *vanished*, and there appears not the least remainder of it; The transgression is removed from the transgressors as far as the east is from the west.[s] These and many the like expressions, give us abundant assurance that the sin once pardoned shall not rise up in judgment against the sinner another day; and give us abundant occasion to say, *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity?*

Well, this secures the life, and happiness, and eternal welfare of the penitent believer: but still he may want present comfort. The bond may be cancelled, and he not know it; the sentence of absolution passed, and yet he not hear the voice of joy and gladness;[t] so that the broken bones are still complaining: therefore God is pleased many times to carry this act of grace on yet further.

(3.) He gives an acquittance, and delivers it by his Spirit into the believer's hand, speaking peace to him, filling him with comfort, arising from a sense of his justification, and the blessed tokens and pledges of it. When he says, *Son, daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*;[u] (as he spake comfortably unto Zion, saying, Thy warfare is accomplished, thine iniquity is pardoned;[v]) then he gives up the bond cancelled, to the unspeakable satisfaction of the penitent. We read of a woman who had been a sinner, a notorious sinner, who, upon her repentance, had much forgiven her, and showed it by her loving much;[w] yet afterwards Christ not only said OF her, *Her sins which are many are forgiven*, but turned and said TO her, *Thy sins are forgiven thee*, and, *Thy faith hath saved thee*, to set forth this further act of divine favour, in causing us to hear God's loving-kindness, and to taste that he is gracious.

Well, blessed, thrice blessed are they whose iniquities are thus forgiven, and to whom they are

b 2 Sam. xii. 13. c Job xxxiii. 19. d Job xxxiii. 22. e Job xxxiii. 23. f Job xxxiii. 24. g Job x. 2. h Rom. viii. 1. i 1 Cor. xi. 32. k 2 Pet. iii. 15. l Col. ii. 14. m Heb. viii. 12.

n Isa. xxxviii. 17. o Mic. vii. 19. p Jer. l. 20. q Isa. xliii. 25. r Ezek. xviii. 22. s Ps. ciii. 12. t Ps. li. 8. u Matt. ix. 2. v Isa. xl. 2. w Luke vii. 47, 48.

not imputed; who by their own experience of the breaking of the power of sin in them, are made to know that the guilt of sin is removed; and to whom it appears, by their being reconciled to God, and to his whole will, that God is in Christ reconciled to them. But may it be hoped that these criminals shall not only be pardoned, but preferred, and made favourites again? Yes, to complete the mercy, he not only forgives the debts we have contracted, but,

(4.) He condescends to deal with us again, and to admit us into covenant and communion with himself. Though we have gone behind-hand in our rent, he remits the arrears, and continues us his tenants; though we have buried and wasted our talents, yet he continues us in his service, and intrusts us with more. Those we have been great losers by, though we may forgive them, yet we do not forget them, nor care for trusting them again. But in this, as in other things, the God with whom we have to do, is *God and not man;* he *forgives* and *forgets*, and yet will be no loser in his glory by forgiving. Lord! what is man, that he should be thus regarded? that he should not only be delivered from going down to the pit, but that his life should see the light,[x] the eternal light, and the paths that lead to it. When we pray that God would forgive us our debts, we pray not only that we may not be rejected, but that we may be accepted in the Beloved, according to the riches of that grace wherein he has abounded toward us;[y] that with the remission of sins, we may receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,[z] the earnest of the Spirit, and *that*, at length, which it is the earnest of, even an inheritance among all them who are sanctified; for whom he justified them he glorified.

2. Having seen how much is included in God's forgiving us our debts, because it is so great a favour, that we may be tempted to think it too much for such worthless unworthy creatures as we are to expect, let us next inquire, *what ground we have to hope for it:* how is it that a God infinitely just and holy, should be thus readily reconciled to a guilty and polluted sinner upon his repenting? If we owe a great sum of money to a man like ourselves, we could not have the face to go to him, and desire him to remit it, when we have not wherewithal to make any composition with him. Why should not a just debt be paid? and if nothing is to be had, why should not the debtor be sold,[a] *currat lex—and the law take its course?* What reason have we to expect that the lawful captive should be delivered?[b] Blessed be God we may expect it, we may be sure of it, if we repent and believe the gospel.

(1.) We may ground our expectations upon the *goodness of his nature.* This is so much his glory, that by it he has proclaimed his name not only *gracious and merciful* in general, but in this particular instance, so that he forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin;[c] and therefore pardons the sin, because he desires not nor delights in the ruin of the sinner. How vast were the compassions of that prince in the parable, which moved him to forgive so great a debt, as that of ten thousand talents![d] And yet, as heaven is high above the earth, so do the divine compassions exceed those: Israel of old found them so, when their transgressions were so very numerous, so very heinous; yet he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity. Merciful men will sometimes lend, hoping for nothing again; and where nothing is to be had, will not be rigorous nor extreme in demanding their right: and shall not the Father of mercies take pity on the miserable? He who is good, and therefore ready to forgive; merciful and gracious,[e] and therefore removes our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west.[f] He is a God with whom that plea is of force, *What profit is there in my blood?* And whose soul was grieved for the misery of Israel,[g] though they brought it upon themselves by their own sin and folly.

Well, it is true that God is infinitely good, and we have abundant reason to hope in his mercy, and abundant encouragement to plead it with him; but it is as true that he is just and righteous, that he is the great Governor of the world, and the honour of his government must be maintained; his injured justice calls for satisfaction, and one attribute of his shall not be glorified by the damage and reproach of another. It is true, he is merciful, and yet there is a world of angels who lie, and are like to lie for ever, under the pouring out of the full vials of his wrath; and therefore, though his goodness and mercy, as it is revealed to us in the Scripture, is our great encouragement, yet,

(2.) We are to ground our expectations upon the *mediation of our Lord Jesus.* Therefore God forgives our debt, because Jesus Christ, by the blood of his cross, has made satisfaction for it, and given his life a ransom for ours: which is so far from lessening the freeness of that grace which forgives us, that it greatly magnifies it, for it was he himself who found the ransom,[h] it was he himself who gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.[i] And herein more than in any thing he commended his love,[k] that he would not only forgive our debt, but put himself to such vast expense of blood and treasure, that he might do it so as to secure, nay to declare, his righteousness; *to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness;* (such an emphasis does the apostle lay upon this;) that he might be not only merciful but just, and the justifier of them who believe in Jesus.[l] If sinners are debtors, it is Christ who is their surety, upon the account of whose satisfaction their debt is forgiven: Christ is called *the surety of the covenant;*[m] not that

x Job xxxiii. 28. y Eph. i. 6, 7. z Acts ii. 38. a Matt. xviii. 25. b Isa. xlix. 24. c Ezek. xxxiv. 6, 7. d Matt. xviii. 27.
e Ps. lxxxvi. 5. f Ps. ciii. 8, 12. g Judg. x. 16. h Job xxxiii. 24. i 1 John iv. 10. k Rom. v. 8. l Rom. iii. 25, 26. m Heb. vii. 22.

he was originally bound in the bond with us, as if it were implied in the penalty annexed to the covenant of innocency, which was, *Thou shalt surely die*, that is, *thou or thy surety*. No, Christ's undertaking supposes us already debtors, and under arrest for the debt; so that Christ comes in rather as bail to the action, than as a secondary undertaker from the beginning. His office as mediator takes it for granted, that God and man are at variance, for a *mediator is not of one*;[n] we are looked upon as under the law, that is, under the curse, when Christ to redeem us makes himself sin and a curse for us.[o] Let us see how this is done.

[1.] Our Lord Jesus voluntarily undertook to be a surety for us: pitying our deplorable case, and concerned for his Father's injured honour, that divine justice might be satisfied, and yet sinners saved, he offered to make his own soul a sacrifice for sin, and himself a propitiation, answering the demands of the law, as the propitiatory, or mercy-seat, exactly answered the dimensions of the ark. The Father intrusted him with this great piece of service, and he voluntarily and cheerfully consented to it: he said, *Lo, I come*, and not only did this will of God, but delighted to do it;[p] drawn to it, and held to it, with no other cords but those of his own love, and the agreeableness of his undertaking to his Father's commandment.

Christ had no debt of his own to pay, for he always did those things that pleased his Father. Such was the dignity of his person, and such the value of the price he paid, that he had wherewithal to make full satisfaction, and to pay this debt, even to the last mite. He said, *Upon me be the curse*, my Father. Thus he became bound for us, as Paul for Onesimus to Philemon his master: If *he have wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, I Paul have written it with my own hand*, the blessed Jesus has written it with his own blood, *I will repay it*.[q] And this undertaking of Christ's shall redound more to the glory of God, even to the glory of his justice, than the damnation of these sinners would have done; for if they had perished, the righteousness of God would have been, to eternity, but *in the satisfying*; but now, by the merit of Christ's death, it is once for all *satisfied*, and reconciliation made for iniquity. Thus he *restored that which he took not away*.[r]

Let us pause a little, and think with wonder and thankfulness of this glorious undertaking. How great was that kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man, which set this work going! How admirable the wisdom that contrived it! *The wisdom of God in a mystery*.[s] Let every crown be thrown at the Redeemer's feet, and every song sung to his praise. *Who is this that engageth his heart to approach unto God*,[t] as a surety for us? It is he who speaks in righteousness, and will never unsay what he has said, for he is mighty to save,[u] he is almighty.

[2.] Having made himself a surety for us, he made full satisfaction to divine justice for our debt, by the blood of his cross. He poured out his soul unto death,[v] not only for our good, but in our stead; and paid, though not the *idem—the same*, that we should have paid, yet the *tantundem—the equivalent*, that which was more than equivalent; so that in him God might be said to have received double for all our sins,[w] so much was the Father glorified in him.

God charged the debt upon him, according to his undertaking. Those he undertook for being insolvent, the action was brought against him; and God laid upon him the iniquity of us all;[x] made it all to *meet upon him*, (so the word is,) as the sins of all Israel were made to meet upon the head of the goat, that on the day of atonement was to be sent into a land of forgetfulness.[y] Solomon says, *He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it*, shall be broken by it: our Lord Jesus being surety for us who were strangers and foreigners, he smarted for it;[z] for it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and put him to grief

He voluntarily and freely paid the debt; his life was not forced from him, but he laid it down of himself.[a] The satisfaction was to be made *to God in his* HONOUR; for in that he had been injured, and to that he had an eye, when he said, *Father, glorify thy name*,[c] take the satisfaction that is demanded. And it was to be made by *his death*, for without shedding of blood, that blood which is the life, there was no remission; and, therefore, he laid down his life with these words, *Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit*;[d] that life, that soul, which is to be given as a ransom for many, I here give to thee; I put it into thy hands, as the surety pays the debt into the hands of the creditor, the proper person to receive it.

[3.] The satisfaction which Christ made for our sins was graciously accepted, and God was so well pleased in him,[e] as to be well pleased with us in him. This was a further act of divine grace; for in strict justice it might have been insisted on, that the law should have had its course against the sinners themselves. Christ intimated, that pursuant to the counsels of peace,[f] which were between the Father and him, concerning man's redemption, his arrest should be our discharge, when he said to those who seized him in the garden, *If ye seek me, let these go their way*.[g] He delivered up himself to suffer and die, that we might be delivered from wrath and ruin, and divine justice agreed to it.

n Gal. iii. 20. o Gal. iii. 10, 13. p Ps. xl. 7. q Phil. 18, 19. r Ps. lxix. 4. s 1 Cor. ii. 7. t Jer. xxx. 21. u Isa. lxiii. 1 v Isa. liii. 12. w Isa. xl. 2.

x Isa. liii. 6 y Lev. xvi. 21 z Prov. xi. 15. a Isa. liii. 10 b John x. 18. c John xii. 28. d Luke xxiii. 46 e Matt. xvii. 5. f Zech. vi. 13. g John xviii. 8.

In token of the acceptance of his satisfaction, God raised him from the dead, sent an angel to roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and so to release the prisoner; which he did, and then sat upon it[h] in triumph, signifying that then death had no more dominion over him, but was perfectly conquered and abolished. But are we certain that he had a fair discharge? Yes, for he was often seen alive, seen at liberty, and the Father having raised him from the dead, set him at his own right hand, which would have been no place for him, if he had not fully made good his undertaking. Christ's death being the payment of our debt, for he was delivered for our offences, his resurrection was the taking out of our acquittance, for he rose again for our justification.[i] Therefore the apostle lays the stress of our faith, hope, and comfort upon this, *Who is he that shall condemn?* Who can take out an execution against us? *It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again:*[k] by which it appears that his dying for us was accepted, especially since he now is even at the right hand of God making intercession in the virtue of his satisfaction; and it is an effectual intercession, for the Father hears him always.

[4.] The satisfaction being accepted, a release of debts is published and proclaimed in the everlasting gospel to all penitent and obedient believers. Full assurance is given them that their sins shall be pardoned, and they shall be made accepted in the Beloved. The preaching of the gospel is called the *proclaiming of the acceptable year of the Lord*,[l] in allusion to the year of release, which was every seventh; and, especially, to the year of jubilee, which was every fiftieth;[m] when all debts were discharged, mortgaged possessions restored, and all encumbrances on men's estates taken off. And this was proclaimed by sound of trumpet in the evening of the day of atonement, to signify, that upon the account of the atonement which Christ was to make, poor sinners should be delivered from that wrath and curse to which they were bound over, and brought into the glorious liberty of God's children, and restored to all the glorious privileges and inheritances of free-born Israelites. *Blessed is the people that hear this joyful sound*,[n] the trumpet of the everlasting gospel publishing this release, this act of indemnity, *liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound.*

These glad tidings of great joy are to be brought to all people; whoever will come and take the benefit of this general release, and sue out a particular discharge upon it, on very easy and unexceptionable terms; for the gospel excludes none, who do not by their own wilful impenitence and unbelief exclude themselves. Nay, we have not only this discharge offered us, but we are courted, and earnestly invited, to come in and accept of it. God having in Christ laid a foundation for the reconciling the world unto himself, has sent his ambassadors, not only to propose the matter to us, but to beseech us, nay, God does by them *beseech us to be reconciled to God*,[o] though it had better become us to beseech him first to be reconciled to us.

[5.] It is upon the account of Christ's satisfaction, that our sins are actually pardoned upon our repenting and believing; and that is it which we are to plead with God, and to rely upon as a valid plea in our prayers to God for the forgiveness of our debts. In *his* righteousness we must appear before God; making mention of that, even of that only, and not thinking to justify ourselves.[p] It is through his blood that we have redemption, even the remission of sins,[q] for that is it which, having been shed for us without the city, speaks for us within the veil, and speaks better things than that of Abel;[r] and he still appears *in the midst of the throne*, a Lamb *as it had been slain*,[s] newly slain, and bleeding afresh, to intimate the constant perpetual virtue of his satisfaction, and the continual advantage which believers have and may have by it.

In praying for the forgiveness of our sins, we must have an eye to Christ as our Redeemer; the Redeemer of our persons that were in bondage, and of our inheritance which was in mortgage. He is our *Goel;* Job calls him so, and the prophets often: it is the title of the next *kinsman;* who by the law was to redeem the possession which his brother sold.[t] Christ having taken our nature upon him, is become our kinsman, and he is the next kinsman who is able to redeem, so that to him the right of redemption does belong: and he has graciously condescended to do the kinsman's part; so that we return to our inheritance again, from which we had otherwise been for ever banished; and have the earnest of it until the complete redemption of the purchased possession.[u] We must also in a particular manner have an eye to his death as our ransom: for the sake of which we are delivered from going down to the pit.[v] Very fitly therefore is that sacrament which is the memorial of his death, made the seal of our pardon.

3. Having showed you how sad your case is upon the account of sin, and what a dangerous debt it is; and yet that your case is not desperate, but there is hope for you through grace, I promise myself, you will now be willing and glad to hear, *what is expected and required from you*, that you may obtain this favour, and that your debts may be forgiven. Christ, as a surety for us, has made satisfaction; but what must we do that we may have an interest in that satisfaction? It is true that atonement is made for sin, and is accepted as sufficient to ground a

h Matt. xxviii. 2. i Rom. iv. 25. k Rom. viii. 34. l Luke iv. 19. m Lev. 25, 9, 10. n Ps. lxxxix. 15. o 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. p Ps. lxxi. 16. q Eph. i. 7. r Heb. xii. 24. s Rev. v. 6. t Lev. xxv. 25. u Eph. i. 14. v Job xxxiii. 24.

treaty of peace upon; and yet it is as true, that multitudes perish eternally under the load of this debt, and continue in their captivity, notwithstanding the proclamation of liberty. It therefore concerns us all to see to it, that we be duly qualified, according to the tenor of the new covenant, for the comforts of a sealed pardon and a settled peace; and that we may be so,

(1.) We must *confess the debt*, with a humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart. We must own ourselves guilty before God, and concluded under sin. Let not those expect to prosper, or recover themselves from under this load, who cover their sins, for they, and they only, who confess and forsake them, shall find mercy.[w] We are charged as debtors, and must not go about to deny the debt, no, nor to excuse or extenuate it; but be ready to acknowledge that we have sinned, and have perverted that which was right, and it profited us not;[x] that we have been both unjust to God and injurious to ourselves, as debtors are.

In confessing the debt we must be particular; must not only own that we are sinners, but, in *this* and *the other* instance, we have sinned; not for information to God, he knows our sins better than we ourselves know them, but for humiliation and warning to ourselves. *I have sinned*, (says David,) *and have done this evil.*[y] *I have sinned*, (says Achan,) *and thus and thus have I done.*[z] And the more particular we are in the acknowledgment of sin, the more comfort we may expect to have in the sense of the pardon. If I can say, "*This* sin I confessed; I trust, through grace, *this* sin is pardoned, and shall not be laid to my charge. But then this confession of sin must be accompanied with true remorse and godly sorrow for it; we must bewail it, and bemoan ourselves because of it; must give glory to God, and take shame to ourselves in making this confession: And as the prodigal when we own we have sinned against God, we must own, that we are no more worthy to be called his children; nay, that it were a righteous thing with him to deliver us to the tormentors. And if we thus judge ourselves, we shall not be judged.

(2.) We must *acknowledge a judgment* of all we have to our Lord Jesus, who has been thus kind to satisfy for our debt. This is one proper act of faith. To resign, surrender, and give up ourselves, our whole selves, body, soul, and spirit; all we are, have, and can do; to be under the direction and government of his word and Spirit, to be devoted to his honour, employed in his service, and disposed of at his will. Our own selves we must give unto the Lord,[a] and to us to live must be Christ: our all must be put into his hands, must be laid at his feet. It is indeed a very poor counter-security, but such as it is he requires it, and is pleased to accept of it, provided we be sincere and faithful in the surrender.

There is good reason why we should do this; for therefore he delivered us out of the hands of our enemies, that we might serve him;[b] therefore redeemed us, that we might be to him a *peculiar* people, *purified* from sinful works, and *zealous of good works.*[c] Nor can we do better for ourselves, than to give up ourselves entirely to Christ; we are never *more our own*, than when we are *wholly his.* If we resign ourselves to him, it is in trust for the securing of ourselves, and our own true welfare, that we may not again be our own ruin. Thus will he complete his kindness to us, if it be not our own fault: he who was our surety to save us from perishing under the load of guilt we had contracted, will be our trustee, to save us from falling again under the like load; for he has said, *Sin shall not have dominion over you.*[d] Thus will he perfect all that which concerns us;[e] and if we commit ourselves and our all to him, we shall find he is able to keep what we have committed unto him against that day, and he will be found a faithful trustee.

(3.) We must *give to Christ the honour* of our pardon, by relying entirely on his righteousness as our plea for it; acknowledging that other foundation of hope can no man lay,[f] and other fountain of joy can no man open. We must for ever disclaim all dependence upon our own sufficiency, and with the highest satisfaction rest upon Christ only as a complete and all-sufficient Saviour. The great concerns of our immortal souls, our reconciliation to God, and our felicity in him, we must lodge in his hands, by a submission not only to his government, as the *Lord our Ruler*, but to his grace, as *the Lord our Righteousness*, made of God to us *righteousness*,[g] that we might be *made the righteousness of God in him.*[h] For, thus, boasting is for ever excluded, and he that glories must glory in the Lord.

(4.) We must *study what we shall render to him who has loved us, who has so loved us.* Let us mention it to his praise, take all occasions to speak of that great love wherewith he loved us, in purchasing for us the remission of that great debt. We cannot expect an interest in Christ and his righteousness, unless we be willing to own our obligations to him, as those who are sensible the bonds he has loosed us from[i] bind us closely and constantly to him.

(5.) We must *engage ourselves for the future*, that we will render to God the things that are his, and be careful not to run in debt again. If we would find mercy, we must not only confess our sins, but forsake them, and keep close to the way of our duty. Ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well, are the commanded fruits of repentance, and without those

w Prov. xxviii. 13. x Job xxxiii. 27. y Ps. li. 4. z Josh. vii. 20. a 2 Cor. viii. 5. b Luke i. 74, 75. c Titus ii. 14.

d Ps. cxxxviii. 8. e 2 Tim. i. 12. f 1 Cor. iii. 11. g 1 Cor. i. 30. h 2 Cor. v. 21. i Ps. cxvi. 16.

we cannot expect the promised fruits of it. Has God graciously remitted us our arrears, let us pay our rent more punctually for time to come. Every day is a rent day with us, and we must be careful, by filling up time with duty, and doing the work of every day in its day, to pay our rent duly; and wherein we come short, balance our accounts with the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin,[k] by a renewed application of the virtue of that to our souls; and thus *keep touch* with him who is, and ever will be, faithful to us. Have we wasted our talents,[l] and so contracted debt, and yet are we still intrusted with them? Let us henceforth be more diligent in the improvement of them, that by the blessing and grace of our Master, our five talents may be made other five, and we may have our Master's approbation, and enter at length into his joy. And let us always remember, that God speaks peace to his people, and to his saints, on this condition, that they do not return again to folly.[m]

(6.) Our forgiving others is made the indispensable condition of our being forgiven of God. Nothing can be more express than this, *If we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our Father who is in heaven forgive us ours.*[n] For God will have his children to be like him, merciful as he is merciful, and good as he is, even to the evil and unthankful. That servant in the parable, who was rigorous in exacting a small debt from his fellow-servant, by that instance of the hardness of his heart made it to appear, that he was never truly humbled for his own debt to his Lord, that great debt, nor ever truly sensible of his Lord's kindness to him in forgiving it; and therefore, his repentance being counterfeit, his pardon was never ratified, but he was delivered to the tormentors, as a wicked servant.[o]

Let this consideration prevail to pacify the most provoked, and mollify the most severe; let it not only suppress every root of bitterness in us, but extirpate it and pluck it up: let us not harbour the least thoughts of malice and revenge against those who have been any way injurious to us, nor render to any evil for evil, nor be extreme to mark what is done amiss against us; for *what then shall we do, when God riseth up, and when he visiteth, what shall we answer him?*[p]

And now, (brethren,) having very briefly and plainly opened to you this great concern that lies between you and God, I must leave it to you to make the application of what has been said, each of you to yourselves; nay, I hope you have been applying it as we have gone along; for these are things of which none of us can say, They belong not to us. Leave it to you, did I say?—I leave it with God by his Spirit to apply it to all your consciences, that you may be *delivered into the mould* of these great truths. I shall therefore close only with a few words of exhortation upon the whole matter.

1. Do not delay to come to an account with your own consciences, but search diligently and impartially, that you may see how matters stand between you and God. *Consider your ways,*[q] *search and try them.*[r] Commune with your own hearts, saying, *What have I done?* What have I done amiss? Take an account of your debts to God, as all prudent tradesmen do of their debts to those with whom they deal. Think how many the particulars are, how great the sum total is, and what circumstances have enhanced the debt, and run it up to a great height; how exceeding sinful your sins have been, how exceeding hateful to God, and hurtful to yourselves. Put that question to yourselves which the unjust steward put to his lord's debtors, *How much owest thou unto my Lord?* and tell the truth as they did, for themselves; and do not think to impose upon God, by making the matter better than it is, as the steward did for them, writing fifty for a hundred.[s]

2. Be thoroughly convinced of your misery and danger by reason of sin; see process ready to be taken out against you, and consider what is to be done: it is no time to trifle, when all you have is ready to be seized, and if the present season be slipped, you know not how soon the things that belong to your peace may be for ever hid from your eyes, and you will rue your carelessness when it is too late to retrieve what you have lost by it.

3. Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are in the way with him;[t] make your peace with God, and do it with all speed. You need not *send to desire conditions of peace,*[u] they are offered to you, if you will but accept of them; and they are not only easy but very advantageous. Take the advice which Solomon gives to his son who is insnared in suretyship, *Do this, my son,* that thou mayest deliver thyself, go humble thyself, and thereby thou wilt not only pacify an adversary, but make sure a friend: and give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids, till thou hast done this.[v]

4. In order to the making of your peace with God, make sure your interest in Jesus Christ, and make use of him daily for that purpose: retain him of counsel for you in this great cause on which your all depends, and let him be not only your plea but your pleader, for that is his office; *If any man sin,* and so run into debt, *we have an advocate with the Father,*[w] who is ready to appear for us, and attends continually to this very thing. Be advised by him, as the client is by his counsel, and then refer yourselves to him, put your case into his hand and say, *Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me,* when I have nothing to say for myself.

5. Renew your repentance every day for your sins

k 1 John i. 7. l Matt. xxv. 20. m Ps. lxxxv. 8. n Matt. vi. 14, 15. o Matt. xviii. 32, 34. p Job xxxi. 14. q Hag. i. 5. r Lam. iii. 40. s Luke xvi. 5, 6. t Matt. v. 25. u Luke xiv. 32. v Prov. vi. 3, 4. w 1 John ii. 1.

of daily infirmity, and be earnest with God in prayer for the pardon of them. Hereby we give to God the glory of his never-failing mercy, which abundantly pardons; and to Christ the glory of his inexhaustible merit and grace; and keep ourselves continually easy by leaving no guilt to lie upon the conscience unrepented of. "Even reckonings (we say) make long friends." And the more we are humbled for our daily sins, and the more we see of our obligation to Christ, and his merit, for the pardon of them, the more watchful we shall be against them, and the more careful to abstain from all appearances of evil, and approaches towards it.

Lastly, Let those to whom much is forgiven, love much.[x] We have all of us much forgiven us, it is a very *great debt* from which we have been discharged: now it may be expected, that we should have our hearts accordingly enlarged in gratitude to him who *first* loved us, who *so* loved us, and gave himself for us, loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. How shall we express our love to him? What box of precious ointment shall we pour upon his head? What song of love shall we sing to his praise! O that the love of Christ may constrain us[y] to love him, and live to him, who loved us and died for us; to be faithful and constant in our love to him, who having loved his own which were in the world, loveth them unto the end,[z] and will love them all at length into the world of everlasting love.

x Luke vii. 42, 43.

y 2 Cor. v. 14.

z John xiii 1.

HOPE AND FEAR BALANCED:

IN

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE TUESDAY LECTURE, AT SALTERS HALL, JULY, 24TH, 1711.

PSALM cxlvii. 11.

The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

THE dignity and privilege of the righteous, who are God's favourites, here appear bright and blessed, very blessed, very bright; and to an eye of faith, the lustre of them far exceeds even that of crowns and coronets; though their honour like their life is hidden,[a] and, therefore, the world knows them not.[b] What can prove them more great, what more happy, than this, that the God of heaven *takes pleasure* in them?

That God should be *at peace* with any of the children of men, (that degenerate, guilty, and obnoxious race,) is more than we could have expected, considering his justice and holiness; but that he should *take pleasure* in them, should set them apart for himself,[c] gather them in his arms, carry them in his bosom,[d] value them as his peculiar treasure, and make them up as his jewels;[e] this is that which eternity itself will be little enough, and short enough, to be spent in the thankful admiration of. *Lord, what is man that thou shouldst thus magnify him, and set thine heart upon him?*

God takes pleasure in his saints, that is, in his own image upon them: *he rejoiceth in the work of his own hands.*[f] Not that God is capable of receiving any addition to the infinite complacency he takes in himself, and in his own perfections, from any creature; but thus he is pleased to express the favour he bears to his chosen.[g] He *delights not in the strength of a horse*, (so it is said in the foregoing verse,) he *taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.*[h] Princes and great men take delight in these, both for their entertainment, they divert themselves with horse races and foot races, and for their service, they make use of horse guards and foot guards, bring into the field squadrons of horse and battalions of foot, and review their troops with a great deal of satisfaction. But does God do so? No, *he takes pleasure in them that fear him:* he *delights to behold the righteous*,[i] delights to converse with them, invites them into fellowship with himself, and with them his secret is. He delights to employ them, and makes them the instruments of his glory: and herein he magnifies himself, that he has *pleasure in the prosperity of his servants.*[k]

But the CHARACTER here given of God's favourites is THAT for the sake of which I chose this text, and which I shall speak more largely to. They are such as both *fear God*, and *hope in his mercy*. The fear of God I know is often put for all religion; but it being here distinguished from a hope in his mercy, I choose rather to understand it in a more limited sense, as signifying a dread of his majesty.

Fear and hope are passions of the mind so contrary the one to the other, that, with regard to the same object, it is strange they should meet in the same laudable character: yet here we see they do so, and it is the praise of the same persons, that they both fear God, and hope in him.

Whence we may gather this doctrine:

> That in every concern that lies upon our hearts, we should still endeavour to keep the balance even between hope and fear.

We know how much the health of the body depends upon a due temperament of the humours, such as preserves any one from being predominant above the rest; and how much the safety and peace of the nations result from a *due* balance of trade and power, that no one grow too great for its neighbours: and, so necessary is it to the health and welfare of our souls, that there be a due proportion maintained between their powers and passions, and that the one may always be a check upon the other, to keep it

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a Col. iii. 3. b 1 John iii. 1. c Ps. iv. 3.
d Isa. xl. 11. e Mal iii. 17.
f Ps. civ. 31. g Ps. cvi. 4, 5. h Ps cxlvii. 10.
i Ps. xi. 7. k Ps. xxxv. 27.

from running into extremes; as in these affections mentioned in the text. A holy fear of God must be a check upon our hope, to keep that from swelling into presumption; and a pious hope in God must be a check upon our fear, to keep that from sinking into despondency.

This balance must, I say, by a wise and steady hand, be kept even in every concern that lies upon our hearts, and that we have thoughts about. I shall enumerate those that are of greatest importance.

We must keep up both hope and fear,

I. As to the concerns of our souls, and our spiritual and eternal state.

II. As to our outward concerns, relating to the body, and the life that now is.[l]

III. As to the public concerns of the church of God, and our own land and nation.

In reference to each of these, we must always study and strive to support that affection, whether it be hope or fear, which the present temper of our minds and circumstances of our case make necessary to preserve us from an extreme.

I. Nothing certainly does so much *concern* us, and ought to lie so *near our hearts*, as the *prosperity of our souls*, and their happiness in the favour of God, and their fitness to serve him here, and enjoy him for ever. This certainly ought to be the chief and continual care of every man in this life, to approve himself to an eternal God above him, and to prepare himself for an everlasting state before him, This is the concern of the *better part*, and is of all other the most weighty concern. Now, for the due managing of this concern, it is requisite that we *take our work before us*, and give each part of it its place and due proportion, so as that one devout affection may not intrench upon and exclude another. As the beauty of God's being consists in the harmony of his attributes, so the beauty of his image on our souls consists in the harmony of our graces, and the concurrence of them all to the maintaining of our due subjection to God, and due government of ourselves.

In eternity there is neither hope nor fear. In heaven they are both lost in an endless fruition: glorified saints, as they are for ever *quiet from the fear of evil*, and out of the reach of it, so they have nothing more or better to hope for, than what they are already entered into the enjoyment of; *and what a man sees, why doth he yet hope for?*[l] In hell they are both lost in an endless despair: they have nothing to fear there, where they know the worst, and must *feel* to eternity what they would not *fear*; nor have they any thing to hope for, when the door of mercy is shut against them, and a great gulf fixed between them and all blessedness, never to be removed. But in our present state, there is and must be a mixture both of hope and fear; and we must keep up our communion with God, and do our duty to him by the seasonable exercises of both: and thus we must sing both of mercy and judgment, and *sing unto God* of both.[m]

1. We must keep up both *a holy dread of God, and a humble delight in him*; both a reverence of his majesty, with a fear of incurring his displeasure, and at the same time a joy in his love and grace, and an entire complacency in his beauty and bounty, and that benignity of his which is better than life.

Our affections toward God must correspond with the discoveries he has made of himself to us. As he has proclaimed his name for our instruction, so we must proclaim it to *his praise*. Now in God there is both every thing that is awful, and every thing that is amiable; and in his manifestations of himself he seems to have taken a delight in putting these together, and setting the one over against the other. When he makes himself known in his greatness, *as riding on the heavens, by his name JAH*, he adds, in the next words, this instance of his goodness, that he is *a Father of the fatherless, and a Judge for the widows*.[n] Is he the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, and dwells in the holy place?[o] Yet we must know that with *this* man he will dwell, to *this* man he will look, that is of a contrite and humble spirit.[p] And on the other hand, when he tells us how gracious he is in forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin,[q] he tells us presently how just he is also, that he will by no means clear the impenitently guilty.

Thus, therefore, must we have an eye to him, both as he is infinitely great, and greatly to be feared, and as he is infinitely good, and greatly to be loved. And as no *love* one degree short of *perfect* must *cast out all fear*;[r] so no fear, in those who have received the Spirit of adoption, must damp the *delight* which, as children, we must have in *our Father*.[s] We must both fear God's name, and love it; both fear the commandment, and love it. We must delight ourselves always in the Lord; and yet we must make him our fear and our dread,[t] and be in the fear of him every day, and all the day long. In the duties of religious worship, we must know our disparity; and in consideration of that we must serve him with reverence and godly fear,[u] because God, even our God, though he be a rejoicing light to those who serve him faithfully, yet he is a consuming fire to those who trifle with him: but we must also know our privilege, and draw near to him in full assurance of faith, and must serve the Lord with gladness.[v]

2. We must keep up both a *trembling for sin*, and a *triumphing in Christ*, as the *propitiation for sin*. We must be afraid of the curse, and the terrors of it, and yet must rejoice in the covenant, and the

l Rom. viii. 24. m Ps. ci. 1. n Ps. lxviii. 4, 5.
o Isa. lvii. 15. p Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. q Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.
r 1 John iv. 18. s Ps. xxxvii. 4. t Isa. viii. 13.
u Heb. xii. 28. v Heb. x. 22.

riches and graces of it. With one eye we must look at the fiery serpents, and see what danger we are in by our having been stung by them; but with the other eye we must look up to the brazen serpent[n] lifted up on the pole, and see what a fair way we are in of being helped and healed by looking to it. *Look unto me* (saith Christ) *and be ye saved.*

We must not so look upon the comforts of the gospel, as to forget the condemnation of the law, and that we are guilty before God, and liable to that condemnation: which we must be ever mindful of, that we may daily reflect with regret upon sin, and may be quickened to flee from the wrath to come, and to flee for refuge to the hope set before us; and that knowing the terrors of the Lord, we may be persuaded to stand in awe and not sin. And yet we must not so look upon the condemnation of the law, as to forget that we are under grace, and not under the law;[o] and that we have a Redeemer to rejoice in, and with an entire confidence to rely upon, who died to save his people from their sins. We must look upon sin, and be humbled, and be afraid of God's wrath; but at the same time we must look upon Christ, and be satisfied, and hope in his mercy.

3. We must keep up both *a jealousy of ourselves*, and of our own sincerity; and a *grateful thankful sense of God's grace in us*, and the workings of that grace. It is true, the heart of man is deceitful above all things,[p] and in nothing more so than in its judgment of itself. We are all apt to be partial in our own favours; to say *we are rich and increased with goods*, when we do not know, or will not own, that we are wretched and miserable.[q] We have therefore reason to fear lest we should be mistaken, lest our graces should prove counterfeit, and we should be rejected as hypocrites at last. And O that those who live a carnal, worldly, sensual life, under the disguise of a religious profession, were awakened to see their mistake before the flames of hell awaken them! O that fearfulness would surprise those who, indeed, are hypocrites; and that the sinners in Zion were afraid; and that their vain hopes, which are built upon the sand, might be taken down before they are thrown down!

But let not those who fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servant, walk in darkness, but trust in the name of the Lord, *and* stay themselves upon their God.[r] Let not those who, through grace, are brought to prefer the favour of God before the smiles of the world, and are more in care about the things that relate to the soul and eternity, than about those that have reference only to the body and time; let not their godly jealousy over themselves run into an extreme. Let them not be upon all occasions arraigning their evidences, and questioning, *Is the Lord among us, or is he not?* Hearken to this, you that tremble at God's word, and are fearing continually every day.[s] How can you say you do not love God, when you cannot but say that you would not for all the world wilfully offend him, and that there is nothing you desire so much as to be in his favour, and in communion with him? And therefore, though you have no reason to trust in your own merit, yet you have a great deal of reason to hope in that mercy of God, which accepts the willingness of the spirit, and overlooks the weakness of the flesh.[t] Why should you wrong yourselves by bearing false witness against yourselves; as they do who make themselves poor, and yet have great riches?[u] And why should you wrong God, by robbing him of the honour of what he has wrought for you? It is true, we must not be proud of our graces, but we must be thankful for them; we must not pretend to justify ourselves to the covenant of innocency, for we are not innocent; yet we must not therefore reject the advantages of the covenant of grace, nor put from us the comforts that thence flow.

4. We must keep up both a *constant caution over our goings*, and a *constant confidence in the grace of God.* When we consider how weak we are; how apt to stumble in the way, and wander out of it, apt to tire, and apt to turn aside; we shall see cause enough to walk humbly with God. And yet, when we consider how the promises of divine aids are adapted to our case in all the exigences of it, how rich, how sure they are, and how certainly made good to all those who depend upon them, and by faith derive strength and wisdom from them, we shall see cause enough to walk boldly with God. He who walks uprightly,[v] walks with a good assurance, and may travel in the greatness of the strength of him who is mighty to save.

We have need to stand always upon our guard; as knowing that our way lies through an enemy's country, where we have reason to expect that ambushes will be laid for us, and all the stratagems of war made use of to do us mischief. We have need to look well to our goings, and never so much as to *feed ourselves without fear*,[w] lest our *table* should *become a snare*;[x] nor walk abroad without trembling, lest under the green grass there should be a snake; lest for want of watchfulness we should be surprised by a sudden temptation, for want of resolution we should be overpowered by a violent temptation. *Happy is the man* who thus *feareth always*,[y] as seeing himself never out of the reach, no, nor ever out of the way of Satan's temptations, till he comes to heaven.

But still in the midst of this fear we must hope in God's mercy, that he will take our part against our spiritual enemies, will watch over us for good, will preserve our souls from sin, from every evil work,

n John iii. 14. o Rom. vi. 14. p Jer. xvii. 9.
q Rev. iii. 17. r Isa. l. 10. s Isa. li. 13.
t Mat. xxvi. 41. u Prov. xiii. 7. v Prov. x. 9.
w Jude 12. x Psal. lxix. 22. y Prov. xxviii. 14.

the only thing that can do them any real damage. What Christ said to St. Paul, when he was buffeted by a messenger of Satan, he has said to all who, like him, fly to the mercy of God, and continue instant in prayer: *My grace is sufficient for thee,*[z] though thou hast no strength of thy own that is so. Infinite Wisdom knows what grace thy case calls for; and thou shalt have enough to secure the life and happiness of thy soul, from every thing that aims at its death and ruin. Be strong therefore in the Lord, and in the power of his might; go forth, and go on, in his name; as David against Goliah; and be assured that the God of peace, the God of *your* peace, will, in order to that, be the God of *your victory;* he will tread Satan under your feet, will do it shortly, will do it effectually, that he may be to eternity the God of *your triumphs.*

5. We must keep up both a *holy fear lest we come short,* and a *good hope that through grace we shall persevere.* If we rightly understand ourselves, we cannot but be often looking forward, and considering what will be our last end, what will be our future state. And what will it be? Will *our end* be peace? Will *our endless* condition be a happy one?

Truly when we look upon the brightness of the crown set before us, and our own meanness and unworthiness; when we look upon the many difficulties that lie in our way, and our own weakness, and utter inability to break through them; we may justly be afraid, lest some time or other we be guilty of a fatal miscarriage, and perish at last. And such a fear as this is recommended to us as a means to keep us from apostasy, that we may not really come short, as the unbelieving Israelites did of Canaan: *Let us fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short,*[a] should do any thing that looks like, or tends towards, a drawing back to Egypt again. We have no reason to be secure; many who thought they stood, stood as high, stood as firm as we, yet have fallen, have fallen fatally and irrecoverably. Let us, therefore, who think we stand, take heed lest we fall,[b] and with a holy fear and trembling[c] let us be continually working out our salvation. *Vigilantibus non dormientibus succurrit lex—The vigilant, not the negligent, are favoured by the law.*

Yet let not this fear degenerate into amazement, nor take off our chariot wheels, or make us drive heavily. While we fear lest God should leave us to ourselves, and put us into the hand of our own counsels, as justly he might, and then we are undone, let us hope in his mercy, that having begun a good work in us he will perform it. If it be the work of his own hands he will not forsake it, nay, he will perfect it, if it be indeed that which truly concerns us.[d] The same apostle who bids us fear lest we come short, bids us give diligence to a full assurance of hope unto the end;[e] for *faithful is he that has called us, faithful is he that has promised,* who will perform his promise, and perfect his call. To him, therefore, let us commit the keeping of our souls in well doing, the greatest trust to the best trustee; and then let it be our comfort that we *know whom we have trusted,* even one who *is able to keep what we have committed to him against that day,*[f] when it shall be called for.

Thus you see how in the great concerns of our souls there is occasion both for hope and fear, and each have their work to do, so that the two extremes of presumption and despair, those dangerous rocks, may be avoided. This is the levelling work by which the way of the Lord is to be prepared: by a good hope, every valley shall be exalted, and by a holy fear, every mountain and hill shall be brought low.[g] And thus the glory of the Lord being revealed, all flesh shall see it together.

II. The balance must likewise be kept even between hope and fear, as to our *temporal concerns,* about which we cannot be wholly unconcerned. Many cares we have upon our hearts about our life, health, ease, and safety; about our callings and estates, and the prosperity of them; our reputation and interest among men; our relations and families, and our comfort in them: all these we hold between hope and fear, and must take heed, that when things look ever so hopeful we be not rocked asleep in security; and when they look ever so frightful, we do not faint away in despondency.

1. When the world smiles upon us, and our affairs in it prosper, yet then we must keep up a holy fear, and not be too confident in our pleasing prospects; not flatter ourselves with hopes of the great advancement and long continuance of our peace and prosperity; but balance the hopes which sense suggests, with the fears which reason and religion will suggest. When our bodies are in health, and we are in our full strength, the breasts full of milk, and the bones moistened with marrow;[h] when our relations are all agreeable, and such as we could wish; when our affairs are in a good posture, the trade growing, the credit firm, and every thing running in our favour; yet even then we must fear God, and the turns of his providence against us, remembering that in such as fear him he takes pleasure.

Let us not say at such a time, as David said in his prosperity,[i] *I shall never be moved, my mountain stands so strong,* that nothing can stir it, nothing shake a state of health so confirmed, a reputation so established; or as Job said in his prosperity, *I shall die in my nest, and multiply my days as the sand;*[k] or as Babylon in the height of her grandeur, *I shall be a lady for ever,*[l] *I sit as a queen, and shall see no sor-*

z 2 Cor. xii. 9. a Heb. iv. 1. b 1 Cor. x. 12.
c Phil. ii. 12. d Ps. cxxxviii. 8. e Heb. vi. 11.
f 2 Tim. i. 12. g Isa. xl. 3. 4. h Job xxi. 24.
i Ps. xxx. 6. k Job xxix. 18. l Isa. xlvii. 7.

row.[m] Let us never promise ourselves, that because this day smiles upon us, to-morrow must needs be as this day, and much more abundant;[n] since we know not what shall be on the morrow, nor what one day may bring forth. Let us not put the evil day far from us, which for ought we know may be very near, and at the door. But, to prevent the security we are in danger of falling into at such a time,

(1.) Let us keep up an awful regard to the sovereignty of the Divine Providence, and its disposals of us and ours. We are in its hands, as clay is in the hand of the potter,[o] to be formed, unformed, new formed, as he pleases. That which seemed designed for a vessel of honour, is either marred, or with one turn of the wheel made a despised vessel, in which there is no pleasure: and shall we say, dare we say, *Why hast thou made me thus?* May not God do what he will with his own creature? and shall he not fulfil his own counsel, *whether we refuse, or whether we choose?*[p] for we are sure he is debtor to no man.

Whatever we have, it was God who gave it us; and we said when we had it, *Blessed be the name of the Lord,*[q] who in a way of sovereignty gave that to us, which he denied to others more deserving: and whatever we lose, it is God who takes it away; and when it is gone, we must say, *Blessed be the name of the Lord,* who in a way of sovereignty takes from us that which he had given us, and does us no wrong; for we are but tenants at will of all our enjoyments, even of life itself, and may be turned out at less than an hour's warning, for our times are in God's hands, not in our own.

It is true, that godliness has the promise of the life that now is; but we must take heed of misunderstanding those promises which relate to temporal good things, which are all made with this implicit proviso, *As far as is for God's glory and our good;* and further than those, if we love either God or ourselves, we shall not desire them. It is promised, that it shall be well with them that fear God; but it is not promised that they shall be always rich and great in the world, always in health, and at ease. It is promised, that no evil shall befall them, nothing that shall do them any real hurt; but it is not promised that no affliction shall befall them, for there may be need, that for a season they should be in heaviness, and it shall be for their advantage.

(2.) Let us keep up a full conviction of the vanity of this world, and the uncertainty of all our enjoyments in it. We are very unapt scholars, if we have not learned, even by our own experience and observation, that there are no pleasures here below that are lasting, but they are all dying things; and that often proves least safe that is most dear. They are as flowers which will soon fade, and the sooner for being much smelled to; as snow which will soon melt, and the sooner for being taken up in our hands, and laid in our bosoms. The things we dote so much upon make themselves wings[r] (though we should not by our own improvidence and prodigality make them wings) and flee away as an eagle towards heaven. And shall we then set our eyes and hearts upon things that are not, the fashion of which passeth away, and we with it?

The things we are so fond of, we call good things, though if we have not grace to use them well, and to do good with them, they are to us good for nothing. But the Scripture calls them *deceitful riches,* and the *mammon of unrighteousness,* because they put a cheat upon those who depend upon them, and trust in them; they are not what they seem, perform not what they promise, nor last so long as one would think they should. What God has graciously promised us in them, they do perform, but not what we foolishly promise ourselves from them: so that if we are deceived, we may thank ourselves; it is our own fault for trusting to them. They perish in the using,[s] much more in the abusing. Let those, therefore, who are rich in this world, receive the apostle's charge, not to trust in uncertain riches, because they are uncertain; nor to lay up their treasure in them, because our estates as well as our bodies are subject, both to diseases, for *moth and rust corrupt* them, and to disasters, for *thieves break through and steal them.* What assurance can we have of, what confidence can we put in, those goods, which may be lost in an instant by the firing of a house, or the foundering of a ship at sea, by the unsuspected fraud of those we deal with, or the overpowering force of those we contend with? How can we call that *our own,* which is so much in *others' hands,* or think to hold *that* fast; when even that which is *in our hand* slips through our fingers like dust, especially if we *grasp it hard.*

(3.) Let us keep up an humble sense of our own undeservings and ill-deservings. We shall see a great deal of reason not to be confident of the continuance of our creature-comforts, when we consider that we are not worthy of the least[t] of them, no, not of the crumbs that fall from the table of common providence; and if we were not worthy to have them, much less are we worthy to have them long, and to have them secured to us. Nay, we have forfeited them all a thousand times by our abuse of them; and God might justly take the forfeiture. He who is in debt is continually in fear, lest all he has be suddenly seized on: it is our case; we are in debt to the justice of God, and what can we expect, but to be stript of all?

We had been so long ago, if God had dealt with

m Rev. xviii. 7. n Isa. lvi. 12. o Jer. xviii. 4, 6. p Job xxxiv. 33.

q Job i. 21. r Prov. xxiii. 5. s Col. ii. 22. t Gen. xxxii. 10.

as according to our sins; so that we have lived all our days upon forbidden terms, which therefore we can have no assurance of the continuance of.

Though we have the testimony of our consciences for us, that what we have we have got honestly, and not by fraud and oppression: and that we have used it charitably, and to some measure honoured God with it, which is the likeliest way both to secure it and to increase it; yet even then we must not be secure, for that has been that arises on us, which we have not seen to ourselves; and there is none who can say, *I have made my heart clean, I am pure from sin.* We have all contracted guilt enough to justify God in depriving us of all our comforts in this world; and, therefore, have no reason to be confident of the continuance of them, but a great deal of reason, whatever we lose, to say, *The Lord is righteous.*

(4.) Let us keep up a lively expectation of troubles and changes in this changeable, troublesome world. It is what we are bid to count upon, and can look for no other in a wilderness. *Time and chance happen to all*, why then should they not happen to us? *The race is not sure to the swift, nor the battle to the strong*, no, not so much as *bread to the wise, much less riches to men of understanding, or favour to men of skill.*[1] Why then should we think them sure to us? Can you and I imagine that the world should be more kind and more constant to us, than it has been to those who went before us? You have read the story of Job, whom the many eyes saw the richest of all the men of the East, but the serpent has left poor, to a proverb. You have in your own time seen those who were once worth thousands, so reduced that they and theirs have wanted necessary food: and what exemption can we pretend to from the common calamities of human life? We are not better than our fathers, not better than our predecessors. Shall we think our prosperity more firm than that of others has been? We might as well think that the earth should be forsaken for us, and the rock removed out of its place.

Nay, troubles and changes are good for us, they are necessary for us; the temper, or rather the distemper, of our minds make them so, lest we grow proud and secure, and in love with this world. We read of those who have no changes, and therefore they fear not God; who are not in trouble as other men,[2] and therefore pride compasses them about as a chain.[3] Moab has been at ease from his youth,[4] and has not by changes and troubles been emptied from vessel to vessel, and therefore he is settled on his lees, is grown secure and sensual, he is unhumbled and unreformed, *his taste remains in him, and his scent is not changed.* We have therefore reason to expect that God will in love to us exercise us with crosses and afflictions, that he may remove us from what we are, and what we have done amiss, may wean us from this world, and draw out our thoughts and affections upward that world, the comforts of which know no changes.

(5.) Let us keep up serious thoughts of death approaching, and of our speedy removal to another world. Though the comforts we enjoy should not be taken from us, though we were ever so sure they should not, yet we know not how soon we may be taken from them, and then, how long soever they may last, they are ours no longer. Do we not perceive how frail our nature is? Are we not in deaths often, in deaths always, in death even in the midst of life? Do we not see ourselves, whenever we are, standing upon the brink of eternity, and our souls continually in our hands? And what good have we then to look for in this world, who are hastening apace out of it, and can carry nothing away with us? *What is our strength that we should hope?*[5] If we wait for a larger and finer house than what we now live in upon earth, before it falls to us perhaps the grave may be our house, and we may make our bed in the darkness. And when our days are past, with them our purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of our hearts; we and our hope go down together to the bars of the pit, when our rest is in the dust.[6]

Death will put a period to all our hopes in this world, and to all our enjoyments: how loose therefore should we sit to them, when life itself hangs so loose! He who said, *Soul, take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years, eat, drink, and be merry*, was by this proved a fool, that *that* very night his *soul* was by death *required of him*:[7] and then *whose shall all these things be* which he has *provided*, and promised himself so much from? None of his we may be sure. Let us therefore be so wise as to consider our latter end, and be daily mindful of it, and then we shall not be such fools as to rely upon any thing in this world for a portion and happiness: we see we have here no continuing city, let us therefore seek and look for one that is to come.[8]

Let me now press this caution upon those whose hopes are most apt to rise high from this world, that in order to the keeping of the balance even, they may maintain a holy fear, and not grow secure:

[1.] You who are young, and setting out in the world, must be reminded not to expect great things in it. You hope you shall do as well as the best; but it may prove otherwise, that you may fare in it as ill as the worst. You are apt to look at the things of the world through that end of the perspective glass that magnifies them, and to count upon having every thing in your mind, as if there were nothing but prizes in the world's lottery: and so lay a foundation for the greater grief in the disappointment, when whatever prizes others may have, you, perhaps, may have

[1] Eccl. ix. 11. [2] Ps. lxxiii. 5.
[3] Ps. lxxiii. 6. [4] Jer. xlviii. 11.
[5] Job vi. 12. [6] Ps. cxlvi. 4.
[7] Luke xii. 19, 20. [8] Heb. xiii. 14.

nothing but blanks to your share: and then it will be *folly* "to curse your stars," (as some profanely speak,) but *justice* to reproach yourselves for building so high on a sandy foundation, and promising yourselves satisfaction of spirit, in that which you were many a time told had nothing in it but vanity and vexation of spirit. Think not too well of yourselves, for then you are apt to prognosticate nothing but good to yourselves; but lay yourselves low, and then you will lay your expectations low.

[2.] You who are rich, and have abundance of the world, do not make that abundance *your strong city*, and a *high wall*;[c] for it is not so really, but only in your own conceit, and you may soon find it as a *bowing wall*, and a *tottering fence;* a broken reed, which will not only fail under you, but will run into your hand and pierce it. Keep up such a fear of God and his providence, as may forbid you ever to say unto the gold, *Thou art my hope*;[d] and to the fine gold, *Thou art my confidence;* for *if the Lord do not help you*, much more if he turn to be your enemy, and fight against you, whence can the world help you, *out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press*,[e] out *of the farms*, or out *of the merchandise?*

[3.] You who are cheerful and gay, and cast away care, who walk in the way of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes, and withhold not yourselves from any joy, let the fear of God be a check to your mirth, and restrain it from growing into an excess. You may perhaps take care that in laughter your hearts shall not be sad,[f] but the end of this mirth may be heaviness before you are aware. When you rejoice in hope of the glory of God, that hope will not make you ashamed; but when you rejoice in hope of the wealth, and pomp, and pleasures of this world, you have *now* reason to be ashamed that you place your happiness in such things, and will *at length* be ashamed that you looked for so much from them. You are but *girding on* the harness, and therefore boast not, as though you had *put it off*;[g] *be not high-minded, but fear;* and look for *that*, every day, which *may* come any day.

2. When the world frowns upon us, and we are crossed, and disappointed, and perplexed in our affairs, then we must keep up a good hope, and not be inordinately cast down, no, not in our *melancholy* prospects, about our health, our safety, our name, our relations, and our effects in the world. We must not at any time burthen ourselves with distracting care, what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed;[h] but cast this care upon God, and depend upon him to care for us.[i] We must not in the worst of times torment ourselves with amazing fear, as if every thing that threatens us must needs ruin us, and every fresh gale would be a storm presently; and as if every mole-hill of difficulty in our way were an insuperable mountain. How black soever things look, and how low soever we are brought, we must not allow ourselves in fearing more than there is cause, nor more than is meet; we must not frighten ourselves with the creatures of our own imagination, nor suffer our fears to disquiet our minds, and deprive us of the government and enjoyment of ourselves, to damp our joy in God, to disturb our communion with him, and discourage our dependence on him.

But when fear weighs down the balance on that side, let us endeavour to keep it even, to keep it from sinking into despair, by maintaining a holy confidence in God, even as to our outward affairs: and when we are warned to *get ready for the worst*, we must still *hope the best;* hope that things are not so bad as they seem to be, that they will not be so bad as they are feared to be; and that in due time they will be better than they are. And let this hope keep our head above water, when we are ready to sink into despair; let it enable us to check ourselves for being cast down and disquieted;[k] for as bad as things are, if we *hope in God*, we shall *yet praise him.*

(1.) Hope in God's power: be fully assured of this, that how imminent soever the danger is, he can prevent it; how great soever the straits are, he can extricate us out of them, can find out a way for us in an untracked wilderness, and open springs of water to us in a dry and barren land: for with him *nothing* is *impossible*, nor is his *arm* ever *shortened*, nor his wisdom nonplused. Let us honour God, by a firm belief of his omnipotence; *Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me whole, thou canst make me clean*, thou canst raise me up from a low estate, and raise up friends for me when I am most forlorn; by trusting in him as a God all-sufficient when creatures fail, and whom we may rejoice in as the God of our salvation, though the fig-tree do not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vine. The murmuring Israelites did not in any thing affront God so much as in saying, *Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?*[l] *Can he give bread also?* As if any thing was too hard for the Lord.

(2.) Hope in his providence; and believe not only that he *can* do *any thing*, but that he *does* do *every thing;* and whatever the event is, God does therein *perform the thing that is appointed for us*,[m] and takes cognizance of us and our affairs, how mean and despicable soever we are. The great God has all hearts in his hand, their hearts particularly that you have dealings with and dependence on. The ships on board of which your effects are, though they are *afar off upon the sea*, are under God's eye; and he is the confidence of *all the ends of the earth*,[n] the remotest plantations where your concerns lie. And

c Prov. xviii. 11. d Job xxxi. 24. e 2 Kings vi. 27.
f Prov. xiv. 13. g 1 Kings xx. 11. h Matt. vi. 26.
i 1 Pet. v. 7. k Ps. xlii. 5. l Ps. lxxviii. 19.
m Job xxv. 14. n Ps. lxv. 5.

shall not that God who governs the world, be intrusted with the disposal of your concerns?

Hope in the *usual method* of Providence, which sets prosperity and adversity *one over against the other*: and when the ebb is at the lowest makes the tide to turn, and the day to dawn when the night is at the darkest. It is the glory of Providence to help the helpless, to raise the poor out of the dust, and bring back even from the gates of death; to breathe upon dry bones, and say unto them, *Live*. Let this encourage us to hope, that when things are at the worst they will mend; and therefore, as in the heights of prosperity we must rejoice as though we rejoiced not, so in the depths of adversity we must weep as though we wept not; *non ita male, nunc et olim, sic erit—not as though, because circumstances have been and are adverse, they are ever to remain so.* God generally comforts his people, according to the time that he has afflicted them.[4]

(3.) Hope in his pity and tender compassions: which in the day of your grief and fear, you are to look upon yourselves as the proper objects of. The text directs us particularly to hope in his mercy: we must depend upon the goodness of his nature for that which we have not an express promise for. Let this silence our fear, that the God in whose hand our times are, is gracious and merciful, does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, much less his own children, but when there is cause, and when there is need, and therefore will not always chide, will not contend for ever; but though he cause grief, he will have compassion.[5] We may with a good assurance *fall into the hands of the Lord*, (and whose hands soever we fall into, they are *his* hands,) for we know that his mercies are great, and those who hope in them shall find them so.

(4.) Hope in his promise; that word of his upon which he hath caused us to hope, and which we have all the reason in the world to build upon,[6] for not one *iota* or tittle of it shall fall to the ground. Though he has not promised to deliver us from that *particular* evil we have a dread of, or to give us that *particular* comfort and success we are desirous of, yet he has promised that nothing shall harm them who are followers of him; nay, that all things shall work together for good to them;[7] and (which is enough to silence all our fears) that though our calamities may separate us from the dearest comfort and comforters we have in this world, yet they shall never be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,[8] from divine comforts, and the divine Comforter.

And now, who is there here that stands in need of this caution against despondency of spirit under discouraging events, and to whom it is seasonable to recommend a believing hope for the balancing and silencing of their distrustful fears? Let them apply this to themselves, and make use of the hope recommended to them as an anchor of the soul,[1] to keep them steady in a storm.

[1.] You who are beginning the world with fear and trembling, who are humble, and honest, and diligent, but have little to begin with, have many difficulties to break through, and are very diffident of your own understanding: be not discouraged, but hope in God's mercy. Your friends are few, unable to help you, or unkind and regardless of you: father and mother have perhaps forsaken you.[2] Know then that you are the particular care of Providence, which gathers the outcasts, and provides even for young ravens, when they are deserted. *Trust in the Lord*, therefore, *and do good*, so *shalt thou dwell in the land*: and though thou be not feasted, yet *verily thou shalt be fed*.[3] Though the beginning be small, the latter end may by the blessing of God greatly increase,[4] and a little one may become a thousand.

[2.] You who have concerns that lie at hazard, in danger at sea, or of being a prey to the enemy; who have debts in bad hands, or dear relations that you have dependence upon, or delight in, in peril; give not way to amazing fear, that fear which has torment, but hope in God's mercy. Give not up any thing for gone, till it is gone; and when it is gone, yet give not up all for gone, as long as you have the good providence of God to trust to. Say not, as David in his haste, *I am cast out of thy sight*, or, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*: but wait on the Lord, and be of good courage, resolved to welcome his holy will, whatever it be. We are sometimes told that the merchants are *in pain* for such a ship, such a fleet: you think at such a time, it is only the news of their safe arrival that will put you out of your pain. And what if that news never come? then you condemn yourselves to a lasting uneasiness. But let me recommend that to you, which will make you easy, whatever the event be: commit your way to God, by a believing prayer, and submit your will to God by a penitent resignation, and then let your thoughts be established.

[3.] You who, by the providence of God, are from fulness reduced to straits, have met with losses which you think can never be repaired, and conclude you shall never see a good day again, but are undone to all intents and purposes; do not give way to these desponding thoughts, but hope in the mercy of God, that mercy which brings low, and raises up. As Job's troubles are a warning to those in prosperity not to be secure, so his return to his former splendour is a warning to those in adversity not to despair. You know not what better times you may yet be reserved for, as Job was, whose latter end God blessed more than his beginning.[5]

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[1] Ps. xc. 16. [2] Lam. iii. 20, 22. [3] Ps. cxxx. 4.
[4] 1 Pet. v. 10. [5] Rom. viii. 38.

[1] Heb. vi. 19. [2] Ps. xxvii. 10. [3] Ps. xxxvii. 3.
[4] Job viii. 7. [5] Job xlii. 12.

III. I come now briefly to show how the balance must be kept even between hope and fear as to public concerns, both those of the church abroad, and of our own nation. Are not the concerns of the church abroad our concerns? They ought to be so. I hope we all lay them near our hearts, as members of the great body, and hearty well-wishers to its interests, and to the honour and kingdom of its great Head. Are we not in care that the Christian religion may get ground among men, and not lose the ground it has; that it may prevail and rule in its power and purity; that the bounds of the church may be enlarged by the accession both of Jews and Gentiles to it; that the breaches of it may be healed, by the pouring out of a spirit of love and charity upon all who belong to it; that the ordinances of Christ, administered according to the institution of them, may ever be its glory, and upon that glory there may ever be a defence; a cloud created by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, both upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies?[y]

The land of our nativity ought in a particular manner to be dear to us, for in the peace or trouble of that, we have peace[z] or trouble. Is it not our concern, that our liberty and property be secured; that the government flourish; that the public peace and tranquillity be continued; that justice be duly administered; that the power and influence of the nation abroad be advanced; that the trade be protected and increased; but, above all, that the protestant religion be transmitted pure to those who shall come after us; that the bulwarks erected against popery may be strengthened; that atheism, infidelity, and all iniquity, may be made to stop their mouth; that the form of godliness may ever be the beauty of the nation, and the power of it may ever rule in men's hearts and lives? Is it not our concern, that our eyes should still see our teachers, and that they should not again be removed into corners, nor our religious assemblies broken up and scattered? If it be, we cannot but look forward with concern, and while we enjoy peace and liberty at present, be in care about the continuance of them; and in our prospects there cannot but be a mixture of hope and fear, and we must endeavour so to fear the worst, as not to grow secure, and so to hope the best, as not to despond, or be dispirited.

The truth is, we are very apt at some times, when second causes smile a little, to be very sanguine, above what there is reason for, and to conclude, that we shall without fail be in Canaan presently; at other times, when things go not just to our mind, we are apt to be very chagrined, more than there is cause, and to conclude that we shall without remedy be hurried back into Egypt again. This hour we soar, and if the wind turn, next hour we sink; as if when the sun shines we should think it would never rain, and when it rains we should think the sun would never shine out again. And have we not lived long enough in this world to be ashamed both of those hopes and those fears? having often seen ourselves disappointed both in the one and the other; and in the issue things have proved neither so well as we hoped, nor so ill as we feared; so that we have surely at length learned by experience, that it is our wisdom and interest, as well as our duty, to keep the balance even between hope and fear.

1. We have always reason to keep up a holy fear as to public affairs, and to be apprehensive of trouble before us, even when things look most promising. We have no reason, even when we dwell peaceably, as the men of Israel in Solomon's time, to dwell carelessly, as the men of Laish.[a] It is true, and we have a great deal of reason to be thankful for it, that we are a happy people; we have long been blessed with peace and plenty at home, and with victory and success abroad; we live under a very good government, which seeks the welfare of our people, speaking peace to all their seed; we have long sitten every one under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree; we have long enjoyed the free exercise of our religion, and great plenty of the means of grace, and there has been none to make us afraid. Our fleece has been wet with the dews of heaven, when that of other nations has been dry: while theirs also has been wet with showers of blood, ours has been dry.

Shall England then say, *I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow?* By no means. Happy is the man that still feareth, as David, whose flesh trembled for fear of God;[b] and notwithstanding the many mercies he had received from him, was afraid of his judgments. And we have reason to be so; for,

(1.) We are a provoking people. Atheism and profaneness abound among us, notwithstanding the testimonies borne against them, and the endeavours used to suppress them. Vice is become fashionable and epidemical; all flesh have corrupted their way; *the whole head sick, the whole heart faint.* How is God's name dishonoured, his day profaned, his good creatures abused to luxury and excess; and how does the unclean spirit range through the land! Liberty to sin has been pleaded for as *Christian liberty*, and the societies for reformation branded as *illegal inquisitions*, and their pious endeavours opposed, insulted, and ridiculed. And shall not God visit for these things? *Shall not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*[c] How can a people who hate to be reformed, hope to be saved?

The great decay of serious godliness among those who run not with others to an excess of riot, is likewise a very threatening symptom. If those

y Isa. iv. 5. z Jer. xxix. 7.

a Judges xviii. 7. b Ps. cxix. 120. c Jer. ix. 9.

grow more insolent who are filling the measure of the nation's guilt by their wickedness, and at the same time those grow more cold and remiss, who should empty it by their prayers and tears, things look very ill indeed. How wofully do the professors of this age degenerate from the zeal and strictness of their predecessors! And such is the corruption of the rising generation in many families, that there is reason to fear a further degeneracy. And if thus we grow worse and worse, what will become of us at last? If thus, as Ezra speaks, the holy seed mingle themselves with, and conform themselves to, the people of these abominations, what may we expect, but that God should be angry with us till he hath consumed us![d] For our religion sensibly consumes, and a consumption may be as fatal as a stab. Those may be of any religion, who are of no religion.

(2.) We are a divided people, and our divisions give just cause to fear the worst; for what can be expected, but that a kingdom divided against itself should be brought to desolation? It is our enemies' policy to divide us, and our sin and folly to serve their design by our misunderstandings one of another, and disaffection one to another, when we might countermine and defeat it by our mutual love and charity. For the divisions of our Reuben, there cannot but be great thoughts and searchings of heart among all who are concerned for the public welfare. We are in danger of being burnt up by the heats in our own bosoms, and broken to pieces by the blows we give one another; and who can we think will be our deliverers, if we be thus our own destroyers?

It is not so much the difference of sentiment that is threatening, nor the difference of practice according to that sentiment; I never expect to see all wise men of a mind, and good men will not act against their judgment; but that which does us the mischief, is the mismanagement of our differences, our uncharitable censures one of another, and reflections one upon another, our heats and animosities, and party-making, to the destruction, not only of Christian charity, but of common friendship and good neighbourhood. The breach seems wide as the sea, which cannot be healed: and what will be in the end hereof? If we thus bite and devour one another, what can be expected, but that we should be consumed one of another?[e] While our enemies triumph in our divisions, it becomes us to tremble because of them.

(3.) God has told us, that in the world we shall have tribulation; all the disciples of Christ must count upon it, and not flatter themselves with hopes of an uninterrupted tranquillity any where on this side heaven. The church is here militant, its state in this world is a warfare: if it retire sometimes into quarters of refreshment, yet it must expect to be drawn out into the field again next campaign: if it have its intervals of peace, those are intended as breathing times, that it may recruit and gather strength for an encounter with another trouble. Once we read that the land of Israel had rest fourscore years;[f] but we never read afterwards that it had so long a respite. We are in a wilderness, and we must expect to fare no better than the church in the wilderness did,[g] which though sometimes it pitched where there were twelve wells of water,[h] yet presently was where there was no water[i] to drink; and when it removed from the wilderness of Sin, the cloud that was their guide led them to the wilderness of Paran;[k] but still they were in a desert land, where God, though he led them about, yet instructed them. Let the people of God never expect, till they come to heaven, to be out of the reach of evil, and therefore never expect to be perfectly quiet from the fear of it.

Far be it from me to suggest any thing that may create disquieting jealousies; all that I aim at in mentioning these grounds of fear, is, that hereby we may all be awakened to our duty.

[1.] Let us, in consideration hereof, stir up ourselves to pray, and to wrestle with God in prayer, for the turning away of the judgments, which our own sins, and the malice of those who are the enemies of our public peace, threaten us with. Jacob feared Esau his brother, and then prayed, *Deliver me, I pray thee*, from him.[l] Jehoshaphat feared, and then set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaim a fast.[m] Whatever are the grounds of our fear, we know God can remove them; he can turn away ungodliness from Jacob,[n] and then he comes as a Redeemer to Zion.

Let not our prayers for the church of God, and for our own nation, degenerate into a formality; nor let us grow customary in them, as if it were only for fashion' sake, that we prayed for the queen and the government, the preservation of the protestant succession, and the prosperity of the nation and its allies, and (as some vainly drink healths to these) only for a compliment. I fear lest some who join with us in prayer, however in other parts of the service they think themselves somewhat concerned, when we come to that, grow remiss and indifferent, as if that were nothing to them; whereas our Lord Jesus has taught us, before we pray for our daily bread and the pardon of our sins, to pray for the prosperity of his church, that his name may be sanctified, his kingdom may come, and his will be done. Let us therefore not only join heartily with our ministers in prayer for the church of God, and for the nation, but let each of us in our families and

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[c] Ezra ix. 2, 14. [e] Gal. v. 15. [f] Judges iii. 30.
[g] Acts vii. 38. [h] Exod. xv. 27.
[i] Exod. xvii. 3. [k] Numb. x. 12. [l] Gen. xxxii. 11.
[m] 2 Chron. xx. 3. [n] Rom. xi. 26.

closets be intercessors with God for public mercies; let us stand in the gap to turn away his wrath, and give him no rest till he establish, till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.[o]

[2.] Let us, in consideration hereof, do what we can to prevent the judgments that threaten us, by a personal reformation of heart and life, and by contributing what we can in our places to the reformation of others. When God speaks concerning a nation, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy,[p] its turning from sin is the only way to save it from ruin, and that is a sure way. It is the *island of the innocent* that is *delivered by the pureness of their hands.*[q] Let this charity to the public begin at home. Let every Israelite, as once every Ninevite, turn from his evil way; and then who can tell but God will yet return and repent,[r] and leave a blessing behind him? But let not this charity end there; let us appear on the Lord's side; let us act in defence of injured virtue and despised godliness, and do our utmost in humility and sincerity to put vice and profaneness out of countenance. And if we thus return to God in a way of duty, no doubt he will return to us in a way of mercy, and be better to us than our fears.

[3.] Being warned of a deluge coming, let us provide accordingly: let not the warning make us despond and despair. Noah did not; he knew the deluge should not be a final destruction of mankind, but that there would be another world after that which was to be drowned; he knew also that it should go well with him, and his family. With this hope he encouraged himself; but being warned of God concerning it, he was moved with fear, and made provision for it; he walked with God, and they who do so are sure to be hid in the day of the Lord's anger,[s] to be hid either in heaven or under heaven. He prepared an ark, and then was himself saved in it. Christ is our ark, God has prepared in him a refuge for all those who flee to him, and take shelter in him when a deluge comes. Preserve the evidences of your interest in Christ clear and unclouded, and your hopes of eternal life firm and unshaken; lay up a treasure of comforts and experiences; make the name of the Lord your strong tower; his attributes, his promises, your sanctuary, into which you may run and be safe, in which you may rest and be easy, and, then, welcome the will of God, nothing can come amiss.

2. Whatever cause we may see to fear, yet still we must keep up a good hope, as to public affairs. We hear of the threatening powers and policies of our enemies, the heads and horns of the dragon,[t] that makes war with the Lamb. We see the church in many places afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted; her adversaries many and mighty, her helpers few and feeble; yet let not our faith and hope fail; it is day, though it be cloudy and dark, and at evening time it shall be light.[u] Let Israel hope in God, and wait for him, as those who wait for the morning; and when the night is long and gloomy, do as Paul's mariners did, cast anchor, and wish for the day.[v] Let us learn to make the best of that which is, and hope the best concerning that which shall be.

Let our hopes always be such a check upon our fears, that they may not prevail to disturb our communion with God, to stop the mouth of prayer, and weaken the hands of honest endeavour. Hearken not to the foolish surmises of danger, nor be put into a fright by evil tidings: *Say not, A confederacy, to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid,* but *make God your fear and your dread.*[w] The more we are governed by the fear of God, the less we shall be disturbed by the fear of man. Nehemiah encouraged the builders of the wall with this, when they were surrounded with enemies, who designed to come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease. *Be not afraid of them, remember the Lord which is great and terrible,*[x] greater and more terrible to them than they can be to us, and who will show himself above them in that thing wherein they deal proudly. When you fear continually every day, as if the oppressor in his fury[y] were ready to destroy, you forget the Lord your Maker, and his dominion over all, and the dependence of every creature upon him; which, if you had a due regard to, you would look with contempt upon Sennacherib himself, and would say, *Where is the fury of the oppressor?*

Let me prevail with you at this day to encourage yourselves in the Lord your God as to public affairs. While we fear our own sins, let us hope in God's mercy; for though our iniquities prevail against us, and threaten to stop the current of God's favours, yet as for our transgressions he shall purge them away,[z] and that great obstacle being removed, his favours shall have a free course again. Though the designs of our enemies be laid ever so deep, and their hopes ever so high, yet God can make even their wrath to praise him, and restrain the remainder of it;[a] and therefore take heed and be quiet, fear not, neither be faint-hearted,[b] but hope that things will end well at last.

There are three things which may encourage our hope, and keep the balance even against all our fears, as to the concerns both of the protestant churches abroad, and our own nation.

(1.) The word which God has spoken to us; which (whatever other props our hopes may be supported with) is the great foundation on which they must be built, and then they are fixed. If our hopes be

o Isa. lxii. 6, 7. p Jer. xviii. 7, 8. q Job xxii. 30. r Jonah iii. 10. s Zeph. ii. 3. t Rev. xii. 3. u Zech. xiv. 7.

v Acts xxvii. 29. w Isa. viii. 11, 12. x Neh. iv. 11, 14. y Isa. li. 13. z Ps. lxv. 3. a Ps. lxxvi. 10. b Isa. vii. 4.

grounded on the promise, and our expectations guided by it, they are as the house built on the rock; and the heart that is supported by them is established and cannot be moved.[c] *Si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruinæ—Though the earth be removed, yet will we not fear.*[d] But if our hopes be founded on the ability and agency of creatures, they rise or fall as second causes smile or frown; as the ship upon the water, which is higher or lower, as the tide ebbs or flows. The stocks are as the news is, and then every turn of the wheel otherwise than we would have it, shakes our hopes, and robs us of the comfort of them. Be persuaded therefore to hope for what God had promised, according to the true intent and full extent of the promise, and because he has promised it, and that hope shall be an anchor of the soul sure and stedfast.

Is not this the word which God has spoken, and on which he hath caused us to hope? That the *kingdoms of the world shall become his kingdoms:* That *Christ shall have the heathen given him for his inheritance, and the ends of the earth shall see his salvation.* Has he not said that the *man of sin shall be consumed,* the mystery of iniquity unravelled, and that the New-Testament Babylon shall *sink like a millstone into the mighty waters?* Has he not said, that the day will come when *swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks,* when the *wolf and the lamb shall lie down together,* and there shall be *none to hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain?* Has he not said, that *for the oppression of the poor, and the sighing of the needy, he will arise, and set them in safety from those that puff at them?* That *the rod of the wicked shall not always rest on the lot of the righteous,* but *the year of the redeemed will come,* and the *year of recompences for the controversy of Zion?* Has he not said, *that a seed shall serve Christ, which shall be accounted to him for a generation;* that *the name of Christ shall endure for ever;* and that *the church is built upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it?*

This, and a great deal more to this purpose, he has said; and he is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent. Has he made the promise, and shall he not make it good? In this therefore let us trust, in this let us triumph,—God has spoken in his holiness; he has given me his word for it, and then I will rejoice; I will divide Sechem, Gilead is mine, Manasseh mine:[e] it is all my own as far as the promise goes, which we must not so much as stagger at.

(2.) The work which God has begun among us. We have reason to hope in God's mercy; for the interest that lies so much upon our hearts, even the interest of religion among us, is the interest of God's own kingdom, which he has set up among us, and will therefore keep up: it is the work of his own hands,[f] which he will never forsake.

Things are not so bad, but, blessed be God, there are some hopeful, favourable symptoms in our case; and none more so, than the national testimonies that are borne against atheism and infidelity, and the threatening growth of deism, Socinianism, and scepticism among us; the complaints that are justly made of the profanation of the Lord's day, and the contempt cast upon the Scripture and divine institutions; of the wretched corruption of manners, and the influence which the profaneness of the stage has upon it. When these things are represented as the real grievances of the nation, and lamented accordingly, surely now there is hope in Israel, concerning this thing,[g] and we may rejoice in that hope.

I trust God has among us a remnant of praying people, a remnant that hold fast their integrity; and with an eye to them God will continue to save us, and will perfect what he has wrought. We may safely argue, as Haman's wife does, for the perfecting of the ruin of our enemies; *If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews,* if the cause be God's, as certainly it is, before whom, before which, thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not, thou canst not, prevail, though thou struggle ever so hard, but shalt surely, shalt irrecoverably, fall before him[h] and it. And we may also argue, as Manoah's wife does, for the preventing of our own ruin; *If the Lord had been pleased to kill us, he would not as at this time have showed us such things as these.*[i] As for God, his work is perfect; if he *bring to the birth, he will cause to bring forth.*[k]

(3.) The wonders which he has wrought for us. When we are encouraging ourselves with hopes that God will ordain peace for us, because he has wrought our work in us;[l] yet this is discouraging, that there are such difficulties in the way, which we think can never be got over. But let us then consider the former times, remember the works of the Lord, and his wonders of old;[m] not only those which our fathers have told us of, but which we have seen in our own days, whereby God's work has been begun, carried on in a surprising way, and by events which we looked not for.

When God had begun to deliver Israel out of Egypt, and conduct them to Canaan by miracles, he expected that in their straits they should depend upon him still to work miracles for their relief, and was displeased at their unbelief if they did not. God has begun to save us, though not by miracles, yet by marvels; and thereby has encouraged us to depend upon him that he will still do wonders for us, rather than the work he has done should be undone again. If a mean and worthless people may be saved by a divine prerogative, why may not a weak and helpless people be saved by a divine omnipotence?

c Ps. cxii. 7, 9. d Ps. xlvi. 2. e Ps. lx. 6, 7. f Ps. cii. 25. g Ezra x. 2.

h Esth. vi. 13. i Judges xiii. 23. k Isa. lxvi. 9. l Isa. xxvi. 12. m Ps. lxxvii. 11.

Be of good courage therefore, and hope in God, that we shall yet praise him; stay yourselves upon him, strengthen yourselves in him, look upwards with cheerfulness, and then look forward with satisfaction. Let your hopes quicken your prayers, let them keep you in the way of duty, and enlarge your hearts to run in that way; let them quicken your endeavours in your places, to serve the interests of God's kingdom among us to the utmost of your power; and then let them silence your fears, and make you always easy to yourselves and those about you. Comfort yourselves and one another with this, that the same almighty hand that has laid the foundations of his church among us, will build upon those foundations, will in his own way and time, in his own method, and according to the plan of his own eternal counsels, carry on the building, till at length the top-stone be brought forth with shouting, and we shall cry, *Grace, grace to it.*[n]

[n] Zech. iv. 7.

A SERMON

CONCERNING

THE CATECHISING OF YOUTH:

PREACHED TO MR. HARRIS'S CATECHUMENS, APRIL 7, 1713.

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2 Timothy i. 13.

Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

Because Paul in this, as in the former epistle, giving wholesome advice and instruction to Timothy; for the enforcing of it, among other things, puts him in mind of his education, and the advantages of it: the good principles which by it had been instilled into him, and the good practices he had been trained up in: and upon trial, now he came to years of understanding, he could not but see that they were good. Let him therefore adhere to them, and abide by them, and now build upon the foundation then laid.

He particularly mentions the two great advantages which he was blessed with, in his childhood and youth; that he was bred up, both under the tuition of godly parents, and under the direction and instruction of an able faithful ministry: and both these are requisite to complete the blessings of a religious education.

1. He had been well taught by his godly parents, his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice,[a] whose unfeigned faith the apostle would have him frequently to think of, and thereby be minded to stir up the gift of God that was in him.[b] His father was a Greek, one who had some religion in him, but left it to his mother to bring him up as she thought fit: and she and his grandmother were not wanting to season the vessel betimes with a good savour: so that from a child he knew the Holy Scriptures, and was made wise to salvation by them.[c] It is a great opportunity, which *mothers* have, and which prudent, pious mothers will improve, to fill the minds of their children, when they are young, with good knowledge, and to form them to a good disposition. If the tree must be bent, it must be done when it is young and tender, and with a very gentle, easy hand, for the spirit is not to be broken but bowed.

2. He had been well taught by St. Paul too. His mother and grandmother had taught him the Scriptures, and made him ready in them, as a child of God; then Paul expounded the Scriptures more fully to him, and by the grace of God made him mighty in them, so that he became a man of God, thoroughly furnished to all good works. The text speaks of the form of sound words, which he had heard of Paul, either in private lectures read to him as his pupil, or in his public teaching and catechising, on which Timothy was constantly and diligently attending.

Now those two methods of instruction, both by parents in their families, and by ministers in more public assemblies, are necessary, and do mutually assist each other, and neither will excuse the want of the other. Let not parents think to leave it wholly to ministers; as if because their children are well taught in public, they need not take any pains with them at home: no, *there* the foundation must be laid, and there the improvement by public catechising must be examined, and *there* a more particular application must be made according to the children's capacities and dispositions, than it is possible for ministers to make in public. The people of Israel had the Levites dispersed among them, whose office it was to teach them the good knowledge of the Lord: and yet it is required of parents that they not only receive God's words into their own hearts, but that they teach them diligently to their children, and talk of them in their families, and tell those under their charge the meaning of the testimonies and judgments which he had commanded them.[d] If father, or

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[a] 2 Tim. v. 5. [b] Acts xvi. 1. [c] 2 Tim. iii. 15. [d] Deut. vi. 6, 7, 20.

mother, or both, do not teach their children first, and teach them last too, they will not be fit for, nor much the better by, public catechising.

And on the other hand, let not ministers think to leave it wholly to parents, as if because the children were well taught at home, they needed not to contribute any help of theirs to their instruction. The great Shepherd of the sheep has charged them to feed his lambs[e] with food proper for them. Besides the natural authority and affection of parents, it is fit that the spiritual authority and affection of ministers likewise, should be improved for the advantage of the rising generation. And it may be presumed, that according to the gift given to them, they have greater abilities for instruction than the parents have. In teaching your children other arts and sciences, though you may have some insight into them yourselves, yet you make use of those who particularly profess those arts and sciences, and make it their business to teach them; and will you not do so in that which is the one thing needful for them to learn well. You are to feed your kids, but you must do it beside the shepherds' tents,[f] under the conduct of a gospel ministry.

Now Timothy having had this double advantage, Paul urges him still to proceed in that good way wherein he had so well set out; to hold fast that form of sound words, which he had received.

(1.) This implies that he had a form of sound words delivered to him by Paul; a brief summary of the Christian doctrine, and of all those things which are most surely believed[g] among Christians, as St. Luke expresses it; ὑποτυπωσιν—a *delineation*, a *scheme*, or rough draught of the gospel institutes. It is a metaphor taken from painters; in drawing a face, they first draw the shape and lines of it, and then fill it up with proper colours. Such a model or plan of the truths and law of Christ Timothy had, as he might afterwards, in his meditation and preaching, enlarge upon. Whether this form of sound words was a creed, or confession of faith, I cannot say; I rather think it was in the way of a catechism, because that method of instruction was used in the early ages of the church: for we find it alluded to in St. Peter's ἐπερωτημα—*the answer of a good conscience*,[h] or rather the *interrogation*; so that I think if we apply it, especially to our catechisms, to the forms of sound words so formed, we shall offer no violence at all in the text.

(2.) Here is a charge to him to *hold it fast*, ἐχε—*Have it*. Have it by thee, have it with thee, have it in thee, have it always ready for use; do not part with it, nor in any instance depart from it. *Have it*, that is, make it to appear that thou hast it; as to have grace is to have it in action and exercise, and to him who so has, has and uses what he has, shall be given. Or, as we read it, *Hold it fast*; it was delivered to us, to *have* and to *hold*; and we have it in vain, if we do not hold it.

Accordingly we may hence learn two doctrines.

I. That good catechisms, containing the grounds and principles of the Christian religion, are useful forms of sound words; and it is a great mercy to have heard and learned those forms.

II. Those who have heard and learned the good forms of sound words, must hold them fast in faith and love.

I. It is a very great advantage to young people, to hear and learn the Christian forms of sound words in the days of their youth; to have been well taught some good catechism, or confession of faith. Observe here,

1. The words of the gospel are ὑγιαινοντων—*sound words*, or as some render it, *healthful*, *wholesome*, *healing words*. Put both together, and it intimates,

(1.) That there is *value and validity* in the words of the gospel; as there is in that which is sound and firm, and in good condition. They are what they seem, and there is no cheat in them. Try them; and you will find you may trust them, as you may that which is sound, and will never be made ashamed of your confidence in them. *Men* speak with flattering lips and with a double heart; but the words of the Lord are pure words,[i] and have no mixture of falsehood in them. The law was written in stone, to intimate its stability and perpetuity; and the gospel is no less firm; every iota and tittle of both shall survive heaven and earth.[k]

Assure yourselves, brethren, the words of the gospel which we preach to you, and which you are trained up in the knowledge of, are unchangeable and inviolable. Holy Job's creed concerning his Redeemer, was graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever;[l] much more is ours so; it is what you may venture your souls and your everlasting welfare upon. That is a sound word, That *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*; even the *chief*.[m] And that is a sound word, That *God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*.[n] It is sound speech that cannot be condemned; for it has been more than a thousand times tried, and it stands firm as the everlasting mountains. *These are the true sayings of God*;[o] and if we compare the traditions of the elders, or the speculations of the philosophers, with them, we shall say, with the prophet, *What is the chaff to the wheat?*[p]

(2.) That there is virtue to be drawn from them for *healing* and *health* to us. They are not only clear from every thing that is hurtful and unwholesome, but there is that, in them, which is medicinal and restorative, not only of health and strength, but of

e John xxi. 15. f Cant. i. 8. g Luke i. 1.
h 1 Pet. iii. 21. i Ps. xii. 2. k Matt. v. 18.
l Job xix. 24, 25. m 1 Tim. i. 15. n 1 Pet. v. 11.
o Rev. xix. 9. p Jer. xxiii. 28.

life itself. These waters of the sanctuary,[q] these leaves of the tree of life, are healing to the nations.[r] These words, if duly applied and mixed with faith, restore the soul, and put it in frame, heal its maladies, and reduce to a just temper its distempered and disordered powers. It was said of old concerning those who were sick, that God sent his word and healed them.[s] And when Christ was here upon earth, it was by the power of his word that he healed all who had need of healing, and in a sense of their need applied themselves to him for it. And this was a figure of the efficacy of the word of the gospel for the healing of diseased souls, a divine power going along with it; and in it the Sun of Righteousness arises in the soul, as it did in the world, with healing under his wings.[t]

Let this therefore recommend to you the words we teach you, that they are not only of inestimable value in themselves, but will be of unspeakable advantage to you. They are healing words indeed; for they are regenerating and recreating words, whereby you may be saved.[u] Mix faith with them, and you will experience the power of them, setting you to rights, and giving you a new life and vigour. They are therefore not only faithful sayings, but well worthy of all acceptation, of *your* acceptation. Accept them therefore, and receive the benefit of them, that you receive not God's grace in vain: and if they be in vain, and you be not healed by them, the fault is in yourselves.

2. It is good to have forms of these sound words drawn up for the use of those who are to learn the first principles of the oracles of God;[v] not to be imposed as of equal authority with the Scriptures, but to be proposed in order to the further study of the Scriptures.

Bear us witness, we set up no other rule of faith and practice, no other oracle, no other touchstone or test of orthodoxy, but the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament: these only are the fountains whence we fetch our knowledge; these only the foundations on which we build our faith and hope; these the *dernier resort* of all our inquiries and appeals in the things of God, for they only are given by divine inspiration. This is the principle we abide by, *To the law and to the testimony;*[w] that is the *regula regulans—the paramount rule*, and far be it from us that we should set up any form of words in competition with it, much less in contradiction to it; or admit any rival with it in the conduct and guardianship of our souls, as some do the traditions of the church, and others, I know not what light within. Every other help we have for our souls we make use of as *regula regulata—a rule controlled*, in subordination and subserviency to the Scripture; and among the rest our catechisms and confessions of faith.

Give me leave to illustrate this by an appeal to the gentlemen of the long robe. They know very well that the common law of England lies in the *Year Book*, and *books of reports*, in the *records of immemorial customs*, and in *cases occasionally adjudged:* which are not an artificial system drawn up by the rules of method, but rather historical collections of what was solemnly discussed, and judiciously delivered, in several reigns, *pro ne natâ—as occasions have arisen*, and always taken for law; and according to which the practice has always been; (with which, if I may be allowed to compare that which, infinitely more sacred and inviolable, cannot be altered or amended by any wisdom or power on earth;) such are the books of the Scripture, histories of the several ages of the church, (as those of the several reigns of the kings,) and of the discoveries of God's mind and will in every age, as there was occasion; and these, too, built upon ancient principles, received and submitted to before these divine annals began to be written.

But though *those* are the fountains and foundations of the law, those gentlemen know that *institutes* and *abridgments, collections of, and references to, the cases adjudged in the books*, are of great use to them, to prepare them for the study of the originals, and to assist them in the application of them, but are not thought to derogate from the authority and honour of them. Such we reckon our forms of sound words to be; if in any thing they mistake the sense of the text, or misapply it, they must be corrected by it; but as far as they agree with it, they are of great use to make it more easy and ready to us.

That which is intended in these forms of sound words, is, not like the council of Trent, to make a new creed, and add it to what we have in the Scripture; but to collect and arrange the truths and laws of God, and to make them familiar.

(1.) By these forms of sound words, the main principles of Christianity, which lie scattered in the Scripture, are collected and brought together. We know that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable, and that there is no idle word in God's book, nothing that is unnecessary; but we know that all is not alike profitable, or alike necessary. Every line in a well drawn picture is of use, and answers some end; but every line is not alike serviceable to the main design of the picture, which is to represent the face of the person whose picture it is, yet we must not say therefore, that it might as well have been spared. The Scripture gives us the things of God in their native purity and plainness, yet not without their proper illustrations. It is *naked* TRUTH, that is, without disguise, and the ambiguity which Apollo's oracles were noted for, but not NAKED *truth*, without dress and ornament.

Now our catechisms and confessions of faith pick

q Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9. r Rev. xxii. 2. s Ps. cvii. 20. t Mal. iv. 2. u Acts xi. 14. v Heb. v. 12. Heb. vi. 1. w Isa. viii. 20.

up from the several parts of holy writ, those passages, which though, perhaps, occasionally delivered, contain the essentials of religion, the foundations and main pillars upon which Christianity is built; which we are concerned rightly to understand, and firmly to believe, in the first place, and, then, to go on to perfection. We cannot contain all the Scripture; but there are some more weighty and comprehensive sayings, which (like those which the Jews wrote in their phylacteries) we should bind, for a sign, upon our hand, and which should be as frontlets between our eyes.[x] And our forms of sound words furnish us with these.

(2.) By these, the truths of God are arranged and put in order. The several books of Scripture are written in an excellent method, according as the particular nature and intention of them is, and they are put together in an admirable good order: but when out of them the *main principles* of religion are to be gathered, it is necessary that they be put into some method proper to serve the design of representing them at one view, that we may understand them the more distinctly, by observing their mutual references to each other, their connexion with, and dependence upon, each other; and thereby they appear in their truer light, and fuller lustre.

These forms of sound words show us the order that is in God's words, as well as in his works; the harmony of divine truths, how one thing tends to another, and all centre in Christ, and the glory of God in Christ: and thus, like the stones in an arch, they mutually support, and strengthen, and fix one another. They are as a map of the land of promise, by the help of which we may travel it over with our eye in a little time, and know the true situation of every tribe, though we cannot give a particular description of every part of its inheritance.

(3.) By these, the truths of God are brought down to the capacity of young ones, and those who are as yet but weak in understanding. Not that God has *spoke in secret, in a dark place of the earth*;[y] no, *the words of wisdom's mouth are all plain to him that understandeth.*[z] But to those who are yet babes they need to be explained; to them we must *give the sense, and cause them to understand the reading*;[a] and this is in part done by those forms of sound words, which lead us by the hand as it were into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Not that we need to seek other words than those which the Holy Ghost teaches; they are the most proper vehicle of the things which are *given us of God to know*,[b] and it is unsafe to depart from them. Many, under pretence of refining upon the Scripture, and expressing the things contained in it more philosophically, have but darkened counsel by words without knowledge:[c] the faithful servant will deliver his message as near as he can in his master's own words; *Go* (says God to Ezekiel) *get thee to the house of Israel; and* do not only speak my words, but *speak with my words to them.*[d]

But spiritual things must be compared with spiritual, and by the plainer parts of Scripture, those must be explained that are more dark and hard to be understood; and this is done by our *forms of sound words*, which make the principles of religion to be as milk for babes, who as yet cannot bear strong meat.[e] The ten commandments are a divine form of sound words to direct our *practice*, but they are short and exceeding comprehensive; it is therefore necessary that we be taught from other Scriptures, what each commandment requires and forbids. The Lord's prayer is another divine form of sound words to direct our *petitions*; but that also is short and comprehensive, and it is requisite we should be taught from other Scriptures, what we pray for in each petition. The form of baptism is another divine form of sound words, peculiar to the Christian dispensation; but that also needs to be explained by other Scriptures, as it is excellently well in the ancient creeds; which we receive and embrace, and greatly rejoice in, as standing, lasting testimonies to the faith once delivered to the saints,[f] which, by the grace of God, we will not only adhere to, but earnestly contend for, and live and die by. And all these divine forms of sound words you have fully and faithfully set before you, and opened to you, in the Assembly's Larger and Shorter Catechism; as, blessed be God, they are in many other, both in our own and other reformed churches.

3. Those are happy who are well taught, and have well learned, those forms of sound words when they are young. It is a great privilege, and a very improving one, to be betimes instructed in the principles of religion, and to have the truths of Christ instilled into us in the days of our youth, and to be trained up in an acquaintance and converse with them from the first; by the care of godly parents especially, who have many advantages in dealing with children which ministers cannot have, to be put betimes upon reading the Scriptures, and getting portions of it by heart; remembering and repeating sermons; to be taught the catechism, and examined in it, and not only made to *say* it, but made, as we are capable, to *understand* it, and taught to *prove* it by Scripture, and give a reason for it; to be directed to pray, and obliged to do it; and to a strict observation of the Lord's day, in order to all this. And if to all this be added *ministerial catechising*, the more copious and accurate explication of the mysteries of God by the appointed stewards of those mysteries, it consummates the happiness of a religious education, from which abundant advantages may be reaped, if it be wisely and faithfully improved.

x Deut. vi. 8. y Isa. xlv. 19. z Prov. viii. 9.
a Neh. viii. 8. b 1 Cor. ii. 13. c Job xxxviii. 2.
d Ezek. iii. 4. e Heb. v. 12. f Jude 3.

I know I speak to *those* who enjoy this privilege, on whom the doctrine of Christ not only comes down *in showers*, in the preaching of the word, but on whom *it distils* more slowly and softly, *as the dew, and as the small rain upon the tender herb*,[g] in catechising. And I commend your pious zeal in coveting and seeking instruction this way. Go on, and prosper, the Lord is with you while you be with him: and I hope it is a token for good, and will prove so, that God has mercy in store for the next generation,—that there are so many young people among us who are *asking their way to Zion*, and desire to be told it, *with their faces thitherward. Who hath begotten us these?*

I know also there *are* many, and many there *have been*, who were blest with a religious education when they were young, and were then trained up in the way in which they should go, who have afterwards turned aside from the holy commandment; who though they were not *born of fornication*, but were the *seed of the faithful*, yet have proved an unfaithful seed, and have themselves *gone a whoring from their God*. This should not discourage parents and ministers from doing their duty, in catechising youth, but should direct them to look up to God for his grace, without which all our care and pains is fruitless, and we do but beat the air; and should engage *you who are catechised* to be jealous over yourselves, with a godly jealousy, that you may not be conceited of yourselves, or confident in yourselves, may not be *high-minded*, but may always *fear* lest you *seem to come short* of that which is expected from you, or seem to fall off to any evil work or way, and though now you think you stand, may always take heed lest you fall.

But I know that your being thus catechised, if you improve it aright, and be not wanting to yourselves, will be of unspeakable advantage to you; and I hope to be of use, both to direct you and to encourage you, if I tell you how and which way it may be made so.

(1.) Hereby *you are, for some time, well employed now you are young*. Childhood and youth, upon this account, (among others,) are vanity,[i] that so much of the time is then spent to so little purpose, and yet better than, as it is afterwards spent by many, to evil purposes. But your being catechised obliges you to spend at least some part of your time well, and so as you may afterwards reflect upon it with comfort and satisfaction above many other, perhaps above any other, of your precious moments. If the time which children and young people would, *otherwise*, spend in sport and recreation, (they call it PAS[S]-TIME, when we have more need of STAY-times than pastimes, for it passes away fast enough of itself,) is thus happily retrieved, and is spent in good exercises; in conversing with the word of God; (which we should be meditating in day and night,) in reviewing and repeating to ourselves the things of God; we cannot but say that it is a kindness to us, and much greater than it would be, to keep a man from spending an estate wastefully, and put him into a way of getting an estate easily and honourably. Whatever goes with the rest of your time, here is a portion of it spent so as to turn to a good account, and so as you may meet it again with comfort on the other side death and the grave.

Those who are catechised either by their parents or ministers on the *evening* of the Lord's day, have a particular advantage therein: that those precious minutes, (and one minute of sabbath time is worth three of any other day,) which so many young people idle away in foreign, foolish talk, either in the fields, or at the doors of their houses, (which corrupts the mind and manners, and dispels what they had gained, if they had gained any thing, in and by the duties of the day,) they spend in that which serves such good purposes, and will help to clench the nail that has been driven, that it may be a *nail in a sure place*. I know not how young people can be trained up to a better piece of good husbandry, than to a good husbandry of time, especially sabbath time.

(2.) Hereby you will *become better able to understand the word preached, and more capable of profiting by it*, and so it will be a great advantage to you. I am sure it is the duty of ministers to preach the word, and therein to be constant, to be instant in season and out of season, they have [2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.] received a solemn charge to do so; and if so, either you must hear, or they must preach to the walls. And I am sure you are concerned to hear, so that your souls may live; and therefore to take heed how you hear, and, in order to your profiting, to hear with understanding. The *highway* ground in our Saviour's parable, represents those who hear the words of the kingdom, and understand it not;[k] for it is not ploughed up and prepared to receive it; they are not instructed in the things that are spoken of, and therefore such as speak to them of those things are *barbarians*. They who are not catechised, not taught the forms of sound words, apprehend not what we mean when we speak of their misery by nature, the sinfulness of sin, the mediation of Christ, the operations of the Spirit, and the great things of the other world; we had as good talk Greek to them: they are ready to say of us, as the people did of Ezekiel's preaching, *Doth he not speak parables?*[l]

But you who are catechised understand our dialect, are acquainted with Scripture language; for you are accustomed to it, and can say, "This good word is the confirmation, and that the illustration, and the other the application, of what we have many

g Deut. xxxii. 2. h Jer. l. 5. i Eccl. xi. 10. k Matt. xiii. 19. l Ezek. xx. 49.

a time heard, and knew before, but thus are made to know better. And therefore though those who have not been catechized do most *need* instruction, by the preaching of the word; (and for their sakes we must many a time stay to explain things which are most plain, wherein they who are strong ought to bear with us, in compassion to the infirmities of the weak;) yet those who have been well catechised do most *desire* it, and delight in it, and edify by it, because they understand it. Catechising does to the preaching of the word the same good office that John Baptist did to our Saviour; it prepares its way, and makes its paths straight, and yet like him does but say the same things: "*Repent with an eye to the kingdom of heaven.*"

(3.) Hereby *you will have a foundation laid for a good work of grace in your souls.* It is true, that God in his favours to us, and his operations on us, acts as a God, with an incontestable sovereignty, and an irresistible power; but it is as true that he deals with men as men, as reasonable creatures, in a way suited to their nature, he draws with the cords of a man;[m] he gains possession of the will and affections by opening the understanding, informing the judgment, and rectifying its mistakes. And this is entering into the soul, as the good Shepherd, whose own the sheep are, enters into the sheepfold by the door;[n] whereas Satan debauches the affections, and so perverts the will, and bribes and blinds the understanding, which is climbing up another way, for he is a thief and a robber. Christ opens the understanding, and so makes the heart to burn; opens men's eyes, and causes the scales to fall from them; and so turns men from Satan to God.

Now though Christ can give an understanding immediately, as to Paul; yet ordinarily he enlightens it, in the use of means, and gives a knowledge of divine things, by the instructions of parents and ministers; and afterwards by his Spirit and grace brings them home to the mind and conscience, delivers the soul into the mould of them, and by them works a saving change in it. It was the prerogative of an *apostle* to come to the knowledge of the gospel, not by man, nor to be taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;[o] *we* must come to the knowledge of it, in the way of instituted ordinances; and none more likely to prepare for the particular applications of divine grace, than this particular application of good instruction by catechizing.

(4.) Hereby you will be *armed against the assaults and insinuations of seducers*, and such as lie in wait to deceive, and draw you aside into the paths of error. Satan is a roaring lion, who seeks in this way to devour souls; and none are such an easy prey to him as those who are ignorant and unskilful in the word of righteousness. But those who are well instructed in the forms of sound words, and understand the evidence of divine truths, are aware of the fallacies with which others are beguiled, and know how to detect and escape them, for surely *in vain* is the net spread in the sight of any bird. They who grow in the knowledge of Christ, will not be visibly led away by the error of the wicked, so as to fall from their own stedfastness;[p] those who are thus established when they are children, will not be always *children, tossed about with every wind of doctrine.*[q]

Those who are well catechised, are well fortified against temptations to atheism and infidelity, which, under pretence of FREE-thinking, invite men to FALSE and FOOLISH-thinking; and by *debauching their principles*, corrupt their morals: and which, under pretence of a FREE *conversation*, allure to VICE and IMMORALITY, enslave the soul to the most brutish lusts, and by *corrupting the morals*, debauch the principles. It will likewise be an excellent antidote against the poison of popery; a national zeal against which is, then, likely to be an effectual defence of the protestant religion, when it is a zeal according to knowledge. A right understanding of the *offices* and *ordinances* of Christ, the former of which are daringly usurped, and the latter wickedly corrupted and profaned, in the church of Rome, will, by the blessing of God, preserve us from going in with those strong delusions, though the temptation should be ever so strong, and prepare us to suffer, rather than to sin, if we should be called out to it.

(5.) Hereby you will be *furnished for doing good to others*, in the places where God has set you. Your being well instructed in the forms of sound words, will qualify you to be useful in your generation, for the glory of God, and the edification of many; which will be your honour and comfort now, and will add to your crown hereafter. Out of a good treasure of Christian knowledge well laid up when you are young, you will be able, like the good householder, to *bring forth things new and old*,[r] as there is occasion, for the entertainment and benefit of others. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak.* Hereby you will be able to resist and oppose that evil communication which corrupts good manners, and to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; and not only so, but to advance and keep up that communication which is good, and to the use of edifying,[s] which may manifest grace in your hearts, and minister grace to the hearers. These forms of sound words will teach you that sound spirit which cannot be condemned.[t] And thus your lips will feed many.

It will be likewise of great use to you in prayer; both in secret, and with your families, when God calls you to the charge of families. With what

m Hos. xi. 4. n John x. 1, 2. o Gal. i. 12. p 2 Pet. iii. 17.

q Eph. iv. 14. r Matt. xiii. 52. s Eph. iv. 29. t Tit. ii. 8.

solid judgment, exact method, aptness, and great variety of expression, have I heard private Christians, who have been well instructed in the things of God, and conversant with the Scripture, offer up their prayers and supplications to God, without the help of any other forms but those forms of sound words; and this with such unfeigned fervours of pious affection, as has been very proper to kindle and excite, to raise and carry on, the devotions of those who joined with them. I believe some who are pleased to be severe, in their reflections upon all *extemporary prayer*, as we call it, would not be so, if they knew *this* so well as I have done.

6. Hereby, *those who have a good work of grace begun in them, will be greatly assisted in the progress of it.* Timothy, by the help of these forms of sound words, is nourished up in faith and good doctrine, whereunto he has attained.[1] They who have pure hearts and clean hands, hereby shall become stronger and stronger[2] in judgment, in affection, and in resolution. The more firmly the foundation is laid, the broader and the higher the building may be carried. And the better we understand the road we are to travel, the better we shall get forward in our journey. Affectionate Christians who are weak in knowledge, have but the wings of a dove that flies low; but knowing Christians are carried on as upon eagles' wings, with which they mount up for the prize of the high calling,—they run and are not weary.

And those who have themselves some good measures of knowledge and grace, may be greatly improved in both, by attending upon public catechising and if young, by bearing a part in it. Apollos was an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures and he was instructed in the way of the Lord," *κατηχημενος—he was catechised*, so the word is: and he was fervent in spirit, yet he was still willing to learn, and found advantage by it; for there were those who took him, and expounded to him the way of God more perfectly. Those who think they understand the way of God pretty well, yet should still be *exercising with the exercises of God*, should not think they have already attained, or are already perfect, but should be pressing forward, and aim to understand the way of God more perfectly.

7. Hereby you will *have your memories well stored for your own use, and will have always good matter ready at hand for pious thoughts and meditations.* It is certainly as much the benefit, as it is the duty, of Christians, to converse much in their hours with the things of God. It is the character of the blessed man, and an evidence of his delighting in the law of God after the inner man, that *in that law he meditates day and night.*[3] *O how do I love it!* says David, *it is my meditation all the day.*[4] It is the subject, not only of my *frequent*, but of my *fixed* thoughts: not now and then, upon an occasion, but constantly. And if David could find such employment and entertainment for his thoughts from morning till night in the law of God, much more may we find satisfaction in it, and the gospel of Christ too, which so far excels it.

Now one reason why this duty of meditation is so much neglected, is, because people want matter for their thoughts to enlarge and expatiate upon, and the reason of that is, because they were never furnished, as they should have been, in all knowledge:[5] their stock is soon exhausted, and they know not what to think of next. But if you get an abundance of good knowledge, you will never have to seek for something proper and useful to entertain yourselves with. You soon forget the sermons you hear; but if your catechism was well learned, and the *grounds* of it you can never forget *them*; so that you may at any time take an answer of your catechism, and dwell upon that in your thoughts, till your hearts burn within you.

(8.) Hereby you will be *enabled to transmit, more and more, to those who come after you, that good thing which is committed to you.* The truths and ordinances of Christ are a sacred deposit, a trust handed down to us by our believing predecessors, and lodged in our hands, to be carefully kept in our day, and faithfully transferred to the generations to come: but how can we do that, if we be not ourselves both rightly and fully apprized of it. We are false to this trust, not only if we *betray* it, by the admission of heresy and idolatry; but if we *lose* it and let it drop, by ignorance and carelessness, and unacquaintedness with, and indifference to, the interests of Christianity.

We of this age cannot *otherwise* repay what we received from those who went before us, than by consigning the value received to those who come after us: nor make any other requital to our parents, for giving us a good education, but by giving the like to our children; which, therefore, with the utmost care and pains we should *qualify* ourselves to do, and then *make conscience* of doing. And those who have not children of their own, ought to do it for the children of their relations, and the children of the poor, and to promote public catechisings and charity schools; and thus contribute what they can to the raising up of a seed to serve Christ, which shall be accounted to him for a generation, that thus the name of Christ may endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. What has been told to us of the wondrous works of God, we must tell to our children, that they may tell them to their children, that those who *shall be created* may praise the Lord.[6]

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[1] 1 Tim. iv. 6. [2] Prov. xxii. 4. [3] Rom. vii. 22—25.

[4] Psal. cxix. 97. [5] 1 Cor. i. 5. [6] Psa. lxxviii. 3, 6.

II. Those who have the *privilege* to hear and learn the forms of sound words, with it have a *charge*,—To hold them fast in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.

This implies that you are in danger of losing them, and being robbed of them, through your own negligence of having them snatched out of your hands by your spiritual enemies, or drop through your fingers if you do not hold them fast. Satan is that wicked one who steals the word of God out of the hearts of the careless hearers and learners; as the fowls of the air do the seed from the highway ground,[b] that it could not have any root in. Many have had the form of sound words, and with it a form of godliness, and a name to live; but have let them go, and lost them; have made shipwreck of the faith, and of their own souls. Let their falls be warnings to us, and let us therefore fear *lest we also come short*, or so much as *seem to come short*.

I know I speak to those who have the form of sound words, who have *hold of it*. In God's name therefore I charge you to *hold it fast*, to keep your hold of it, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

1. You must hold it fast, that is, you must retain the remembrance of it; keep it in mind and memory; you have it, see that you always have it, that you have it ready for your use upon all occasions. Great stress is laid upon this: the gospel is that by which we are saved, if we keep in memory what has been preached unto us.[c] Not as if the bare remembering and being able to recite these sound words, and the forms of them, were sufficient to save us; they do not heal as charms and spells pretend to do, merely by the repeating or writing of them; a man may be able to say all the Bible over by heart, and yet come short of grace and glory; but the remembering of these things is necessary to our due improvement of them, and to the other duties required of us: if we so remember the covenant as to be ever mindful of it; if we remember his commandments to do them,[d] we remember them aright.

(1.) It will be of good use to you, to retain the words you now learn and hear; and in order to that, frequently to review them, to catechise yourselves, and repeat them over to yourselves. What you said to your parents perhaps by rote, when you were children, and not yet capable of knowing the intent and extent of, you should now say to yourselves, with understanding, and judgment, and affection. Let not the wisest and best be ashamed to repeat the words of their catechism, as they have occasion to quote them; but let them rather be ashamed who cannot do it; who can remember, all their days, the idle foolish stories and songs they learned when they were young, but forget the forms of those words whereby they must be saved, and must be judged.

(2.) It is of absolute necessity that you retain the remembrance of the *things*, so as to have them ready for use, though it be in your own words. It is necessary that you should be well acquainted with the mystery of the gospel; with your need of a Saviour; with the method in which the salvation was wrought out by the Son of God, and is applied by the Spirit of God; with the breadth of the commandment, and with the strictness and spiritual nature of it; with the tenor of the new covenant, and the precious privileges of it; and with the great truths concerning the upper and future world: in these things you have been instructed; and are concerned to give the more earnest heed to the things you have heard, lest at any time you let them slip.[e] Consider,

[1.] They are things worth remembering; of inestimable value in themselves, and of vast importance and concern to us; in comparison with which, abundance of other things which we fill our memories with, are but toys and trash. How many things do we retain the remembrance of, which tend to defile our minds, or to disquiet them, which we would *willingly forget* if we could; and how many more are we *industrious to keep in memory*, which serve only to the carrying on of our business in the world: whilst THAT is seldom or never seriously thought of, and so comes by degrees to be in a manner forgotten, WHICH BELONGS TO OUR PEACE, our everlasting peace; and justly may that be hid from our eyes,[f] which we thus hide our eyes from. The reason Moses gives to Israel, why they should set their hearts to all the words he testified to them, will hold more strongly, why we should treasure up Christ's word in our heart, and let it dwell in us richly, that *It is not a vain thing for us*, but *it is our life*,[g] and the lives of our souls depend upon it.

[2.] The remembrance of them will be of very great and good use to us daily; both to *fortify us against every evil word and work*, by suggesting to us the most powerful arguments against sin, and the most pertinent answers to the temptations of Satan; and to *furnish us for every good word and work*, by suggesting to us the wisest directions, and the sweetest encouragements, in doing our duty. If we hold fast these forms of sound words as we ought, our mouth, like that of the righteous, *shall speak wisdom*, and our tongue shall be able to *talk of judgment*. And if thus the law of our God be in our heart, none of our steps shall slide. Solomon for this reason writes to us excellent things in counsel and knowledge, *that we may answer the words of truth to those that send to us*;[h] or, as the margin reads it, *to those that send us*, to God, who sent us into the world to do all the good we can in it.

[3.] It was for this end that we have heard and learned them, *that we might lay them up in our hearts*,

b Matt. xiii. 19. c 1 Cor. xv. 1, 2. d 1 Chron. xvi. 15. e Heb. ii. 1. f Luke xix. 41. g Deut. xxxii. 46, 47. h Prov. xxii. 20, 21.

in order to their being of use to us hereafter; so that we receive the grace of God therein in vain, if we do not retain them. They are not intended merely for your present exercise and entertainment, as a task upon you to keep you employed, much less as an amusement to keep up in you a reverence for your parents and teachers; but they were intended to fit you for the service of God in this world, and the vision and fruition of him in a better world. You learn your catechism, not as you who were designed for tradesmen learned Latin and Greek, when you went to school, it may be, with design to forget it, because you had a notion you should never have occasion for it in your business; but as you learned to write and cast accounts, with design to retain it, because you were told you would have use for it daily in carrying on your trade. You are taught now, that you may, as long as you live, live according to what you are taught.

[4.] You will be called to an account shortly for these, as well as other your advantages; and therefore are concerned to improve them, so that you may give up your account with joy, such joy as shall be an earnest of that *joy of our Lord*, into which *good and faithful servants*, who have diligently and faithfully improved their talents, shall *enter*, and in which they shall be for ever happy. For your having heard and learned these things, will but aggravate your condemnation if you do not hold them fast. You know what was Chorazin's doom, and Bethsaida's, and Capernaum's; tremble lest it should be yours. It is an awful thought which I have somewhere met with, "That the professors of this age, in which there is such plenty of the means of knowledge and grace, whether they go to heaven, or hell, will be the greatest debtors in either of these places: if to heaven, the greatest debtors to divine mercy and grace for those improved means that helped to bring them thither; if to hell, the greatest debtors to divine justice for those abused means that would have helped to keep them thence."

Let not what I have said of the necessity of remembering the sound words we hear, be a discouragement to any serious, conscientious Christians, who have honest and good hearts, but weak and treacherous memories; nor make the righteous sad, who ought not to be made sad. You who tremble at God's word, do really get good by it, though you cannot recollect the method and language in which it is delivered you. If you live in the fear of God, and in a course of holy watchfulness against sin, and diligence in duty, you retain the impressions of the word, though you cannot retain the expressions of it. I have been told of a good man, who was much affected with a sermon he heard concerning, as it would appear, the vanity of the world; and commending it afterwards to a friend, was desired to give some account of the sermon: "Truly," says he, "I cannot remember any thing of it, but I am resolved, by the grace of God, I will never set my heart so much upon this world as I have done." "Why then," (says his friend) "thou rememberest all." David will never forget God's precepts, for (says he) *By them thou hast quickened me.*[j] If we find our hearts *quickened* by the word, we *do not* forget it; and it is to be hoped we *will not*, we *shall not*, forget it. Put a sieve that is dirty into the water, and though when you take it out it carries away little or nothing of the water with it, yet it is washed and made clean. Though we cannot repeat the good sermons we have heard; yet if, through grace, our hearts and ways are purified by them, they are not lost.

But let what I have said engage you who hear and learn the forms of sound words, to hold them fast, to imprint them in your minds and memories, that you may have them ready to you at all times, as occasion requires. In order to this, labour to understand them; and let your knowledge be clear and distinct, and then you will be likely to retain it; set every truth in its proper place, and then you will know where to find it; set it in its true light, and then you will know what use to make of it. Get your hearts duly affected with divine things, and abide and act under the power and influence of them; and then you will remember them. Be often repeating them to yourselves: the Virgin Mary kept the sayings of Christ, by *pondering them in her heart.*[k]

2. You must hold it fast in faith. It is not enough to *remember* the good truths that are taught you; but you must *mix them with faith,*[l] or they will not profit you. You let them go, though you remember them ever so well, if you let go the *belief* of them, and the *profession of your faith* concerning them: it is by a hand of faith that you *take hold* of them, and *keep hold.*

You must hold them fast in faith, that is,

(1.) You must give a firm assent to them as faithful sayings; must set to your seal that God is true. And every word of his is so, even that which you cannot *comprehend the mystery of*, as the eternity of God, the immensity of all his perfections, the Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, the operations of the Spirit upon the soul of man, and the like; yet *because they are things which God has revealed*, you must subscribe to the truth of: if you do not, you make God a liar; and do in effect make yourselves wiser than God, when you say, *How can this be?* Whereas you should say, *Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.*

(2.) You must grow up to a full assurance of the

[j] Ps. cxix. 93.

[k] Luke ii. 19.

[l] Heb. iv. 2.

undeniable truth, and incontestable evidence, of these sound words. Pass on toward perfection; acquaint yourselves with the *Confirming Catechism;* know not only *what* it is we believe, but *why* we believe it; and be ready always to give a reason of the hope that is in you.[m] Solomon had this view in instructing his son; *That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth;*[n] that thou mayst be convinced that they are words of truth, and receive them accordingly. And Luke the evangelist had the same design in writing his gospel, and inscribing it to his friend Theophilus, who, probably, had been his pupil; *That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed;*[o] this is holding it fast in faith.

(3.) You must make a faithful application of these sound and healing words to yourselves; else they will not answer the end, or be healing to you, any more than food not eaten, physic not taken, or a plaster not applied. Of the word of Christ you must say, not only, "This is true," but, "This is true concerning *me:*" *He loved me, and gave himself for me;* to save me, not *in* my sins, but *from* them; and to purify me to himself, and make me zealous of good works. Hear it, and know it, for thy good,[p] says Eliphaz to Job, *for thyself*, so it is in the margin. Then only we know it for our good, when we know it for *ourselves*.

3. You must hold it fast in love; that is the other arm with which these forms of sound words must be embraced, and held, that we may not let them go.

(1.) You must take delight in them, and in the knowledge of them: that which we love we will hold fast, and not easily part with. It is not enough for us to know the truth, but we must love it; not enough that we receive it as a faithful saying, but also as well worthy of all acceptation; we must not only give it credit as true news, but bid it welcome as good news, and rejoice in it; and when Christ says, *Surely, I come quickly*, we must not only say, "*Even so*, SO IT IS, *he* WILL *come*," but *Amen, so* BE IT; COME, *Lord Jesus.*[q] This wisdom, this knowledge, must so enter into thy heart, as to become pleasant to thy soul.[r] They say it was a ceremony used of old by the Jews, when they sent their children to school, they gave them a piece of a honeycomb to eat, repeating those words of Solomon, *My son, eat thou honey because it is good, and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste; so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul, when thou hast found it.*[s] And that which is not thus delighted in, will not be long held fast.

(2.) You must be affected with them, and lay them to heart, as things that concern you to the last degree. Love is the leading affection, and rules the rest; as that goes, all the rest move. Be affected with love to the good word of God; and then you will conceive a high value and veneration for Christ, and a rooted antipathy to sin; a holy contempt of the world, a deep concern for your own souls, and a care about your everlasting state; and all other good affections, that will be the principles of a steady and regular motion of the soul heaven-wards. And then you will hold fast this form of sound words, when it makes such impressions as those upon you, and (as Christ's sayings ought to do) sinks down into your hearts,[t] and impresses a weight and stamp upon them.

3. You must be influenced by them, and act under the commanding power of them. That *love* in which the sound words must be held fast, is here put for all that *evangelical obedience* which holy love is the principle of; for, as faith works by love, so love works by keeping the commandments of God;[u] for *This is the love of God*, that we *keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous.* We then hold fast the sayings of Christ, when we hold to them, in the constant temper of our minds, and tenor of our lives, and govern ourselves by them in all we say or do, that we may *thus* adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.

4. There is one word more in the text to be touched upon, and it is the centre and crown of all: This faith and love must be in Christ Jesus. Blessed Paul, full of blessed Jesus, breathes nothing so much as Christ; he is his Alpha and Omega, and must be ours; it is the token in every epistle. We must hold fast the sound words of the gospel, in that faith and love which has Christ for its author, its object, and its end.

(1.) Which has Christ for its *author;* that faith and love which is wrought in us, not by the strength of any natural reasonings or resolutions of our own, but by the Spirit and grace of Christ, darting rays of divine light into the understanding, and striking sparks of divine fire into the affections, for these are *not of ourselves*, they are the *gift of God.* Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus;[v] for on him is our help laid, and in him only is our help found. Depend not upon any ability of your own, lean not to your own understanding, but go forth and go on, take hold and keep hold, in Christ's strength.

(2.) Which has Christ for its *object;* that faith and love in which the truths of the gospel must be held fast, as it must flow from Christ, so it must fasten on him. It is Christ in the gospel that we must embrace, and hold fast; who is the true treasure hid in that field, which we must think it worth while to part with all we have for the purchase of. It is by faith in Christ, and love to Christ, that we must hold fast what we have received. For this

m 1 Pet. iii. 15. n Prov. xxii. 21. o Luke i. 4.
p Job v. 27. q Rev. xxii. 20.
r Prov. ii. 10. s Prov. xxiv. 13, 14. t Luke ix. 44.
u 1 John v. 3. v 2 Tim. ii. 1.

reason we must embrace those sound words, because we find so much of Christ in them. He is that golden thread that runs through the web of the whole gospel. St. Austin somewhere says of himself, that before his conversion he took great delight in reading the writings of Tully, the Roman orator, but now says he, I cannot relish them at all, as I used to do, because I find nothing of Christ in them.

(3.) Which has Christ for its *end*. It must be that *faith* and love *which has an eye to Christ*; which has this always in view, *to glorify Christ, and to be glorified with Christ*: that *faith* which presses toward its own perfection, in the immediate sight of Christ: and that *love* which presses toward its own perfection, in the everlasting enjoyment of him.

Application.

Let me now close with a few words of exhortation, in reference to the form of sound words.

1. Let us bless God, that our lot is cast in a land of light: that he who determines the times before appointed, and the bounds of men's habitations, has determined ours so well, and so much to our advantage: that those statutes and judgments, which the heathen have not known, are revealed to us. We can never be enough thankful to God for this distinguishing favour, his manifesting himself to us, so as not unto the world. *Blessed are our eyes, for they see* the joyful light, and *our ears, for they hear* the joyful sound, which many prophets and kings desired to see, desired to hear, and might not.[v] We can never be enough thankful to God for it, that living in a *Christian nation* we have Bibles; in a *protestant nation*, we have them in a language we understand: that to us are committed the oracles of God,[w] *the lively oracles*, with more advantage than to the Jews of old; that with us are the priests, the Lord's ministers, sounding with his trumpets.[x] So many and so great are our privileges, above most other nations, that it may justly be expected I wish it could be as justly said, *Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people!*[y]

2. Let us particularly be thankful to God for the *forms* of sound words, both ancient and modern, which we have among us, for our catechisms and confessions of faith: that we have plenty of them, and variety of them, not clashing and contradicting each other, but rather confirming and illustrating each other; for to Christ they all with one consent bear witness, and to the law and to the testimony they all appeal: though the methods be different, they meet in the same centre: and tend to direct those of different tastes and capacities to it. Likewise

3. Let parents and governors of families make conscience of instructing their children, and servants, in the forms of sound words. Here this work must begin, for it must begin betimes; *Whom shall he teach knowledge? Whom shall he make to understand doctrine?* The prophet there answers, *Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breast*:[z] when they are very young, under the immediate care of their mothers or grandmothers, as Timothy was: they are the teachers of babes.[a] When Solomon was tender, and only-beloved in the sight of his mother,[b] she taught him.[c] The history of the Scripture is most proper to acquaint your children with in the first place: we see how soon they apprehend, and are affected, with other stories, and why may not impressions be made upon them as soon by the Scripture stories. Pleasant and profitable instructions may also be given to children by the psalms for singing, and by divine poems and verses suited to their capacity.

It will be of great use likewise to your children, to be told betimes, what it is supposed natural for them to ask, *What we mean by this and the other religious service*.[d] Tell them why you read the Bible with so much veneration: because it is the book of God, and holy men wrote the several parts of it, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Tell them why you make conscience of praying to God so solemnly every day: because you have a necessary and constant dependence upon God, and upon his providence and grace, that you are daily receiving mercy from him, and daily need his favour. Tell them why you observe the Lord's day, and make such a difference between that and other days; that it is in remembrance of the creation of the world, the resurrection of Christ, and the pouring out of the Spirit. Especially tell them of their baptism: take all opportunities to let them see children baptized, (in order to which it is very good to have it done publicly,) and tell them, thus they were baptized in their infancy, and by that solemnity *dedicated and devoted to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; and what was done for them then, they must now do for themselves. Tell them of the corruption of their nature, which needed cleansing; and of the grace of God in Christ, in which there is a cleansing virtue.

Set them to learn their catechism; let them commit some portions of Scripture to memory, as you find they are able to do it; and examine them what they can remember of the sermons they hear. You will meet with some difficulty herein from the corruption of their nature, which you must endeavour to get over as much as may be by a gentle hand; give their instruction with all possible freedom and familiarity, with compassion and condescension to their capacity. *These* words these things must dili-

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v Matt. xiii. 16. w Rom. iii. 2. x 2 Chron. xiii. 12.
y Deut. iv. 6. z Isa. xxviii. 9.

a 2 Tim. iii. 15. b Prov. iv. 3.
c Prov. xxxi. 1. d Exod. xii. 26.

gently to their children, not who are the most dictatorial in doing it, and make the greatest noise, but who talk of them *frequently*; when they sit in the house, and walk by the way, when they lie down, and when they rise up,[f] frequently dropping good instructions among their children: and if but one in ten insensibly slip into their minds, and fasten there, what good proficients may we hope they will be in time. Contrive how to make this work, as much as may be, a pleasure and delight to your children and servants, and not a task, or a terror, or a drudgery. Teach them as Christ teaches, who is meek and lowly in heart.

4. Let the ministers of Christ look upon themselves as under a charge to feed the lambs of Christ's flock. All the reformed churches make this a part of their work; to be done either publicly or privately; either in their solemn religious assemblies, or in meetings on purpose for this work; or in visiting their families, either by themselves, or, as in some churches abroad, by some other proper persons qualified for, and deputed to, this service particularly. Private catechising has the advantage of a more particular application to the persons catechised: public catechising has the advantage of a more general edification; and therefore both should be used in their season, or that which, all circumstances considered, may turn to the best account.

O that we who are ministers, were filled with a zeal for the spiritual welfare and eternal salvation of young people, and a concern for the rising generation; and were to do our utmost as our ability and opportunity is, to fill the minds of young ones, in their early days, with the knowledge of Christ, and to fix them for Christ, that the next generation may be better than this. And O that those who are employed in public catechising, may see of the travail of their souls to their satisfaction, and not labour in vain!

5. Let us look with pity upon the great numbers of children, even in our own land, who are not taught these forms of sound words, but are bred up in ignorance and profaneness; strangers and enemies to Christ and true Christianity. *They are poor, they are foolish, they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God.*[g] They sit in darkness in a land of light, and walk on in darkness, and if infinite mercy do not interpose to prevent, they are hastening into utter darkness. If you can do any thing, sirs, have compassion upon them and help them; pick up some of those neglected, abandoned young ones, you who have ability, and rescue them from ruin, by putting them into a way of receiving instruction. We have charity schools set up in the city and country; which, if managed by the rules of catholic Christianity, have a direct tendency to the bettering of the world, and the reforming of the next age, if the reforming of this should be despaired of. What is given to the support and encouragement of them, is charity, both to soul and body, and will be fruit abounding to your account.

6. Let those who have heard and learned the forms of sound words long ago, retain them still, and improve more and more. I have reason to think I speak to many who were blessed with a good education, were trained up in the way wherein they should go: I beseech you examine yourselves, not only whether you have not departed from it, I hope you have not quite deserted it, but what progress have you made in it? What have you built upon that foundation? Has it been wood, hay, and stubble;[h] airy notions, nice speculations, perverse disputings, and strifes of words? or has it been gold, silver, and precious stones; advances in serious godliness, in holiness, and heavenly mindedness, and the power of that kingdom of God, which is not meat or drink, but *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*?[i] Go on and prosper, for the Lord is with you. But if you have in any degree let go that good thing which was committed to your trust, I beseech you bethink yourselves whence you have fallen, and remember again what you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.*[k]

7. I must not part without a word to you, whose request brought me to this service here to-day, you who are catechised in the principles of religion, that you may grow yet more and more in the knowledge of Christ and Christianity.

(1.) Carefully attend to the instructions that are given you; and treasure them up, with sincerity, and all the marks of reverence and seriousness. Give attendance on, and attention to, what is taught you, and set your heart to it. You must take pains, else you cannot expect to reap advantage; for it is in labour that there is profit. Be careful to mark what is said, not critical to make remarks upon it; and give account of it with affection, but without affectation; and attend here not for ostentation, because you think yourselves better than others, but for your edification, because you would be better than you are.

(2.) Pray over what is taught you, and beg of God to bless it to you. Man can but teach the outward ear, it is God only that can bring it to the heart, and in that respect none teach like him. It is he who teaches with a strong hand,[l] and then the teaching is effectual; who seals the instruction,[m] and then it is abiding; who gives the understanding, and opens the heart. Look up to him therefore by faithful and fervent prayer, for that grace of his which is necessary to your profiting by the means of grace. You

f Deut. vi. 7. g Jer. v. 4. h 1 Cor. iii. 12. i Rom. xiv. 17. k Rev. iii. 2, 3. l Isa. viii. 11. m Job xxxiii. 16.

crave his blessing upon the food for your body, that it may be nourishing to you; and can you expect your spiritual food should nourish you without that blessing, or that you should have that blessing, if you do not pray for it? That good thing which is by the word committed to you to keep for God, do you by prayer commit to God to keep for you, and bring it to your minds when you should use it.

(3.) Live as those who by attendance on such an exercise as this, make a profession of religion above many others. Hereby you seem to be more solicitous about your souls, and more inquisitive concerning the way to heaven, than your neighbours; but what will it avail you that you seem to be so, unless you be really so? The tree will be known by its fruits. Evidence that you receive not so much instruction in vain, by the exemplary purity and piety, seriousness and strictness, of your whole conversation. By your justice and charity, and unshaken veracity and fidelity; your sobriety and temperance; your humility and meekness; your conscientious obedience to your parents and masters, and a steady course of godliness and honesty; you ought to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. I remember Epictetus—pressing his pupil to show by his practice of virtue, his profiting by the instructions given him—illustrates it by this similitude: "The sheep," says he, "do not come to their shepherd, and show him how much meat they have eaten, but they make it to appear by their growing fatter and fitter for use." *Thus*, therefore, do you make it appear, that you improve in Christian knowledge, *by the agreeableness and evenness of your Christian practice, and your perseverance in it to the end*, that you and we may rejoice, in the day of the Lord, that we have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain.

A MEMORIAL OF THE FIRE OF THE LORD:

IN

A SERMON,

PREACHED SEPTEMBER 2ND, 1713, BEING THE DAY OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE BURNING OF LONDON, IN 1666.

AT MR. REYNOLDS'S MEETING-HOUSE, NEAR THE MONUMENT.

NUMBERS xi. 3.

And he called the name of the place Taberah, because the fire of the Lord burnt among them.

WE have here an account of the prudent and pious care which Moses took, to preserve the memorial of a fire which happened in the camp of Israel, by giving a new name of suitable signification to the place where it happened; which being left upon record here, in the book of God, is a monument of the fire, further visible and more durable than this pillar of stone, the monument hard by, and will outlast even the pillar of salt; for wherever, in any age, the books of Moses are read, and they shall be read in every age to the end of time, there shall this be told for a memorial; that the fire of the Lord burnt among the Israelites, and in remembrance of it, Moses called the place *Taberah*.

And thus it suits the occasion of our meeting here to-day, in communion with many religious assemblies in this city, to put ourselves and one another in mind of that *fire of the Lord*, which, in the memory of many of you, burnt among you to that degree, as to make of this city a heap, this flourishing city a ruin; a judgment which it was then thought fit, by the annual observation of this day, to transmit the remembrance of to posterity.

Now observe in the text,

1. What the judgment of God upon the camp of Israel was. *The fire of the Lord burnt among them.* It is called *the fire of the Lord*, because it fell from heaven, it came immediately from the hand of God: as that fire did, which sometimes consumed the sacrifices, in token of God's acceptance of them, when justly it might have consumed the sinners, and taken vengeance on them. Here it did consume the sinners, to signify, that their iniquity was such, as should not be purged with sacrifice or offering for ever;[a] as another time it consumed the sacrificers, when they offered strange fires.[b]

Lightning is the *fire of the Lord*, as thunder is the *voice of the Lord*. With that fire Job's sheep, and the servants that attended them, were burnt up.[c] It is heaven's fire-arms, with which sometimes dreadful execution has been done. "Fire and water," we say, "are good servants, but bad masters:" the old world was mastered and destroyed by water, and this is reserved unto fire.[d] God has treasures of both in his magazines, which he has laid up against the *time of trouble, the day of battle and war*.[e]

This fire of the Lord burnt among them, among that people whom God peculiarly favoured, when by sin they displeased him, and his anger was kindled against them.[f] Though the pillar of cloud and fire was over them to protect them, while they kept themselves in the love of God, that should be no security to them, when they rebelled against him. It burnt the bodies of many of them to death, they were killed with lightning; or, perhaps, it burnt their tents and goods; *It consumed*, (so the original is, *v.* 1.) *in the uttermost parts of the camp*, not saying whether persons or dwellings. Our translation determines it to persons, *them that dwell there;* but the *quenching of the fire*, (*v.* 2.) seems rather to intimate that it was the *tents* that were burnt. It kindled in the *utmost parts of the camp*, where the inferior sort were, the mixt multitude, who were

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a 1 Sam. iii. 14. b Lev. x. 1, 2. c Job i. 16.

d 2 Pet. iii. 6, 7. e Job xxxviii. 23. f Numb. xi. 1.

generally the ringleaders in every mutiny; the judgment began where the sin began. Or, it intimates that God came upon them by degrees, seizing those first who were of lower rank, that others might take warning. Or, this fire began in the utmost parts of the camp, as if it would take all before it.

Now this, among other things, happened to them for example,[g] and was intended to be a warning to us, that we sin not after the similitude of their transgression. The people complained; that was it that provoked God to kindle this fire among them. Let those who are of a fretful, discontented spirit, who are always complaining of their lot, complaining of every event, quarrelling with God and his providence, diminishing every mercy, and doubling every cross, see in this instance, what an exceeding sinful sin this is, and how provoking to God. Those who are always complaining for trifles, must expect to have something given them to complain of. As on the one hand nothing is more acceptable to God, than our humble acceptance of all he says and does. (*Quis Deo placuit? Cui Deus placuerit—Who pleases God? The man whom God pleases,* Aug.) so on the other hand, nothing is more displeasing to God, than our being displeased at his disposals.

2. The memorial of this judgment, to transmit a traditional knowledge of it to posterity, Moses called that place, *Taberah, Incendium, Combustio—a Burning.* The Seventy translate the Hebrew name Εμπυρισμος. Moses knew too well how apt the people were, soon to forget the works of God, both his mercies and his judgments, and therefore was very industrious to fix in their minds the remembrance of them; and contrived means to revive the remembrance of them, when it should begin to dwindle and die. This fire of the Lord, though it burned but in the uttermost part of the camp, and was soon quenched, yet must not be forgotten; he therefore calls the place *Taberah*—Here the burning was. And if posterity ask, What burning? It will be answered, the burning of a part of the camp of the Israelites, with the fire of the Lord, for their discontent and murmuring. And we find Moses himself, near forty years after, putting the next generation in mind of this very thing, purely by the mention of this name, as he did of other the like sins and judgments, by the names he had given to other places for the same purpose: *And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-Hattaavah, ye provoked the Lord to wrath.*[h]

But by recording those things in his sacred writings, he has more effectually preserved the memorial of them, and transmitted it even to us, whose lot is cast in the ends of the earth, and upon whom the ends of the world are come.[i] And this is one of those passages of story, which the Psalmist would have the fathers to make known to their children, that they may tell them to theirs; That God heard their murmurings and was wroth, *so a fire was kindled against Jacob.*[k]

So that hence we may gather this lesson:

That a lasting memorial ought to be kept of the fire of the Lord, when it has at any time burned among a people.

As the mercies of God ought to have their memorials, and used to have in the church of God *names* of remembrance, *stones* of remembrance, *songs* of remembrance, *days* of remembrance, of which it were easy to give numerous instances in Scripture; so the judgments of God too should be remembered, for they are improvable as well as his mercies, improvable not only by the sufferers themselves, and by their neighbours at the same time, but by their successors afterwards, as Shiloh's ruins were Jerusalem's instructions,[l] many ages afterwards. Care must therefore be taken, not only to preserve the remembrance of them in our own bosoms, but to transmit it to the generations to come, for their benefit.

For it is not enough to remember these works of God, but we must consider them,[m] must wisely consider[n] them, so as to understand them, and make a good use of our remembrance of them. As we must remember God's commandments to do them,[o] else we remember them to no purpose; so we must remember God's providences, not merely as matter of discourse among ourselves, or information to our children, but with suitable affections working *in* our spirits, and suitable impressions made *upon* them. *Lo, this, we have searched it,* (says Eliphas,) *so it is, hear it, and know thou it for thy good.*[p]

(1.) We must often call to mind the personal and private rebukes of Providence, which we ourselves and our families have been under. The history of a man's own life is as useful a piece of history as any he can study; and here a man must be his own historian, and his own reader: and therefore under both characters it is to be hoped he will be careful, and faithful *to* himself. God's counsel to Israel is good counsel to every Israelite, *Thou shalt remember all the way in which the Lord thy God has led thee in this wilderness,* how *he humbled thee,* and *suffered thee to hunger,* and *chastened thee, as a man chasteneth his son.*[q]

We should remember what God has spoken to us, not only by his word, giving earnest heed, lest at any time we let it slip,[r] but by his rod, for that also has a voice, an articulate, intelligible voice, and is sent to us on an errand, and waits for an answer; and the voice of both we should now both hear for the time to come, and hear from the time past; and the repeating of the lessons we have been taught by

g 1 Cor. x. 6. h Deut. ix. 22. i 1 Cor. x. 11
k Ps. lxxviii. 6. 21 l Jer. vii. 12. m Eccl. vii. 13
n Ps. lxiv. 9. o Ps. ciii. 18. p Job v. 6.
q Deut. viii. 2. 3. 5. r Heb. ii. 1

both, is confessedly necessary to our learning of them perfectly.

Apt enough we are to complain of our former afflictions, too apt to remember them, with peevish reflections upon the divine Providence, and the instruments of it, and vain boasting of what hardships we have gone through. But we should remember them, to renew our repentance for the sins that procured them, our thankfulness for the mercy that supported us under them, our patient submissions to the will of God in them, our improvements in knowledge and grace by them, and the good resolutions of better obedience we made under them; it is for this end that we are to preserve memorials of our troubles: as the lamenting church remembered the affliction and the misery, the wormwood and the gall, *My soul* (says she) *hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me.*[s] And as David penned many of his psalms, to keep in remembrance, and to bring to remembrance, the distresses he was in, that at the same time he might recollect, for his present benefit, the frame of his spirit, and the workings of his heart under them.

You have all found your days upon earth to be full of trouble, though not all alike so; review the troubles of your life, that what was ill done by you in the day of your affliction, may be undone by repentance; and what was well done, may be done again, may be better done, and kept always in the imagination of the thought of your heart. Let not your sicknesses and pains be forgotten; Hezekiah took care that his should not, but should be kept in remembrance by his writing, when he had been sick and was recovered.[t] Let not your losses in your estate, your crosses and disappointments in your affairs, be forgotten. Let not the death of your dear relations, and the breaches thereby made upon your comforts, be forgotten. Naomi took care that her complicated griefs of both those kinds should not be, when she changed her own name, *Call me not Naomi, call me Mara.*[u] David took care that his should not, when he penned the 39th Psalm (it should seem) upon occasion of the death of some friend who was dear to him, and left upon record his prayer under the affliction, *Lord, make me to know my end,* and his promise, *I will take heed to my ways.*[v]

By remembering your afflictions in this good manner, and for these good purposes, you may not only regain the benefit you formerly got by them, but may gain more; as having now your thoughts more cool and sedate, and under command, than they were in the hurry of the affliction. The chastening for the present is grievous, and perhaps we are under it, as Job was, *full of confusion;* but it is afterwards, when it comes to be reflected upon and reviewed, that it yields the *peaceable fruit of righteousness,*[w] fruit that remains.

By a due remembrance of former convictions, if we received them aright, like the tender and tractable child, we shall be kept from returning to folly, and so prevent another correction; and, like the burnt child, dread the fire.

(2.) We must often call to mind public judgments, judgments upon the communities we are members of; upon the land and nation, God's controversies with them; upon the city, his voice that has cried to it; for as in the peace thereof we have peace, so in the trouble thereof we have trouble, and must feel it. Those are unworthy the honour of Zion's sons, who think not themselves concerned in Zion's sorrows, her past as well as present sorrows.

Though God by subsequent providences in favour of a returning people, may have superseded *the fast of the fourth month, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh, the fast of the tenth,* so as to *turn them into joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts;*[x] and by the abundance of our comforts, may make us to *forget our miseries,* and *to remember them as waters that pass away;*[y] *to forget all our toil,*[z] as Joseph did; yet we must still remember to make a pious improvement of it; must still be sowing, sowing in the spirit, though the tears in which we sowed be in some measure wiped away: and to assist you herein, as God enables me, is my desire and endeavour at this time, that our coming together may not be in vain.

God has many ways contended with us of this nation, with you of this city; as we have been, like Israel of old, favoured with many privileges and advantages above our neighbours, both for life and godliness, whence it might justly, and with good reason, have been inferred, as it was concerning them, *Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people;*[a] so, being found like them, notwithstanding this, *a foolish people and unwise,* nay, a *rebellious* and *gainsaying people,* we have like them fallen under severe judgments: for the more rich a people's privileges are, the more provoking their sins are, and consequently the heavier are their punishments; for even in this life, especially in dealing with communities, (which as such can be dealt with in this life only,) God sometimes observes a proportion between the sins and the plagues.

Some have observed, that God's judgments upon us in this last age, have been the sorest in their kind of any other; like that concerning which the prophet appeals to the old men, and to all the inhabitants of the land, whether there had ever been the like in their days, or in the days of their fathers.[b] Never was there such a plague in this nation, as that

s Lam. iii. 19, 20. t Isa. xxxviii. 9. u Ruth i. 20. v Ps. xxxix. 4. w Heb. xii. 11.

x Zech. viii. 19. y Job xi. 16. z Gen. xli. 51. a Deut. iv. 6. b Joel i. 2.

in London in 1665, never such a fire as that the year after, never such a dreadful storm as that about ten years ago, as if God were heating the furnace *seven times hotter*; for he will bring greater judgments on those who are not wrought upon by lesser; and when he judgeth he will overcome.

That which I am now to confine myself to, is the fire of the Lord which was kindled in this city, this day 47 years, which in four days' time laid in ashes the richest, the oldest, and the most considerable part of this city, I mean within the walls; and I observe upon the calculation then made, that there was almost as much consumed without the walls, as was left standing within. For thus the survey stood; "373 acres burnt within the walls, and 75 left standing; but there were 63 acres burnt without the walls." You had 89 parish churches burnt, besides chapels; you had your Exchange, your Guildhall, and the halls of your companies, laid in ashes; and above thirteen thousand dwellings levelled with the ground.

Some of you can remember it, perhaps by a good token, a sad token, you were burnt out of your houses it may be, and forced to lodge in the fields. It may be some of you were great losers by it, when you were young, and setting out in the world, and it was a great while before you recovered it; it broke the measures you had laid, ruffled your affairs, and put you upon new counsels; or perhaps brought you so much to a loss, that you were at your wits' ends, and at that time knew not what to do; but have since found to your comfort, that God knew what to do for you, and has graciously helped you.

Or though you were not then so far grown up, or so far engaged in the world, as to be sufferers by it, yet you were eye-witnesses of it. You saw it rage, you saw what desolations it made; and now you are old, will say it was the most dreadful sight you ever saw. The piteous case of so many ruined families, and their doleful lamentations, could not but be yet more affecting, yet more afflicting; and made you ready to cry with the prophet in a like case, *my bowels, my bowels, I am pained at my very heart, because thou hast heard, O my soul*, the alarm of fire! Fire! no less terrible than the alarm of war; *Destruction upon destruction is cried.*[c] The destruction of the fire, upon that of the pestilence the year before. Many a melancholy story perhaps some of you have told, upon the occurrences of that time, and the impressions they made upon you.—*Quæque ipse miserrima vidi—Disastrous things have I seen.*

But there is another thing which you must give me leave to inquire, What you remember of it? The faithful ministers of Christ at that time, no doubt, laid out themselves in their preaching, to improve that providence, in dealing with you about your souls. Something came from the press upon that occasion, by Mr. Vincent, Mr. Doolittle, and others; and much more we may well conclude by word of mouth. Now what do you remember of that? What account can you give of the sermons you heard upon that occasion, and of the good impressions they made upon you when you were young, and your hearts tender? Can you say, through grace, that your consciences were then convinced and awakened, and that when you were chastened, you were taught out of the law, and the gospel.[d] Happy the day, and happy you, if what you then lost by the rod of God, was made up, and more than made up to you, in what you gained by the word of God.

But the most of you were not then born, or were so young as to remember nothing of it; yet you have been told of it, perhaps you have read of it, and cannot be altogether ignorant of that event. Blessed be God, there is no occasion for such different sentiments and resentments between the old people and the young, as there were when the foundations of the second temple were laid, when the young people rejoiced to see a temple begun, but the aged wept, because it was so far inferior to the old one. No, if the young will join with you who are old, in bewailing the fall of the former city, you will join with them in celebrating the beauty of the latter;[e] and let both join in endeavouring to improve the remembrance of that fire of the Lord.

Nine lessons I shall recommend to you, to be learned from that fire which we are this day observing the memorial of.

I. See how terrible God is in his judgments, and fear before him. It was the fire of the Lord that burnt among you; whatever hand of man might be in it, it is certain this evil in the city was the Lord's doing; it was a consumption determined by the Lord of hosts,[f] and the breath of the Almighty that kindled the fire, and directed all the motions of it. It was the Light of Israel, who is and will be a rejoicing Light to his people, that was then as a fire, a *consuming fire*;[g] for so our God is and will be, to those who rebel against him; and the Holy One of Israel, who was then as a flame, that devoured so many churches and houses, as if they had been briers and thorns, in one day.

See how terrible God's majesty is; when he came down upon an errand of mercy, to deliver Israel out of Egypt, he appeared in a flame of fire in the bush;[h] and at Mount Sinai, the sight of the glory of the God of Israel, was like devouring fire in the eyes of the children of Israel:[i] but much more terrible is his justice to them that provoke him. If the glory of his greatness be like fire, to a people who are entering into covenant with him, much more will the

c Jer. iv. 19, 20. d Ps. xciv. 12. e Ezra iii. 11. f Isa. xxviii. 22. g Isa. x. 16, 17. h Exod. iii. 2. i Exod. xxiv. 17.

terror of his wrath be so, to a people who have broken covenant with him.

Come, behold what desolations God has made, and say with Moses the man of God, upon the review of the judgments of God inflicted on Israel in the wilderness, and this at *Taberah*, among the rest, *Who knows the power of thine anger?*[k] Say as the men of Bethshemesh said, when there was such a slaughter made among them who looked into the ark, *Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?*[l] Say as the sinners in Sion are forced at length to say, and the hypocrites when fearfulness surpriseth them, *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring flames,*[m] (by which some understand God himself,) *with the everlasting burning?* Say as David, *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments:*[n] and conclude with the apostle, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*[o]

God has all creatures at his command, and all the powers they have are derived from him, and by them he designs to keep the world in awe. The power which the fire has to consume and destroy is from him; when he pleases he can countermand it, as in the case of the three children; and when he pleases he can commission it, and enforce its operations, and direct its motions. *The voice of the Lord divides the flames of fire,*[p] sends one flame one way, and another flame another way, and each on its respective errand.

Let the thoughts of the fire of London fill us with a holy awe of God, and a filial fear of his wrath; that fire of the Lord, which when it is kindled but a little, much more when it is kindled to such a degree, we shall see cause to say, *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*[q] *Fear ye not* me, *saith the Lord,*[r] that with a touch, with a frown, with a look, can make the *mountains smoke?* that with one spark of fire can lay *heaps upon heaps?* Let the earth tremble at his presence, much more at his absence, and his departure in anger.

See what fools they are, who make this God their enemy by sin, and engage his power against them, and yet when they have done so, bid defiance to his justice, challenge him to do his worst, saying, *Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it.*[s] Is this a God to be jested with? *Be not deceived, he is not mocked.* Presumptuous sinners, who play with this fire, who *stretch out their hands against God, and strengthen themselves against the Almighty,* who *run upon him, even upon his neck, upon the thick bosses of his buckler,*[t] will find to their cost, that none ever hardened his heart against God and prospered. God has access with his flames to men's hearts, as well as to their houses, can kindle a fire in their bones, a fire in their consciences, that shall secretly waste and exhaust their spirits, a fire not blown, not seen, that shall consume them, a fire that shall burn to the lowest hell, and never be quenched.

Give all diligence, therefore, to make your peace with this terrible God: it may be done, it shall be done, if it be not your own fault. *Fury is not in him,* and yet it is to no purpose to think of contending with him; to make opposition, is but like putting briers and thorns before a consuming fire, which, instead of stopping its progress, does but make it burn the more furiously. Let him therefore take hold on his strength, that he may make peace, *and he shall make peace.*[u]

And having made your peace with God, keep yourselves always in his love, and take heed of turning yourselves out of it; and while you do so, solace yourselves in his love, and believe that this God of power will be your protector, and a wall of fire round about you.

II. See what a mischievous thing sin is, which provokes God thus to be our enemy, and to fight against us. If it was God's justice that burnt London, it was man's injustice that brought fuel to the fire; for a fruitful land is never turned into barrenness, nor a flourishing city into ruins, but it is for the iniquity of them that dwell therein.[v] God never contends with a people, but it is sin, it is sin that is the cause of the controversy. National sins bring national judgments. The sins of a city bring misery upon it; *Jerusalem hath grievously sinned, therefore she is removed.*[w] When the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly, it was not long ere he rained hell from heaven upon them; and when all flesh had corrupted their way, presently they were cut down out of time, and their foundation overthrown with a flood. It was the wickedness of the city, that made it combustible matter for the fire of God's wrath to fasten upon, *Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra—Sin reigned within and without the walls.* When sin abounds both within the walls and without, no wonder if the fire prevails in both.

London was then told by the watchmen upon her walls, what the sins were that provoked God to lay it waste; they had then a loud call to show this Jerusalem her abominations, which might be read in her desolations. It was then justly observed, that for some time before the fire, the power of vice and profaneness was grown more exorbitant than ever, more daring, more threatening, that it insulted and triumphed over the restraints and checks which for some years before it had lain under, and now set them at defiance. It was observed, remember, not long since, by a venerable body, "That at that time, to avoid hypocrisy, men ran into open impiety:" and I have heard it complained of, by those who lived at

k Psal. xc. 11. l 1 Sam. vi. 20. m Isa. xxxiii. 14.
n Psal. cxix. 120. o Heb. x. 31. p Psal. xxix. 7. q Psal. ii. 12.
r Jer. v. 22. s Isa. v. 19. t Job xv. 25, 26.
u Isa. xxvii. 4, 5. v Psal. cvii. 34. w Lam. i. 8.

that time, "that debauchery was made by many a test of loyalty; and a man was suspected to be disaffected to his prince, if he did not profane the name of his God." Was this the character of the times immediately preceding that desolation? And could any other be expected, but that God should visit for these things, and that his soul should be avenged on such a city, such *a nation, as this?*[x]

Sabbath-breaking is a sin for which God has particularly threatened to contend by fire: *If ye will not hearken to me, to hallow the sabbath day, I will kindle a fire in the gates of Jerusalem.*[y] How sabbaths had been profaned in those times of licentiousness, is easy to conjecture; and if we may make remarks upon the circumstances of a judgment, in order to the improving of it, it must be taken notice of, that the fire began between one and two of the clock on a Lord's-day morning, as if God would thereby intimate, that it was kindled to avenge the quarrel of his sabbath.

How should this increase our hatred of sin, that evil and bitter thing, by which we have procured such things as these to ourselves, which has been the destruction of souls, bodies, families, cities, churches, nations, worlds; which is not only the reproach, but the ruin, of any people. What a dread should we conceive of the fatal consequences of national sins, which would fix us among those holy mourners, who sigh and cry for the abominations that are committed amongst us.[z] Methinks this should put life into the despised and almost deserted cause, of the reformation of manners among us, that in the prosecution of it, we not only consult the glory of God, the honour of our holy religion, and the good of precious souls, but the peace, safety, and prosperity of the communities we are members of. The surest way to prevent another fire, is, to discountenance and suppress that immorality and profaneness, for which the fire of the Lord has burnt among you.

Not that this was the only ground of God's controversy with the city. Even the professors of religion, who run not with others to an excess of riot, contributed to the guilt which kindled those flames, by their lukewarmness and indifference in religion, their pride, and vanity, and worldliness, and neglect of family worship, as they were often then told by their faithful reprovers. Under such public calamities, our business is not to judge and censure others, but each of us to take blame and shame to ourselves, and seriously to ask, *What have I done?*

And yet we must be very regardless of the work of the Lord, and the operation of his hand, if we do not observe, that London's plague and fire came but three or four years after the casting out and silencing of a great number of able, faithful ministers of Christ there, and all the nation over, because they would not sin against their consciences. Jerusalem was burnt the first time, for misusing the messengers of the Lord;[a] and the second time, for laying hands on the disciples of Christ, and persecuting them;[b] for Christ resented what was done against them, as done against himself.

At least we must be allowed to observe, that the fire happened not six months after the commencing of the *Five-mile Act*, by which they who, but a little before, were turned out of their churches, were barbarously turned out of their houses, and not suffered to live within five miles of any corporation, or of the places where they had been ministers. It was the observation of a wise and good man at that time, "that as it was in mercy to many of the ministers, that they were removed out of the city, before that desolating judgment came; so it spoke aloud to the government, *Let my people go, that they may serve me; and if ye will not, behold, thus and thus will I do unto you.*" This he thought was the Lord's voice, then crying in the city.

III. See what an uncertain thing this world is, and all our possessions and employments in it. If men would but believe the preacher's text and doctrine, which is delivered to us, not only as the word of the Eternal God, which therefore we may venture to believe, nay, are bound to believe, but, in compassion to our infirmity, is confirmed to us by the observation and experience of the wisest of men, *All is vanity—vanity of vanities*, and *vexation of spirit*, and would live up to their belief of it, it would save them a great deal of trouble; for how many sore crosses and afflictions does the worldliness of our hearts need and call for, to give us a sensible demonstration, that we may come under the needful conviction of the vanity of this world, and its insufficiency to make us happy.

How plainly may we read this, by the light of London's flames! How many well-furnished houses and shops were then consumed in a little time! It is part of the lamentation of the ruin of Babylon, that *in one hour so great riches is come to nought.*"[c] How many who were worth thousands over-night, were so impoverished by the fire, that they were worth nothing, or next to nothing, by the next morning! Like Job, whom the rising sun saw the richest of all the men of the east, and the setting sun left poor to a proverb. Our Saviour speaks of the danger we are in, of losing our treasures upon earth, by the moth that corrupts, or thieves that break through and steal;[d] but this loss of it by fire, is worse than either. What the moth has been in, may yet be good for something, and what the thief has stolen, may perhaps be recovered; but what the fire has consumed, is quite lost, and past retrieve.

How sudden and surprising was this desolation,

x Jer. v. 9. y Jer. xvii. 27. z Ezek. ix. 4. a Jer. xxxvi. 16. b Luke xxi. 12. c Rev. xviii. 17. d Matt. vi. 19.

how little thought of and expected by the sufferers, who hoped they had goods laid up for many years, and houses that should endure to many generations, when the fire comes with a warrant to seize them this night, and to strip them of all; and thereby to teach you and me not to boast ourselves of to-morrow, since we know not what a day, what a night, what an hour, may bring forth.[e] And in how little time was the desolation accomplished! Three or four days reduced to ashes buildings that had been long in rearing, and treasures that had been long in gathering.

This is a good reason why the rich man should not glory in his riches, for as the flower of the grass, which is scorched by the sun, they pass away[f] and are gone, and their place knows them no more; a good reason why we should not be secure in the enjoyment of our worldly possessions, nor flatter ourselves with the thought, that to-morrow must needs be as this day, and much more abundant; that we shall die in our nest, and that our mountain stands so strong, that it cannot be moved, when we know not what a great change a very little time may produce.

It is a good reason why we should not make these perishing things our portion, nor lay up our treasure in them; and why we should sit loose to them, and take our affections off from them: for shall we set our eyes and hearts upon these things that are not, that make themselves wings and flee away;[g] that are liable to a thousand destructive casualties, and are therefore unworthy of our esteem and regard, especially, when they stand in competition with the true and everlasting riches? It is therefore our wisdom to be dead to these things, because if we be, we shall the better bear the disappointment, if they should be thus taken from us, and we shall easily say, it was what we looked for. Your houses, and shops, and goods are combustible things: call them so, and put a value upon them accordingly, as you do upon paper-buildings, and give all diligence to make that sure, which will be made sure. When Jerusalem's desolation was hastening on, the inhabitants had this needful admonition given them, *Arise ye, and depart, this is not your rest*, for *it is polluted*.[h] It is true of all things here below, they are polluted with sin, and are hastening towards their ruin, and therefore cannot be the repose of our souls. What then should we do, but arise and depart from them?

Neighbourhood, which is the pleasure of cities, where houses join so close, may prove of ill consequence, and serve but to spread and propagate the flames: of that therefore, no more than of other present comforts, let us not be over-fond.

IV. See how malicious the enemies of our peace and our holy religion are, and what need we have to stand upon our guard against them. There is a day that will bring to light the hidden works of darkness, and bring into judgment every secret thing, and to that day must be referred the full discovery of the cause of the fire of London. There was as full a demonstration given as could be, by the master of the house where the fire began, that it could not possibly be by accident, which gave abundant cause to think that it was designedly set on fire by Romish incendiaries, for the weakening of the protestant interest, which they have all along been, and still are, aiming at the destruction of.

The parliament met soon after the fire, and presently, even that House of Commons appointed a committee to inquire into the causes of the late fire; before whom abundance of informations were given in and proved, which were afterwards printed; but the parliament was prorogued before any judgment was given upon them. But it seems very evident, upon the concurring testimonies then given in, to which I refer you, that it was the execution of a popish design. One Robert Hubert, a French papist, being taken up upon suspicion, confessed that he was one of those who fired the baker's house, that was first set on fire, with a fire-ball; and he was executed for it. Many others were taken throwing fire-balls, but by some means or other made their escape, as appears by the report of that committee.

I would not be found insinuating any causeless, groundless jealousies, nor incensing men with enmities against the persons of any; our religion teaches us to forgive our enemies, and to pray to God to forgive them; we may not call for fire from heaven upon those who are set on fire of hell against us.[i]

But if this be true, as we have reason to think it is, surely it cannot but confirm and increase our detestation of popery, and fill us with a holy, heavenly zeal against that strong delusion. Can that be the religion of the meek and humble Jesus, which needs, and prescribes, and uses such methods for its own propagation, as not only Christianity abhors, but even humanity startles at, and is shocked by? Our Lord Jesus would not force his way, no not to Jerusalem, by destroying a poor village, and that of Samaritans too, that opposed him, and gave this reason for it, that the Son of man *came not to destroy men's lives* and dwellings, but to *save them*?[k] How far then are they from, nay, how contrary to, the spirit of Christ and his holy religion, who make no difficulty of destroying a great city, and that of Christians too, for the compassing of their design to reduce a people under the heavy yoke of their tyranny, that had happily escaped from under it. But no wonder they stumble not at heaps of ruins, when they startle not at seas of blood; but to gain their point, can wade through them without horror.

[e] Prov. xxvii. 1. [f] James i. 10. [g] Prov. xxiii. 5.

[h] Mic. ii. 10. [i] James iii. 6. [k] Luke ix. 56.

How many treasons, murders, and massacres, have not only been justified but consecrated, when they have been for the advancement of the pretended catholic cause! Instruments of cruelty are in their habitation, as in that of Simeon and Levi: *O my soul, come not thou into their secret.*[t]

And as it should increase our hatred of the Romish religion, so it should increase our dread of the Romish designs against us, and all that is dear to us. The extirpating of that which they call the Northern Heresy, is what they have been aiming at ever since the reformation; and we have no reason to think they have dropped the design, when not many years ago, it was carried so far, that it was next door to an accomplishment, and no less than a miracle of mercy saved our darling Isaac from being sacrificed to popish tyranny, when it lay bound upon the altar. Or, have we any reason to think that popery has altered its character? I wish we had: but the methods lately taken to root out the protestant religion in France, besides the persecution we hear of in Poland, at this time, and other instances, are sufficient to convince us, that popery is the same bloody, barbarous, inhuman thing, that ever it was, and therefore its advances towards us are to be as much dreaded as ever; that we may be quickened in our prayers to God, to fortify our bulwarks against that complication of sins and judgments, and to lift up a standard against that enemy, even when he comes in like a flood. Cry earnestly to God day and night, that he would turn all the counsels of popish Achitophels into foolishness; and I trust he will, as he has done many a time.

V. See how graciously God often remembers mercy in the midst of wrath, and in compassion takes up his controversy, when he might in justice proceed in it. You have a monument of the judgment, here where the fire began, but in every place where it stopt, the houses that escaped are so many monuments of sparing mercy. You can easily perceive, by the different materials and structure of the houses, just how far the fire proceeded: when you observe this, say, *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed,*[u] that all was not consumed, that God did not make a full end, but that, when he overthrew some of you, as he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, yet others of you were as brands plucked out of the burning.[x] The quenching of the fire at Taberah[y] is here recorded with the kindling of it, that we might learn to sing of mercy and judgment, and sing unto God of both, for in both his hand is to be seen.

When God had made London as a fiery oven in the day of his wrath, and the flames went on like a mighty army, conquering and to conquer, threatening to leave neither root nor branch; then God repented himself concerning his servants, his soul was grieved for the misery of London, and he said, *How shall I give thee up? How shall I deliver thee?* How shall I make thee as *Admah*, and set thee as Zeboim! In every place whither the fire had spread, much about the same time a check was given to it, and God said to the raging fire, as he does to the raging sea, *Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, here shall thy proud waves*, thy proud flames, *be stayed.*

Let this be remembered with thankfulness to God, and to the praise of that mercy of his, which rejoiceth against judgment, and prevents its making a full end; and let us add to this, our own experience of the like seasonable interpositions of divine mercy for our relief. The earthly house of this tabernacle has perhaps been on fire with a fever, or some other wasting, consuming distemper, ready to reduce it to dust and ashes, yet God has staid the progress of it, has said unto us, Live, and the time was a time of love, not to be forgotten.

It ought to be taken notice of as an answer of prayer; we are told here, that when the fire of the Lord burnt in the camp of Israel, Moses, that great intercessor, and as such, a type of Christ, prayed unto the Lord, and then the fire was quenched. And no doubt when London was burning, there were a remnant of praying people standing in the gap, to turn away the wrath of God, who wept and made supplication, and in answer to their prayer, God spared a part of the city. The prophet Amos tells us that when, in his time, the Lord God called to contend by fire, he prayed, *O Lord God, cease I beseech thee*, and the Lord repented for this. *It shall not be, saith the Lord God.*[z]

Let this engage us to call upon God, and encourage us to trust in him in all our straits and difficulties, be they ever so great and threatening: he is a present help in time of need, and the necessity, as it engages his mercy, so it magnifies his power. If we can by faith depend upon him to save us, then when we think we perish, it shall be made to appear that even the winds and the seas obey him.

VI. See how wonderfully God can revive what seemed to be ruined. Now we are remembering the burning of this city, we must by no means overlook the rebuilding of it, and the raising up of another city, phœnix-like, out of the ashes of the old one. I am apt to think this seemed to them who lived then almost impracticable, and there were those who were ready to despair of it. How should they find money to rebuild their houses, and to contribute their share to the public buildings too, who had not only lost their goods in the fire, but lost in a manner their trades too, by which they and their families must subsist? and yet the Lord their God being with them, they built and prospered, and in two or three years, there scarce remained any marks or footsteps of the fire. You may easily imagine how great the destruction was, and yet you will hardly imagine it,

t Gen. xlix. 6. u Lam. iii. 22. x Amos iv. 11.

y Numb. xi. 2. z Amos vii. 4–6.

when you observe how magnificent the repair of it is; for surely *the glory of the latter city is far greater than the glory of the former:* I wish it were so upon the account that the glory of the latter temple so far exceeded that of the former, which was the presence of Christ in it.

When God made of this city a heap, yet he did not make it to be no city, nor say concerning it, that it should never be built again;[q] it was desolate, but not, as Babylon, desolate for ever; no, nor as Jerusalem, that had seventy years accomplished in her desolation:[r] but in a little time God had mercy on your dwelling-places, as the prophet speaks, *and the city was built again on her own heap*,[s] and built again with advantage, more strong, more beautiful, and more uniform than it had been before; as if it had passed through a refining fire, rather than a consuming one, and had only been melted down to be cast in a better mould. *This was the Lord's doing*, for *except he build the house, they labour in vain that build it*,[t] and it may justly be *marvellous in our eyes.* God has fulfilled to you what he said of Zion and Jerusalem, Though *I was jealous against them with great fury*, yet *I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem;* and O that the following promise to Jerusalem might be made good to London, It shall be called *a city of truth, and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain.*[u] How well were it, if the hearts of the citizens were as much improved by the fire, as their houses were!

Let this resurrection of the city out of its ashes, be to us an emblem of the state of Christ's church in the world; *it is persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed;*[v] its desolations may sometimes be said to be universal, but they shall not be perpetual. The protestant interest in many places is brought very low, and its ruins trampled on, by the same that triumphed in the ruins of this city of our solemnities, yet we have reason to hope it shall revive, and flourish again, even where it seems razed to the very foundations. It is promised concerning the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, that God will build again the ruins thereof,[w] and will set it up: when the time comes that Babylon must fall, (and fall it must sooner or later,) that promise shall be fulfilled. Let this quicken our prayers to God, for the re-establishing of the protestant religion, where it is borne down and trampled on, and let us continue instant in that prayer, and not faint, though we be sadly disappointed in the hands that we thought should have gone forward in the effecting of it; God will do his own work in his own way and time, if not by *might and power*, yet *by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts;* for so Jerusalem was rebuilt, and before that Spirit the mountains of difficulty that lay in the way became plain.[x] Our care must be to retain a sincere affection for our holy religion, how low soever the profession of it is, or may be brought, and not think the worse of it for its being deserted, and losing ground. It is the character of the servants of God, that when Zion is in ruins, they take pleasure even in its broken scattered stones, and favour the very dust thereof, they love the ground she stood upon; and let such assure themselves, that the *time to favour Zion, yea, the set time, will come.* And *when the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory*, and in doing it will put this honour upon the wrestling seed of Jacob, that therein he will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.[y] Let Daniel's prayer therefore be ours, and his plea, that God would cause his face to shine upon the sanctuary that is desolate for the Lord's sake.[z]

VII. See how dangerous our condition is, who have not been reformed by the various methods God has taken with us. You have long since seen your city rebuilt, and the effects of the fire no more remaining, which may supersede the annual memorial of the judgment: but if the ends of it be not answered, there is still occasion to revive the remembrance of it; may not God justly complain of us, as he did of Israel, You have sometimes been overthrown by signal judgments, and at other times saved by signal mercies, *yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*[a] And we may therefore justly fear, that for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.[b] Is there any less sinning, or any more praying, in London than there was formerly? I wish there were. But we have too much reason to fear, that we come under Jerusalem's sad character, when the founder melted in vain.[c] Iniquity still abounds and goes barefaced, vice is as daring and threatening as ever; and what will be in the end thereof? May we not fear, lest God should send greater judgments among us, since lesser have not done their work, nor gained their point.

There are fires of another nature, which we have reason to fear the fatal effects of, both to the city, and to the land, I mean our unhappy divisions and animosities, and violent heats one against another: the sin that is in our divisions may be justly punished with the ruin that is commonly the effect of them, for a city or kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and becomes an easy prey to the common enemy, who warm their hands at those flames, and doubt not to find their account in setting us at variance one against another.

The removal of the gospel, and the taking away of our candlestick out of its place, would be a much sorer judgment than the burning of the city, and ought to be dreaded and deprecated accordingly. If papal tyranny should again take footing here, if our

q Isa. xxv. 2. r Dan. ix. 2. s Jer. xxx. 18. t Psal. cxxvii. 1. u Zech. viii. 2, 3. v 2 Cor. iv. 9. w Acts xv. 16.

x Zech. iv. 6, 7. y Psal. cii. 13, 14, 16, 17. z Dan. ix. 17 a Amos. iv. 11. b Isa. ix. 17. c Jer. vi. 29.

Bibles should be taken from us, and our ministers be banished or put to death, if the idolatrous mass should be set up in our churches and the consecrated host carried about our streets to be adored, London would look a more melancholy place than it did when it was in ashes. I hope that God, who has hitherto by miracles of mercy saved our holy religion, will still, and that that blessed light shall not die in our hands; I hope it will never come to that; yet I must say we have no reason to be secure, when we consider the desert of our sins, and the designs of our enemies, and especially when we consider the desolations of divers protestant churches abroad, that once thought themselves as safe and as likely to continue as we do. *Go see what God did to Shiloh;* what he did to the seven churches of Asia; and let us not be high-minded but fear, for are we better than they?

The cause of truth and godliness shall be victorious at last, but may meet with many a hard struggle in the mean time. What trying times may be before us we cannot tell, but I am sure it is our wisdom to be prepared for the worst, by being more and more established in the truth as it is in Jesus, by sitting loose to the world, and treasuring up such comforts and experiences, as will carry us with courage and cheerfulness through the most mournful time, to a most joyful eternity; and then welcome the will of God.

The gospel is not tied to places; its privileges are movable things. The kingdom of God may be taken from us, and given to another nation;[d] and what will become of us, if our glory be departed, and all our pleasant things laid waste. The most effectual course we can take to prevent it, is to make a good use of our privileges, and live up to them; as the most threatening step toward it is the corrupting the nation with the vices of its neighbours, which will be as fatal to it as the idols and idolatries of the countries round about were to Israel of old.

I would not amuse people with causeless jealousies, but awaken people to a holy fear and diligence in their duty by these suggestions. There is a startling passage in Mr. George Herbert's poem, called the *Church Militant*, written I believe about eighty years ago, which has been much taken notice of. After he had showed how the church took rise in the eastern parts of the world, and so moved more and more westerly, he goes on thus:

Religion stands on tiptoe in our land,
Ready to pass to the American strand,
When height of malice and prodigious lusts,
Impudent sinnings, witchcrafts, and distrusts
(The marks of future bane) shall fill our cup
Unto the brim, and make our measure up;
When Seine shall swallow Tyber, and the Thames,
By letting in them both, pollute her streams;
When Italy of us shall have her will,
And all her calendar of sins fulfil.
Whereby one may foretell what sins next year
Shall both in France and England domineer;
Then shall religion to America flee,
They have their times of gospel ev'n as we.

I remember I heard Dr. Tillotson (afterwards Archbishop) quote these verses of Mr. Herbert's, in a sermon on John xii. 35. *Yet a little while is the light with you;* (it is since printed in the second volume of the folio edition of his posthumous works;) and having explained the signs of the times to be this, "When the vices of Italy shall pass into France, and the vices of both shall overspread England, then the gospel will leave these parts of the world."—He makes this remark upon it, "Whether this was only the prudent conjecture and foresight of a wise man, or whether there be not something more prophetical in it, I cannot tell. But we have too much cause to apprehend, that if we do not reform and grow better, God will find some way or other to deprive us of that light, which is so abused and affronted by our wicked lives; and he seems now to say to us, as Christ did to the Jews, *yet a little while is the light with you.*"

VIII. See what a necessary and constant dependence we have upon God and his providence for our safety. You have seen how great a matter a little fire kindles, and in a little time, and cannot but think how much all you have in the world lies at the mercy of that merciless element, if God should give it commission. Though you be ever so careful of fire in your own houses, how many careless people are there in the houses about you, which, if set on fire, would soon set yours on fire; so that we can be no night secure, but that we may be either burnt *in* our beds, or burnt *out of them.* There have been frequent fires in and about the city since this great one, to put you in mind of what God has done, and what he could do; and many other accidents we and our families continually lie exposed to: the dreadful wind ten years ago, showed you that God has more arrows in his quiver, and can bring another judgment without bringing another fire.

Now this should engage us all to have our eye toward the Lord, by faith to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty;[e] and by prayer every morning and every evening, to put ourselves, our houses and families, under divine protection, and to beg that the city may be the care of God's providence in a particular manner, and the charge of his angels, as Jerusalem of old was. O that this argument might prevail with you, to set up and keep up the worship of God in your families, and to make a business of it, that though I cannot assure you that it will preserve

d Matt. xxi. 43.

e Ps. xci. 1.

you from your share in common calamities of this kind, all things come alike to all, yet it is the best course you can take to be safe and easy; with what a holy security may you lie down at night, and go abroad in the morning, when you have first solemnly recommended yourselves and yours to the mercy of God, and taken the way which he has appointed to engage him for you. Such is the comfort of doing this, such the satisfaction of having done it, that we may well call it work that is its own wages. If you make your houses little churches for God, he will make them little sanctuaries to you, and create a defence upon all your glory.[f]

You have your engines, your watchmen, your insurances, but after all, *Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*[g] It is therefore your great concern to make him your friend, and to keep yourselves in his love; to secure the favour of the Ruler of rulers, from whom every man's judgment proceeds.[h] He has put you into an easy way of doing this, not by costly sacrifices and offerings, but by faithful and fervent prayer, kept up in its life, and not sunk into a formality.

Neither pray ye for yourselves alone, and for your houses, but for the city, and parts adjoining, that in the safety thereof you may be safe. Thus approve yourselves true friends to the city, and seek the welfare of it. You are for conscience sake toward God, rendered incapable of serving the city in any civil offices, serve it so much the more with your prayers, serve it in sacred offices, as intercessors with God for it; and thank God you cannot be hindered from serving it in this way.

Nor is it enough to keep prayer up in your houses, but you must do what you can to keep sin out of your houses, lest that spoil the success of your prayers. *If iniquity be in thine hand*, any ill-got gain, or any ill way of getting, *put it far away*, and *let no wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles*, and then thou shalt *take thy rest in safety*, thou shalt *lie down, and none shall make thee afraid.*[i] And do what you can, in your places, to suppress wickedness in the city, and to promote the reformation of manners, that the city may be called *a city of righteousness, a faithful city*, which God may delight to dwell in.

IX. See what a dreadful day the great day of the Lord will be, when the world shall be on fire, and the earth, and all the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. If the burning of London was so terrible, what then will the burning of the world be, the whole world? When *the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved*, and *the elements shall melt with fervent heat*, and *all these things shall be dissolved.*[k] The volcanos, or burning mountains, in Naples and Sicily, and many other places, which have been on fire as long as we have any history of those countries extant, are sometimes very terrible, and the eruptions of fire from them very threatening: surely Providence has wisely ordered those little conflagrations of the earth, to be earnests of the general conflagration, and standing, sensible confirmations of the Scripture tradition of it; nay, some have thought, that they will be in part the means of the burning of this world; so Dr. Tho. Burnet, in that part of his "Theory of the Earth," which treats *De conflagratione mundi—Of the conflagration of the world; Externus est et visibilis apparatus ad hoc incendium, in montibus ignivomis—There is evidently a provision in the fiery mountains for this desolation.* And he quotes a remarkable passage of Pliny, (l. ii. c. 106, 107.) when he had reckoned up several burning mountains, &c. he concludes, *Excedit profecto omnia miracula, ullum diem fuisse, in quo non cuncta conflagrarent—It is a miracle that the world is not on fire every day.* Why should it seem incredible to us then, that it will be on fire shortly? Believe it, sirs, as sure as you see this day, you shall see that day. And where will all the wealth and pride of this world be then? What will become of us, if we have all our portion and happiness in it?

Think of the fire in which the Lord Jesus will be revealed in that day, the flaming fire,[l] the fire that will devour before him;[m] he will come with an innumerable company of angels, and every one of those spirits is *a flame of fire.*[n] What flames then will the Judge be surrounded with! Think how you will look him in the face in that great and terrible day, and and how your works will abide that fire. Those who lived and died in sin, will then call in vain to rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of him that sits on the throne, and the wrath of the Lamb; but those who lived and died in Christ, will see no terror, no, not in that fire, but will then lift up their heads with joy, knowing that their redemption draws nigh.

Nay, there is a fire yet more dreadful, which you are concerned to think of. The earth, and the works that are therein, will soon be burnt up; but there is a lake of fire and brimstone, which burns eternally, and shall never be quenched, prepared indeed for the devil and his angels, but into which all the wicked and ungodly shall be cast, by the irreversible sentence of the righteous Judge, and in which they shall be tormented world without end. I am here in God's name to give you warning to flee from that wrath to come,[o] by fleeing from sin, by fleeing to Christ; and whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, to testify unto you, that you come not to that place of torment; and if you hear not, if you heed not, Moses and the prophets, Christ and his ministers, giving you this warning, neither would ye be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.[p]

f Isa. iv. 5, 6. g Ps. cxxvii. 1. h Prov. xxv. 26.
i Job xi. 14, 18, 19. k 2 Pet. iii. 12.
l 2 Thess. i. 8. m Ps. l. 3. n Ps. civ. 4.
o Matt. iii. 6. p Luke xvi. 28, 31.

A BRIEF INQUIRY INTO

THE TRUE NATURE OF SCHISM:

OR

A PERSUASIVE TO CHRISTIAN LOVE AND CHARITY.

THERE is scarce any one thing that has been discussed in the Christian world with more heat and noise among the several dividing parties, than the charge of schism. This has involved the disputing part of the church in the most violent engagements above twelve hundred years. Schism is so deformed a brat, that nobody has been willing to own it, a crime so very black, that each party has been studiously industrious to clear itself from the charge. To this indictment all have pleaded *Not guilty;* and we find none that have justified it. But here is the misery; such notions of it have been entertained, that it has been almost impossible to deny, without recriminating. And perhaps the most guilty have been most hot in charging others. Athaliah, the greatest traitor, is most loud in crying, *Treason, treason.*

We are all agreed that schism is an arch-rebel in Christ's kingdom; but in sending out the hue and cry after it, the difficulty is, how to describe it. Several attempts have been made; would it be in vain to try one more? Waving all inquiries into the several definitions and descriptions which have been given of it, let us have recourse to the law and to the testimony; for whoever speak in the things of God, (as they certainly do who speak of sin and duty,) if they speak not according to that rule, it is because there is no light in them.

Therefore I only premise this one postulatum, that nothing is to be accounted sin, but that which is made so by the word of God: *Tekel* is to be written upon nothing but that which has been carefully weighed in the balances of the sanctuary.

In our inquiry what is sin, let those books be opened which must be opened at the great day. If sinners must be judged by those books shortly, let sin be judged by them now, and let not any man or company of men in the world, assume a power to declare that to be sin, which the Sovereign Rector of the world has not declared to be so, lest in so doing they be found stepping into the throne of God, who is a jealous God, and will not give this branch of his glory to another.

Let us therefore see what the Scripture says concerning schism; not concerning the evil of it, we are convinced of that, but concerning the nature and *formalis ratio—due meaning* of it.

The Old Testament will not help us so much in this inquiry as the New; for as to the binding of Jews to worship only in one place, at Jerusalem, and to offer only upon that altar, it was a precept purely ceremonial, and to us Christians is vacated by that gospel rule, which wills us to pray every where, and their synagogues then (not their temple) were the patterns of Christian assemblies.

Only one scripture occurs in the Old Testament, which, perhaps, will help to rectify some mistakes about schism. It is the instance of Eldad and Medad, who prophesied in the camp. The case in short is this, Eldad and Medad were persons upon whom *the Spirit rested*, that is, who were by the extraordinary working of the Spirit endued with gifts equal to the rest of the seventy elders, and were *written*, that is, had a call to the work, but they *went not out unto the tabernacle* as the rest did, though God himself had appointed that they should, Numb. xi. 26. And *they prophesied in the camp*, that is, exercised their gifts in private among their neighbours in some common tent. Upon what inducements they did this, does not appear, but it is evident that it was their weakness and infirmity thus to separate from the rest of their brethren. If any think they prophesied by a necessitating and irresistible impulse, they may remember that *the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets.*[a]

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[a] 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

Now if some of the schismaticating doctors that the church had known, had but had the censuring of Eldad and Medad, we should soon have had a judgment given against them, much more severe than would have been awarded to him who gathered sticks on the sabbath-day.

And it is confessed, all the circumstances considered, it looks like a very great irregularity, especially as an infringement of the authority of Moses, which they who prophesied in the tabernacle under his presidency manifestly owned, and submitted to.

Well, an information was presently brought in against them, *v.* 27. *Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp*, that is, to speak in the invidious language of the times, there is a conventicle at such a place, and Eldad and Medad are holding forth at it.

Joshua, in his zeal for that which he fancied to be the church's unity, and out of concern for the authority of Moses, brings in a bill to silence them; for as hot as he was, he would not have them fined and laid in the gaol for this disorder, neither; only, my lord Moses, forbid them; not compel them to come to the tabernacle, if they be not satisfied to come, only, for the future, prohibit their schismatical preaching in the camp. This seems a very good notion.

But hold, *Joshua, thou knowest not what manner of spirit thou art of.* Discerning Moses sees him actuated by a spirit of envy, and does not only deny, but severely reprove, the motion, Numb. xi. 29. *Enviest thou for my sake? Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets*, provided the Lord will but *put his Spirit upon them.* He is so far from looking upon it as schism, that he does not only tolerate, but encourage it. And O that all those who sit in Moses's chair, were but clothed with this spirit of Moses.

This instance is full enough to show, that all is not schism, which even wise and good men are apt to think is so.

But our special inquiry must be in the New Testament; and forasmuch as words are the signification of things, let us see what the Scripture means by this word schism.

The *critics* observe, that the Greek word Σχισμα is used eight times in the New Testament.

1. In a literal sense, for a rent in a garment, Σχισμα, *the rent is made worse.* In the same sense Σχιζω is used. As also of the rending of the vail. The cleaving of the heavens.[b] But this makes little to our purpose.

2. It is used figuratively for a division; and that twofold.[c]

(1.) A division in apprehension; so Σχισμα is used. In which places it signifies the different thoughts and apprehensions that the people or their rulers had concerning Christ, some thinking well of him, others not. Some accusing him, others excusing him.

In this sense Σχιζω is used, for the different sentiments the people had concerning Paul.[d]

Now this diversity of opinion, judgment, or apprehension, cannot be called or looked upon in itself as a thing criminal, inasmuch as there are many things which either because they are dark and obscure, and so not capable of demonstration, or because they are trivial and of light moment, and so not worth a demonstration, it is no matter what opinion men are of concerning them.

Only where the matter is weighty, and touches the fundamentals of Christianity, there an error is criminal, and if stubbornly persisted in, is heresy.

But the evil of it lies not in the diversity, but in the erroneousness and danger of the opinion.

I cannot believe that the greatest worshippers of the *Diana* of their own opinions, will be so sottish as to brand those for schismatics, who in every punctilio of opinion are not exactly of the same standard with themselves.

If there be any so strangely rigid, *let not my soul come into their secret*, for I despair to see even all the saints of a mind, in every thing, till they come to heaven.

It does therefore evidence too great a strangeness to the spirit of the gospel, to condemn all those who differ from us only in their apprehensions about little things. John's disciples were greatly displeased because Christ's disciples did not fast so often as they did, and quarrelled with Christ himself about it. And the answer of the meek and holy Jesus is worthy remark, that he gives a good reason why his disciples did not fast, viz. Because *the bridegroom was yet with them;* and yet does not condemn John's disciples that fasted often: which teaches us not to make our own opinions and practices (like Procrustes's bed) the standard by which to measure all others; and that in such cases we are to think it sufficient only to acquit ourselves, first to our own consciences, and then if need be to the world, without condemning others, who think and practise otherwise in such little things, and perhaps have as much reason for their thoughts and practices as we have for ours.

(2.) A division in affection: and in this sense it is used three times in the first epistle to the Corinthians, and no where else in all the New Testament.

We must particularly examine each place, that thence we may be furnished with a true notion of schism: and in plain terms, the case is whether a diversity (or, if you call it so, a separation) of communion be the *formalis ratio—due meaning* of schism.

[b] Matt. ix. 16. Mark ii. 21. John xix. 24. Luke v. 36. Matt. xxvii. 31. John xxi. 11. Mark i. 10.

[c] John vii. 43. John ix. 16. John x. 19.

[d] Acts xxiii. 7.

I find the word, and with it, no doubt, the thing, *I beseech you brethren—that there be no divisions* (Σχισματα) no *schisms* among you; so reads the margin of our Bibles.

Now to find out what this schism is, let us inquire into the exegetical exhortations that accompany it.

[1.] *That ye all speak the same things*, viz. in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; for in little things it can never be made a duty to be of the same opinion, since it is morally impossible, but (as Estius seems to understand it) not to break Christian charity in your disputes about them.

Observe, he does not oblige us to think the same thing, but though your thoughts be divers, yet speak the same thing, that is, in your preaching and conversation, speak of those things only wherein you are agreed; and for those things wherein you differ, do not fall out and fight about them, but love one another notwithstanding.

[2.] That ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. Which must be understood of a serious endeavour after it; for otherwise a perfect conjunction must be reserved for a world of everlasting perfection.

But the meaning of the exhortation seems to be, that all their little heats and animosities should be swallowed up in an unanimous zeal for the great gospel truths, wherein they were all agreed.

We must inquire also into the Corinthians' miscarriage, which occasioned this caution, which you have, 1 Cor. i. 11, 12. there were contentions among them, v. 11. εριδες. So that schisms and contentions are one and the same thing, and it is worth noting, that Clemens Romanus, in that famous epistle of his to the Corinthians, still calls schisms εριδες—*contentions*.

Now the contention was about their ministers; *I am of Paul*, says one; *I am of Apollos*, says another, &c. Now he who was of Apollos was as much a schismatic, as he who was of Paul, because they quarrelled and fell out about so small and indifferent a matter.

Observe, it was not so much being of Paul and being of Apollos that made the schism; for Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas were all theirs, (*chap.* iii. 22.) but saying, *I am of Paul*, that is, crying him up as the only man for them, so as to despise others. If one went to hear Paul, and another went to hear Apollos, that did not make a schism, no, nor if one communicate with Paul, and another with Apollos; for why might not each go where he could be most edified? But the schism was, that they sacrificed Christian love and charity to this difference of apprehension. This is evident in that those who said, *I am of Christ*, so as to despise and censure, and quarrel with them that said *I am of Paul*, &c. are reproved equally with the rest.

Now the way of curing this schism was not to silence Apollos and Cephas, that whether they would or no they might all be of Paul; nay, it is well worth the observing that in the same epistle we find Paul very earnest with Apollos to go to Corinth, (xvi. 12.) *As touching Apollos, I greatly desired him to come to you.* Which he never would have done, if he had not preferred the common interest of souls' salvation before his own credit.

But the way to cure this was to convince them of the folly of the quarrels, how senseless and irrational they were; and to persuade them to lay aside their enmities and heart-burnings, and to love one another, and to walk hand in hand in the same way though they traced different paths, which they might well do when the paths lay so very near together.

By this instance it appears, that narrow-spiritedness which confines religion and the church to our way and party, whatever it is, to the condemning of others who differ from us in little things, is the great schismatising principle, which has been so much the bane of the Christian church; *Hinc illæ Lacrymæ—hence her sorrows.*

We find the word used, *I hear there be* Σχισματα—*divisions among you*, 1 Cor. xi. 18.

It is undeniably evident that it cannot be meant of any breach of communion, for it is said expressly (*v.* 20.) that they *came together in one place*, and that into the church too, that is, the place of meeting.

But the schisms were quarrels and contentions about some little things relating to the circumstances of public worship; and the quarrel seems to have been about the time of beginning their worship, especially when they were to join in the Lord's supper, or their love-feasts: it seems they did not come exactly at the time, therefore the apostle bids them *tarry one for another*, *v.* 33. Those who came early quarrelled with those who came late, for coming no sooner; and those who came late quarrelled with the other, for beginning before they came.

Some quarrels of this kind were the schisms here spoken of.

The word is used, *that there be no schism in the body.*[e] The apostle is there carrying on a metaphor betwixt the natural body, and the church; and this clause clearly relates to the natural body, for he does not come to the reddition of the comparison till *v.* 27.

Now, what he means by the schism in the body, is plain from the antithesis in the following words—*But that the members should have the same care one for another.* So that when the members care not one for another, when the eye says to the hand, I have no need of thee; (*v.* 21.) when there is not a sympathy and fellow-feeling among Christians, (*v.* 26.) here is schism.

That is schism which breaks or slackens the bond by which the members are knit together.

[e] 1 Cor. xii. 25.

Now, that bond is not an act of uniformity in point of communion, in the same modes and ceremonies; but true love and charity in point of affection. It is charity that is the *bond of perfectness*:[f] it is the unity of the Spirit that is the *bond of peace*,[g] and schism is that which breaks this bond.

Now from all this laid together, I draw out this description of schism, which, according to my present apprehensions, is the true scripture notion of it.

"Schism is an uncharitable distance, division, or alienation of affection among those who are called Christians, and agree in the fundamentals of religion, occasioned by their different apprehensions about little things."

This is the schism which the Scripture makes to be a sin, and by Scripture rules it must be judged. Schism (as indeed the root of all other sin) we see lies in the heart and affections. The tree is known by its fruits. The bitter root bears gall and wormwood. Let us therefore take a short view of those practices, which, according to this description, are schismatical practices.

1. Judging, censuring, and condemning those who differ from us in little things, is a schismatical practice, as it evidences a great alienation, if not enmity, of the affections. *Charity thinketh no evil, οὐ λογιζεται το κακον—does not reason evil*, does not study to make sins, but cover them; and if they be made, yet not to make the worst of them, it puts the best construction upon words and actions.

Now to pass a censorious judgment upon others, and to put the worst construction upon what they say and do, is certainly uncharitable, that is, schismatical. It is a practice often condemned in Holy Writ; *Judge not, that ye be not judged*;[h] it is construed a *judging of the law*.[i]

It is especially condemned with reference to the present case, of different apprehensions about little things, in that famous scripture, (Rom. xiv. 4, 5.) a scripture, which, if well studied and lived up to, would heal us all. Judging the heart is, in my estimation, one of the most uncharitable species of judging. Censuring the principles and ends of an action, which are secret, charging those who differ from us with hypocrisy, is a heart sin. If the appearance be good, and the outside be justifiable, when we conclude hypocrisy is in the heart, we step into the throne of God.

2. Laying a greater stress upon small matters of difference than they will bear, and widening the breach about them. As on the one hand, to censure all prayers by a form, or by this form in particular, as superstition, will-worship, formality, and the like: on the other hand, to censure all extempore praying as babbling, canting, froth, and noise, as if God had not accepted his own people in the one as well as the other. The fastening of a censure, and passing of a judgment upon a whole party and way, if it be not very clear and well-grounded indeed, will be likely to split us upon the rock of schism and uncharitableness.

3. Concluding hardly as to the spiritual state and condition of those who differ from us, excluding them out of the church, and from salvation, because they are not just of our mind in every punctilio.

Witness that notion which excludes out of the church, and consequently out of heaven, all those (how orthodox and serious soever they are otherwise) who are not in prelatical communion; if no diocesan bishops, then no ministers, no sacraments, no church, no salvation; which is certainly the most schismatical notion that ever was broached in the Christian world.

4. Reproaching, reviling, and railing at those who differ from us in little things, is another schismatical practice; fastening such nick-names upon them, and loading them with such reproaches, as carry in them all the odium that malice can infuse into them; dressing them up in bears' skins, and then baiting them, doing what we can by calumnies and misrepresentations, to alienate the affections of others from them.

5. Making, consenting to, approving, or executing of penal laws against those who differ from us in little things, to punish them for such difference in their persons, estates, or liberties, is another uncharitable or schismatical practice.

This is contention with a witness; which aims at no less than the ruin of a person contended with, in the dearest of his secular interests; to beat out his brains, because his head is not exactly of our size.

6. Separation from communion with those that we have joined ourselves to, without cause; give me leave to call it *separation for separation sake*, without any regard had to any thing amiss in the church we separate from, or any thing better in that we join ourselves to. This is an evidence of an uncharitable alienation of affection, and is consequently schismatical, when we quite cast off communion with our brethren, out of ambition, animosity to their persons, affectation of novelty and singularity, or the like.

This was manifestly the case of the Donatists, the infamous schismatics of the primitive church. Their principles were, that the church of Christ was to be found no where but in their sect, and all other churches were no churches; that true baptism was not administered but among them; and a great many barbarous outrages they committed in the heat of their separation.

7. An affected strangeness, or distance in commu-

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f Col. iii. 14. g Eph. iv. 3. h Matt. vii. 1. i James iv. 11, 12.

nion or conversation, from those who thus differ from us, upon the account of such difference, avoiding conversation and familiarity with them, carrying it strangely towards them, only because they do not wear the dividing name of our party.

This evidences an uncharitable alienation of affection prevailing in the heart, and is consequently schismatical.

Many such like practices might easily be mentioned, if it were needful; but they are obvious enough, especially if we look into the laws of charity: (1 Cor. xiii. 4—7.) and remember that all transgression of those laws is uncharitableness, and when that is found in the things of religion, it is schism. The corollary from the whole is this, that whoever they be that allow themselves in these and the like practices and affections towards their brethren, who differ from them in little things, whether they be Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independent, or by what name or title soever they are self-dignified and distinguished, they are so far schismatical, inasmuch as they break the great law of Christian charity.

Let us now try what inference may be drawn from the Scripture notion of schism.

1. If this be schism, then is it not within the line of any human power to make that separation to be schismatical, which was not so in itself. By the description given of schism, it does appear to be a thing, *malum in se—evil in itself*, which was not so before; an attempt of that kind would sink with its own weight. And therefore it is well worthy observation, that when the parliament made a law against conventicles, (which are the great schismatical eyesores,) they called it an act to prevent and suppress *seditious* conventicles, knowing it to be within their line to declare a thing to be sedition; but not schismatical conventicles, for that was a thing in which they could not concern themselves.

2. If this be schism, then the guilt of it is to be looked for in particular persons, and is not to be charged by wholesale upon parties of any denomination whatsoever; as among us at this day in the prelatical party there are some schismatical, and others not; and the same is to be said of the separating party; nay, who is there who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from this sin?" Have we not all need to pray, *From envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness*, (which are the ingredients of schism,) *good Lord, deliver us*, both from the guilt, and from the power, of it? It is not so much our differences themselves, as the mismanagement of our differences, that is the bane of the church, burning up Christian love with the fire of our contentions.

Whence come these *wars and fightings? Come they not hence, even from our lusts?*[k] And those who say they are perfectly free from these warfaring schismatic lusts, must give me leave to say, I doubt they deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them.

3. If this be schism, then there may be schism where there is no separation of communion; that is plain from the instance of the Corinthians, who came together into *one* place, and yet are blamed for being schismatical. Bringing people to one place will never cure a schism, till they are brought to be of one accord.

You may bind the leopard, and lay him down by the lamb, and yet the enmity remain as great as ever, except there be an inward change.

A quarrel about little things may likewise be schismatical on one side, and not on the other. Jeremiah was a man of strife and contention,[l] that is, a man striven and contended with, and yet no schismatic; though ordinarily (as it is commonly said of domestic differences) there are faults more or less on both sides.

4. If this be schism, then there may be separation of communion where there is no schism. For thus we all agree, that there may be a difference of apprehension, and yet no schism; provided it do not eat out Christian love, but be managed amicably, as between the Arminians and Calvinists, in the church of England, and divers the like.

Now if this difference of apprehension relate to worship or communion, and the modes or terms thereof, there cannot but be a strong inclination to separate in whole or in part, according as the difference of apprehension is; for do what we can, as long as we are rational creatures, the understanding will have the directing of the will.

Now surely this separation, (if we must call it so,) or rather, this variety and diversity of worship and communion, may be managed without schism, provided Christian love and charity be kept entire notwithstanding.

For can any imagine that a difference of apprehension, in regard of worship and discipline, should be more schismatical than difference of apprehension in doctrine; since, of the two, doctrinal truths seem more essential to Christianity?

But to come a little closer. The meetings of the dissenters (though now, blessed be God, permitted and allowed of by the law of the land, yet) are commonly charged with being schismatical. The great outcry is, that we leave the church; and the unthinking mobile, who are so well taught as to know no other churches but the public places of worship, are easily induced to believe it; as if it were schism to worship God any where else, let the worship there be what it will.

Those who will allow themselves the liberty of an unprejudiced thought, cannot but see the difference so small, that as long as we believe the same Chris-

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k Jam. iv. 1.

l Jer. xv. 10.

tian faith, and agree in the same protestant abhorrence of papal delusions, we may easily be looked upon as one and the same church, as well as two several parish churches may, especially being united under the care and protection of one protestant king, and members of the same protestant commonwealth.

(1.) I do from the bottom of my soul detest and abhor all separation from the parish churches to atheism, irreligion, and sensuality, *(who separate themselves, sensual,*[m]*)* who forsake the church to go to the alehouse or tavern, or to their secular business, or to their slothfulness and laziness, to *separate unto that shame.*[n] And if this separation had been more animadverted upon than it has been of late, probably the cure of schism would have been sooner effected thereby, than by severities that have been used against conscientious separatists.

(2.) I do likewise abhor all schismatical, that is, uncharitable, proud, censorious, rigid separation; such separation as theirs who condemn the parish churches as no parts of the visible church, who rail at ministers as Babylonish and antichristian: this is a horrid breach of the law of Christian love, and that which every good heart cannot but rise at the thoughts of.

And yet I cannot but say, and am satisfied in it, that there may be a lawful and justifiable separation, (though I would rather call it a diversity of communion from the parish churches,) which I shall endeavour to clear in three cases.

[1.] If my own conscience be not satisfied in the lawfulness of any terms of communion imposed, as far as I fall under that imposition, I may justify a separation from them, and a joining with other churches, where I may be freed from that imposition, provided that this be not done schismatically, that is, with heat and bitterness, and alienation of Christian affection. And I hope none that have the law of Christ written in their hearts will say, that it is impossible truly to love those with whom I am not satisfied to join in all the ordinances, for the sake of some ceremonies, with which, after all my study, prayer, and conversation, I cannot be satisfied.

So, if I be a minister, and as such obliged to preach the gospel, yet kept out from the public exercise of my ministry by such terms and conditions, oaths and subscriptions, as I judge sinful; in such a case surely it is lawful for me, with Eldad and Medad, to prophesy in the camp, since in my judgment the door of the tabernacle is made narrower than my Master has appointed it to be made. What should hinder but that, as a minister of Christ, I may administer all the ordinances, according to Christ's institution, to those who are willing to join with me, and put themselves under my conduct (such as it is) in those administrations? If God has given though but one talent, it must be traded with, or else there will be an uncomfortable reckoning shortly, especially when we look abroad, and consider how the apparent necessity of precious souls call for our utmost diligence in our Master's work; and indeed there is work enough for us all, if God would give us hearts to be serious and unanimous in it.

In this also it is always provided, that my agency in a ministerial station be not made schismatical by my heat, passion, and bitterness; but that I live in true love and charity with those whom by reason of the impositions I cannot, *salva conscientia—with a pure conscience*, join with in communion.

[2.] Though I be satisfied in the lawfulness of the terms of communion required, and so when purer administrations are not to be had, may, rather than live in a total want of the ordinances, comply with them, yet when I have an opportunity of enjoying those ordinances in a way which I judge more pure and scriptural, or which I think more lively and edifying, and more likely to attain the great end of all ordinances, and that contribute more to my comfort and holiness, and communion with God; in such a case I cannot see but that I may lawfully have recourse to such administrations, though thereby I may seem to separate from another church, wherein before I had joined, and for which I still retain a very charitable opinion and affection. If the magistrate should be so unreasonable as to impose upon me an unskilful physician, to be alone made use of in case of sickness, I might take him rather than none; but if there be another, who, I am sure, has more skill and will to help me, I think I should be accessary to the ruin of my health and life, if I should not make use of him, notwithstanding such an inhibition.

And is not the life, and health, and salvation of my immortal soul dearer to me than any other concern? Is not communion with God the sweetest and most precious of all my delights? Is it not the life of my soul, and the crown of all my joys? And are not those administrations most desirable in which I find myself most edified? Must I then be such an enemy to my own comfort and happiness, as to throw away all opportunities which I might have of that kind, only in a compliment? *Amicus Socrates, amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas—Socrates is my friend, Plato is my friend, but truth is my best friend.* The bishops are my friends, and the ministers my friends, and I have a true love for them, but charity begins at home, especially when my precious soul, more worth than all the world, lies at stake.

This case is somewhat the clearer in those parishes

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m Jude 19.

n Hos. ix. 10.

where the public ministers are either ignorant, profane, or malignant.

[3.] Nay, suppose I am so well satisfied in communion with the parish churches in all administrations, as not to desire better, or not to expect better, in the dissenters' meetings, yet I cannot see what schism, that is, what breach of Christian love and charity, there is in it, for me to be present sometimes in the congregations of the sober dissenters, and to join with them who worship the same God, in the name of the same Mediator, read and preach the same word, and live in hopes of the same inheritance, and differ from me only in some little things which I think not worth contending for, scarce worth the mentioning; hereby to evidence my universal love and catholic charity, and that I am not of narrow, schismatical, dividing principles, nor one who will sacrifice Christian love to the petty trifling fancies and interests of a party.

The sober dissenters are such as I have reason to hope have communion with God in what they do, and therefore why should not I now and then have communion with them? *In every nation he that fears God, and works righteousness, is accepted of him;* and why should he not be accepted of me? Why may not I have fellowship with them who have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.[o] To fancy schism, that is, uncharitable contention and a breach of Christian love, in this is very absurd.

Obj. But hereby I encourage a schism, and countenance them in their separation from that which in my estimation is lawful and good, and does not give just cause for such a separation.

Answ. There must be grains of allowance for difference of apprehension, different capacities, constitutions, and inclinations; custom, and especially education, must be put into the scale; and while I walk according to the light which God has given me, I must charitably believe that others do so to.

Whether the dissenters' meetings be as to the constitution of them (looking upon them only as diversities of communion) schismatical, has been considered already, and found otherwise by Scripture light.

The common outcry is, that it is the setting up of altar *against* altar: which is not so; for at the most it is but altar *by* altar; and though I have often read of one body, and one Spirit, and one hope, and one Lord, and one faith, and one baptism, and one God and Father,[p] yet I could never find a word in all the New Testament of one altar,[q] except Jesus Christ, the altar that sanctifies every gift, in whom we all centre. And if there be any of the dissenters who are schismatical, that is, contentious, bitter, and uncharitable in their separation, let them bear their own burthen, but by my presence with them I encourage that in them, no more than I do too much of a like spirit in too many of those who are called the church-of-England men, by my adherence to them.

To conclude. By all this it is evident that unity of affection is the thing to be laboured after, more than uniformity in modes and ceremonies. We have been long enough trying to root schism out of the church, *vi et armis—by impositions, fines, and penalties,* choking our brethren, because their throats have not been so wide as ours. And it has been found ineffectual, even in the judgment of our great Sanhedrim, who have declared that "giving ease to scrupulous consciences is the likeliest way to unite their Majesty's protestant subjects in interest and affection." What if we should now try another method, and turn the stream of our endeavours into another channel? Hitherto we have been as it were striving which should hate one another most; what if we should now strive which should love one another best, and be most ready to do all offices of true charity and kindness, and bury all our little feuds and animosities in that blessed grave of Christian love and charity?

What if we should every one of us, of each party, (as we have been too often called,) set ourselves by our preaching to promote and propagate the gospel of *peace*, and by our prayers to prevail with God for a more plentiful pouring out of the Spirit of *peace*, that the dividing names of *Baalim* may be taken out of our mouths, and that, however it goes with uniformity of ceremony, we may keep the unity of the Spirit? And then I doubt not but that we should soon see our English Jerusalem established a praise in the midst of the earth.

And yet I am afraid even saints will be men; there will be remainders even of those corruptions which are the seed of schism, in the best, till we all come to the perfect man.

And that is the comfort of my soul, that if we can but once get to heaven, we shall be for ever out of the noise and hurry of this quarrelsome, contentious, dividing world, and the church triumphant shall be no more militant, but that happy world of everlasting light will be a world of everlasting love.

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o 1 John i. 3. p Eph. iv. 4—6. q Heb. xiii. 10.

THE LAY-MAN'S REASONS

FOR HIS

JOINING IN STATED COMMUNION WITH

A CONGREGATION OF MODERATE DISSENTERS.

My case, in short, is this. I am born in a Christian nation, and baptized into the Christian faith; and I reckon it my unspeakable honour and happiness that I am so, and that I live in the times of reformation. In this nation, wherever I am, I find public assemblies for religious worship, all agreeing to worship the same God, in the name of the same Mediator, under the conduct and influence of the same Spirit, according to the rule of the same Scriptures, holding communion with the universal church in faith, hope, and love, under the presidency of gospel ministers, by the same ordinances of the word, sacraments, and prayer, looking for the same blessed hope. All these assemblies concur, in their testimony, not only against Jews, Pagans, and Mahometans abroad, but against atheists, infidels, and profane at home; and likewise in their protestation against the tyranny and idolatry of the church and court of Rome.

But I find there is some difference among these Christian assemblies. Though all good Christians are one in Christ by faith, and one with each other by holy love, yet in outward and lesser things I observe they do not all agree. And it is no surprise to me that they do not; for I know that the best are imperfect in this world. I find some of these assemblies, and, indeed, far the greatest number, established and appointed by an act of parliament at the time of the happy restoration, 14 Car. 2. The ministers presiding in these assemblies, ordained by bishops, usually presented by lay-patrons, and to the great advantage of their ministry, dignified, and honourably provided for, by the civil government. The ordinances administered in these assemblies according to the book of Common Prayer, and the discipline managed by the chancellor of the diocese, and his court.

I find some few of these assemblies permitted and allowed by another act of parliament, twenty-seven years after the former, at the time of the late glorious revolution, 1 William and Mary. The ministers presiding in them ordained by presbyters, chosen by the people, and though taken under the protection, yet destitute of the authority and support, of the civil powers. The ordinances administered in them not by a set, prescribed, constant form, but by the rule of the Scripture in general, and according to the measure of the gift given to him that ministers. The discipline managed by the minister himself, who presides in other ordinances, with the advice and concurrence of the congregation. Providence has so cast my lot, and appointed the bounds of my habitation, that assemblies of both these kinds are within my reach.

And, through the grace of God, I think I can truly say, this is my character. I am heartily concerned about my soul, and my everlasting condition: it is my care and desire to please God, and to work out my salvation. All other interests and concerns are nothing to me, in comparison with this. I seriously profess I am afraid of sin, and am solicitous to be found in the way of my duty, and to get all the help I can to forward me toward heaven, and to fit me for it. Hereunto I can add this further protestation, that, through the grace of God, I have a catholic charity for all good Christians. I cannot monopolize the church; it is narrow enough, I dare not make it narrower: I love a good man, whatever party he belongs to, and him who follows Christ, though he does not follow with me. *He that fears God, and works righteousness, is accepted of God,* and shall be accepted by me. My practice is this. I join myself sometimes with the assemblies of the public establishment, if any opportunity offers itself on a week day; or if I happen on the Lord's day to be out of the reach of such assemblies as I choose

statedly to join with, I freely and cheerfully attend the divine service of the church, knowing nothing in the prayers but what I can heartily say Amen to, which I choose rather to do, than to answer aloud after the minister. And this I do, that I may testify the catholic charity, and my communion with, and affection to, all good Christians, though I be not in every thing of their mind. Hereby, likewise, I endeavour to fulfil all righteousness, and, in my place, I bear my testimony to that which is of God in the public establishment, wherein I do rejoice, and will rejoice.

But I constantly join in all the ordinances with a congregation of moderate and sober dissenters: with them I hold stated communion; and with them, after many serious and impartial thoughts, have put myself under the ministerial conduct and inspection of a preacher or teacher allowed, though not authorized by the law of the land; but one who is manifested in my conscience to be a true and faithful minister of Jesus Christ.

The reasons why I choose my settled communion with the dissenters, are these six, which abundantly satisfy my own conscience at present, not judging other men's consciences, nor knowing what further light God may hereafter give me in this matter.

1. I think it is my duty to own and adhere to that ministry which seems to me to be wrongfully and injuriously excluded from the public establishment; and the exclusion of which was professedly intended and designed by the Act of Uniformity. By making such oaths, declarations, and subscriptions, the indispensable terms of their admission into the ministry, or continuance in it, as they could not comply with, without sinning against their consciences, they were and are effectually shut out from the public establishment. This I take to be a wrong both to them who are well worthy of the church's double honours, and to the church which stands in need of, and would be greatly benefited by, their useful labours. I therefore think that I ought, in my place, both to bear my testimony against the exclusion of them, (lest I should partake with other men's sins, and should be found to have laid a confederacy with those who put so many burning shining lights under a bushel,) and also to aid, assist, and encourage those who are so excluded; putting my soul into their soul's stead, and then doing as I would be done by. Were I a minister, I must be shut out as they are, and should expect to be countenanced in suffering for conscience sake; and therefore cannot but countenance them. And this is that which I verily believe most men will do when it comes to be their own case, whatever they talk when they are uppermost. Those who, at any time, have thought themselves unjustly restrained from the public exercise of their ministry, have ever yet thought themselves obliged to exercise it in private as they could, and their friends obliged to stand by them in it; and so I believe they ever will.

2. I think it is my duty to choose rather statedly to join in those administrations, which come nearest to the divine institution, than in those which have in them an unnecessary mixture of human invention. How far men may lawfully devise and use ceremonies of their own, under pretence of beautifying God's ordinances, and edifying themselves and others, I pretend not to be a competent judge: but to me it seems very plain, that the ordinances of Christ are purer, and look better, without them; and that those who make the Scripture only their rule, and admit nothing into their worship but what is warranted by it, are to be preferred much before those who practise many things in their stated public worship, which they do not produce any ground or warrant for in the Holy Scripture. To me it seems much better in baptism, only to wash a child with water, in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in token that he shall not be ashamed to confess Christ crucified, which is Christ's institution, than, besides that, in token of the same thing, to sign him with the sign of the cross; and in the Lord's supper, to use the gesture Christ's disciples used, rather than another devised by men. Having chosen the Scripture for the standing rule of my faith and practice, I choose to have communion with those who seem to me to keep most closely to it.

3. I think it is my duty to choose rather statedly to join with those who assert and maintain the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, than with those who willingly submit to the impositions of men in the things of God, and justify those impositions. I am very well satisfied, that when my Redeemer, in kindness to his church, broke the yoke of that ceremonial law, which was given by Moses, he did not leave it in the power of any man, or company of men, in the world, to make another like yoke, and lay that upon the necks of the disciples. I doubt not but there is a power in the Christian magistrates, or other governors of the church, to restrain and correct natural indecencies in any of the necessary circumstances of public worship; as time, place, habit, or gesture: and that, in any of these, which unavoidably renders the administration of the ordinances either despicable, or inconvenient, or unprofitable, to those who attend upon them. But I see nothing in the gospel which warrants any governors, civil or sacred, to impose such habits and gestures as they please (because they think them decent) upon those who think them incongruous; and then, to make the use of them the indispensable condition of their communion. In the religious assemblies of the dissenters I observe, that generally every thing is done with the gravity and decorum that becomes the solemnity there performed: I see no uncouth habits, I hear no noisy responses, but all

things are managed decently, and in order, with reverence, and to edification: and yet no ceremonies are imposed, no terms of communion made, which Christ has not made; no days made holy, but that which God has made so; no stress laid upon the holiness of places, which the New Testament gives not the least hint of since the destruction of the temple; and therefore I choose to join with them; for *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*. Their ministers are not tied up to any one prescribed form of prayer, but are at liberty to vary and enlarge according to the improvements of their knowledge, and warmth of their devotion, and the case of those whose mouth they are in prayer: And, as I think, every minister ought to have some competent measure of the gift of prayer, as well as preaching; and that otherwise he is not duly qualified; so, I think, having that ability, he ought not to be abridged of his liberty to use it; especially not in the administration of sacraments. *All things are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any.*[a]

4. I think it is my duty to choose rather to join with those, who refuse to admit into the communion with them such as are openly vicious and profane, than with those who, being under an unhappy obligation to administer the Lord's supper to all in office, and to transfer the trial of all suspensions to the bishop's court, cannot possibly use so strict a discipline. Not that I think I am ever the worse for bad people's joining with me in the Lord's supper, but perhaps they are the worse for my joining with them; and I would not be accessary to the hardening of them in their impieties. I do not expect to meet with any society of Christians perfectly pure on this side heaven; there are spots, I know, in our feasts of charity; but I must prefer those who appear to me either to be more pure from the mixture of corrupt members, or at least more solicitous and desirous to be so, and more capable of being so by their own constitution. I have seen, with much satisfaction, many of the church of England zealous against vice and profaneness, and active for the suppressing of it, and have a mighty value and veneration for them upon that account; and wish their constitution would allow them to do more, by church-censures, in prosecution of that worthy design than I apprehend it will. But for that pious zeal of theirs, I have so often heard them called presbyterians by those who are bigots for episcopacy and the ceremonies, that I confess it has made me love the presbyterians the better, since zeal against profaneness enters so much into their character, even their enemies themselves being judges.

5. I think it is my duty to choose rather to join with those churches, whose constitution leaves room for a catholic and comprehensive charity, than with those whose avowed principles and sentiments force them to monopolize the church in England to themselves, and forbid them to own the dissenting ministers as true ministers, and their churches as true churches. This, I confess, has a mighty influence on me. The sober dissenting ministers, as I am acquainted with them, are manifest in my conscience to be faithful ministers of Jesus Christ; and in their administrations I cannot but see the institution of ordinances observed, and every thing well fitted to answer the end of them. I know many who constantly attend in their assemblies, and have observed them to be sound in their principles, sober in their lives, honest in their dealings, constant in their devotions, and in all instances to have given undeniable proof of their being sincere good Christians. When, therefore, in the books and sermons that plead for the church of England, I find these ministers censured and condemned as usurpers, impostors, and lay-intruders; all their administrations nulled, their assemblies denied to be parts of the catholic church, all who join with them sentenced as schismatics to the pit of hell, and no hopes of salvation given them, but what God's general mercy allows to moral heathens; and all the reformed churches, that have no bishops, falling so far under the same censure, that their ministers cannot be admitted ministers of the church of England, unless they be reordained, while those who have been popish priests may; and all these harsh censures excused from uncharitableness with this, that they cannot help it, their principles lead them to it: then, think I, the Lord deliver me from such principles, and from that pretended unity, which is destructive of real charity. On the other side, I find the dissenters willingly owning the established churches as true churches, their ministers as true ministers, their principles leading them to do so. I often hear them, in their public assemblies, pray for them, and for their success in their ministry, and profess their communion with them in faith, hope, and love; and in their common conversation, I hear them speak of them with love and respect. My judgment and inclination lead me to the charitable side, as the best and safest; and by all I have read and heard in this controversy, that appears to me to be the side of the dissenters.

6. I think it is my duty to attend on those administrations which I find to be most for my edification in faith, holiness, and comfort, and best (with me) to answer the ends of holy ordinances. Herein I hope I may be allowed to judge for myself. I have often tried both; and if I know my own heart, without prejudice or partiality, I must say, that I have found my heart more affected and enlarged in those confessions, prayers, and thanksgivings, which have been offered up without a stated prescribed form,

[a] 1 Cor. vi. 12.

than ever it was in those that have been invariably tied up to certain words. Far be it from me to make comparison of men's abilities and performances: I greatly honour and value the gifts and labours of many who are in the public establishment: but in my capacity, the dissenters' praying and preaching is most adapted, and most profitable: and those I am to reckon the best gifts, and to covet earnestly, which I find by experience best for me. Sabbath-time is precious; and I would willingly improve it so as will be most for my advantage in keeping my communion with God, and preparing for heaven. If it be owing to my own weakness that these administrations are most agreeable to me, yet while I sincerely design God's glory, and my own spiritual benefit therein, I trust, through Christ, that God will not only forgive me, but accept me, and that they also who are strong, will bear with my infirmities.

These are the principles I go upon, and from them I conclude.

(1.) That if the present dictate of my conscience and practical judgment be, that it is my duty to choose my stated communion with the congregations of dissenters, then it is my sin if I do not do it: *for to him that knows to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin.*

(2.) Then, by occasional communion with the church of England, whereby I design to testify my charity and catholic communion, and my approbation of that in it which is good, I do not in the least condemn my stated communion with the dissenters: for though I am not convinced that it is a sin of commission at any time to join with the established church, nor that any thing in itself unlawful is required as the condition of lay-communion, yet, upon the grounds aforesaid, I am fully convinced it would be a sin of omission not to join with the dissenters. I will not condemn any thing that is good, when a better is not in my reach; but when it is, I think I am obliged, in duty to God, and in concern for my own soul, to prefer it. *All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.*

(3.) Then, in all this, I am far from judging and censuring those who differ from me. I walk according to my present light, preferring that which I think and find to be best: and I verily believe those good Christians who, I know, constantly join with the public establishment do so too, preferring that which they think and find to be the best; and both they and I (I trust) are accepted of God. To those who condemn me herein, I shall only offer that reasonable demand of St. Paul: *If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.*[1]

[1] 2 Cor. x. 7.

A PLAIN

CATECHISM FOR CHILDREN.

Introduction.

I should not have thought of drawing up, much less of publishing, this little Catechism, with its *Appendix*, if I had not been solicited to it by some of my friends, whose judgment and advice I have a great deal of reason to put a value upon.

The children into whose hands it is designed to be put, are supposed to have learned the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, those first forms of sound words; and then perhaps some time spent in this, may prepare them afterwards to improve by the fulness and accuracy of the *Assembley's Catechism*, with which this does very little interfere, and which therefore, I hope, it will not be suspected of a design to supersede.

Whether such a catechism as this be so needful, as some have said they think it is, I know not. However, I hope it may be useful to some; and therefore I am willing to let it go abroad; and the blessing of heaven go along with it.

It is God's promise, that *all shall know him, from the least even to the greatest.* That that promise may be fulfilled, and all pious endeavours, for the propagating of Christian knowledge, crowned with success, is my heart's desire and prayer.

July 7th, 1703. Matth. Henry.

PART I.

Of God and the Scriptures.

Q. 1. What must you do in the days of your youth? A. I must remember my Creator. Q. 2. Who is your Creator? A. The great God, who made the world. Q. 3. Who is your Preserver? A. The same God, who made me, preserves and maintains me; and in him I live, and move, and have my being. Q. 4. What are you made and maintained for? A. To glorify God. Q. 5. What do you believe concerning this God? A. I believe that he is an infinite and eternal Spirit, most wise and powerful, holy, just, and good. Q. 6. How many gods are there? A. There is but one God. Q. 7. How many persons are there in the godhead? A. Three: the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and these three are one. Q. 8. What is your duty to this God as your Creator? A. It is my duty to fear and honour him, to worship and obey him, and in all my ways to trust in him, and to please him. Q. 9. What is the rule of your faith and obedience? A. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, which we call the Bible. Q. 10. What is the excellency of that book? A. It is the word of God. Q. 11. What use will it be of to you? A. It is able to make me wise to salvation.

PART II.

Of our Misery by Sin, and our Redemption by Christ.

Q. 12. Who were your first parents? A. Adam and Eve, from whom we are all descended. Q. 13. What condition did God create them in? A. Holy and happy. Q. 14. How did they lose their holiness and happiness? A. By their disobedience to the command of God, in eating the forbidden fruit. Q. 15. What condition are we all born in? A. Sinful and miserable. Q. 16. How do you perceive your condition to be by nature sinful? A. Because I find I am naturally prone to that which is evil, and backward to that which is good; and foolishness is bound up in my heart. Q. 17. How do you perceive your condition to be by nature miserable? A. Because I find myself liable to many troubles in this life; and the Scripture tells me, I am by nature a child of wrath. Q. 18. What would become of you then without a Saviour? A. I should be certainly lost and undone for ever. Q. 19. Who is it that saves us out of this sad condition? A. Our Lord

Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and man. Q. 26. Who was Jesus Christ? A. The eternal Son of God. Q. 27. What did he do to redeem and save us? A. He took our nature upon him, and became man. Q. 28. What life did he live in that nature? A. A life of perfect holiness, leaving us an example. Q. 29. What doctrine did he preach? A. A true and excellent doctrine, concerning God and himself and another world. Q. 30. What miracles did he work to confirm his doctrine? A. He healed the sick with a word; raised the dead, cast out devils, and many other the like. Q. 31. What death did he die? A. The cursed death of the cross, to satisfy for our sins, and to reconcile us to God. Q. 32. What became of him after he was dead? A. He arose again from the dead on the third day, and ascended up into heaven. Q. 33. Where is he now? A. He is at the right hand of God, where he ever lives, making intercession for us, and has all power both in heaven and earth. Q. 34. When will he come again? A. He will come again in glory at the last day to judge the world.

PART III.

Concerning Baptism and the Covenant of Grace.

Q. 29. What relation do you stand in to the Lord Jesus? A. I am one of his disciples, for I am a baptized Christian. Q. 30. Into whose name were you baptized? A. Into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Q. 31. What was the meaning of your being so baptized? A. I was thereby given up in a covenant way to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Q. 32. What was the covenant which was granted and sealed in your baptism? A. The covenant of grace made with us in Jesus Christ. Q. 33. What is the sum of that covenant? A. That God will be in Christ to us a God, and we must be to him a people. Q. 34. How then must you take the Lord for your God? A. I must take and take the Father for my chief good and highest end; God the Son, for my Prince and Saviour; and God the Holy Ghost, for my Sanctifier, Guide, and Comforter. Q. 35. How must you give up yourself to him to be one of his people? A. I must deny all ungodliness, and worldly fleshly lusts, and must resolve to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope. Q. 36. What are the three great blessings promised in this covenant? A. The pardon of sin, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and eternal life. Q. 37. What are the two great conditions of this covenant? A. Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. Q. 38. What is it to repent of your sins? A. It is to be sorry that I have offended God, in what I have done amiss, and to do so no more. Q. 39. What is it to believe in Jesus Christ? A. It is to receive him, and to rely upon him as my Prophet, Priest, and King, and to give up myself to be ruled, and taught, and saved by him.

PART IV.

Concerning our Duty to God, Ourselves, and our Neighbour.

Q. 40. How must you evidence the sincerity of your faith and repentance? A. By a diligent and conscientious obedience to all God's commandments. Q. 41. What is the first and great commandment? A. To love God with all my heart. Q. 42. What is the second, which is like unto it? A. To love my neighbour as myself, and to show it, by doing as I would be done by. Q. 43. What is the honour you owe to God's name? A. I must never take his name in vain, but must always make mention of it with reverence and seriousness. Q. 44. What is the honour you owe to God's word? A. I must read it and hear it with diligence and attention: I must meditate upon it, believe, and frame my life according to it. Q. 45. What is the honour you owe to God in his providence? A. I must receive all his mercies with thankfulness, and I must bear all afflictions with patience, and submission to his holy will. Q. 46. What is the honour you owe to the Lord's day? A. I must keep the sabbath holy to God, by a diligent performance of the religious duties of the day, both public and private, not speaking my own words, nor doing my own works on that day. Q. 47. How must you honour God in prayer? A. I must every day, by solemn prayer, seek the favour of God, and give unto him the glory due unto his name. Q. 48. In whose name must you pray? A. In the name of Jesus Christ only. Q. 49. What must you pray for? A. For mercy to pardon, and grace to help in time of need. Q. 50. What else must you do in your prayers? A. I must confess my sins, and give God praise for his goodness to me. Q. 51. What must be your daily care concerning your own soul? A. I must take care that my heart be not lifted up with pride, nor disturbed with anger, or any sinful passion. Q. 52. What must be your care concerning your body? A. I must take care that it be not defiled by intemperance, uncleanness, or any fleshly lusts. Q. 53. What must be your care concerning your words? A. I must never tell a lie, nor mock at any body, nor call nick-names, nor speak any filthy words. Q. 54. What is your duty to your parents and governors? A. I must reverence and obey them in the Lord: I must thankfully receive their instructions, and submit to their rebukes, and labour in every thing to be a comfort to them. Q. 55. What is your duty to the poor? A. I must pity, help, and relieve them, according to my ability.

Q. 56. What is your duty to all men? A. I must render to all their dues; I must be honest and just in all my dealings; I must be respectful to my friends, and forgive my enemies, and speak evil of no man. Q. 57. How are you able to perform this duty? A. Not in any strength of my own, but in the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ, which I must ask of God for his sake. Q. 58. What must you do when you find you come short of this duty? A. I must renew my repentance, and pray to God for pardon in the blood of Christ, and be careful to do my duty better for the time to come. Q. 59. What encouragement have you thus to live in the fear of God? A. If I do so, I shall certainly be happy both in this world, and in that to come.

PART V.

Concerning the Future State.

Q. 60. What will become of you shortly? A. I must shortly die, and leave this world. Q. 61. What becomes of the body at death? A. It returns to the earth, to be raised to life again at the day of judgment. Q. 62. What becomes of the soul then? A. It returns to God who gave it, to be determined to an unchangeable state, according to what was done in the body. Q. 63. What shall be the portion of the wicked and ungodly in the other world? A. They shall all go to hell. Q. 64. What is hell? A. It is a state of everlasting misery and torment, in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. Q. 65. What shall be the portion of the godly in the other world? A. They shall all go to heaven. Q. 66. What is heaven? A. It is a state of everlasting rest and joy with God and Jesus Christ. Q. 67. What life then will you resolve to live in this world? A. God's grace enabling me, I will live a holy, godly life, and make it my great care and business to serve God, and save my soul.

A SHORT CATECHISM

FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF THOSE WHO ARE TO BE ADMITTED TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Q. 1. What is the Lord's supper? A. It is a sacrament of the New Testament. Q. 2. Who ordained this sacrament? A. Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein he was betrayed. Q. 3. What are the outward signs in this sacrament? A. Giving and receiving bread and wine, and eating and drinking of them in a solemn and religious manner. Q. 4. What does the bread broken signify and represent to us? A. The broken body of our Lord Jesus, which was crucified for us. Q. 5. What does the wine signify? A. The precious blood of Christ, which was shed for us upon the cross. Q. 6. What does the minister's giving the bread and wine signify? A. The gracious offer that is made us in the gospel, of Christ and all his benefits, upon the terms of faith, and repentance, and new obedience. Q. 7. What does the receiving of the bread and wine signify? A. Our hearty acceptance of Christ as he is offered to us in the gospel, and our compliance with the terms of that offer. Q. 8. What does the eating of the bread and drinking of the wine signify? A. The satisfaction we take in Christ and his gospel, and the nourishment of our souls thereby through faith. Q. 9. Why did Christ ordain this sacrament? A. To be a memorial of his death till he come; for he said, *Do this in remembrance of me.* Q. 10. What more is there in this sacrament? A. It is a seal of the covenant of grace, strongly assuring us, that God is willing in Christ to be to us a God, and strongly engaging us to be to him a people. Q. 11. Why would you be admitted to this solemn ordinance? A. Because I desire to take the covenant of my baptism upon myself, and to make it my own act and deed, to join myself unto the Lord. Q. 12. What do you think of that covenant which is there sealed? A. I think it is well ordered in all things, and sure; and I do heartily consent to it, and venture my soul and my salvation upon it. Q. 13. What do you think of Christ, who is there set before you? A. I think he is a gracious and all-sufficient Saviour, and I accept of him as my Lord and my God. Q. 14. What do you think of sin? A. I think sin to be the worst of evils; and I do heartily repent of my own sin, and turn from it to God. Q. 15. What do you think of this world? A. I think it is vanity and vexation of spirit, and I will never set my heart upon it. Q. 16. What do you think of the other world? A. I think the things of another world are real, and great, and very near, and I would therefore give all diligence to prepare for that world. Q. 17. What do you think of a religious life? A. I think that a holy, heavenly life, spent in the service of God, and in communion with him, is the most pleasant and comfortable life a man can live in this world. Q. 18. Will you then live such a life? A. By the grace of God, I will, and with purpose of heart will cleave to the Lord. Q. 19. What communion do you desire to have with the church of Christ? A. By faith, hope, and love, I desire to maintain a spiritual communion with all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Q. 20. What must you do in your preparation for the Lord's Supper? A. I must examine myself. Q. 21. How must you examine yourself about your spiritual state? A. I must seriously inquire whether I do in sincerity consent to the covenant of grace, and whether I be indeed born again. Q. 22. What will be an evidence, that your spiritual state is bad?

A. If I live a vain and careless life, loving the world more than God, and minding the things of the flesh more than the things of the Spirit, and allowing myself in any known sin, I have reason to conclude, that whatever profession I make, my spiritual state is bad. Q. 23. What will be an evidence that your spiritual state is good? A. If I be heartily concerned about my soul and eternity, and carefully seek the favour of God through Christ; if I strive against sin, make conscience of my words and ways, and have respect to all God's commandments, I have reason to hope, that notwithstanding my daily infirmities, my spiritual state is good. Q. 24. How must you examine your conscience about your particular actions? A. I must solemnly reflect upon what I have done amiss in thought, word, and deed, and I must humbly confess it before God, and judge myself for it. Q. 25. What else must you do in your preparation for the Lord's supper? A. I must earnestly pray to God for his Spirit and grace; I must meditate much upon the love of Christ in dying for me; and I must be in charity with all men. Q. 26. After what manner must you receive the sacrament? A. With humble reverence and seriousness; with sorrow for sin, and hatred of it; with faith in Christ, and the lively workings of pious and devout affection towards him. Q. 27. What must you do after you have received this sacrament? A. I must walk cheerfully with God in all holy conversation, and never return again to folly. Q. 28. Who are they that receive this sacrament unworthily? A. They who continue in love and league with sin while they pretend to covenant with God. Q. 29. What is the misery of those who do so? A. They eat and drink judgment to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body. Q. 30. Who shall be welcome to this ordinance? A. They who by faith cordially consent to the covenant of grace, and do honour to their Redeemer, by showing forth his death. Q. 31. What benefits do they receive by it that duly improve it? A. Their faith is hereby strengthened, their resolutions are confirmed, their comforts are increased, and they have an earnest of the everlasting feast.

A

SCRIPTURE CATECHISM,

IN THE

METHOD OF THE ASSEMBLY'S.

Introduction.

We are very happy (I know) in catechisms, which, to the inhabitants of this *valley of vision*, will be either the means of knowledge, or the shame of ignorance. The variety of these forms of sound words, while they all speak for substance the same thing, and are all built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, derogates not at all from the honour of the Christian doctrine, but rather (like the setting up of several candles in the same room) help to diffuse the light, and make it stronger. Many very excellent expositions we have both of the *Church Catechism* and of the *Assembly's*, and an ancient and profitable one of Mr. Ball's; and yet some encourage me to hope, that this *essay*, which is in a way not hitherto used, that I know of, will be found not altogether useless. Two things I aim at in it: one is, to put the catechism into such a dress, as to make it (if possible) both easy and copious, so as that it may not be an insuperable task to the learner, and yet may furnish him with plenty of useful knowledge. The bulk of it (which somewhat exceeds my first intentions) shows it to be copious; and yet I think it is made very easy, by breaking of it into so many short questions, and those answered by Yes or No, which the learner may at first content himself with, the teacher, if he pleases, reading the proofs and, by degrees, the learner, who is willing to take

a little pains, and begins to be versed in the Scriptures, will find it no great difficulty to charge his memory with most of the proofs annexed, which the question oftentimes easily introduces, and which, by frequent use, will in time become familiar. I remember to have seen an *Explanation of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism*, (and I think it was the first that ever was published,) by a great man, the Rev. Dr. Wallis, of Oxford, which was done by breaking the propositions of the catechism in short questions, answered (as this) with Yes or No. That performance, though very short, was an excellent precedent, directing to a method of catechising, which has been of good use to enrich the understanding of the learners, without overloading their memories. The text subjoined here will show that our Yea is yea, and our Nay, nay. To make this the more easy, the several sections under each article may be allotted to several catechumens.

But another thing I aim at, (and indeed the chief,) is to promote the knowledge of the Scriptures. Divine truths, methinks, sound best in divine language; and the *things which God has revealed to us by his Spirit*, cannot be conveyed in a more safe and proper vehicle, than by the words which the Holy Ghost teaches, (1 Cor. ii. 10, 13.) which, though I would be far from superstitiously tying myself or others to, yet, I confess, I cannot but think they should be preferred. I have often observed how the evangelist rectifies a mistake which rose upon a saying of Christ's, only by repeating the words spoken, John xxi. 23. *He said not, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* He said so, and no more; add thou not to his words. We are directed not only to think, but to *speak, according to his word*, Isa. viii. 20.

It is especially profitable to acquaint children betimes with their Bibles, and to show them their religion there. *Timothy's catechism* was the Scripture, which he knew απο βρεφους—*from his very infancy*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. They who are ready and mighty in the Scriptures, will be thoroughly furnished for every good work, and thoroughly fortified against every evil work. What I have here endeavoured, may (I hope) prove a good expedient for this purpose, obliging myself to produce a text of Scripture for every question, it cannot be thought they should be alike apposite. Perhaps here and there one may be found that is *diverted* from its *primary* intention by an allusion only, (which I think is warranted by divers of the New-Testament quotations out of the Old,) yet I hope there are none *perverted*. Were we more conversant with the inspired writings, we should (as one of the ancients speaks) "adore the fulness of the Scriptures." I have quoted the texts as concisely as I could, in hopes the diligent reader, who searches the Scripture daily, will be stirred up to look further into the places referred to, which he will often find very well worth his while. To that end, I have throughout added the book, chapter, and verse; which yet it is needless for them who learn by heart to trouble themselves with.

To the service of such ministers, governors of families, and other Christians, as shall see cause to make use of such a help, with an entire dependence upon the grace and blessing of God, for the acceptableness and usefulness of it, this small oblation is humbly tendered, by one who is earnestly desirous to increase in Scripture knowledge, and ambitious of the honour of being any way instrumental to propagate it.

MATTH. HENRY.

POSTSCRIPT TO THE THIRD EDITION.

I am willing to take this opportunity to advise one thing more concerning the use of this catechism, which I have found very beneficial, *viz.* That the learners be put in their answers to turn the question into a proposition, which they will easily do with a little direction. Example,—Is man a reasonable creature? Yes: man is a reasonable creature; for there is a spirit in man, &c. And this will lead them, when the question gives occasion for it, to make application to themselves. Again, Is your business in the world to serve the flesh? No: it is not *my* business in the world to serve the flesh; for we are not debtors to the flesh.

A

SCRIPTURE CATECHISM.

Q. 1. *What is the chief end of man?*

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy him for ever.

1. Is man a reasonable creature? Yes: for there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding, Job xxxii. 8. Has he greater capacities than the brutes? Yes: for God teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven, Job xxxv. 11.

2. Is man his own maker? No: it is God that hath made us, and not we ourselves, Ps. c. 3. Is he then his own master? No: there is a Lord over us, Ps. xii. 4. Is he his own carver? No: should it be according to thy mind, Job xxxiv. 33. Is he his own end? No: for none of us lives to himself, or dies to himself, Rom. xiv. 7.

3. Is it your business in the world to serve the flesh? No: for we are not debtors to the flesh, that we should live after the flesh, Rom. viii. 12. Is it to pursue the world? No: for we are not of the world, John xvii. 16.

4. Is your happiness bound up in the creature?

No: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit, Eccl. i. 14. Will the riches of the world make you happy? No: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, Luke xii. 15. Will the praise and applause of men make you happy? No: for it is vain-glory, Gal. v. 26. Will sport and pleasure make you happy? No: for the wise man said of laughter, It is mad, and of mirth, What doth it? Eccl. ii. 2. Can the gain of the world make you happy? No: for what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Matt. xvi. 26.

5. Is God then your chief end? Yes: for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, Rom. xi. 36. Were you made for him? Yes: this people have I formed for myself, Isa. xliii. 21. Were you redeemed for him? Yes: ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

6. Is it your chief business to glorify God? Yes: we must glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's, 1 Cor. vi. 20. Must this be ultimately designed in all our actions? Yes: do all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. x. 31. Is God glorified by our praises? Yes: he that offers praise, glorifies me, Ps. l. 23. And is he glorified by our works? Yes: herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, John xv. 8.

7. Is God your chief good? Yes: for happy is the people whose God is the Lord, Ps. cxliv. 15. Does all good come from him? Yes: for with him is the fountain of life, Ps. xxxvi. 9. And is all good enjoyed in him? Yes: the Lord is the portion of my inheritance, and of my cup, Ps. xvi. 5.

8. Is it your chief happiness then to have God's favour? Yes: for in his favour is life, Ps. xxx. 5. Is that the most desirable good? Yes: for his loving-kindness is better than life, Ps. lxiii. 3. Do you desire it above any good? Yes: Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us, Ps. iv. 6, 7. And should you give all diligence to make it sure? Yes: herein we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 9.

9. Is communion with God in grace here the best pleasure? Yes: it is good for me to draw near to God, Ps. lxxiii. 28. Is the vision and fruition of God in glory hereafter the best portion? Yes: for in his presence there is fulness of joy, Ps. xvi. 11. Will you therefore set your heart upon this chief good? Yes: Lord, whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee; when my flesh and my heart fail, God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever, Ps. lxxiii. 25, 26.

Q. 2. *What rule has God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?*

A. The word of God (which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament) is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.

1. Do we need a rule to direct us to our chief end? Yes: for we all like sheep have gone astray, Isa. liii. 6. Could we not find it out of ourselves? No: for man is born like the wild ass's colt, Job xi. 12.

2. Is divine revelation necessary to religion? Yes: for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, Rom. x. 17. Is not the light of nature sufficient without it? No: for the world by wisdom knew not God, 1 Cor. i. 21. Has God therefore given us a revelation? Yes: he hath showed thee, O man, what is good, Mic. vi. 3. Was there revelation from the beginning? Yes: at sundry times, and in divers manners, God spake unto the fathers, Heb. i. 1.

3. Are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament the word of God, and a divine revelation? Yes: for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, 2 Tim. iii. 16. Were they indited by the blessed Spirit? Yes: for holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. i. 21. Were they confirmed by miracles? Yes: God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, Heb. ii. 4. Do they recommend themselves? Yes: for the word of God is quick and powerful, Heb. iv. 12. Is not the Bible then a cheat put upon the world? No: for these are not the words of him that hath a devil, John x. 21.

4. Was the book of the Scripture written for our use? Yes: whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, Rom. xv. 4. And is it of great use? Yes: for it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 2 Tim. iii. 16.

5. Are the Scriptures the great support of our religion? Yes: for we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Eph. ii. 20. Are they the standing rule of our faith and practice? Yes: we must have recourse to the law and to the testimony, Isa. viii. 20. Are they the only rule? Yes: for other foundation can no man lay, 1 Cor. iii. 11. Are they our guide? Yes: for the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, Prov. vi. 23. Do they show us the way to heaven and happiness? Yes: for in them we think we have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Christ, John v. 39.

6. Are the Scriptures our oracle which we must consult? Yes: What is written in the law, how readest thou? Luke x. 26. Are they our touchstone which we must try by? Yes: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, Isa. viii. 20. Are they the weapons of our spiritual warfare? Yes: Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Matt. iv. 10. Eph. vi. 17.

7. Is the written word a sufficient rule? Yes: for the law of the Lord is perfect, Ps. xix. 7. Is it plain?

Yes: for the word is nigh thee, Rom. x. 8. Is the church's authority the rule of our faith? No: for our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, 1 Cor. ii. 5. May we depend upon unwritten traditions? No: for we must refuse profane and old wives' fables, 1 Tim. iv. 7.

8. Will the written word be the rule of our judgment hereafter? Yes: for we must be judged by the law of liberty, Jam. ii. 12. Ought we therefore to be ruled by it now? Yes: as many as walk according to this rule, peace shall be on them, Gal. vi. 16. And to be comforted by it? Yes: for through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we have hope, Rom. xv. 4.

9. Are the Scriptures to be translated into vulgar tongues? Yes: for we should hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God, Acts ii. 11. And must we study them? Yes: Search the Scriptures, John v. 39. And labour to understand them? Yes: Understandest thou what thou readest? Acts viii. 30. And must we rest satisfied with this revelation of God's will? Yes: for if we believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would we be persuaded though one rose from the dead, Luke xvi. 31. Is it a great affront to God to neglect his word? Yes: I have written unto them the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing, Hos. viii. 12.

10. Must little children get the knowledge of the Scripture? Yes: Timothy is commended for this, that from a child he knew the Holy Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15. And must their parents instruct them therein? Yes: they must teach them diligently unto their children, and talk of them, Deut. vi. 7.

11. Must we all love the word of God? Yes: O how love I thy law! And must we meditate therein? Yes: It is my meditation all the day, Ps. cxix. 97. And will this be to our own advantage? Yes: for it is able to make us wise to salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15.

Q. 3. *What do the Scriptures principally teach?*

A. The Scriptures principally teach, what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.

1. Is it necessary that we have a faith concerning God? Yes: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. xi. 6. Can we have that faith without being taught? No: for how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? Rom. x. 14. And have they not heard? Yes: verily their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world, Rom. x. 18.

2. Is not the knowledge of God a great privilege? Yes; for this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, John xvii. 3. Is it not the best knowledge? Yes: for the knowledge of the Holy is understanding, Prov. ix. 10. Does the Scripture teach us that knowledge? Yes: for if we receive those words, and hide those commandments with us, then shall we understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God, Prov. ii. 1, 5.

3. Do not the works of creation prove that there is a God? Yes: for we understand by the things that are made his eternal power and godhead, Rom. i. 20. And do not the works of providence prove it? Yes: for verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth, Ps. lviii. 11. But do not the Scriptures tell us best what God is? Yes: for no man hath seen God at any time, the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, John i. 18.

4. Are we all concerned to get the knowledge of God? Yes: we should all know him, from the least even to the greatest, Heb. viii. 11. Must children get that knowledge? Yes: I write unto you little children because you have known the Father, 1 John ii. 13. And must we all grow in that knowledge? Yes: we must follow on to know the Lord, Hos. vi. 3.

5. Are we to believe what the Scripture reveals concerning God? Yes: for these things are written that we may believe, John xx. 31. And must we believe all that the Scripture reveals? Yes: Believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets, Acts xxiv. 14. Must we believe that which is not revealed? No: for the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. ii. 11.

6. Does God require duty of man? Yes: for unto man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, that is understanding, Job xxviii. 28. Is it enough to believe the truth revealed, if we do not the duty that is required? No: for faith without works is dead, James ii. 26. Is it enough to do the duty required, though we do not believe the truth revealed? No: for he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, 1 John v. 10.

7. Does the Scripture teach us what duty God requires? Yes: He has showed thee what the Lord thy God requires of thee, Mic. vi. 8. And must we do the duty that the Scripture teaches? Yes: we must observe to do according to all that is written therein, and not turn from it to the right hand, or to the left, Josh. i. 7. Must this obedience always accompany faith? Yes: for they which have believed in God must be careful to maintain good works, Tit. iii. 8.

Q. 4. *What is God?*

A. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

1. Is God a Spirit? Yes: for Christ himself has said, God is a Spirit, John iv. 24. Is he a pure Spirit? Yes: for God is light, and with him is no darkness at all, 1 John i. 5. Has he a body as we

have? No: Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as a man seeth? Job x. 4. Can he be seen with bodily eyes? No: for he is one whom no man hath seen, or can see, 1 Tim. vi. 16. Are not the angels spirits? Yes: he maketh his angels spirits, Ps. civ. 4. Are not the souls of men spirits? Yes: for he formeth the spirit of man within him, Zech. xii. 1. But is God a Spirit like unto them? No: for he is the Father of spirits, Heb. xii. 9.

2. Is God infinite? Yes: for we cannot by searching find out God. Job xi. 7. Is he contained in any place? No: for the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, 1 Kings viii. 27. Is he every where present? Yes: for whither can we go from his Spirit, or flee from his presence? Ps. cxxxix. 7. Can any hide himself in secret places that God shall not see him? No: for do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord, Jer. xxiii. 24.

3. Is God eternal? Yes: from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God, Ps. xc. 2. Had he beginning of days? No: for he is the Ancient of days, Dan. vii. 9. Shall there be any end of his life? No: for he is the same, and his years have no end, Ps. cii. 27. Is there with him any succession of time? No: for his days are not as the days of man, Job x. 5. Can he die? No: he is the only potentate, that hath immortality, 1 Tim. vi. 16.

4. Is God unchangeable? Yes: for he is the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning, Jam. i. 17. Is there any decay of his perfections? No: for he fainteth not, neither is weary, Isa. xl. 28. Is there any alteration in his counsels? No: for he is not a man that he should repent, 1 Sam. xv. 29. Is it well for us that he is unchangeable? Yes: I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed, Mal. iii. 6.

5. Is God infinite in his being? Yes: for he has said, I AM THAT I AM. Exod. iii. 14. Is he self-existent? Yes: for the Father hath life in himself, John v. 26. Is he the best of beings? Yes: for who is a God like unto him? Exod. xv. 11. Is he the first of causes? Yes: for he is the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, 1 Cor. viii. 6. Is he the highest of powers? Yes: for he is King of kings, and Lord of lords, 1 Tim. vi. 15.

6. Is he a God of perfect knowledge? Yes: for his understanding is infinite, Ps. cxlvii. 5. Can any thing be hid from him? No: for all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do, Heb. iv. 13. Does he know things to come? Yes: for he declareth the end from the beginning, Isa. xlvi. 10. Does he know our hearts? Yes: for he understandeth our thoughts afar off. Ps. cxxxix. 2. Does he know all our actions? Yes: for his eyes are upon the ways of man, Job xxxiv. 21.

7. Is God infinitely wise? Yes: for wisdom and might are his. Dan. ii. 20. Are all his works wisely done? Yes: in wisdom he hath made them all. Ps. civ. 24. And particularly the work of redemption? Yes: for it is the wisdom of God in a mystery, 1 Cor. ii. 7. Can the wisdom of God's counsels be fathomed? No: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! Rom. xi. 33.

8. Is he a God of power? Yes: God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God, Ps. lxii. 11. Is he Almighty? Yes: he is the Lord God Almighty, Rev. xv. 3. Is his power irresistible? Yes: for none can stay his hand. Dan. iv. 35. Is his sovereignty incontestable? Yes: for he giveth not account of any of his matters. Job xxxiii. 13. Is any thing too hard for him? No: for with God all things are possible, Matt. xix. 26.

9. Is he a God of perfect holiness? Yes: for holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts. Isa. vi. 3. Is there iniquity with God? No: he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, Heb. i. 13. Is this his glory? Yes: for he is glorious in holiness, Exod. xv. 11. And must we give him the glory of it? Yes: give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness, Ps. xxx. 4. And must we study herein to resemble him? Yes: Be ye holy, for I am holy, 1 Pet. i. 16.

10. Is he a just and righteous Governor? Yes: the Lord is righteous in all his ways, Ps. cxlv. 17. Did he ever do wrong to any of his creatures? No: there is no unrighteousness in him, Ps. xcii. 15. And does justice please him? Yes: the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, Ps. xi. 7.

11. Is he a merciful God? Yes: he is the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, Exod. xxxiv. 6. And a good God? Yes: thou art good, and dost good, Ps. cxix. 68. Is he universally good? Yes: for he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works, Ps. cxlv. 9. Is he in a special manner good to his own people? Yes: for truly God is good to Israel, Ps. lxxiii. 1. And should we acquaint ourselves with his goodness? Yes: O taste, and see that the Lord is good, Ps. xxxiv. 8.

12. Is he a God of truth? Yes: the truth of the Lord endures for ever, Ps. cxvii. 2. Will he perform all his promises? Yes: for he is faithful that hath promised, Heb. x. 23. Is there any danger of his deceiving us? No: it is impossible for God to lie. Heb. vi. 18.

13. Is this a complete description of God? No: for, lo, these are but parts of his ways; and how little a portion is heard of him! Job xxvi. 14. Must we therefore always speak of God with reverence? Yes: for behold God is great, and we know him not, Job xxxvi. 26. And must we pray to him to teach us what we shall say? Yes: for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness, Job xxxvii. 19.

Q. 5. *Are there more gods than one.*

A. There is but one only, the living and true God.

1. Are there many gods? No: for though there be that are called gods, yet there is but one God, 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. Can there be but one? No: for he has said, I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Isa. xlvi. 9. Are you sure there is but one? Yes: for the Lord our God is one Lord, and there is none other but he, Mark xii. 29, 32.

2. Is the God whom we serve that one God? Yes: for Jehovah he is God, Jehovah he is God, 1 Kings xviii. 39. Is he infinitely above all pretenders? Yes: for he is a great King above all gods, Ps. xcv. 3. Is he God alone? Yes: O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, thou art the God, even thou alone, Isa. xxxvii. 16. Are all other gods false gods? Yes: for all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens, Ps. xcvi. 5.

3. Is our God the true God? Yes: the Lord he is the true God, Jer. x. 10. Is he the only true God? Yes: this is life eternal, to know the only true God, John xvii. 3. Is he the living God? Yes: the living God, and an everlasting King, Jer. x. 10. Is he the Sovereign Lord? Yes: for he is God over all, blessed for evermore, Rom. ix. 5. Is this one God enough? Yes: for he is God All-sufficient, Gen. xvii. 1.

4. Is the Lord Jehovah the maker of all things? Yes: he is the everlasting God, even the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, Isa. xl. 28. Is he your Maker? Yes: he is the Lord our Maker, Ps. xcv. 6. Is he the owner of all things? Yes; for he is the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, Gen. xiv. 19. Is he your rightful owner? Yes: we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand, Ps. xcv. 7. Is he the ruler of all things? Yes: for his kingdom ruleth over all, Ps. ciii. 19. Is he your ruler? Yes: O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, Ps. cxvi. 16. Is he the benefactor of all the creatures? Yes: for he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, Acts xvii. 25. Is he your benefactor? Yes: for he daily loadeth us with his benefits, Ps. lxviii. 19. Shall he therefore be yours by your own consent? Yes: O God, thou art my God, Ps. lxiii. 1.

Q. 6. *How many persons are there in the Godhead?*

A. There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God; the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

1. Are there three gods? No: for the Lord is one, and his name one, Zech. xiv. 9. Is there more than one person in the Godhead? Yes: for God said, Let *us* make man, Gen. i. 26. Are there distinct persons in the Godhead? Yes: for he who is the brightness of his Father's glory, is the express image of his person, Heb. i. 3. Are there three persons in the Godhead? Yes: for there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, 1 John v. 7.

2. Is the Father God? Yes: for there is one God and Father of all, Eph. iv. 6. Is Jesus Christ the Word? Yes: his name is called the Word of God, Rev. xix. 13. Is the Word God? Yes: for in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, John i. 1. Is the Holy Ghost a divine person? Yes: for the Spirit searcheth all things, 1 Cor. ii. 10.

3. Is it the personal property of the Father to beget the Son? Yes: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, Ps. ii. 7. Is it the personal property of the Son to be begotten of the Father? Yes: for he is the only-begotten of the Father, John i. 14. Is it the personal property of the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and the Son? Yes: for Christ says, I will send you the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, John xv. 26.

4. Are these three one God? Yes: for it is said expressly, these three are one, 1 John v. 7. Are they the same in substance, and equal in power and glory? Yes: for Christ says, I and my Father are one, John x. 30. Can this doctrine be measured by reason? No: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to us, Matt. xvi. 17. But ought we to believe it? Yes: for we are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Matt. xxviii. 19. and we are blessed with the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. And ought we to improve it? Yes: that we all may be one, as the Father is in Christ, and he in the Father, that we also may be one in them, John xvii. 21.

Q. 7. *What are the decrees of God?*

A. The decrees of God are his eternal purposes, according to the counsel of his own will: whereby for his own glory he hath fore-ordained whatever comes to pass.

1. Does God dispose of all things that come to pass? Yes: My times are in thy hand, Ps. xxxi. 15. Does he do it according to his own will: Yes: for he hath done whatsoever he pleased, Ps. cxv. 2. Can any control his will? No: for he doth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, Dan. iv. 35. Has he determined before what he will do? Yes: for known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world, Acts xv. 18.

2. Is there a counsel then in all the will of God? Yes: for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, Eph. i. 11. Is it an eternal counsel? Yes: for it was ordained before the world, 1 Cor.

ii. 7. Is it free? Yes: Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight, Matt. xi. 26. Is it unchangeable? Yes: the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, Ps. xxxiii. 11. Is it for his own glory? Yes: that we should be to the praise of his glory, Eph. i. 12.

Were all the events of time ordained from eternity? Yes: He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, Job xxiii. 14. Does any thing come to pass by chance? No: for the lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord, Prov. xvi. 33. Does every thing come to pass as God has ordained it? Yes: for there are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand, Prov. xix. 21.

4. Can we search out God's counsels? No: for his judgments are a great deep, Ps. xxxvi. 6. Ought we not therefore to acquiesce in them? Yes: Here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him, 2 Sam. xv. 26. May we question God's proceedings? No: for his thoughts are above our thoughts, Isa. lv. 9.

Q. 8. *How does God execute his decrees?*

A. God executes his decrees in the works of creation and providence.

1. Shall all God's decrees be executed? Yes: for the Lord of hosts hath sworn, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, Isa. xiv. 24. Can any of them be defeated? No: for the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? Isa. xiv. 27. Did God execute his decree in the work of creation? Yes: he hath created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created, Rev. iv. 11. And does he execute his decrees in the works of Providence? Yes: for out of the mouth of the Most High both evil and good proceed, Lam. iii. 38.

2. Did God begin to work in the creation of the world? Yes: Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundations of the earth, Heb. i. 10. Is he still working? Yes: for Christ says, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work, John v. 17. Are all his works copied out of his counsels? Yes: for they are what his hand and his counsel determine before to be done, Acts iv. 28.

3. Are God's works many? Yes: O Lord, how manifold are thy works! Ps. civ. 24. Are they great? Yes: his work is honourable and glorious, Ps. cxi. 3. Are they perfect in their kind? Yes: God is the Rock, his work is perfect, Deut. xxxii. 4. Can they be amended? No: whatsoever God doth, nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it, Eccl. iii. 14. Ought they to be studied? Yes: They are sought out of all them that have pleasure therein, Ps. cxi. 2. Is it a great sin to neglect them? Yes: because they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up, Ps. xxviii. 5.

4. Can all God's works be thoroughly discovered? No: for no man can find out the work that God makes from the beginning to the end, Eccl. iii. 11. Can his designs in them be accounted for? No: for his way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters, Ps. lxxvii. 19. But is he glorified in them? Yes: all his works do praise him, Ps. cxlv. 10.

Q. 9. *What is the work of creation?*

A. The work of creation is God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

1. Did God create the world? Yes: in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, Gen. i. 1. Did he create every thing in the world? Yes: for without him was not any thing made that was made, John i. 3. John xii. 7—9. Did he create the world by his word? Yes: for through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, Heb. xi. 3. Did all things come into being by that word? Yes: for by the word of God the heavens were of old, 2 Pet. iii. 5. And are they thereby preserved in being? Yes: by the same word they are kept in store, *v.* 7. Did God find any difficulty in making the world? No: for he spake and it was done; he said, Let there be light, and there was light, Ps. xxxiii. 9. Gen. i. 3. Did he need assistance in it? No: for he stretcheth forth the heavens alone, and spreadeth abroad the earth by himself, Isa. xliv. 24.

2. Did he make all out of nothing? Yes: for the things which are seen were not made of the things which do appear, Heb. xi. 13. Did he bring light out of darkness? Yes: for God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, 2 Cor. iv. 6. And order out of confusion? Yes: for the earth was without form and void, Gen. i. 2. Did he make all in six days? Yes: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, Exod. xx. 11. Did God make all well? Yes: God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good, Gen. i. 31. Did he make all firm? Yes: he hath made a decree which shall not pass, Ps. cxlviii. 6. And all for himself? Yes: the Lord has made all things for himself, Prov. xvi. 4.

3. Did God make all things by Jesus Christ? Yes: for by him also he made the worlds, Heb. i. 2. and created all things by Jesus Christ, Eph. iii. 9. Col. i. 16. John i. iii. Did God manifest his own perfections in the work of creation? Yes: for the heavens declare the glory of God, Ps. xix. 1. Must we give him the glory of this work? Yes: we must worship him that made the heaven and the earth, Rev. xiv. 7. Must we give him thanks for his creatures? Yes: every creature of God is good, and to be received with thanksgiving, 1 Tim. iv. 4. May we be encouraged by the work of creation to trust in God? Yes: My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth, Ps. cxxi. 2.

4. Did God create the angels? Yes: He maketh his angels spirits, Heb. i. 7. Are they attendants upon him? Yes: thousand thousands minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him, Dan. vii. 10. Are they employed for the good of the saints? Yes: they are sent forth to minister for them which shall be heirs of salvation, Heb. i. 14. Have true believers communion with them in faith, hope, and love? Yes: for we are come to an innumerable company of angels, Heb. xii. 22.

5. Did all the angels continue in their integrity? No: There were angels that left their first state, Jude 6. Is it probable that they who fell, fell by pride? Yes: for they that are lifted up with pride, fall into the condemnation of the devil, 1 Tim. iii. 6. Were they punished for their sin? Yes: God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, 2 Pet. ii. 4.

Q. 10. *How did God create man?*

A. God created man male and female, after his image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.

1. Is man God's creature? Yes: for we are also his offspring, Acts xvii. 28. Were our first parents the work of his hands? Yes: male and female created he them, and called their name Adam, Gen. v. 2. Was man made with a consultation? Yes: for God said, Let us make man, Gen. i. 26. Do all the children of men descend from Adam and Eve? Yes: for God has made of one blood all nations of men, Acts xvii. 26.

2. Was man's body at first made out of the earth? Yes: God made man of the dust of the ground, Gen. ii. 7. And are our bodies of the earth earthy? Yes: for I also am formed out of the clay, Job xxxiii. 6. But are they not curiously wrought? Yes: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, Ps. cxxxix. 14. Is God the former of our bodies? Yes: Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and fenced me with bones and sinews, Job x. 11. Is he the author of our senses? Yes: the hearing ear, and seeing eye, the Lord has made, even both of them, Prov. xx. 12.

3. Is God the Father of our spirits? Yes: for he breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, Gen. ii. 7. Has God given each of us a soul? Yes: The Lord liveth that made us this soul, Jer. xxxviii. 16. Is it a rational soul? Yes: for the spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, Prov. xx. 27. Is it immortal? Yes: for the spirit of a man goes upward, Eccl. iii. 21. Does it die with the body? No: for when the dust returns to the earth as it was, the Spirit returns to God who gave it, Eccl. xii. 7. Is God then the Sovereign of the heart? Yes: for he has said, Behold, all souls are mine, Ezek. xviii. 4. Must we therefore commit our souls to him? Yes: Into thine hand I commit my spirit, Ps. xxxi. 5.

4. Was man made after God's image? Yes: God created man in his own image, Gen. i. 27. Did that image consist in knowledge? Yes: for we are renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created us, Col. iii. 10. Did it consist in righteousness and true holiness? Yes: for the new man after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. iv. 24. Was there in man at first a perfect purity and freedom from sin? Yes: Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, Ezek. xxviii. 15. compare xvi. 13. Was there in him a perfect rectitude and disposition to good? Yes: for God made man upright, Eccl. vii. 29. Are there some remains of God's image still upon man? Yes: for men are made after the similitude of God, Jam. iii. 9. Was man made with a dominion over the creatures? Yes: for thou hast put all things under his feet, Ps. viii. 6. Have we not reason to admire God's favour to man? Yes: Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? Ps. cxliv. 3.

Q. 11. *What are God's works of providence?*

A. God's works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions.

1. When God had made the world, did he leave it to itself? No: for he upholdeth all things by the word of his power, Heb. i. 3. Does he see to the whole creation? Yes: for the eyes of the Lord are in every place, Prov. xv. 3. Does he condescend to take notice of his creatures? Yes: he humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth, Ps. cxiii. 6. Is any thing at a distance from him? No: for he is not far from every one of us, Acts xvii. 27. Does he look on as one unconcerned? No: for his eyes behold, and his eyelids try, the children of men, Ps. xi. 4.

2. Does God look after the world of angels? Yes: for he maketh peace in his high places, Job xxv. 2. Does he look after this lower world? Yes: for the eyes of all wait upon him, Ps. cxlv. 15. Does he take care of the fowls? Yes: our heavenly Father feedeth them, Matt. vi. 26. What! even the sparrows? Yes: not one of them shall fall to the ground without our Father, Matt. x. 29. What! and the ravens? Yes: he feeds the young ravens which cry, Ps. cxlvii. 9. Is he the Protector and Benefactor of all the creatures? Yes: Thou preservest them all, Neh. ix. 6. Is he man's Protector and Benefactor? Yes: for in him we live, and move, and have our being, Acts xvii. 28. Do we depend upon God for the support of our life? Yes: for he holdeth our soul in life, Ps. lxvi. 9. And for the comforts of life? Yes: for he giveth us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness, Acts xiv. 17. And do we depend upon him for the safety of our life? Yes: he keepeth all our bones, Ps. xxxiv. 20. And for the con-

tinuance of life? Yes: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days, Deut. xxx. 20.

3. Does God govern all things? Yes: his kingdom ruleth over all, Ps. ciii. 19. Does he govern the holy angels? Yes: for they do his commandments, Ps. ciii. 20. Does he govern the heavenly bodies? Yes: the stars in their courses fought against Sisera, Judg. v. 20. Does he govern the power of the air? Yes: stormy winds fulfil his word, Ps. cxlviii. 8. Does he order what weather it shall be? Yes: for he saith to the snow, Be thou upon the earth, Job xxxvii. 6. And does he govern the inferior creatures? Yes: he spake, and locusts came, Ps. cv. 34. Can he command them? Yes: I have commanded the ravens to feed thee, 1 Kings xvii. 4. Can he control them? Yes: he shut the lions' mouths, Dan. vi. 22. Has he a sovereign dominion over the whole creation? Yes: for the Lord of hosts is his name, Isa. xlvii. 4.

4. Does God govern the children of men? Yes: the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, Dan. iv. 32. Does he govern kings? Yes: for the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, Prov. xxi. 1. And does he govern kingdoms? Yes: for he is the Governor among the nations, Ps. xxii. 28. And families too? Yes: for except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it, Ps. cxxvii. 1. Does he govern great men? Yes: for God is the judge, he puts down one, and sets up another, Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. And mean men too? Yes: for every man's judgment proceedeth from the Lord, Prov. xxix. 26. Can man make his own fortune? No: for the way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man that walketh, to direct his steps, Jer. x. 23. When man purposes, does God dispose? Yes: a man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps, Prov. xvi. 9. Do all comforts and crosses come from God's hand? Yes: for he has said, I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things, Isa. xlv. 7. Does God's providence extend itself to the smallest things? Yes: The very hairs of your head are all numbered, Matt. x. 30.

5. Is God's government holy? Yes: he is holy in all his works, Ps. cxlv. 17. Is it wise? Yes: he is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working, Isa. xxviii. 29. Is it powerful? Yes: for when he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble, Job xxxiv. 29. Is it rightful? Yes: God is greater than man, Job xxxiii. 12. Is it just? Yes: for shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Gen. xviii. 25. Does God sometimes reward and punish in this life? Yes: the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner, Prov. xi. 31. But does he always? No: for all things come alike to all, Eccl. ix. 1, 2.

6. Does God govern the world for the good of his church? Yes: for Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have called thee by thy name, Isa. xlv. 4. Is the government of the world committed to the Lord Jesus? Yes: for he is head over all things unto the church, Eph. i. 22. And is all ordered for God's glory? Yes: for the Lord alone shall be exalted, Isa. ii. 11. Is it a comfort to good men that God governs the world? Yes: The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice, Ps. xcvii. 1. Is it a terror to the wicked? Yes: The Lord reigns, let the people tremble, Ps. xcix. 1. Ought we to give him the praise of it? Yes: Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigns, Rev. xix. 6.

Q. 12. *What special act of providence did God exercise towards man in the estate wherein he was created?*

A. When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience, forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death.

1. Did God make man happy as well as holy? Yes: for he put him into the garden of Eden, Gen. ii. 15. Did he provide comfortably for him? Yes: for he said, I will make him a help meet for him, Gen. ii. 18. Did he admit him into communion with himself? Yes: for he then blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, Gen. ii. 3. Was God well pleased in him? Yes: for his delights were with the sons of men, Prov. viii. 31.

2. Did God give him a law? Yes: the Lord God commanded the man, Gen. ii. 16. Did he give him a command of trial? Yes: Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it, Gen. ii. 17. Did he assure him of happiness, if he obeyed? Yes: for of every tree in the garden (even the tree of life) thou mayest freely eat, Gen. ii. 16. Did he threaten death upon his disobedience? Yes: for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, Gen. ii. 17.

3. Was this God's covenant with Adam? Yes: for we read of those who, like Adam, transgressed the covenant, Hos. vi. 7. marg. Was, Do this and live, one branch of that covenant? Yes: for the man that doeth them, shall live in them, Gal. iii. 12. Was, Fail and die, the other branch of the covenant? Yes: the soul that sinneth, it shall die, Ezek. xviii. 4. Was this the covenant of innocency? Yes: for the law was not of faith, Gal. iii. 12. Was there a mediator of this covenant? No: for it is the better covenant that is established in the hands of a Mediator, Heb. viii. 6.

Q. 13. *Did our first parents continue in the state wherein they were first created?*

A. Our first parents being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the state wherein they were created, by sinning against God.

1. Is man now in the state wherein he was created? No: for God made man upright; but they

have sought out many inventions, Eccl. vii. 29. Can we now say we are perfectly holy? No: If I say I am perfect, that shall prove me perverse, Job ix. 20. Can we say we are perfectly happy? No: for man is born to trouble, Job v. 7. Are we as we were then? No: man was planted a noble vine, but is turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine, Jer. ii. 21. Did man continue long in his state of innocence? No: For man being in honour abideth not, Ps. xlix. 12.

2. Did God leave man to the freedom of his own will? Yes: For if thou scornest, thou alone shall bear it, Prov. ix. 12. Did God draw Adam to sin? No: for God tempteth no man, James i. 13. Is he any way the Author of sin? No: far be it from God that he should do wickedness, Job xxxiv. 10. Did he do what was fit to be done to prevent it? Yes: What could have been done more to my vineyard? Isa. v. 4. Was he obliged to do more? No: for may he not do what he will with his own? Matt. xx. 15. Does all the blame of man's sin lie upon himself then? Yes: O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, Hos. xiii. 9.

3. Did man fall by sinning against God? Yes: Thou hast fallen by thine iniquity, Hos. xiv. 1. Was that the beginning of sin in this world? Yes: for by one man sin entered into the world, Rom. v. 12.

Q. 14. *What is sin?*

A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

1. Is there a moral difference of good and evil? Yes: for we must cease to do evil, and learn to do well, Isa. i. 16, 17. Is it all alike then what we do? No: for God shall bring every work into judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, Eccl. xii. 14. Is there such a thing as sin in thought? Yes: for the thought of foolishness is sin, Prov. xxiv. 9. May sin be committed in word too? Yes: for in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, Prov. x. 19.

2. Does sin suppose a law? Yes: for where there is no law, there is no transgression, Rom. iv. 15. and v. 13. Is sin the breach of a law? Yes: for sin is the transgression of the law, 1 John iii. 4. Is it God's law only that can make a thing to be sin? Yes: For against thee, thee only, have I sinned, Ps. li. 4. Is every breach of God's law sin? Yes: for all unrighteousness is sin, 1 John v. 17. Are we to judge of sin by the law? Yes: for by the law is the knowledge of sin, Rom. iii. 20. Could we discover sin without some law? No: For I had not known sin but by the law, Rom. vii. 7. Is the transgression of the law of nature sin? Yes: for they that have not the written law, show the work of the law written in their hearts, Rom. ii. 14, 15. But does the written law discover the root of sin? Yes: I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet, Rom. vii. 7.

3. Is ignorance of God sin? Yes: He shall take vengeance on them that know not God, 2 Thess. i. 8. Is disaffection to God's government sin? Yes: My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me, Ps. lxxxi. 11. Is all disobedience to God's law sin? Yes: For the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience, Col. iii. 6. Is it a sin to omit the good which God has commanded? Yes: for to him that knows to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin, Jam. iv. 17. Is it a sin to do it negligently? Yes: for if thou doest not well, sin lies at the door, Gen. iv. 7. Is it a sin to do the evil which God has forbidden? Yes: for he has said, O do not this abominable thing which I hate, Jer. xliv. 4. Is the inclination to evil sin? Yes: for St. Paul speaks of the sin that dwells in us, Rom. vii. 17.

4. Is sin the worst of evils? Yes: it is an evil thing, and a bitter, to forsake the Lord, Jer. ii. 19. Is the sinfulness of it the worst thing in it? Yes: for sin by the commandment becomes exceeding sinful, Rom. vii. 13. Is sin worse than affliction? Yes: for Moses by faith chose rather to suffer affliction than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, Heb. xi. 25. Is it displeasing to God? Yes: God is angry with the wicked every day, Ps. vii. 11. Is it destructive to ourselves? Yes: be sure your sin will find you out, Numb. xxxii. 23.

5. Ought we not therefore to take heed of sin? Yes: Stand in awe, and sin not, Ps. iv. 4. And of all appearances of it? Yes: abstain from all appearances of evil, 1 Thess. v. 22. And all approaches towards it? Yes: Touch not the unclean thing, 2 Cor. vi. 17. And must we hate it? Yes: Ye that love the Lord, hate evil, Ps. xcvii. 10. Must little children take heed of sin? Yes: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not, 1 John ii. 1. Is it folly to make light of sin? Yes: fools make a mock at sin, Prov. xiv. 9. Will our observing the law of God be the best preservative against sin? Yes: Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee, Ps. cxix. 11. Will an eye to God be the best argument against sin? Yes: How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God, Gen. xxxix. 9.

Q. 15. *What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the state wherein they were created?*

A. The sin whereby our first parents fell from the state wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

1. Did our first parents eat the forbidden fruit? Yes: Thou hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it, Gen. iii. 17. Was their doing so disobedience? Yes: for it was by one man's disobedience that many were

made sinners, Rom. v. 19. Did the woman eat forbidden fruit first? Yes: the woman being deceived was in the transgression, 1 Tim. ii. 14. Did the serpent tempt her to it? Yes: the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, 2 Cor. xi. 3. Was that serpent the devil? Yes: The old serpent is the devil and Satan, Rev. xx. 2. Did he aim to make man as miserable as himself? Yes: he was a murderer from the beginning, John viii. 44.

2. Did the tempter teach them to question the command? Yes: he said to the woman, Hath God said ye shall not eat? Gen. iii. 1. Did he promise them safety in sin? Yes: he said, Ye shall not surely die, Gen. iii. 4. Did he promise them advantage by the sin? Yes: In the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, v. 5. Did he feed them with high thoughts of themselves? Yes: Ye shall be as gods, v. 5. Did he suggest to them hard thoughts of God? Yes: for he said, God doth know this, v. 5. Did Eve do well to parley with him? No: for we should cease to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge, Prov. xix. 27.

3. Did the devil prevail in the temptation? Yes: for she took of the fruit, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat, Gen. iii. 6. Was there in this sin the lust of the flesh? Yes: for she saw that the tree was good for food. Was there in it the lust of the eye? Yes: for she saw that it was pleasant to the eyes. And the pride of life? Yes: for she saw it was a tree to be desired to make one wise. Was unbelief of the word of God at the bottom of it? Yes: It is the evil heart of unbelief that departs from the living God, Heb. iii. 12. Was there in it an opposition to the divine law? Yes: for sin took occasion by the commandment, Rom. vii. 8. Was disobedience in a small matter a great provocation? Yes: for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is iniquity and idolatry, 1 Sam. xv. 23. If Adam fell thus, have we any reason to be secure? No: Wherefore let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall, 1 Cor. x. 12.

Q. 16. *Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?*

A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression.

1. Are we concerned in our first parents' disobedience? Yes: for by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, Rom. v. 18. Were we in their loins when they ate the forbidden fruit? Yes: for Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living, Gen. iii. 20. Was Adam a common father? Yes: for he was to be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, Gen. i. 28. Was he a public person? Yes: for he was the figure of him that was to come, Rom. v. 14. Was the covenant made with him, and his posterity? Yes: for God always established his covenant with men, and with their seed after them, Gen. ix. 9.

2. Was Adam's sin our ruin then? Yes: for through the offence of one many are dead, Rom. v. 15. Was the honour of human nature thereby stained? Yes: for Adam begat a son in his own likeness, Gen. v. 3. Was the power of the human nature thereby weakened? Yes: for when we were without strength, Christ died for us, Rom. v. 6. Was the purity of it thereby corrupted? Yes: for in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing, Rom. vii. 18. Was Adam himself degenerated! Yes: for God said to him, Dust thou art, Gen. iii. 19. And are we in like manner degenerated? Yes: for we have all borne the image of the earthy, 1 Cor. xv. 49.

3. Is this degeneracy universal? Yes: for all flesh hath corrupted his way, Gen. vi. 12. Did our Lord Jesus descend from Adam by ordinary generation? No: for he is the Lord from heaven, 1 Cor. xv. 47. Did he then sin in Adam? No: for he is undefiled, separate from sinners, Heb. vii. 26. Did all the rest of mankind sin in Adam? Yes: for how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Job xxv. 4. Are the ways of the Lord herein equal? Yes: but our ways are unequal, Ezek. xviii. 29.

Q. 17. *Into what state did the fall bring mankind?*

A. The fall brought mankind into a state of sin and misery.

1. Is mankind in a state of sin? Yes: for both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin, Rom. iii. 9. Is a state of sin a sad state? Yes: for they that are in the flesh cannot please God, Rom. viii. 8. Did the fall bring us into a state of sin? Yes: for by it many were made sinners, Rom. v. 19. Does the world continue in that state? Yes: for the whole world lies in wickedness, 1 John v. 19. And are you by nature in that state? Yes: if I justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me, Job ix. 20.

2. Is mankind in a state of misery? Yes: the misery of man is great upon him, Eccl. viii. 6. Is sin the cause of all that misery? Yes: for death entered by sin, and so death passed upon all men, Rom. v. 12. Is misery the consequence of sin? Yes: for evil pursues sinners, Prov. xiii. 21. Do all the creatures share in the sad effects of sin? Yes: cursed is the ground for thy sake, Gen. iii. 17. And could all this mischief come from that one sin? Yes: for how great a matter does a little fire kindle, James iii. 5, 6.

3. Did the fall bring mankind into a state of apostasy from God? Yes: for they are all gone aside, Ps. xiv. 3. Is that a sinful state? Yes: for it is

great whoredom to depart from the Lord, Hos. i. 2. And is it a miserable state? Yes: Woe unto them, for they have fled from me, Hos. vii. 13.

4. Did the fall bring mankind into a state of slavery to Satan? Yes: for they are taken captive by him at his will, 2 Tim. ii. 26. Is that a sinful state? Yes: for the prince of the power of the air works in the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 2. Is it a miserable state? Yes: for the God of this world hath blinded their minds, 2 Cor. iv. 4. Is it like the condition of the prodigal son? Yes: for he went into a far country, wasted his substance, began to be in want, and was sent into the fields to feed swine, Luke xv. 13—15.

Q. 18. *Wherein consists the sinfulness of that state whereinto man fell?*

A. The sinfulness of that state whereinto man fell consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, (which is commonly called original sin,) together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

1. Are we all born under guilt? Yes: for all the world is guilty before God, Rom. iii. 19. Does the whole race of mankind stand attainted at God's bar? Yes: for the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, Gal. iii. 22. Is this according to God's rule of judgment? Yes: for he visiteth the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, Exod. xx. 5. Is not God unrighteous who thus takes vengeance? No: God forbid, for then how shall God judge the world, Rom. iii. 6.

2. Are we all born in sin? Yes: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me, Ps. li. 5. Are we of a sinful brood? Yes: for we are a seed of evil-doers, Isa. i. 4. May we be truly called sinners by nature? Yes: Thou wast called a transgressor from the womb, Isa. xlviii. 8.

3. Is there in every one of us by nature the want of original righteousness? Yes: there is none righteous, no, not one, Rom. iii. 10. Is there in us an aversion to that which is good? Yes: for the carnal mind is enmity against God, Rom. viii. 7. Is there in us a moral impotency to that which is good? Yes: for the carnal mind is not in subjection to the law of God, neither indeed can be, Rom. viii. 7. Can we of ourselves do any thing that is good? No: for we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, 2 Cor. iii. 5.

4. Is there in us a proneness to that which is evil? Yes: My people are bent to backsliding from me, Hos. xi. 7. Are there the snares of sin in our bodies? Yes: for there is a law in the members warring against the law of the mind, Rom. vii. 23. And are there the seeds of sin in our souls? Yes: For when I would do good, evil is present with me, Rom. vii. 21. And is the stain of sin upon both? Yes: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, Rom. iii. 23.

5. Did we all bring sin into the world with us? Yes: for man is born like the wild ass's colt, Job xi. 12. Is it in little children? Yes: for foolishness is in the heart of a child, Prov. xxii. 15. As reason improves, does sin grow up with it? Yes: for when the blade is sprung up, then appear the tares also, Matt. xiii. 26. Is it not a wonder of mercy then that we are any of us alive? Yes: it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, Lam. iii. 22.

6. Is the whole nature of man corrupted by the fall? Yes: The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, Isa. i. 5. Is the understanding corrupted? Yes: the understanding is darkened, being alienated from the life of God, Eph. iv. 18. Is that unapt to admit the rays of divine light? Yes: for they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Is the will corrupted? Yes: The neck is an iron sinew, Isa. xlviii. 4. And is that unapt to submit to the rule of the divine law? Yes: For what is the Almighty (say they) that we should serve him? Job xxi. 15. Are the thoughts corrupted? Yes: for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, Gen. viii. 21. Is the fancy full of vanity? Yes: vain thoughts lodge within us, Jer. iv. 15. Are the affections corrupted? Yes: It is a carnal mind, Rom. viii. 7. Is conscience itself corrupted? Yes: even the mind and conscience is defiled, Tit. i. 15. Is the whole soul corrupted? Yes: the heart is deceitful above all things, Jer. xvii. 9.

7. Is this corruption of the mind sin? Yes: for it is enmity agianst God, Rom. viii. 7. Have we it from our original? Yes: for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, John iii. 6. Do we derive it through our parents? Yes: for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Job xiv. 4. Does it render us odious to God's holiness? Yes: for the foolish shall not stand in his sight, Ps. v. 5. Does it render us obnoxious to his justice? Yes: for death reigns over them that have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgressions, Rom. v. 14.

8. Does this original corruption produce actual transgression? Yes: for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, Matt. vii. 18. Does it produce it betimes? Yes: for the wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies, Ps. lviii. 3. Does it produce it naturally? Yes: as a fountain casteth out her waters, Jer. vi. 7. Does all sin begin in the heart? Yes: for when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, James i. 15. Is it not necessary therefore we should have a new nature? Yes: Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again, John iii. 7. Can we get to heaven without it? No: for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor xv. 50.

Q. 19. *What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?*

A. All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.

1. When our first parents had eaten the forbidden fruit, did they become as gods? No: they were like the beasts that perish, Ps. xlix. 12. Did the devil make his words good then? No: for he is a liar, and the father of it, John viii. 44. Did not he put a cheat upon them? Yes: the woman said, the serpent beguiled me, Gen. iii. 13. Did shame come in with sin? Yes: for they knew that they were naked, Gen. iii. 7. Did fear come in with sin? Yes: for they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden, Gen. iii. 8. Was not that their misery? Yes: for fear hath torment, 1 John iv. 18.

2. Did they lose communion with God? Yes: for he drove out the man, Gen. iii. 24. Is fallen man unworthy of communion with God? Yes: for what communion has light with darkness? 2 Cor. ii. 14. Is he unfit for communion with God? Yes: for can two walk together except they be agreed? Amos iii. 3. Could fallen man ever get to heaven by virtue of the covenant of innocency? No: for cherubims and a flaming sword were set to keep that way to the tree of life, Gen. iii. 24.

3. Is fallen man under God's wrath? Yes: for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, Rom. i. 18. Are we all so by nature? Yes: we are by nature children of wrath, even as others, Eph. ii. 2. Are we so by reason of sin? Yes: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience, Eph. v. 6. Is there a distance between God and man by reason of sin? Yes: your iniquities have separated between you and your God, Isa. lix. 2. Is there a quarrel between God and man by reason of sin? Yes: My soul loathed them, and their soul also it abhorred me, Zech. xi. 8. Is it not sad to lie under God's wrath? Yes: for who knows the power of his anger? Ps. xc. 11.

4. Is fallen man under God's curse? Yes: for cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them, Gal. iii. 10. Is this curse in force against all wicked people? Yes: the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, Prov. iii. 33. Has sin brought a curse upon the world? Yes: Cursed is the ground for thy sake, Gen. iii. 17.

5. Is mankind by the fall become liable to the miseries of this life? Yes: In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life, Gen. iii. 17. Are we all by nature liable to these miseries? Yes: for man is born to trouble, Job v. 7. Is all the hurtfulness of the creatures the effect of sin? Yes: Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth, Gen. iii. 18. Is the toil of business the effect of sin? Yes: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, v. 19. Is pain and sickness the effect of sin? Yes: There is not any rest in my bones, because of my sin, Ps. xxxviii. 3. Are all our crosses the effect of sin? Yes: our sins have withholden good things from us, Jer. v. 25. Should we not therefore bear them patiently? Yes: Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin? Lam. iii. 39.

6. Is all mankind by the fall become liable to death itself? Yes: for so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, Rom. v. 12. Was a sentence of death immediately passed upon fallen man? Yes: Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return, Gen. iii. 19. Do we all deserve death? Yes: the wages of sin is death, Rom. vi. 23. Is it the natural consequence of sin? Yes: for sin, when it is finished, brings forth death, Jam. i. 15. Can any avoid it? No: What man is he that liveth and shall not see death? Ps. lxxxix. 48. Is it determined? Yes: it is appointed to men once to die, Heb. ix. 27. Do you expect it? Yes: I know that thou wilt bring me to death, Job xxx. 23. Is sin the sting of death? Yes: the sting of death is sin, 1 Cor. xv. 56. Is the amazing fear of death the effect of sin? Yes: there are those who through fear of death are all their life-time subject to bondage, Heb. ii. 15. Is the body's rotting in the grave the effect of sin? Yes: as drought and heat consume the snow-waters, so doth the grave those which have sinned, Job xxiv. 19.

7. Is mankind by the fall become liable to the pains of hell for ever? Yes: for he that wanders out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead, Prov. xxi. 16. Ps. ix. 17. Can God make a soul for ever miserable? Yes: for after he hath killed he hath power to cast into hell, Luke xii. 5. Is there a state of punishment in the other life? Yes: for we are warned to flee from the wrath to come. Matt. iii. 7. Is it the desert of sin? Yes: for when God renders to every man according to his works, he will render indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, Rom. ii. 8, 9. Will it be the portion of impenitent sinners? Yes: Ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell, Matt. xxiii. 33.

8. Is hell the wrath of an everlasting God? Yes: for the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it, Isa. xxx. 33. Is it the anguish of an immortal soul? Yes: for their worm dieth not, Mark ix. 44. Is any way of relief open to them? No: Betwixt us and you there is a gulf fixed, Luke xvi. 26. Is their punishment therefore everlasting? Yes: These shall go away into ever-

lasting punishment, Matt. xxv. 46. Should we not every one of us dread it? Yes: for it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, Heb. x. 31. Isa. xxxiii. 14.

Q. 20. *Did God leave all mankind to perish in the state of sin and misery?*

A. God having out of his mere good pleasure from all eternity elected some to eternal life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of a state of sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation by a Redeemer.

1. Might not God justly have left all mankind to perish in their fallen state? Yes: for in his sight shall no man living be justified, Ps. cxliii. 2. Would God have been a loser by it, if they had been left to perish? No: for, can a man be profitable to God? Job xxii. 2. But did he leave them to perish? No: for the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appears, Tit. iii. 4. Was the case of fallen angels helpless and desperate? Yes: for God spared not them, 2 Pet. ii. 4. But is the case of fallen man so? No: for he is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, 2 Pet. iii. 9. Is God's patience a token for good? Yes: the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation, 2 Pet. iii. 15. Does it appear that God has a good will to man's salvation? Yes: As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn and live, Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Is this an encouragement to us all to hope in his mercy? Yes: for if the Lord had been pleased to kill us, he would not have showed us such things as these, Judg. xiii. 23.

2. Could man help himself out of his state of sin and misery? No: for when we were without strength Christ died for the ungodly, Rom. v. 6. Could any creature help us? No: for none of them can by any means redeem his brother, Ps. xlix. 7. Could God himself only help us? Yes: O Israel! thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help, Hos. xiii. 9. Did God contrive a way for man's recovery? Yes: he hath devised means that his banished may not be expelled from him, 2 Sam. xiv. 14. Was it the contrivance of infinite wisdom? Yes: it is the wisdom of God in a mystery, ordained before the world for our glory, 1 Cor. ii. 7. Has he provided a way for our recovery? Yes: I have found a ransom, Job xxxiii. 24.

3. Did God particularly design the salvation of a remnant of mankind? Yes: there is a remnant according to the election of grace, Rom. xi. 5. Are there some whom God has chosen? Yes: God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit, 2 Thes. ii. 13. Is there a certain number of such? Yes: for their names are in the book of life, Phil. iv. 3. Rev. xiii. 8. Were they chosen from eternity? Yes: he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. Were they chosen for the sake of any thing in themselves? No: Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, John xv. 16. But of his mere good pleasure? Yes: he hath predestinated us according to the good pleasure of his will, Eph. i. 5. Were they chosen to salvation as the end? Yes: God had appointed us to obtain salvation, 1 Thess. v. 9. And to sanctification as the means? Yes: he has chosen us that we should be holy, Eph. i. 4. Was it for the glory of God? Yes: that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, Rom. ix. 23.

4. Shall the election obtain? Yes: the purpose of God according to election shall stand, Rom. ix. 11. Does our salvation begin there? Yes: we love him, because he first loved us, 1 John iv. 19. Are others passed by? Yes: when the election hath obtained, the rest are blinded, Rom. xi. 7. Does God know certainly whom he has chosen? Yes: the Lord knows them that are his, 2 Tim. ii. 19. Do we know it? No: for secret things belong not to us, Deut. xxix. 29. Can we know our own election otherwise than by our being sanctified? No: we must make our calling, and so make our election, sure, 2 Pet. i. 10.

5. Were the elect given to Christ? Yes: Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, John xvii. 6. Did he undertake their salvation? Yes: For this is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, John vi. 39. Was it promised him that he should effect it? Yes: He shall see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand, Isa. liii. 10. And was he himself assured of it? Yes: All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, John vi. 37. And does it always prove so? Yes: As many as were ordained to eternal life believed, Acts xiii. 48. And shall any of them miscarry? No: for it is said of seducers, they shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect, Matt. xxiv. 24.

6. Has God entered into a new covenant, pursuant hereto? Yes: for we are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. vi. 14. Does he insist upon the terms of the first covenant? No: he hath not dealt with us after our sins, Ps. ciii. 10. Is he willing to deal with us upon new terms? Yes: I will make a new covenant with them, Jer. xxxi. 31. Is he willing to be ours in covenant? Yes: I will be to them a God, Heb. viii. 10. Will he accept us as his? Yes: they shall be to me a people. And will he be at peace with us? Yes: God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, 2 Cor. v. 19.

7. Is this wrought out by a Redeemer? Yes: for there is not salvation in any other, Acts iv. 12. Was that Redeemer of God's own providing? Yes: God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, John iii. 16. Is the new covenant made with us in Christ? Yes: for he is the Mediator of the

better covenant. Heb. viii. 6. Is it a covenant much for our advantage? Yes: for it is well ordered in all things and sure. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Is perfect obedience the condition of it? No: for if by grace, then it is no more of works. Rom. xi. 6. Is faith the condition of it? Yes: for by grace ye are saved through faith. Eph. ii. 8. Is sincerity accepted as our gospel perfection? Yes: Walk before me, and be thou perfect. Gen. xvii. 1. Is that which is required in the covenant promised in the covenant? Yes: I will cause you to walk in my statutes. Ezek. xxxvi. 27. Does every transgression in the covenant cast us out of the covenant? No: I will visit their transgression with a rod, but my loving-kindness will I not utterly take away. Ps. lxxxix. 32, 33.

8. Will this covenant deliver us out of a state of sin and misery? Yes: Whosoever believes in Christ shall not perish. John iii. 16. Will it bring us into a state of salvation? Yes: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. John iii. 36. And can we desire any more? No: It is all my salvation, and all my desire. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

9. Was there intimation given to Adam of this way of salvation by a Redeemer? Yes: for it was said to him, That the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head. Gen. iii. 15. Was it made known to the Old-Testament saints? Yes: for of this salvation have the prophets inquired, and searched diligently. 1 Pet. i. 10. But is it brought to a clearer light in the New Testament? Yes: Go preach the gospel to every creature: he that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned, Mark xvi. 15, 16. Is this good news to fallen man? Yes: Glory be to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will towards men. Luke ii. 14. Does this covenant exclude any that do not exclude themselves? No: Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely. Rev. xxii. 17.

Q. 21. *Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?*

A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man; and so was, and continues to be, God and Man, in two distinct natures, and one person, *for ever.*

1. Did mankind need a Redeemer? Yes: for by our iniquities we had sold ourselves. Isa. l. 1. Did the elect themselves need a Redeemer? Yes: for we ourselves also were sometimes disobedient. Tit. iii. 3. Would there have been a Redeemer if Adam had not sinned? No: for they that be whole need not a physician, Matt. ix. 12. Could an angel have been our Redeemer? No: for his angels he charged with folly. Job iv. 18.

2. Is Jesus Christ the Redeemer? Yes: there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Is he the only Redeemer? Yes: for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Acts iv. 12. Is he a universal Redeemer? Yes: he gave himself a ransom for all. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Did he die to purchase a general offer? Yes: the Son of man was lifted up, that whosoever believes in him should not perish. John iii. 14, 15. Is all the worth the honour for Christ's mediation? Yes: for by him all things consist. Col. i. 17. Is it long of Christ men that so many perish? No: I would have gathered you, and you would not, Matt. xxiii. 37.

3. Is Christ in a special manner the Redeemer of God's elect? Yes: I lay down my life for the sheep. John x. 15. Was their salvation particularly designed in Christ's undertaking? Yes. Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. John xvii. 2. Was their sanctification particularly designed? Yes: For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified. John xvii. 19. Is all mankind redeemed from among devils? Yes: for none must say as they did, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God, Matt. viii. 29. But are the elect redeemed from among men? Yes: these were redeemed from among men. Rev. xiv. 4.

4. Is the Redeemer LORD? Yes: every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, Phil. ii. 11. Is he Jesus a Saviour? Yes: Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, Matt. i. 21. Is he Christ anointed? Yes: for God, even thy God, hath anointed thee, Heb. i. 9. Is he Emmanuel? Yes: They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us, Matt. i. 23.

5. Is he the Son of God? Yes: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, Matt. xvi. 16. Is he the Eternal Son of God? Yes: for he is before all things, Col. i. 17. Is he God? Yes: unto the Son he says, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, Heb. i. 8. Is he true God? Yes: His Son Jesus Christ is the true God, and eternal life, 1 John v. 20. Is he the most high God? Yes: for Christ is over all, God, blessed for ever, Rom. ix. 5. Is he equal with the Father? Yes: for he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, Phil. ii. 6. Is he one with the Father? Yes: I and my Father are one, John x. 30. Is he to be worshipped as God? Yes: for all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father, John v. 23. Is he worshipped by the angels? Yes: Let all the angels of God worship him, Heb. i. 6. And is there good reason for it? Yes: for he is the brightness of his Father's glory, Heb. i. 3. Was he begotten of his Father before all worlds? Yes. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, Ps. ii. 7. Is he the only-begotten Son of God? Yes: We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, John i. 14.

6. Did the Son of God become man? Yes: the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, John i. xiv. Did he come into this world? Yes: he came forth from the Father, and came into the world, John xvi. 28. Did he come in the fittest time? Yes: when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, Gal. iv. 4. Did he come with a full commission? Yes: for the Father sanctified him, and sent him into the world, John x. 36. Did he come to save us? Yes: The son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost, Luke xix. 10. Did he come to conquer Satan? Yes: for this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil, 1 John iii. 8.

7. Did the Redeemer take our nature upon him? Yes: he was found in fashion as a man, Phil. ii. 8. Had he a being before his incarnation? Yes: Before Abraham was, I am, John viii. 58. Had he a being before the world? Yes: for the same was in the beginning with God, John i. 2. Is not his incarnation a great mystery? Yes: without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Is it necessary that we believe it? Yes: for he that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God, 1 John iv. 3. Was Jesus Christ God even when he was upon earth? Yes: I am in the Father, and the Father in me, John xiv. 11. Is he man now he is in heaven? Yes: for he that descended is the same also that ascended, Eph. iv. 10.

8. Is the Redeemer both God and man? Yes: for to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and he shall be called the mighty God, the everlasting Father, Isa. ix. 6. Is he both the Son of God, and the Son of man? Yes: he was the Son of Adam, he was the Son of God, Luke iii. 38. Does he continue to be so? Yes: for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, Heb. xiii. 8. Was he man that he might suffer? Yes: for without shedding of blood is no remission, Heb. ix. 22. Was he God that he might satisfy? Yes: for God has purchased the church with his own blood, Acts xx. 28. Is he God and man in two distinct natures? Yes: for he is both the root and offspring of David, Rev. xxii. 16. compare Matt. xxii. 45. Is he so in one person? Yes: for to us there is but one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him, 1 Cor. viii. 6. Is he so for ever? Yes: he is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, Rev. xxii. 13.

9. Is this Jesus the true Messiah promised to the fathers? Yes: we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world, John iv. 42. Were the Scriptures fulfilled in him? Yes: to him give all the prophets witness, Acts x. 43. Did his miracles prove his doctrine? Yes: The works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me, John v. 36. Did the Father himself bear witness of him? Yes: by a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him, Matt. xvii. 5. May we venture our souls upon this foundation? Yes: for this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, 1 John v. 11.

Q. 22. *How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?*

A. Christ the Son of God became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

1. Did Christ the Son of God become man? Yes: forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, Heb. ii. 14. Was it requisite he should become man? Yes: for in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, Heb. ii. 17. Has the Son of man the fulness of the Godhead? Yes: for in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, Col. ii. 9. Has the Son of God the tenderness of a man? Yes: for he was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Heb. iv. 15.

2. Did Christ take unto himself a true body? Yes: A body hast thou prepared me, Heb. x. 5. Was it a body like unto ours? Yes: for he was in the likeness of sinful flesh, Rom. viii. 3. Did he take to himself a human soul? Yes: for he said, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, Matt. xxvi. 38.

3. Was he conceived by ordinary generation? No: for he said, Ye are beneath, I am from above, John viii. 23. Was he conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost? Yes: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, Luke i. 35. Was he born of the Virgin Mary? Yes: the Scripture was fulfilled, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, Matt. i. 23. Was his conception and birth supernatural? Yes: that which was conceived in the Virgin Mary was of the Holy Ghost, Matt. i. 20. Yet was he really and truly man? Yes: for he is not ashamed to call us brethren, Heb. ii. 11.

4. Was Christ the seed of the woman? Yes: for he was made of a woman, Gal. iv. 4. Was the Scripture therein fulfilled? Yes: for the seed of the woman must break the serpent's head, Gen. iii. 15. Was he the Son of Abraham? Yes: for he took on him the seed of Abraham, Heb. ii. 16. Was the Scripture therein fulfilled? Yes: for it was said to Abraham, In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, Gen. xii. 2. Was he the Son of David? Yes: Hosanna to the Son of David, Matt. xxi. 9. Was the Scripture therein fulfilled? Yes: He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of all his holy prophets, Luke i. 69, 70.

5. Was Christ born in Bethlehem? Yes: To you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, Luke ii. 11. Was he born among the Jews? Yes: of them as concerning the flesh, Christ came, Rom. ix. 5. And was it the honour of that nation? Yes: he was the glory of his people Israel, Luke ii. 32. Did he come when the Messiah was expected? Yes: they then looked for redemption in Jerusalem, Luke ii. 38. Did he come when the sceptre was departed from Judah? Yes: for there then went out a decree that all the world should be taxed, Luke ii. 1. Did the angels attend him at his birth? Yes: there was a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, Luke ii. 13.

6. Was the Redeemer born in sin as we are? No: he was without sin, Heb. iv. 15. Was he perfectly pure and holy? Yes: That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God, Luke i. 35. Was he pure and holy in his whole life? Yes: he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, 1 Pet. ii. 22. Was it requisite he should be so? Yes: such a High Priest became us, that was holy, harmless, and undefiled, Heb. vii. 26. Could he have satisfied for our sin, if he had had any sin of his own? No: for he must through the eternal Spirit offer himself without spot, Heb. ix. 14.

7. Was he subject to the sinless infirmities of our natures? Yes: he was in all points tempted like as we are, Heb. iv. 15. Was he hungry? Yes: when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards an hungred, Matt. iv. 2. Was he weary? Yes: Being weary with his journey, he sat on the well, John iv. 6. Did he sleep? Yes: when the ship was covered with waves he was asleep, Matt. viii. 24. Did he pass through the ages of human life? Yes: for Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, Luke ii. 52.

8. Was the Redeemer willing to be incarnate for us? Yes: for when he cometh into the world, he saith, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, Heb. x. 5, 7. Is it well for us that he was so? Yes: for by this will we are sanctified, Heb. x. 10. Was Christ's incarnation great condescension in him? Yes: for hereby he was made a little lower than the angels, Heb. ii. 9. Was it a great honour to our nature? Yes: What is man that thou art thus mindful of him? Heb. ii. 6—8. Is it good news to mankind? Yes: This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15.

Q. 23. *What offices does Christ execute as our Redeemer?*

A. Christ as our Redeemer executes the offices of a Prophet, of a Priest, and of a King, both in his state of humiliation and exaltation.

1. Is Christ a complete Redeemer? Yes: for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, Col. i. 19. Is he completely qualified for the undertaking? Yes: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him, John iii. 34. Is he authorized for it? Yes: for all things are delivered to him of the Father, Matt. xi. 27. Has he a full commission? Yes: for the Father judgeth no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son, John v. 22. And has he an ability equal to his authority? Yes: for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, *v.* 26.

2. Is there all that in Christ which fallen man stands in need of? Yes: for Christ is all, and in all, Col. iii. 11. Is he light? Yes: I am the light of the world, John viii. 12. Is he life? Yes: in him was life, and the life was the light of men, John i. 4. Is he our peace? Yes: he is our peace, Eph. ii. 14. Is he our head? Yes: he is the head of the body, the church, Col. i. 18. Is he the door? Yes: I am the door of the sheep, John x. 7. Is he the way? Yes: I am the way, the truth, and the life, John xiv. 6. Can we come to God as a Father, otherwise than by Jesus Christ as Mediator? No: for no man cometh to the Father but by me, John xiv. 6. Is he our food? Yes: I am that bread of life, John vi. 48. Is he our friend? Yes: This is my beloved, and this is my friend, Cant. v. 16.

3. Is Jesus Christ a Redeemer in office? Yes: for God hath exalted him with his own right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, Acts v. 31. Is he duly put in office? Yes: for him hath God the Father sealed, John vi. 27. Does he duly execute his office? Yes: for he was faithful to him that appointed him, Heb. iii. 2. Is he a Prophet? Yes: This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world, John vi. 14. Is he a Priest? Yes: he is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Heb. iii. 1. Is he a King? Yes: he is King of kings, and Lord of lords, Rev. xix. 16.

4. Did Christ execute these offices in his state of humiliation? Yes: I have glorified thee on the earth, John xvii. 4. Does he execute them in his state of exaltation? Yes: for in heaven itself he now appears in the presence of God for us, Heb. ix. 24. Is he then an all-sufficient Saviour? Yes: he is able to save to the uttermost all those that come to God by him, Heb. vii. 25. And is he as willing to save as he is able? Yes: Whosoever comes unto me I will in no wise cast out, John vi. 37.

Q. 24. *How does Christ execute the office of a Prophet?*

A Christ executes the office of a Prophet, in revealing to us by his Word and Spirit the will of God for our salvation.

1. Does Christ execute the office of a Prophet? Yes: We know that thou art a Teacher come from God, John iii. 2. Does God speak to us by him?

Yes: he hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, Heb. i. 2. Were there prophets under the Old Testament? Yes: God sent his servants the prophets, Jer. xxv. 4. But was Christ above them all? Yes: for he is the Lord God of the holy prophets, Rev. xxii. 6. compare Col. i. 11. And were they his agents? Yes: it was the Spirit of Christ in them that testified, 1 Pet. i. 11.

2. Was Moses the great type of Christ as a prophet? Yes: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me, Acts iii. 22. But was Christ greater than Moses? Yes: for Moses was faithful as a servant, but Christ as a Son, Heb. iii. 5, 6. And is the doctrine of Christ better than that of Moses? Yes: for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John i. 17. Was Christ completely qualified to be a Prophet? Yes: for in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii. 3. Was ever any other so well qualified? No: for no man knows the Father, but the Son, Matt. xi. 27.

3. Has Christ, as a Prophet, revealed God's will to us? Yes: for he said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me, John vii. 16. and xii. 49, 50. Has he revealed God's will concerning our duty? Yes: for he did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil, Matt. v. 17. And concerning our happiness? Yes: for he was anointed to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, Luke iv. 18.

4. Did Christ execute this office when he was on earth? Yes: for he taught them as one having authority, Matt. vii. 29. Did he introduce his doctrine with Thus saith the Lord, like the Old-Testament prophets? No: but Verily, Verily, I say unto you, John iii. 3. Did he confirm his doctrine by miracles? Yes: believe me (said he) for the very works' sake, John xiv. 11. Were his miracles many? Yes: many signs did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, John xx. 30. Were they profitable? Yes: he went about doing good, Acts x. 38. Did Christ teach by the example of his life? Yes: that we might follow his steps, 1 Pet. ii. 21.

5. Does he still execute this office? Yes: for he said, I have declared thy name unto them, and will declare it, John xvii. 26. Does he reveal God's will to us by his word? Yes: for these things are written that we may believe, John xx. 31. And by his Spirit? Yes: The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, he shall teach you all things, John xiv. 26. Does Jesus Christ teach his people? Yes: All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, Isa. liv. 13. And does he teach effectually? Yes: for the Son of man is come, and hath given us an understanding, 1 John v. 20. And does he teach compassionately? Yes: for he can have compassion on the ignorant, Heb. v. 2.

6. Must we learn of this Teacher? Yes: Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, Matt. xi. 29. Are we to receive his doctrine? Yes: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, Col. iii. 16. And must we abide in it? Yes: If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, John viii. 31.

Q. 25. *How does Christ execute the office of a Priest?*

A. Christ executes the office of a Priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.

1. Did fallen man need a Priest? Yes: for every high priest is ordained for man in things pertaining to God, Heb. v. 1. Did Christ execute the office of a Priest? Yes: We have a great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, Heb. iv. 14. Was he appointed to this office? Yes: for Christ glorified not himself to be made a High Priest, Heb. v. 5. Was he confirmed in this office? Yes: for the Lord sware, and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever, Heb. vii. 21.

2. Did Christ, as a Priest, make atonement for sin? Yes: he is a merciful and faithful High Priest, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, Heb. ii. 17. Did he do this by the sacrifice of himself? Yes: he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, Heb. ix. 26. Was he himself the Priest? Yes: for through the eternal Spirit he offered himself, Heb. ix. 14. Was he himself the sacrifice? Yes: he made his soul an offering for sin, Isa. liii. 10. Was he himself the altar? Yes: for we have an altar, Heb. xiii. 10. Would not the legal sacrifices serve? No: for it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin, Heb. x. 4. Did God declare them insufficient? Yes: Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, *v.* 5. Was this sacrifice necessary then? Yes: what the law could not do, in that it was weak, that Christ did, Rom. viii. 3.

3. Did Christ, as a sacrifice, bear our sins? Yes: his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, 1 Pet. ii. 24. Did he bear them by the Father's appointment? Yes: the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all, Isa. liii. 6. Did he suffer for them? Yes: he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, *v.* 5. And not for any sin of his own? No: Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself, Dan. ix. 26. Did he suffer to satisfy for sin? Yes: he was once offered to bear the sins of many, Heb. ix. 28. And was the satisfaction accepted? Yes: he gave himself for us, a sacrifice to God of a sweet smelling savour, Eph. v. 2.

4. Did Christ offer himself voluntarily? Yes: No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself, John x. 18. Was it his own act and deed to make his soul an offering? Yes: for he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, Luke xxiii. 46. Did this sacrifice need to be repeated? No: for by one offering he perfected for ever them

that are sanctified, Heb. x. 14. Did Christ do this for the purchase of our pardon? Yes: for when he did it, he said, Father, forgive them, Luke xxiii. 34. Was it designed to save us from ruin? Yes: he gave his life a ransom for many, Matt. xx. 28. And to reconcile us to God? Yes: for he made peace through the blood of his cross, Col. i. 20. Is this our plea for peace and pardon? Yes: Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, Rom. viii. 34. Is Christ then the great propitiation? Yes: he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world, 1 John ii. 2. And have we hereby access to God? Yes: he suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, 1 Pet. iii. 18. And had the Old-Testament saints the benefit of this sacrifice? Yes: for he was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, Rev. xiii. 8.

5. Does Christ, as a Priest, make intercession? Yes: for he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors, Isa. liii. 12. Is he always doing this? Yes: he ever lives, making intercession, Heb. vii. 25. Does he do this as an Advocate? Yes: If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, 1 John ii. 1. And as a High Priest? Yes: Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord, Exod. xxviii. 12. Does he make intercession in the virtue of his satisfaction? Yes: for by his own blood he entered into the holy place, Heb. ix. 12.

6. Is Christ a Priest after the order of Aaron? No: but after the order of Melchisedec, Ps. cx. 4. Is he a royal Priest? Yes: for he is a Priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both, Zec. vi. 13. Is he a priest that needs a successor? No: for this man, because he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, Heb. vii. 24. Is he a Priest that needs a sacrifice for himself? No: for the law makes men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath makes the Son, who is consecrated for evermore, Heb. vii. 28. Have all believers an interest in Christ's priesthood? Yes: for we have a High Priest over the house of God, Heb. x. 21. Is this an encouragement in our approaches to God? Yes: let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, Heb. iv. 16. And is this it we must depend upon for our acceptance with God? Yes: for spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

Q. 26. *How does Christ execute the office of a King?*

A. Christ executes the office of a King, in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

1. Is Christ put into the office of a King? Yes: I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion, Ps. ii. 6. Does he execute that office? Yes: he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, Luke i. 33. Is he King as Mediator? Yes: he hath authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man, John v. 27. Is his kingdom a spiritual kingdom? Yes: my kingdom is not of this world, John xviii. 36.

2. Is Christ universal monarch? Yes: for all power is given to him both in heaven and on earth, Matt. xxviii. 18. Has he a right to rule all? Yes: he is Lord of all, Acts x. 36. Does he rule all? Yes: he is the Governor among the nations, Ps. xxii. 28. Does he rule all for the good of his church? Yes: he is head over all things to the church, Eph. i. 22. Is he in a special manner the church's King? Yes: O daughter of Sion, thy King comes, Zech. ix. 9.

3. Does Christ, as a King, subdue his people to himself? Yes: Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, Ps. cx. 3. Does he do it by the word of his grace? Yes: he draws with the cords of a man, and with the bands of love, Hos. xi. 4. Does he do it effectually? Yes: he makes ready a people prepared for the Lord, Luke i. 17. Does he conquer the opposition of the carnal mind? Yes: for the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, 2 Cor. x. 4. Does he set up his throne in the soul? Yes: bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. x. 5. And does he rule there? Yes: for he writes his law in their hearts, Heb. viii. 10.

4. Does Christ, as a King, reign in his church? Yes: The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, Isa. xxxiii. 22. Does he enact laws? Yes: he gave commandments to his apostles, Acts i. 2. Does he commission officers? Yes: By me kings reign, Prov. viii. 15. Does he give judgment? Yes: we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, 2 Cor. v. 10. Is homage and allegiance due to him? Yes: for at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, Phil. ii. 10. Does he rule in righteousness? Yes: the sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre, Ps. xlv. 6.

5. Does Christ, as a King, protect his subjects? Yes: for he shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, Isa. xxxii. 2. And does he secure the peace of his kingdom? Yes: for this man shall be the peace, Mic. v. 5. Has he authority to pardon sin? Yes: the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sin, Matt. ix. 6. Has he authority to reward services? Yes: I will give thee a crown of life, Rev. ii. 10.

6. Does Christ, as King, restrain his enemies? Yes: on this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, Matt. xvi. 18. Will he conquer them at last? Yes: for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet, 1 Cor. xv. 25. Will he conquer death itself? Yes: the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death,

1 Cor. xv. 26. Does he count those his enemies that will not have him to reign over them? Yes: Those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them bring hither, and slay them before me, Luke xix. 27.

7. Is Christ a merciful King? Yes: he is meek, and having salvation, Zech. ix. 9. Is he the poor man's king? Yes: he shall deliver the needy when he cries, Ps. lxxii. 12. Has he a large kingdom? Yes: he shall have dominion from sea to sea, Ps. lxxii. 8. Have we reason to hope it shall be larger than now it is? Yes: for the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, Rev. xi. 15. Shall it be a lasting kingdom? Yes: his throne shall be as the days of heaven, Ps. lxxxix. 29. And when the mystery of God shall be finished, shall the kingdom of the Redeemer be resigned to the Creator? Yes: then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, 1 Cor. xv. 24.

8. Ought we to rejoice in Christ's dominion? Yes: Let the children of Sion be joyful in their King, Ps. cxlix. 2. Must we accept him for our King? Yes: Take my yoke upon you, Matt. xi. 29. Must we pay tribute to him? Yes: Send ye the Lamb to the ruler of the land, Isa. xvi. 1. Must we obey him? Yes: for he is the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him, Heb. v. 9.

Q. 27. *Wherein did consist Christ's humiliation?*

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

1. Did Jesus Christ humble himself? Yes: for being in the form of God, he made himself of no reputation, Phil. ii. 6, 7. Was it a deep humiliation? Yes: for he said, I am a worm, and no man, Ps. xxii. 6. Was it requisite he should humble himself? Yes: for thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, Luke xxiv. 46. And was that a proper expedient to atone for our sin? Yes: for the sinner had said, I will be like the Most High, Isa. xiv. 14.

2. Did Christ humble himself in his birth? Yes: for he who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, was made in the likeness of men, Phil. ii. 6, 7. Was he born of that which was then a poor family? Yes: he was a root of dry ground, Isa. liii. 2. Was he born of a poor woman? Yes: for she offered for her cleansing only a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons, Luke ii. 24. compare Lev. xii. 8. Was his supposed father a poor man? Yes: they said, Is not this the carpenter's son, Matt. xiii. 55. Was he born in a poor place? Yes: Bethlehem was little among the thousands of Judah, Mic. v. 2. Was he born in poor circumstances? Yes: in the stable of an inn, and laid in a manger, Luke ii. 7. Had he the respect paid him that was due to an incarnate Deity? No: for he was in the world, and the world knew him not, John i. 10. Was he respected by his countrymen? No: he came to his own, and his own received him not, *v.* 11. Was he born honourably? No: for he took upon him the form of a servant, Phil. ii. 7. Was he born wealthy? No: though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, 2 Cor. viii. 9.

3. Was Christ made under the law? Yes: God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, Gal. iv. 4. Was he circumcised? Yes: when eight days were accomplished, Luke ii. 21. Was he presented in the temple? Yes: they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, *v.* 22. Did he keep the passover? Yes: when he was twelve years old, he went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast, *v.* 42. Was he obedient to his parents? Yes: he went down with them to Nazareth, and was subject to them, *v.* 51. Did he pay tribute? Yes: That give for me and thee, Matt. xvii. 24, 27. Did he fulfil all righteousness? Yes: Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness, Matt. iii. 15. Did he submit to the law of the mediatorship? Yes: Thy law is within my heart, Ps. xl. 8.

4. Was his education mean? Yes: for they said, Is not this the carpenter? Mark vi. 3. Was the place of his abode despicable? Yes: Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? John i. 46. Did he live in honour? No: for he was despised and rejected of men, Isa. liii. 3. Was he attended by great folks? No: Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him? John vii. 48. Were his followers mean? Yes: for they were fishers, Matt. iv. 18. Did he live in mirth and pleasure? No: he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, Isa. liii. 3. Was the sin of sinners a grief to him? Yes: he was grieved for the hardness of their hearts, Mark iii. 5. Were the sorrows of his friends a grief to him? Yes: Jesus wept, John xi. 35. Had he a house of his own? No: The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head, Luke xi. 58. Was he fed with the finest of the wheat? No: he had barley-loaves, John vi. 9. Did he live upon alms? Yes: for certain women ministered to him of their substance, Luke viii. 3. Had he a stately place to preach in? No: he taught the people out of the ship, Luke v. 3.

5. Was he tempted of Satan? Yes: he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan, Mark i. 13. Was that a part of his sufferings? Yes: for he suffered, being tempted, Heb. ii. 18. Was he persecuted betimes? Yes: Herod sought the young child to destroy him, Matt. ii. 13. Was he slandered and reproached? Yes: they said of him,

Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, Luke vii. 34. Was he represented as a madman? Yes: they said, He hath a devil, and is mad, John x. 20. And as one that is in league with the devil? Yes: they said, He casteth out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils, Matt. xii. 24. Did they cavil at his preaching? Yes: he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, Heb. xii. 3. Did he bear all this patiently? Yes: when he was reviled, he reviled not again, 1 Pet. ii. 23.

6. But notwithstanding this, had he honour done him in his humiliation? Yes: for it was said of him, He shall be great, Luke i. 32. Did God put honour upon him? Yes: he received from God the Father honour and glory, 2 Pet. i. 17. Did angels do him honour? Yes: behold, angels came and ministered to him, Matt. iv. 11. Did foreigners do him honour? Yes: Wise men of the east came to worship him, Matt. ii. 2. Did the common report of the people do him honour? Yes: for some said he was Elias, others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets, Matt. xvi. 14. Did those that saw his miracles do him honour? Yes: for they said, It was never so seen in Israel, Matt. ix. 33. Did inferior creatures do him honour? Yes: even the winds and the seas obeyed him, Matt. viii. 27. Were devils themselves compelled to acknowledge him? Yes: for they said, We know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God, Mark i. 24.

7. Did he humble himself unto death? Yes: he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, Phil. ii. 8. Did he die for us? Yes: he was delivered for our offences, Rom. iv. 25. Was this according to the counsels of God? Yes: he was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, Acts ii. 23. Did he suffer in his soul? Yes; for he said, Now is my soul troubled, John xii. 27. Did he suffer from his Father? Yes: he was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted, Isa. liii. 4. Did he suffer in soul from his Father? Yes: for he put him to grief, *v.* 10. Did this put him into an agony? Yes: He began to be sorrowful, and very heavy, Matt. xxvi. 37. Did he suffer this for us? Yes: for he made him sin for us who knew no sin, 2 Cor. v. 21. And yet did the Father love him even when he bruised him? Yes: Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, John x. 17.

8. Did he suffer from Satan? Yes: Thou shalt bruise his heel, Gen. iii. 15. Did Satan set upon him? Yes: The prince of this world cometh, John xiv. 30. But did Satan conquer him? No: He hath nothing in me, John xiv. 30. Did he suffer from the Jews? Yes: for they cried, Crucify him, crucify him, Luke xxiii. 21. Did he suffer from the chief of the Jews? Yes: he was the stone which the builders refused, Ps. cxviii. 22. Did he suffer from the Romans? Yes: the princes of this world crucified the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. ii. 8. Was he betrayed by Judas? Yes: they put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray him, John xiii. 2. Was he sold for thirty pieces of silver? Yes: A goodly price that I was prized at, Zech. xi. 13. Was he forsaken by his own disciples? Yes: all his disciples forsook him, and fled, Matt. xxvi. 56.

9. Was he falsely accused? Yes: they sought false witness against him to put him to death, Matt. xxvi. 59. Was he basely abused? Yes: he hid not his face from shame and spitting, Isa. l. 6. Was he condemned as a blasphemer? Yes: they said, He hath spoken blasphemy, Matt. xxvi. 65. Was he condemned as a traitor? Yes: for they said he perverted the nation, forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, Luke xxiii. 2. Was he scourged? Yes: for by his stripes we are healed, Isa. liii. 5. Was he exposed to contempt? Yes: he was a reproach of men, and despised of the people, Ps. xxii. 6. Did they scoff at him as a Prophet? Yes: they said, Prophesy who smote thee, Matt. xxvi. 68. Did they scoff at him as a King? Yes: they said, Hail, King of the Jews, Matt. xxvii. 29. Did they scoff at him as a Priest and Saviour? Yes: they said, He saved others, himself he cannot save, Matt. xxvii. 42.

10. Was he sentenced to the cross? Yes: Pilate delivered him to be crucified, Matt. xxvii. 26. Was he crucified between two thieves; Yes: he was numbered with the transgressors, Isa. liii. 12. Did he die a bloody death? Yes: for the life of the flesh is in the blood, and it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul, Lev. xvii. 11. Did he die a painful death? Yes: they pierced his hands and feet, Ps. xxii. 16. And a shameful death? Yes: he endured the cross, despising the shame, Heb. xii. 2. And a cursed death? Yes: for he that is hanged is accursed of God, Deut. xxi. 23. Gal. iii. 13. Did God seem to withdraw from him in his sufferings? Yes: he cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Matt. xxvii. 46.

11. Did Christ die to glorify God? Yes: For this cause came I to this hour. Father, glorify thy name, John xii. 27, 28. Did he die to satisfy for our sins? Yes: it was to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24. Did he die to conquer Satan? Yes: he spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them in his cross, Col. ii. 15. Did he die to save us from sin? Yes: he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, Tit. ii. 14. Did he die to purchase heaven for us? Yes: for it is the purchased possession, Eph. i. 14. Heb. ix. 15. Was he in his death made a curse for us? Yes: for Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13. Did Christ sweat for us? Yes: his sweat was, as it were, great drops of

blood, Luke xxii. 44. And thorns being also a fruit of the curse, did Christ wear them for us? Yes: they platted a crown of thorns and put it upon his head, Matt. xxvii. 29.

12. Did Christ do all that was to be done in his sufferings for us? Yes: he said, It is finished, John xix. 30. Did the events answer the predictions? Yes: for the Scriptures must be fulfilled, Mark xiv. 49. Are we sure that Christ was truly dead? Yes: for one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water, and he that saw it bare record, John xix. 34, 35. Did Christ die as a martyr? Yes: for before Pontius Pilate he witnessed a good confession, 1 Tim. vi. 13. Did he die as a testator? Yes: for where a testament is, there must needs be the death of the testator, Heb. ix. 16. Did he die as a sacrifice? Yes: Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, 1 Cor. v. 7.

13. Was there honour done to Christ even in his sufferings? Yes: the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, Matt. xxvii. 51. And were some thereby convinced? Yes: they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God, Matt. xxvii. 54. Is the cross of Christ then a reproach to us? No: God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. vi. 14. Is it what we should all be acquainted with? Yes: I determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, 1 Cor. ii. 2. And ought we to celebrate the praises of our crucified Saviour? Yes: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honour, and glory, and blessing, Rev. v. 12.

14. When Christ was dead, was he buried? Yes: they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre, Acts xiii. 29. Was he buried according to the custom? Yes: as the manner of the Jews is to bury, John xix. 40. Did he continue under the power of death for a time? Yes: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, Matt. xii. 40. Was this his descent into hell? Yes: he descended into the lower parts of the earth, Eph. iv. 9. Did his separate soul go to paradise? Yes: This day shalt thou be with me in paradise, Luke xxiii. 43. Did his body see corruption? No: Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption, Acts ii. 27.

Q. 28. *Wherein consists Christ's exaltation?*

A. Christ's exaltation consists in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

1. Is Jesus Christ exalted? Yes: because he humbled himself, therefore God also hath highly exalted him, Phil. ii. 9. Was his humiliation the way to exaltation? Yes: he suffered these things, and so entered into his glory, Luke xxiv. 26. Was his exaltation the reward of his humiliation? Yes: I have glorified thee on the earth, and now, O Father, glorify thou me, John xvii. 5. Had he it in his eye in his sufferings? Yes: for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, Heb. xii. 2.

2. Was his resurrection the first step of his exaltation? Yes: he was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 1 Cor. xv. 4. Did he continue always in the bands of death? No: for it was impossible he should be holden of them, Acts ii. 24. Did he rise to life? Yes: he both rose and revived, Rom. xiv. 9. Did the same body rise? Yes: Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself, Luke xxiv. 39. Is he the same Jesus still? Yes: I am he that liveth, and was dead, Rev. i. 18. Did he lie in the grave all the Jewish sabbath? Yes: for he rose in the end of the sabbath, Matt. xxviii. 1. Did he rise the same day of the week? Yes: as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, Matt. xxviii. 1. Have we sufficient proof of his resurrection? Yes: he showed himself alive, by many infallible proofs, Acts i. 3. Did he rise to die no more? Yes: Death hath no more dominion over him, Rom. vi. 9.

3. Did Christ rise by his own power? Yes: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up, John ii. 19. and x. 18. Was that a divine power? Yes: for he was crucified through weakness, but he lived by the power of God, 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Was it the great proof of his being the Son of God? Yes: he was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, Rom. i. 4. Was it the will of the Father he should rise? Yes: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came, and rolled back the stone, Matt. xxviii. 2. Did the Father raise him? Yes: God raised him from the dead, Acts xiii. 30. Was this an evidence of the acceptance of his satisfaction? Yes: for he was raised again for our justification, Rom. iv. 25. And we may plead it? Yes: It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, Rom. viii. 34.

4. Did Christ rise as a public person? Yes: for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead, 1 Cor. xv. 21. Are true believers raised with him to a spiritual life? Yes: he hath quickened us together with Christ, Eph. ii. 5. And shall they be shortly raised to eternal life? Yes; Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming, 1 Cor. xv. 23. Is the resurrection of Christ one of the great foundations of Christianity? Yes; if Christ be not risen, our faith is vain, *v.* 14.

5. Did Christ stay on earth forty days after his resurrection? Yes: he was seen of them forty days, Acts i. 3. Did he then ascend up into heaven? Yes: while he blessed them he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven, Luke xxiv. 51. Did he ascend in a cloud? Yes: a cloud received him out of their sight, Acts i. 9. Was he welcome in heaven? Yes: when the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, he came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him, Dan. vii. 13.

6. Was it for our advantage that he ascended up into heaven? Yes: It is expedient for you that I go away, John xvi. 7. Did he ascend as a conqueror? Yes: when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, Eph. iv. 8. Did he ascend as our forerunner? Yes: as the forerunner he is for us entered, Heb. vi. 20. Is he gone to prepare a place for us? Yes: I go to prepare a place for you, John xiv. 2. Did he enter as our High Priest within the veil? Yes: by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, Heb. ix. 12.

7. Did he sit at the right hand of God? Yes: he is seated on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, Heb. viii. 1. Has he authority to sit there? Yes: The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Ps. cx. 1. Is he there now? Yes: he is even at the right hand of God, Rom. viii. 34. Has he been seen there? Yes: Stephen said, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God, Acts vii. 56. Will he continue there? Yes: the heavens must receive him till the restitution of all things, Acts iii. 21. Has he the highest honour there? Yes: God hath given him a name above every name, Phil. ii. 9. Has he the sovereign power there? Yes: for angels, authorities, and powers are made subject to him, 1 Pet. iii. 22. Is he Lord of all there? Yes: Thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands, Heb. ii. 7. Ought we therefore to have our hearts in heaven? Yes: Seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God, Col. iii. 1.

8. Will Christ come again? Yes: If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, John xiv. 3. Are you sure he will come again? Yes: for he said, Surely I come quickly, Rev. xxii. 20. Will he come in glory? Yes: he shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, Matt. xxiv. 30. Will his angels attend him? Yes: he shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, Matt. xxv. 31. Will he come publicly? Yes: Behold he comes in the clouds, and every eye shall see him, Rev. i. 7.

9. Will Christ come to judge the world? Yes: God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained, Acts xvii. 31. Will he come to the terror of all his enemies? Yes: they also which pierced him shall wail because of him, Rev. i. 7. Will he come to the comfort of all his faithful followers? Yes: to them that look for him, he will appear the second time unto salvation, Heb. ix. 28. Will this be at the last day? Yes: I will raise him up at the last day, John vi. 39. Ought we to wait for that day? Yes: looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Tit. ii. 13.

Q. 29. How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit.

1. Is redemption purchased by Christ? Yes: he obtained eternal redemption for us, Heb. ix. 12. Is he then the Author of it? Yes: he became the Author of salvation, Heb. v. 9. Is it redemption by price? Yes: Ye are bought with a price, 1 Cor. vi. 20. Is it a redemption by power? Yes: for he hath led captivity captive, Ps. lxviii. 18. Is this redemption offered to all? Yes: he hath proclaimed liberty to the captives, Isa. lxi. 1. May all that will take the benefit of it? Yes: Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, Isa. lv. 1. Have all the world therefore some benefit by it? Yes: Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, Mark xvi. 15. But have all the world a like benefit by it? No: Thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world, John xiv. 22.

2. Is it enough for us that there is a redemption purchased? No: for there are those who deny the Lord who bought them, 2 Pet. ii. 1. Is it enough to hear of it? No: for to some it is a savour of death unto death, 2 Cor. ii. 16. Is it enough to have a name among the redeemed? No: Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead, Rev. iii. 1. Is it necessary therefore that we be partakers of the redemption? Yes: that we may say, Who loved me, and gave himself for me, Gal. ii. 20. Do all partake of it? No: Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, Acts viii. 21. Do all believers partake of it? Yes: We are made partakers of Christ, Heb. iii. 14. Do they receive the Redeemer? Yes: We have received Christ Jesus the Lord, Col. ii. 6. Do any receive this of themselves? No: A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above, John iii. 27.

3. Must the redemption be applied to us? Yes: It is Christ in you the hope of glory, Col. i. 27. Is it the Spirit's work to apply it? Yes: for it is the Spirit that quickens, John vi. 63. Is he sent for that purpose? Yes: He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you, John xvi. 15. Is he sent in Christ's name? Yes: He is the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, John xiv. 26. Have we as much need of

the Spirit to apply the redemption to us, as of the Son to purchase it for us? Yes: for when Christ had purchased it, it was expedient for us he should go away, that he might send the Comforter, John xvi. 7.

4. Is the Spirit given to the church in general? Yes: Another Comforter shall abide with you for ever, John xiv. 16. Is he promised to particular persons? Yes: Turn ye at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, Prov. i. 23. Are we to pray for the Spirit then? Yes: our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, Luke xi. 13. Do all believers receive of the Spirit? Yes: God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, Gal. iv. 6. Is he their teacher? Yes: he shall teach them all things. Is he their remembrancer? Yes: he shall bring all things to their remembrance, John xiv. 26. Is he the earnest? Yes: he hath given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, 2 Cor. i. 22. Does he begin the good work of grace in the heart? Yes: for when he is come, he shall convince, John xvi. 8. And does he perfect it? Yes: for he hath wrought us for the self-same thing, 2 Cor. v. 5.

Q. 30. *How does the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?*

A. The Spirit applies to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling?

1. Does the Spirit act freely in applying the redemption? Yes: The wind bloweth where it listeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit, John iii. 8. Does he act mysteriously? Yes: Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, Eccl. xi. 15. Does he act effectually? Yes: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, John vi. 37.

2. Is faith necessary to our interest in the redemption? Yes: for without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. xi. 6. Is it the great thing necessary? Yes: only believe, all things are possible to him that can believe, Mark v. 36. and ix. 23. Can we have a saving interest in the redemption without faith? No: he that believeth not, is condemned already, John iii. 18. Is it that which is required on our part? Yes: by grace ye are saved through faith. And is it of ourselves? No: not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, Eph. ii. 8. Is it given for Christ's sake? Yes: Unto you it is given on the behalf of Christ to believe on him, Phil. i. 29.

3. Does the Spirit work faith in us? Yes: it is the faith of the operation of God, Col ii. 12. Is it a divine work then? Yes: this is the work of God, that ye believe, John vi. 29. Is it a work of divine power? Yes: we believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, Eph. i. 19, 20. Is it wrought in all the saints? Yes: for they have all obtained a like precious faith, 2 Pet. i. 1. Shall it be wrought in all the chosen? Yes: for it is the faith of God's elect, Tit. i. 1.

4. Are all true believers united to Christ? Yes: He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit, 1 Cor. vi. 17. Are they interested in his death? Yes: We are crucified with Christ, Gal. ii. 20. And in his burial? Yes: We are buried with him in baptism, Rom. vi. 4. And in his resurrection? Yes: He has quickened us together with Christ, Eph. ii. 5. And in his ascension? Yes: He has made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 6.

5. Is there a real union between Christ and believers? Yes: for both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one, Heb. ii. 11. Is he the Head? Yes: he is the Head of the body, the church, Col. i. 18. Are they his members? Yes: Who are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, Eph. v. 30. Is he the Root? Yes: for of his fulness have all we received, John i. 16. Are they the branches? Yes: I am the vine, ye are the branches, John xv. 5. Is he the Foundation? Yes: Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, Isa. xxviii. 16. Are they built upon him? Yes: Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

6. Is there a relative union between Christ and believers? Yes: I ascend to my Father and your Father, John xx. 17. Are they his children? Yes: Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me, Heb. ii. 13. Are they his brethren? Yes: he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Heb. ii. 11, 12 Are they his spouse? Yes: I have espoused you to one husband, 2 Cor. xi. 2. Are they his subjects? Yes: they are translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, Col. i. 13. Are they his soldiers? Yes: good soldiers of Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. ii. 3. Are they his servants? Yes: Ye call me Master and Lord, John xiii. 13. Are they his scholars? Yes: they sit at Jesus' feet and hear his word, Luke x. 39. Are they his sheep? Yes: for he is the great Shepherd of the sheep, Heb. xiii. 20.

7. Is it by faith that we are united to Christ? Yes: for Christ dwells in the heart by faith, Eph. iii. 17. Is that owing to the Spirit? Yes: we are a habitation of God through the Spirit, Eph. ii. 22. Does communion result from this union? Yes: for truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, 1 John i. 3. And is that owing to the Spirit? Yes: we have an access by one Spirit unto the Father, Eph. ii. 18. Can we be united to Christ without the indwelling of the Spirit? No: for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, Rom. viii. 9. Have all that are united to Christ an interest in the benefits of redemption? Yes: for of him are we in Christ Jesus, who

of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30.

8. Are we united to Christ in our effectual calling? Yes: for we are called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, 1 Cor. i. 9. Will the common call unite us to Christ? No: for many are called, but few are chosen, Matt. xxii. 14. Is it the effectual call then that does it? Yes: for whom he called, them he justified, Rom. viii. 30.

9. Does the gospel call us from sin to God? Yes: it turns from the power of Satan unto God, Acts xxvi. 18. Does it call us from self to Christ? Yes: If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and follow me, Matt. xvi. 24. Does it call us from darkness to light? Yes: He hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, 1 Pet. ii. 9. And from uncleanness to holiness? Yes: God hath not called us to uncleanness, but to holiness, 1 Thess. iv. 7. And from this world to the other? Yes: If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, Col. iii. 1. Is this call effectual when we come at the call? Yes: Follow me, and he arose and followed him, Matt. ix. 9. Is it our great concern to make this sure? Yes: Make your calling and your election sure, 2 Pet. i. 10.

Q. 31. *What is effectual calling?*

A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he does persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

1. Is the common call given to the world? Yes: he sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden, Matt. xxii. 3. Can ministers make that call effectual? No: for who hath believed our report, Isa. liii. 1. Is it the work of God to make it effectual? Yes: for it is God that giveth the increase, 1 Cor. iii. 7. Does he do it in a way suitable to our nature? Yes: I drew them with cords of a man, Hos. xi. 4. Is it necessary to our salvation, that the call should be effectual? Yes: Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, 2 Tim. i. 9.

2. Are all who are effectually called convinced of sin? Yes: I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, Rom. vii. 9. Is it the Spirit's work to convince? Yes: when he is come he will convince the world of sin, John xvi. 8. Is the word the ordinary means of conviction? Yes: for by the law is the knowledge of sin, Rom. iii. 20. Is it necessary we should be convinced of sin? Yes: for they that are whole, need not a physician, Matt. ix. 12. Must we be convinced of the fact of sin? Yes: These things thou hast done, Ps. l. 21. And of the fault of sin? Yes: Know therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing, Jer. ii. 19. And of the folly of sin? Yes: Herein thou hast done foolishly, 2 Chron. xvi. 9. And of the filth of sin? Yes: For how canst thou say, I am not polluted? Jer. ii. 23. And of the fruit of sin? Yes: Your sins have separated between you and your God, Isa. lix. 1, 2. And of the fountain of sin? Yes: They shall know every man the plague of his own heart, 1 Kings viii. 38.

3. Must we also be convinced of our misery? Yes: Thou art wretched and miserable, Rev. iii. 17. And of our danger? Yes: Flee from the wrath to come, Matt. iii. 7. Must we be convinced of our helplessness in ourselves? Yes: when sin revived I died, Rom. vii. 9. And of the possibility of our being helped by the grace of God? Yes: How many hired servants of my father have bread enough, and to spare! Luke xv. 17. Will these convictions put us in pain? Yes: When they heard this, they were pricked to the heart, Acts ii. 37. And bring us to be at a loss within ourselves? Yes: Men and brethren, what shall we do? Acts ii. 37. And put us upon inquiry? Yes: They shall ask the way to Sion with their faces thitherward, Jer. l. 5. Are these convictions necessary to prepare us for an invitation to Christ? Yes: Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, Matt. xi. 28.

4. Does the Spirit, when he has convinced us of sin and misery, leave us so? No: for he has torn, and he will heal us, Hos. vi. 1. When he has showed us our wound, does he show us our remedy? Yes: O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help, Hos. xiii. 9. Does he enlighten our minds? Yes: the Spirit of wisdom and revelation is given, that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened, Eph. i. 17, 18. Does he enlighten them with the knowledge of Christ? Yes: he gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Does he discover to the soul Christ's ability to save? Yes: I have laid help upon one that is mighty, Ps. lxxxix. 19. And his willingness to save? Yes: I will, be thou clean, Matt. viii. 3. Should we be most ambitious of the knowledge of Christ? Yes: counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, Phil. iii. 8. Does the Spirit direct convinced sinners to Christ? Yes: Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope, Zech. ix. 12.

5. Is it enough to have the mind enlightened? No: for we are called into a professed subjection to the gospel of Christ, 2 Cor. ix. 13. Must the will therefore be renewed? Yes: for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, Phil. ii. 13. Is it the work of the Spirit to incline the will to do that which is good? Yes: Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, Ps. cxix. 36. And is that the renewing of the will? Yes: A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Does that make the will pliable? Yes: I will take the stony heart out

of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh, Ezek. xi. 19. Does it bring it into subjection to the will of God? Yes: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Acts ix. 6. And is that a cheerful subjection? Yes: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Rom. v. 5.

6. Is Christ offered to us in the gospel? Yes: Behold, I stand at the door and knock, Rev. iii. 20. Is he freely offered? Yes: Come buy, without money, and without price, Isa. lv. 1. Are we concerned to embrace that offer? Yes: Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled, Prov. ix. 5. Are we by nature averse to it? Yes: Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life, John v. 40. Do sinners perish then through their own wilfulness? Yes: I have called, and ye have refused, Prov. i. 24. Does the Spirit in effectual calling overcome this aversion? Yes: With loving kindness have I drawn thee, Jer. xxxi. 3. Does he persuade us to embrace this offer? Yes: For every man that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me, John vi. 45. Does he enable us? Yes: For you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. ii. 1.

7. Can we turn to God by any power of our own? No: for we are not sufficient of ourselves, 2 Cor. iii. 5. Is it the grace of God that turns us to him? Yes: Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, Jer. xxxi. 18. Is it free grace? Yes: He went on frowardly in the way of his heart, I have seen his ways, and will heal him, Isa. lvii. 17, 18. Does it turn us by a work upon the will? Yes: The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, Acts xvi. 14. Is it special grace? Yes: It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, Rom. ix. 16. Shall this grace be given to all the elect? Yes: All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, John vi. 37. Shall it be effectual? Yes: His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, 1 Cor. xv. 10. May we in faith pray for this grace? Yes: I will for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, Ezek. xxxvi. 37. Can any turn to God without this special grace? No: For no man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him, John vi. 44. Must that grace therefore have all the glory? Yes: we must show forth the praises of him that hath called us, 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Q. 32. *What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?*

A. They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification, and the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them.

1. Are all those happy which are effectually called? Yes: for God hath called us to his kingdom and glory, 1 Thess. ii. 12. Are they partakers of the blessings of the new covenant? Yes: for the promise is sure to all the seed, Rom. iv. 16. Are they happy even in this life? Yes: For after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Eph. i. 13.

2. Are they dignified and preferred? Yes: Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, 1 Pet. ii. 9. Are they brought near? Yes: Ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh, Eph. ii. 13. Are they enriched? Yes: God hath called the poor in this world rich in faith, Jam. ii. 5. Are they taken into the communion of saints? Yes: for we are come to the church of the first-born which are written in heaven, Heb. xii. 23. And into communion with the holy angels? Yes: for we are come to an innumerable company of angels, Heb. xii. 22. Are they entitled to the best possessions? Yes: All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, 1 Cor. iii. 22. Are they happy in the best blessings? Yes: The God and Father of our Lord Jesus hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly things, Eph. i. 3. Are they happy both for soul and body? Yes: He hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, 2 Pet. i. 3.

3. Are they justified? Yes: whom he called, them he justified, Rom. viii. 30. Is that an unspeakable benefit? Yes: blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, Ps. xxxii. 1. Are they adopted? Yes: for he hath predestinated us to the adoption of children, Eph. i. 5. And is that an unspeakable benefit? Yes: for if children, then heirs, Rom. viii. 17. Are they sanctified? Yes: they are sanctified in Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. i. 2. And is that an unspeakable benefit? Yes: for we are partakers of his holiness, Heb. xii. 10.

4. Do they partake of other benefits? Yes: The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly, Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Are all these benefits given to them that are effectually called? Yes: for the promise of the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, is to as many as the Lord our God shall call, Acts ii. 39. And shall every thing turn to their advantage? Yes: all things work together for good to them that are the called, Rom. viii. 28. Will you therefore make it sure that you are effectually called, by coming at the call? Yes: behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God, Jer. iii. 22.

Q. 33. *What is justification?*

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

1. Have we all need to be justified? Yes: for we are all guilty before God, Rom. iii. 19. Is it enough if we justify ourselves? No: If I justify

myself my own mouth shall condemn me, Job ix. 20. Is it enough if our neighbours justify us? No: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God, Luke xvi. 15. Must it be God's act then? Yes: It is God that justifieth, Rom. viii. 33. And his only? Yes: for none can forgive sins but God only, Mark ii. 7. And is it an act of free grace? Yes: we are justified freely by his grace, Rom. iii. 24.

2. Are all that are justified discharged from the sentence of the law? Yes: for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. viii. 1. Have they their sins pardoned? Yes; we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, Eph. i. 7. Does God forgive them? Yes: I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, Isa. xliii. 25.

3. When God forgives sin does he forgive all? Yes: Having forgiven all your trespasses, Col. ii. 13. Does he forgive even great sins? Yes: Though your sins have been as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, Isa. i. 18. Does he forgive many sins? Yes: He will abundantly pardon, Isa. lv. 7. Does he forgive freely? Yes: I will be merciful to their unrighteousness. Does he forgive fully? Yes: Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more, Heb. viii. 12. Is he forward to forgive? Yes: I said I will confess, and thou forgavest, Ps. xxxii. 5. Does he forgive and forget? Yes: Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea, Mic. vii. 19.

4. Is forgiveness of sins offered to all upon gospel terms? Yes: for repentance and remission of sins is preached to all nations, Luke xxiv. 47. Is it secured to all the chosen remnant? Yes: for Christ is exalted to be a Prince, and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins, Acts v. 31. Have all believers their sins pardoned? Yes: through him all that believe are justified, Acts xiii. 39. Are they accepted in God's sight? Yes: he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, Eph. i. 6. Are they accepted as righteous? Yes: for we are made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21. May those that have been ungodly be thus justified? Yes: he justifies the ungodly, Rom. iv. 5.

5. Can we be justified by the covenant of innocency? No: for who can say, I have made my heart clean? Prov. xx. 9. Can we be justified by any thing in ourselves? No: How can men be justified with God? Job xxv. 4. If we know no ill by ourselves will that justify us? No: though I know nothing by myself, yet am I not thereby justified, 1 Cor. iv. 4. Will the law of Moses justify us? No: we are justified from all those things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses, Acts xiii. 39. Will our own works justify us? No: by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified, Rom. iii. 20. Would the ceremonial sacrifices justify men? No: they could not make the comers thereunto perfect, Heb. x. 1. Are we justified for the righteousness of Christ? Yes: By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous, Rom. v. 19. And for that only? Yes: Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, Phil. iii. 9.

6. Is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us for our justification? Yes: for he is made of God unto us righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30. Did Christ die that it might be imputed? Yes: He shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities, Isa. liii. 11. Do we owe our justification then to the death of Christ? Yes: the blood of Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin, 1 John i. 7. And does that lay the foundation of our salvation? Yes: being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath, Rom. v. 9. Were we justified from eternity? No: for in due time Christ died for the ungodly, Rom. v. 9. If Christ had died, and not risen again, could he have justified us? No: for he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, Rom. iv. 25. Is that then our plea for peace and pardon? Yes: for who then is he that shall condemn? Rom. viii. 34. May we then depend upon Christ for righteousness? Yes: In the Lord I have righteousness and strength, Isa. xlv. 24. Is it become an act of justice in God to pardon sin upon the account of Christ's righteousness? Yes: for he is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, Rom. iii. 26. 1 John i. 9.

7. Are we to receive the righteousness of Christ? Yes: We have now received the atonement, Rom. v. 11. Do we receive it by faith? Yes: through his name; whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins, Acts x. 43. And by faith only? Yes: for being justified by faith we have peace with God, Rom. v. 1. Did Christ's death satisfy the law? Yes: for Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, Gal. iii. 13. Is that then our only righteousness in the law court? Yes: for we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, Rom. v. 10. Do we by true faith come up to the terms of the gospel? Yes: Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, Acts xvi. 31. Is that then our righteousness in the gospel court? Yes: for to him that believeth, his faith is counted for righteousness, Rom. iv. 5. Is it therefore our life? Yes: for the just shall live by his faith, Hab. ii. 4. Is it so as it applies Christ's righteousness? Yes: This is the name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6.

8. Is justifying faith a working faith? Yes: for by works is faith made perfect, Jam. ii. 22. And will that faith justify us which does not produce good works? No: for by works a man is justified, and not by faith only, Jam. ii. 24. Is faith then dead without good works? Yes: for as the body

without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also, Jam. ii. 26. And are good works dead without faith? Yes: for without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. xi. 6. Must they both act together then? Yes: for that which avails is faith, which works by love, Gal. v. 6. Do we then make void the law through faith? No: God forbid, yea, we establish the law, Rom. iii. 31. Is our faith our own? No: it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, Eph. ii. 8. Are our good works our own? No: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us, Isa. xxvi. 12. Is any room left for boasting then? No: it is excluded by the law of faith, Rom. iii. 27. Must God therefore have all the glory? Yes: for by the grace of God I am what I am, 1 Cor. xv. 10.

Q. 34. *What is adoption?*

A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God.

1. Are all believers God's children? Yes: Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, Gal. iii. 26. Are they so by nature? No: We are by nature children of wrath, Eph. ii. 3. Are they so by adoption? Yes: We receive the adoption of sons, Gal. iv. 5. Do they deserve to be made God's children? No: How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land? Jer. iii. 19. Are they altogether unworthy of such a favour? Yes: I am no more worthy to be called thy son, Luke xv. 19. Is it bestowed upon them notwithstanding their unworthiness? Yes: I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, 2 Cor. vi. 18.

2. Is adoption an act of God's free grace? Yes: Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, 1 John iii. 1. Are we by it received into the number of God's children? Yes: There shall they be called the children of the living God, Rom. ix. 26. Are we received into that number upon our believing? Yes: As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, John i. 12.

3. Have we leave to call God, Father? Yes: Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, Rom. viii. 15. Does he encourage us to do so? Yes: Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me, Jer. iii. 19. May we call him so, though we have been prodigals? Yes: I will go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, Luke xv. 18. May we look upon all good Christians as our brethren? Yes: For all ye are brethren, Matt. xxiii. 8. And do they all make one family? Yes: Of whom the whole family both in heaven and earth is named, Eph. iii. 15.

4. Does God give the nature of his children to all whom he receives into the number? Yes: Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, Gal. iv. 6. Do they partake of a divine nature? Yes: they are made partakers of a divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. Are all God's children born again then? Yes: they are born not of the will of man, but of God, John i. 13. Is our adoption then to be known by our disposition? Yes: for in this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil, whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, 1 John iii. 10.

5. Have all God's adopted children a right to the privileges of children? Yes: they are brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, Rom. viii. 21. Does their Father pity them? Yes: like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, Ps. ciii. 13. Does he spare them? Yes: as a man spares his own son that serves him, Mal. iii. 17. Does he take care of them? Yes: Children, have ye any meat? John xxi. 15. Does he provide for them? Yes: for they that seek the Lord shall want no good thing, Ps. xxxiv. 10. Does he correct them in love? Yes: For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? Heb. xii. 7. Does he hear their prayers? Yes: Your Father in heaven will give good things to them that ask him, Matt. vii. 11. Will he give them the inheritance of sons? Yes: It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, Luke xii. 32. Will he bring them all safe to it? Yes: He will gather together the children of God that were scattered abroad, John xi. 52. Will Christ present them all to the Father? Yes: Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me, Heb. ii. 13.

6. Must all God's children reverence him? Yes: If I be a Father, where is my honour? Mal. i. 6. Must they obey him? Yes: as obedient children, 1 Pet. i. 14. Must they imitate him? Yes: Be ye followers of God, as dear children, Eph. v. 1. Must they submit to him? Yes: Father, thy will be done, Matt. xxvi. 42.

Q. 35. *What is sanctification?*

A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

1. Are all that are justified sanctified? Yes: for Jesus Christ is made both righteousness and sanctification, 1 Cor. i. 30. Is it necessary they should be so? Yes: for without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14. Did Christ die that they might be sanctified? Yes: For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified, John xvii. 19. And was this the intention of their election? Yes: He hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification, 2 Thess. ii. 13.

2. Is sanctification the work of God? Yes: We are sanctified by God the Father, Jude 1. Is it the

work of the Spirit of God? Yes: it is sanctification of the Spirit, 1 Pet. i. 2. Is it a work of free grace? Yes: according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, Tit. iii. 5. Is it a work wrought in us? Yes: for we are his workmanship, created unto good works, Eph. ii. 10.

3. Is sanctification something more than being civilized? Yes: for he is not a Jew, that is one outwardly, Rom. ii. 28. Is it more than being baptized? Yes: it is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience, 1 Pet. iii. 21. Is it an inward change of the heart? Yes: we must be renewed in the spirit of our mind, Eph. iv. 23. Is it the renovation of the whole man? Yes: if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, 2 Cor. v. 17. Will it suffice to have a new name? No: For thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead, Rev. iii. 1. Will it suffice to have a new face? No: for there are those that have the form of godliness, but deny the power of it, 2 Tim. iii. 5. Must there be a new heart? Yes: A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. And a new nature? Yes: Put on the new man, Eph. iv. 24. And a new birth? Yes: Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, John iii. 3.

4. Must we be cleansed from sin? Yes: From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Must we be consecrated to God? Yes: for we are the temple of God, 1 Cor. iii. 16. Must the law be written in the heart? Yes: I will put my law in their heart, Heb. viii. 10. Must the understanding be enlightened? Yes: Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayst see, Rev. iii. 18. Must the heart be softened? Yes: I will take away the stony heart, and give a heart of flesh, Ezek. xi. 19. Must the will be bowed? Yes: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Acts ix. 6. Must the affections be made spiritual? Yes: Set your affections on things above, Col. iii. 2. Must the body also be an instrument of holiness? Yes: Present your bodies a living sacrifice, Rom. xii. 1.

5. Must we be renewed after the image of God? Yes: Put on the new man, which is renewed after the image of him that created him, Col. iii. 10. And after the pattern of Christ? Yes: for Christ must be formed in us, Gal. iv. 19. Is sin mortified in all that are sanctified? Yes: they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, Gal. v. 24. Is grace planted in them? Yes: there is a well of water springing up to eternal life, John iv. 14. Is this work perfect at first? No: it is first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear, Mark iv. 28.

6. Do all that are sanctified die unto sin? Yes: Reckon ye yourselves dead unto sin, Rom. vi. 11. Do they live unto righteousness? Yes: being dead to sin, we live unto righteousness, 1 Pet. ii. 24. Are they enabled to do so? Yes: for it is through the Spirit that we mortify the deeds of the body, Rom. viii. 13. And is the course of their conversation accordingly? Yes: they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, Rom. viii. 1. Is it our duty to submit to the Spirit as a sanctifier? Yes: Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the works of the flesh, Gal. v. 16. And is the grace of God promised us for this purpose? Yes: Sin shall not have dominion over you, Rom. vi. 14.

Q. 36. *What are the benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?*

A. The benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

1. Are they that are justified happy in this life? Yes: for being justified by faith, we have peace with God, Rom. v. 1. And are they so that are adopted? Yes: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, 1 John iii. 2. And are they so that are sanctified? Yes: for to the pure all things are pure, Tit. i. 15.

2. May they have an assurance of God's love? Yes: Ye know that ye have eternal life, 1 John v. 13. Is the Spirit the author of that assurance? Yes: the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God, Rom. viii. 16. Is it wrought by evidences? Yes: hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments, 1 John ii. 3. Do all believers attain this assurance? No: some walk in darkness, and have no light, Isa. l. 10. But should they labour after it? Yes: Show the same diligence unto the full assurance of hope unto the end, Heb. vi. 11. And is it an unspeakable comfort? Yes: for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost, Rom. v. 5. And is it just cause for triumph? Yes: I know whom I have believed, 2 Tim. i. 12.

3. Is peace of conscience a precious privilege? Yes: for if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God, 1 John iii. 21. Is it the fruit of grace? Yes: for the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever, Isa. xxxii. 17. Has Christ left it as a legacy to his disciples? Yes: Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, John xiv. 27. Can those who are unjustified have this peace? No: There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked, Isa. lvii. 21. Should those that are justified labour after it? Yes: Return to thy rest, O my soul, Ps. cxvi. 7. Should this peace govern us? Yes: Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, Col. iii. 15. And will it preserve us? Yes: The peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds, Phil. iv. 7. And will it be our comfort in the day

of evil? Yes: our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, 2 Cor. i. 12. Is it therefore our interest to secure it? Yes: Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence, Acts xxiv. 16.

4. May those who are justified have joy in the Holy Ghost? Yes: for believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, 1 Pet. i. 8. Have they cause for joy? Yes: for gladness is sown for the upright in heart, Ps. xcvii. 11. Is it their duty to rejoice? Yes: Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice, Phil. iv. 4. Is it their interest to rejoice? Yes: for the joy of the Lord is their strength, Neh. viii. 10. May they rejoice in all conditions: Yes: for we glory in tribulations also, Rom. v. 3. And is this a superlative joy? Yes: it is gladness in the heart more than in the time that their corn and wine increased, Ps. iv. 7.

5. Is grace growing? Yes: He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger, Job xvii. 9. Is it so in its nature? Yes: for it is as the shining light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day, Prov. iv. 18. Is it our duty to grow in grace? Yes: Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. iii. 18. And may we rest in what we have attained? No: but press forward towards the mark, Phil. iii. 14. Is it promised to all believers that they shall grow? Yes: for to him that hath shall be given, Matt. xxv. 29. Will the grace of God make them grow? Yes: I will be as the dew unto Israel, he shall grow as the lily, Hos. xiv. 5.

6. Shall true believers persevere to the end? Yes: for he that hath begun a good work will perform it, Phil. i. 6. Will hypocrites persevere? No: these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away, Luke viii. 13. Does it appear by their apostasy that they never were sincere? Yes: They went out from us because they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us, 1 John ii. 19. But shall any that are justified finally fall away? No: for whom he justified, them he glorified, Rom. viii. 30. Is every fall a falling away? No: for though he falls he shall not be utterly cast down, Ps. xxxvii. 24. May the appearances of grace be lost? Yes: From him shall be taken away even that which he seemed to have, Luke viii. 18. But can true grace be finally lost? No: it is that good part which shall never be taken away, Luke x. 42. Will God recal his gifts? No: the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, Rom. xi. 29. Will he secure them? Yes; we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. i. 5. and v. 7. Is the perseverance of the saints secured by the divine power? Yes: No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands, John x. 29. And by the divine providence? Yes: for he will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, 1 Cor. x. 13. And by the divine grace? Yes: I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me, Jer. xxxii. 40. And by the intercession of Christ? Yes: I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, Luke xxii. 32. And by the indwelling of the Spirit? Yes: The anointing which you have received, abideth in you, 1 John ii. 27. And by the stability of the promise? Yes: My covenant will I not break, Ps. lxxxix. 34. May they be secure then? No: Be not high-minded, but fear, Rom. xi. 20. But may they be encouraged? Yes: He will preserve me to his heavenly kingdom, 2 Tim. iv. 18.

Q. 37. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?*

A. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.

1. Is the happiness of believers confined to this present life? No: if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable, 1 Cor. xv. 19. Is the best of their happiness in this life? No: for in the world ye shall have tribulation, John xvi. 33. Must they die as well as others? Yes: it is appointed unto men once to die, Heb. ix. 27. Must the best and most useful die? Yes: the righteous perisheth, and merciful men are taken away, Isa. lvii. 1. Ought they then to wait for it? Yes: All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come, Job xiv. 14. And to prepare for it? Yes: Therefore be ye also ready, Matt. xxiv. 44.

2. Is death loss to a good Christian? No: for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain, Phil. i. 21. Should it therefore be a terror? No: for the righteous hath hope in his death, Prov. xiv. 32. Does God take special care of the death of his people? Yes: for precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, Ps. cxvi. 15. Is death in the covenant? Yes: All is yours, whether life or death, 1 Cor. iii. 22. Can it separate them from the love of God? No: neither death nor life can do that, Rom. viii. 38.

3. Are believers perfect in holiness in this life? No: I have not yet attained, neither am already perfect, Phil. iii. 12. Are their souls made perfect at death? Yes: the spirits of just men are made perfect, Heb. xii. 23. Are they delivered from sin? Yes: he that is dead is freed from sin, Rom. vi. 7. Are they made perfect in knowledge? Yes: Then shall I know, even as also I am known, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. And perfect in holiness? Yes; for they are come to the perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, Eph. iv. 13. Might

they pass into glory without being made perfect in holiness? No: the unregenerate cannot inherit incorruption. 1 Cor. xv. 50. Being made perfect in holiness, are they confirmed in it? Yes: He that is holy, let him be holy still. Rev. xxii. 11.

4. Do the souls of believers at death sleep with their bodies? No: for when we are absent from the body, we are present with the Lord. 2 Cor. v. 8. Do they go to Christ? Yes: Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ. Phil. i. 23. And will he receive them? Yes: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Acts vii. 59. Shall they be where he is? Yes: That where I am there ye may be also. John xiv. 3. Will they be with him in heaven? Yes: We have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 Cor. v. 1. Do they pass into this glory at death? Yes: That when ye fail ye may be received into everlasting habitations. Luke xvi. 9. Do they immediately pass into it? Yes: This day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Luke xxiii. 43. Are they guarded by angels thither? Yes: He was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. Luke xvi. 22. Are they happy then in their death? Yes: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Rev. xiv. 13. Happier than in life? Yes: The day of their death is better than the day of their birth. Eccl. vii. 1. And is their end peace? Yes: Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. Ps. xxxvii. 37.

5. Is death gain to the wicked man? No: for when a wicked man dies, his expectation shall perish. Prov. xi. 7. Is it therefore a terror to the wicked? Yes: This night thy soul shall be required of thee. Luke xii. 20. Do the souls of the wicked at death go into torment? Yes: The rich man died, and was buried, and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment. Luke xvi. 22, 23. Do they go away under the guilt of their sins? Yes: If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. John viii. 24. Is it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God? Yes: for our God is a consuming fire. Heb. xii. 29. Are the souls of believers distinguished from them? Yes: But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave. Ps. xlix. 15.

6. Are the bodies of believers well provided for at death? Yes: for the Lord is for the body. 1 Cor. vi. 13. May they be cheerfully committed to the grave? Yes: My flesh also shall rest in hope. Ps. xvi. 9. Do they still remain united to Christ? Yes: for they sleep in Jesus. 1 Thess. iv. 14. Do they rest in their graves? Yes: for there the weary be at rest. Job iii. 17. Is the grave a good Christian's bed? Yes: He shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds. Isa. lvii. 2. May the saints triumph over the grave then? Yes: O grave, where is thy victory? 1 Cor. xv. 55. And need they to fear to fall in it? No: for the sucking child shall play upon the hole of the asp. Isa. xi. 8. Are all who are regenerate delivered from the second death? Yes: Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death shall have no power. Rev. xx. 6.

7. Shall the dead be raised again? Yes: there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. Acts xxiv. 15. Shall the same body be raised again? Yes: Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Job xix. 26. Shall it be done by the power of Christ? Yes: for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Cor. xv. 22. Shall there be a vast difference between the godly and the wicked at the resurrection? Yes: for some shall awake to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Dan. xii. 2. Has Christ himself assured us of this? Yes: the hour is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation. John v. 28, 29. Is it certain when this shall be? Yes: for he hath appointed a day. Acts xvii. 31. But is it known to us? No: for of that day and hour knoweth no man. Mark xiii. 32.

Q. 38. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?*

A. At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity.

1. Shall the dead bodies of believers be raised? Yes: For the dead shall be raised. 1 Cor. xv. 52. Is it possible that the same body should return to life again? Yes: Why should it seem a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? Acts xxvi. 8. Is it certain that they shall be raised? Yes: for if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. 1 Cor. xv. 13. Has Christ undertaken for the resurrection of believers? Yes: I am the resurrection and the life. John xi. 25. Are they in error who deny it? Yes: Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. Matt. xxii. 29.

2. Shall the believer's body be raised up in glory? Yes: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. 1 Cor. xv. 43. Shall it be the glory of Christ's glorified body? Yes: he shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. Phil. iii. 21. Shall they be raised by virtue of their union with Christ? Yes: Together with my dead body shall they arise. Isa. xxvi. 19. Shall they be raised to such a life as we now live? No: for in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage. Matt. xxii. 30. Shall they be raised to an immortal life? Yes: for this mortal must put on immortality. 1 Cor. xv. 53. Shall they

that are found alive be changed? Yes: Behold, I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 1 Cor. xv. 51.

3. Shall all the saints at that day be brought to Jesus Christ? Yes: at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ there shall be a gathering together unto him, 2 Thess. ii. 1. Shall they be separated from the wicked? Yes: as the Shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, Matt. xxv. 32. Shall all the saints be then together? Yes: for he shall gather his elect from the four winds, Matt. xxiv. 31. And none but saints? Yes: for he shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, Matt. xiii. 41. And saints made perfect? Yes: for then that which is perfect is come, 1 Cor. xiii. 10. Shall they attend upon Christ at his coming? Yes: Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, Jude 14. Shall they be assessors with him in his judgment? Yes: for the saints shall judge the world, 1 Cor. vi. 2.

4. Shall they be openly acknowledged in the day of judgment? Yes: Him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven, Matt. x. 32. Will God own them as his own? Yes: They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels, Mal. iii. 17. And will that be their honour? Yes: If any man serve me, him will my Father honour, John xii. 26. Shall they be openly acquitted? Yes: for their sins shall be blotted out when the times of refreshing come, Acts iii. 19.

5. Shall the wicked be condemned then? Yes: he shall say to them on his left hand, Depart from me. Shall they be sent away with a blessing? No: Depart ye cursed. Shall they go into a place of ease? No: into fire. Into ordinary fire? No: into fire prepared. Shall it be for a short time? No: but into everlasting fire. Shall they have good company? No: but the devil and his angels, Matt. xxv. 41. Will the salvation of the saints aggravate their condemnation? Yes: for they shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, Luke xiii. 28.

6. Shall the saints at the day of judgment be put in possession of eternal life? Yes: the righteous into life eternal, Matt. xxv. 46. Shall they be blest? Yes: Come, ye blessed of my Father, Matt. xxv. 34. Shall they be perfectly blessed? Yes: for in thy presence is fulness of joy, Ps. xvi. 11. Shall there be any sin in heaven? No: for they are as the angels of God in heaven, Matt. xxii. 30. Shall there be any sorrow there? No: for God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, Rev. xxi. 4. Shall there be any dying there? No: there shall be no more death, Rev. xxi. 4.

7. Is heaven a place of rest? Yes: there remaineth a rest for the people of God, Heb. iv. 9. Is it light? Yes: it is the inheritance of the saints in light, Col. i. 12. Is it honour? Yes: it is a crown of glory that fades not away, 1 Pet. v. 4. Is it wealth? Yes: it is an inheritance incorruptible, 1 Pet. i. 4. Is it joy? Yes: Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, Matt. xxv. 21.

8. Shall we in heaven see God? Yes: when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, 1 John iii. 2. Shall we see him clearly? Yes: now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Shall we enjoy him? Yes: God himself shall be with them, and be their God, Rev. xxi. 3. Shall we be satisfied in the vision and fruition of God? Yes: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness, Ps. xvii. 15. Shall this be everlasting? Yes: So shall we ever be with the Lord, 1 Thess. iv. 17.

9. Is this happiness purchased? Yes: it is the purchased possession, Eph. i. 14. Is it promised? Yes: it is eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised, Tit. i. 2. Is it sure to all good Christians? Yes: even the poor in the world, if rich in faith, are heirs of the kingdom, Jam. ii. 5. Should we not be solicitous that it may be sure with us? Yes: What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? Luke xviii. 18. Should we not then have it much in our eye? Yes: for we look not at the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen, 2 Cor. iv. 18. And should we not be comforted and encouraged with the prospect of it? Yes: for the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed, Rom. viii. 18.

Q. 39. *What is the duty which God requires of man?*

A. The duty which God requires of man is obedience to his revealed will.

1. Does God require duty of men? Yes: Now, O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, Deut. x. 12. Of every man? Yes: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear, Matt. xiii. 9. Has he authority to require duty? Yes: If I be a master, where is my fear? Mal. i. 6. Is it fit he should rule us? Yes: for we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture, Ps. c. 3. Is it fit we should obey him? Yes: for the borrower is servant to the lender, and the fool is servant to the wise in heart, Prov. xxii. 7. xi. 29. Ought we therefore to inquire what our duty is? Yes: Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, Ps. cxix. 33.

2. Has God made known his will concerning our duty? Yes: He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel, Ps. cxlvii. 19. Are we to obey it? Yes: Thou shalt obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments, Deut. xxvii. 10. Is that obedience the condition of our acceptance? Yes: Obey my voice, and I will be your God, Jer. vii. 23. Is obedience to God reasonable? Yes: it is our reasonable service, Rom. xii. 1. Is it easy? Yes: for his com-

mandments are not grievous. 1 John v. 3. And will it be acceptable? Yes: for to obey is better than sacrifice. 1 Sam. xv. 22.

3. Must our obedience to God be sincere? Yes: Fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity, and in truth. Josh xxiv. 14. Must it be universal? Yes: Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. Ps. cxix. 6. Must it be with delight? Yes: I delight in the law of God after the inward man. Rom. vii. 22. Must it be constant? Yes: Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Prov. xxiii. 17. Must God's commands take place of men's? Yes: We ought to obey God rather than man. Acts v. 29. and iv. 19.

4. Should we therefore labour to know the will of God? Yes: Understand what the will of the Lord is. Eph. v. 17. Are we to study his secret will? No: for secret things belong not to us. But his revealed will? Yes: for things revealed belong to us, and to our children, that we may do all the words of this law. Deut. xxix. 29. Is obedience to God's revealed will the whole duty of man? Yes: let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. Eccl. xii. 13.

Q. 40. *What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience.*

A. The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.

1. Was the moral law revealed to man in innocency? Yes: for God created man in his own image. Gen. i. 27. Is it written in the heart of man? Yes: They show the work of the law written in their heart, Rom. ii. 15. Is there then a law of nature? Yes: Doth not even nature itself teach you? 1 Cor. xi. 14. Is that a law of God? Yes: for he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction. Job xxxiii. 16. Does natural conscience enforce that law? Yes: for the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law. Rom. ii. 14. Did the Gentiles sin by the breach of that law? Yes: what they know naturally, in these things they corrupt themselves. Jude 10. And will they be punished for the breach of it? Yes: they that have sinned without law, shall perish without law. Rom. ii. 12.

2. Has God given us the moral law more fully? Yes: I have written unto them the great things of my law, Hos. viii. 12. Are we under that law as a covenant? No: for a man is not justified by the works of the law. Gal. ii. 16. Are we under it as a rule? Yes: we are under the law to Christ. 1 Cor. ix. 21.

3. Is the law of God very extensive? Yes: Thy commandment is exceeding broad. Ps. cxix. 96. And very excellent? Yes: the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good. Rom. vii. 12. Is it admirable? Yes: Thy testimonies are wonderful, Ps. cxix. 129. Is any thing unjust in it? No: I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right. Ps. cxix. 128. Is it beyond any other law? Yes: what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous. Deut. iv. 8.

4. Does the law of God bind the inward man? Yes: for the law is spiritual. Rom. vii. 14. Does it forbid heart sins? Yes: Wash thy heart from wickedness. Jer. iv. 14. Does it require heart service? Yes: My son, give me thy heart. Prov. xxiii. 26. Does the law show us our way? Yes: it is a light to our feet. Ps. cxix. 105. Does it discover sin to us? Yes: by the law is the knowledge of sin. Rom. iii. 20. Does it warn us concerning sin and duty? Yes: by them is thy servant warned. Ps. xix. 11. Does it show us the need of Christ? Yes: the law was our school-master, to bring us to Christ. Gal. iii. 24. And does Christ do that for us which the law could not? Yes: Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. Rom. x. 4.

5. Ought we to love the law of God? Yes: I love thy commandments above gold. Ps. cxix. 127. And to consult it upon all occasions? Yes: Thy testimonies are my delight and my counsellors. v. 24. And to conform it? Yes: We must walk in the law of the Lord. v. 1.

Q. 41. *Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?*

A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.

1. Was the moral law in force before the ten commandments were given? Yes: for Abraham commanded his children to keep the way of the Lord. Gen. xviii. 19. Was it at last summed up in these commandments? Yes: for the law was given by Moses. John i. 17. Was the law of the ten commandments given first to Israel? Yes: He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts to the children of Israel. Ps. ciii. 7. But are they binding to us now? Yes: for Christ came not to destroy the law but to fulfil, Matt. v. 17.

2. Did God himself give these commandments? Yes: from his right hand went a fiery law for them, Deut. xxxiii. 2. Did God himself speak to them? Yes: Thou camest down upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, Neh. ix. 13. Did he use the ministry of angels therein? Yes: they received the law by the disposition of angels. Acts vii. 53. Did God himself write them? Yes: he gave unto Moses two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God, Exod. xxxi. 18.

3. Was the law given with much terror? Yes: for it was given upon a mount that burned with fire, and with blackness, and darkness, and tempest. Heb. xii. 18. Was the sight terrible to Moses himself?

Yes: for he said, I exceedingly fear and quake, Heb. xii. 21. Did it strike an awe upon the people? Yes: for they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient, Exod. xxiv. 7. And should not we be awed by the consideration of it? Yes: knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, 2 Cor. v. 11. Did the ten commandments include the whole moral law? Yes: If thou wilt enter into life, keep these commandments, Matt. xix. 17.

Q. 42. *What is the sum of the ten commandments?*

A. The sum of the ten commandments is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind, and our neighbour as ourselves.

1. Is all the law summed up in a word? Yes: all the law is fulfilled in one word, Gal. v. 14. Is that a short and sweet word? Yes: for it is love; love is the fulfilling of the law, Rom. xiii. 10.

2. Is it our duty to love God? Yes: Take good heed to yourselves that ye love the Lord your God, Josh. xxiii. 11. Must we love him with a sincere love? Yes: Grace be with them that love him in sincerity, Eph. vi. 24. And with a strong love? Yes: My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. Ps. xlii. 2. And with a superlative love? Yes: There is none upon earth that I desire besides thee, Ps. lxxiii. 25. And is all this included in the first and great commandment? Yes: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment, Matt. xxii. 37, 38. And is this the sum of our duty to God? Yes: for if any man love God, the same is known of him, 1 Cor. viii. 3. Must those who love God be careful to please him? Yes: for this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, 1 John v. 3. And must they be afraid to offend him? Yes: Ye that love the Lord, hate evil, Ps. xcvii. 10.

3. Is there good reason why we should thus love God? Yes: Therefore thou shalt love the Lord thy God, Deut. xi. 1. For is he most lovely in himself? Yes: God is love, 1 John iv. 8. And most loving to us? Yes: we love him because he first loved us, 1 John iv. 19. Will he return our love? Yes: I love those that love me, Prov. viii. 17. Will he reward it in this world? Yes: all things shall work together for good to them that love God, Rom. viii. 28. And in the other world? Yes: for eye hath not seen what God hath prepared for them that love him, 1 Cor. ii. 9. Will you then love God above all? Yes: I will love thee, O Lord, my strength, Ps. xviii. 1. And pray to God to give you grace to love him? Yes: the Lord direct our hearts into his love, 2 Thess. iii. 5.

4. Is it our duty to love our neighbour too? Yes: He that loveth God, must love his brother also, 1 John iv. 21. Can we pretend to love God, if we do not love our neighbour? No: he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen, 1 John iv. 20. Is this the fulfilling of the law? Yes: all is comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, Rom. xiii. 9. James ii. 8. Gal. v. 14. Is it the second great commandment? Yes: the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, Matt. xxii. 39. Is it an old commandment? Yes: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, I am the Lord, Lev. xix. 18. Is it a new commandment? Yes: A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, John xiii. 34.

5. Must we have a respect for all men? Yes: Honour all men, 1 Pet. ii. 17. Especially for all good men? Yes: we must honour them that fear the Lord, Ps. xv. 4. Must we esteem one another? Yes: Let each esteem other better than themselves, Phil. ii. 3. Must we sympathize with one another? Yes: Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep, Rom. xii. 15. Must we please one another? Yes: for even Christ pleased not himself, Rom. xv. 2, 3. Must we help one another? Yes: Bear ye one another's burthens, Gal. vi. 2. Must we do good to one another? Yes: as we have opportunity we must do good to all men, Gal. vi. 10. Must we pray for one another? Yes: Pray one for another, that ye may be healed, James v. 16. Must we love even our enemies? Yes: Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, Matt. v. 44.

6. Must you hurt nobody in word or deed? No: A citizen of Sion doth not evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour, Ps. xv. 3. Must you be true and just in all your dealings? Yes: That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, Deut. xvi. 20. Must you bear no malice or hatred in your heart? No: for whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, 1 John iii. 15.

7. Are we to love our neighbour as ourselves? Yes: for we are members one of another, Eph. iv. 25. As truly as we love ourselves? Yes: Let love be without dissimulation, Rom. xii. 9. And as fruitfully? Yes: Not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, 1 Cor. x. 33. And as constantly as we love ourselves? Yes: Let brotherly love continue, Heb. xiii. 1. Ought we therefore to do as we would be done by? Yes: Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, Matt. vii. 12. Should we in our places promote Christian love? Yes: for every one that loveth is born of God, 1 John iv. 7. And will this be our comfort? Yes: Live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you, 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

Q. 43. *What is the preface to the ten commandments?*

A. The preface to the ten commandments is in these words, I am the Lord thy God, which brought

thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

1. Did God himself speak the ten commandments? Yes: God spake all these words, saying. Exod. xx. 1. Was it fit they should be introduced with a solemn preface? Yes: Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken. Isa. i. 2. Did he therein assert his own authority? Yes: I am the Lord thy God. Did he remind them of the great things he had lately done for them? Yes: I am the Lord thy God, from the land of Egypt. Hos. xii. 9.

2. Was the condition of Israel in Egypt very miserable? Yes: for the Egyptians made them to serve with rigour. Exod. i. 13. Did God bring them out of Egypt? Yes: He brought Israel from among them, for his mercy endureth for ever. Ps. cxxxvi. 11. Did he do it miraculously? Yes: With a strong hand, and a stretched-out arm, for his mercy endureth for ever. v. 12. Did this oblige them to keep his commandments? Yes: When I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I said, Obey my voice. Jer. vii. 22, 23. But does this concern us? Yes: for unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them. Heb. iv. 2. For is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes: of the Gentiles also. Rom. iii. 29.

Q. 44. *What does the preface to the ten commandments teach us?*

A. The preface to the ten commandments teaches us, that because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all God's commandments.

1. Is God the Lord Jehovah? Yes: I am the Lord, that is my name. Isa. xlii. 8. Is that a reason why we should keep his commandments? Yes: Ye shall observe all my statutes, and do them, I am the Lord. Lev. xix. 37. Is he our God? Yes: He is thy praise, and he is thy God. Deut. x. 21. Is that a reason why we should keep his commandments? Yes: for all people will walk every one in the name of their God. Mic. iv. 5. Ps. xcv. 7.

2. Is he our Redeemer? Yes: Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer. Isa. lxiii. 16. Has he redeemed us from outward troubles? Yes: Behold, the Lord hath kept me alive. Josh. xiv. 10. And are we therefore bound to keep his commandments? Yes: Truly, I am thy servant, thou hast loosed my bonds. Ps. cxvi. 16. And are we very ungrateful if we do not? Yes: Now thou hast given us such deliverance as this, should we again break thy commandments? Ezra ix. 13, 14.

3. Has God brought us out of a spiritual Egypt? Yes: for Christ proclaims liberty to the captives. Isa. lxi. 1. Are we delivered from the bonds of sin? Yes: He shall redeem Israel from all their iniquities. Ps. cxxx. 8. And is our deliverance by Christ greater than theirs out of Egypt? Yes: for if the Son make you free, then you shall be free indeed. John viii. 36. And are we therefore bound to keep all his commandments? Yes: for we are delivered out of the hands of our enemies, that we might serve him. Luke i. 74, 75. And was this the design of our redemption? Yes: He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity. Tit. ii. 14. Is there then all the reason in the world why we should be religious? Yes: Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Isa. i. 18.

Q. 45. *What is the first commandment?*

A. The first commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

1. Is it an essential duty of religion to worship God? Yes: for those have no hope that are without God in the world. Eph. ii. 12. Are we concerned to be right in the object of our worship? Yes: We must know what we worship. John iv. 22. Does the first commandment direct us in this? Yes: for the first of all the commandments is this, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Mark xii. 29.

2. Does God lay a stress upon our having him for our God? Yes: Hear, O my people, and I will speak: I am God, even thy God. Ps. l. 7. And upon our having him only? Yes: Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: there shall no strange god be in thee, neither shalt thou worship any strange god. Ps. lxxxi. 8, 9. Did Israel need this commandment? Yes: for their fathers served other gods. Josh. xxiv. 2. And were they tempted to serve other gods? Yes: the gods of the people that were round about them. Deut. xiii. 7.

Q. 46. *What is required in the first commandment?*

A. The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God, and to worship and glorify him accordingly.

1. Does that which forbids us to have any other gods, require us to have the true God? Yes: Put away the strange gods, and serve the Lord only. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. Is it our duty to acknowledge God? Yes: The Lord he is God, the Lord he is God. 1 Kings xviii. 39. And must we acknowledge him to be the only true God? Yes: Thou art the God, even thou alone. 2 Kings xix. 15.

2. Is it our duty to acquaint ourselves with him? Yes: Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace. Job xxii. 21. Must we grow in that acquaintance? Yes: increasing in the knowledge of God. Col. i. 10. And may we attain to it? Yes: then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord. Hos. vi. 3.

3. Must we accept of God for our God? Yes: Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God.

Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. And must we join ourselves to him? Yes: Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, Jer. l. 5. And consent to be his? Yes: O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, Ps. cxvi. 16. Must we take God the Father to be our chief good and highest end? Yes: O God, thou art my God, Ps. lxiii. 1. And God the Son to be our Prince and Saviour? Yes: My Lord and my God, John xx. 28. And God the Holy Ghost to be our sanctifier, teacher, guide, and comforter? Yes: for they that are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God, Rom. viii. 14. Must we renounce all others? Yes: For by thee only will we make mention of thy name, Isa. xxvi. 13. Must we do this deliberately? Yes: Choose ye this day whom ye will serve, Josh. xxiv. 15. Must we do it solemnly? Yes: One shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, Isa. xliv. 5. Must we do it resolutely? Yes: Nay, but we will serve the Lord, Josh. xxiv. 21. May we be at liberty to change our Master? No: but with purpose of heart must cleave to the Lord, Acts xi. 23.

4. When we have avouched the Lord for our God, must we apply ourselves to him? Yes: If the Lord be God, then follow him, 1 Kings xviii. 21. Must we glorify him accordingly? Yes: Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, Ps. xxix. 2. Must we worship him? Yes: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, Matt. iv. 10. Must we worship him with inward worship? Yes: we must serve him with our spirits, Rom. i. 9. Is that the worship he requires? Yes: for such the Father seeks to worship him, John iv. 23.

5. Must we remember God? Yes: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, Eccl. xii. 1. And think of him with delight? Yes: My meditation of him shall be sweet, Ps. civ. 34. Must we adore and admire him? Yes: Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Exod. xv. 11. Must we fear him above all? Yes: Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, Isa. viii. 13. And reverence him? Yes: he is to be had in reverence of all them that are about him, Ps. lxxxix. 7. Must we submit to his word? Yes: Speak, Lord, for thy servant hears, 1 Sam. iii. 9. And submit to his will? Yes: It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, *v.* 18.

6. Must we love God above all? Yes: O love the Lord all ye his saints, Ps. xxxi. 23. Must our desire be towards him? Yes: So panteth my soul after thee, O God, Ps. xlii. 1. Must our delight be in him? Yes: Delight thyself always in the Lord, Ps. xxxvii. 4. Must our dependence be upon him? Yes: In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust, Ps. xxxi. 1.

7. Must we live a life of communion with God? Yes: Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord, Ps. xxv. 15. And a life of complacency in him? Yes: Rejoice in the Lord always, Phil. iv. 4. And a life of conformity to him? Yes: Be ye holy, for I am holy, 1 Pet. i. 16. And a life of confidence in him? Yes: Commit thy way unto the Lord, Ps. xxxvii. 5. And a life of regard to him? Yes: In all thy ways acknowledge him, Prov. iii. 6. Must our hearts go out towards him? Yes: Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul, Ps. xxv. 1. And must we have him always in our eye? Yes: I have set the Lord always before me, Ps. xvi. 8. And must we walk with him in the whole course of our conversation? Yes: as Enoch walked with God, Gen. v. 24. And is this inward worship the life of religion? Yes: it is better than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices, Mark xii. 33.

Q. 47. *What is forbidden in the first commandment?*

A. The first commandment forbiddeth the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying, the true God, as God, and our God; and the giving of that worship and glory to any other which is due to him alone.

1. Is it a great sin to deny the being of God? Yes: The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God, Ps. xiv. 1. Or to deny his omniscience? Yes: They say, The Lord shall not see, Ps. xciv. 7. Or to deny his justice? Yes: He hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it, Ps. x. 13. Or his holiness? Yes: Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself, Ps. l. 21. Or his goodness? Yes: I knew thee to be a hard man, Matt. xxv. 24. Or his faithfulness? Yes: Where is the promise of his coming? 2 Pet. iii. 4. Is it a sin to question God's providence? Yes: Is the Lord among us? or is he not? Exod. xvii. 7. Or to question his power? Yes: Can God furnish a table in the wilderness, Ps. lxxviii. 19. And is there such a thing as practical atheism? Yes: They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, Tit. i. 16.

2. Is it a great sin to be ignorant of God? Yes: Some have not the knowledge of God; I speak it to your shame, 1 Cor. xv. 34. Is it a damning sin? Yes: He shall take vengeance on them that know not God, 2 Thess. i. 8. Is it the cause of all other sins? Yes: There is neither truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God, in the land, Hos. iv. 1. Is it a great sin to forget God? Yes: Thou hast forgotten the God that formed thee, Deut. xxxii. 18. And to cast off the fear of him? Yes: There is no fear of God before his eyes, Ps. xxxvi. 1. And to live without prayer? Yes: Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, Isa. xliii. 22. And not to glorify him? Yes: The God in whose hand thy breath is, hast thou not glorified, Dan. v. 23.

3. Is all distrust of God a sin? Yes: the evil heart of unbelief departs from the living God, Heb. iii. 12. And tempting God? Yes: Thou shalt not

tempt the Lord thy God. Matt. iv. 7. And all the coldness of our love to him? Yes: But their heart is far from me. Matt. xv. 8. Does this commandment forbid all ungodliness? Yes: for the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness. Rom. i. 18. And all idolatry? Yes: Little children, keep yourselves from idols, 1 John v. 21.

3. Had the Gentiles other gods besides the true God? Yes: they had gods many, and lords many, 1 Cor. viii. 5. And were those gods devils? Yes: they sacrificed to devils, and not to God. 1 Cor. x. 20. May we have communion with them? No: I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. 1 Cor. x. 20. Have those fellowship with them who consult with witches? Yes: Is it because there is not a God in Israel, that thou goest to inquire of Beelzebub, the god of Ekron. 2 Kings i. 3. Did the Gentiles multiply their gods? Yes: According to the number of thy cities are thy gods. Jer. ii. 28. Were they gods of their own making? Yes: And they that make them are like unto them. Ps. cxv. 8. Was not that a great affront to the living God? Yes: They changed the truth of God into a lie. Rom. i. 25.

4. Is there not such a thing as spiritual idolatry? Yes: These men have set up their idols in their hearts. Ezek. xiv. 4. Is it idolatry to make a god of our appetites? Yes: Whose god is their belly, Phil. iii. 19. Or a god of our money? Yes: for covetousness is idolatry. Col. iii. 5. May we give that respect to any creature which is due to God alone? No: for his glory he will not give to another, Isa. xlii. 8. Is it therefore a sin to love them more than God? Yes: He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me. Matt. x. 37. And to trust in them? Yes: Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, Jer. xvii. 5. Is this spiritual adultery? Yes: She went after her lovers, and forgat me, saith the Lord. Hos. ii. 13.

Q. 48. *What are we especially taught by these words, [before me,] in the first commandment?*

A. These words, [before me,] in the first commandment, teach us, that God, who seeth all things, takes notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God.

1. Are we always in God's sight? Yes: Thou knowest my down-sitting, and my up-rising. Ps. cxxxix. 2. Are all our actions in his sight? Yes: All my ways are before thee. Ps. cxix. 168. Does he take notice of them? Yes: he pondereth all our goings. Prov. v. 21.

2. Are all our good works before him? Yes: I know thy work, and thy labour, and thy patience, Rev. ii. 2. Does he know all our inward worship of him? Yes: The Lord hearkened, and heard those that thought on his name. Mal. iii. 16. And should that encourage us to have him for our God? Yes: for your Father sees in secret, and will reward openly. Matt. vi. 4.

3. Are all our evil works before him? Yes: He sets our iniquities before him, Ps. xc. 8. Is the having of other gods oftentimes a secret sin? Yes: They do it in the dark, and say, The Lord sees us not. Exod. viii. 12. But does God see? Yes: He that formed the eye, shall he not see it? Ps. xciv. 9. Does he take notice of all our neglects of him? Yes: if we have forgotten the name of our God he knows it. And does he take notice of all our inclinations to other gods? Yes: if we have stretched out our hands to a strange god, shall not God search this out? Ps. xliv. 20. 21. And is he much displeased with secret idolatry? Yes: Seest thou the great abominations that they commit? Ezek. viii. 6. And should this oblige us to be faithful to him? Yes: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

Q. 49. *What is the second commandment?*

A. The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath: or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

1. Does the second commandment concern the ordinances of God's worship, as the first object of it? Yes: Therefore ye shall keep mine ordinances. Lev. xviii. 10. Was it requisite there should be a law concerning them? Yes: Lest ye say, How did these nations serve their gods? so will I do likewise, Deut. xii. 30. Is this binding to us now? Yes: Dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. 1 Cor. x. 14. Are we Christians forbidden to worship images? Yes: That they should not worship idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone. Rev. ix. 20.

2. Does this commandment forbid the making of images for a religious use? Yes: Cursed be the man that maketh any graven image. Deut. xxvii. 15. Does it forbid the making an image of what is in heaven above? Yes: Lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, shouldst be driven to worship them, Deut. iv. 19. Or on earth beneath? Yes: As they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox. Ps. cvi. 20. Or in the waters under the earth? Yes: As they made the likeness of creeping things. Rom. i. 23.

3. Does it forbid us to bow down to them? Yes: Shall I bow down to the stock of a tree? Isa. xliv. 19. Or to worship them? Yes: Thou shalt worship no other God. Exod. xxxiv. 14. Or to show any re-

respect to them? Yes: I will take away the names of Baalim out of their mouth, Hos. ii. 17. Was it requisite this commandment should be thus enlarged? Yes: Precept must be upon precept, and line upon line, Isa. xxviii. 10. And that it should be backed with many reasons? Yes: for they are mad upon their idols, Jer. l. 38.

Q. 50. *What is required in the second commandment?*

A. The second commandment requires the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God has appointed in his word.

1. Is it our duty solemnly to worship God? Yes: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, Matt. iv. 10. Do we thereby honour him? Yes: we give unto him the glory due unto his name, Ps. xxix. 2. Does the light of nature teach us to worship God? Yes: they cried every man unto his god, Jonah i. 5. But does it teach us sufficiently how to worship him? No: Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Acts xvii. 23. Has God in his word appointed us in what way to worship him? Yes: for this was ordained in Joseph for a testimony, Ps. lxxxi. 5. And must we worship him in the appointed way? Yes: See thou make all things according to the pattern showed thee, Heb. viii. 5.

2. Are we to receive such ordinances as God has appointed? Yes: The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey, Josh. xxiv. 24. Should we labour to understand them? Yes: What mean ye by this service? Exod. xii. 26. And are we to observe them? Yes: Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, Matt. xxviii. 20. And to observe them duly? Yes: as the duty of every day requires, Ezra iii. 4.

3. Are we to keep God's ordinances? Yes: That good thing which was committed to thee, keep, 2 Tim. i. 14. Are we to keep them carefully? Yes: Keep them as the apple of thine eye, Prov. vii. 2. Must we keep them pure without corruption? Yes: Add thou not to his words, Prov. xxx. 6. And entire, without diminution? Yes: We must walk in all the ordinances of the Lord, Luke i. 6. May we neither add nor diminish? No: Thou shalt neither add thereto, nor diminish from it, Deut. xii. 32.

4. Must we worship God in the spirit? Yes: We are the circumcision that worship God in the spirit, Phil. iii. 3. Must we be inward with God in every service? Yes: for bodily exercise profiteth little, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Is ignorance the mother of devotion? No: for if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? Mal. i. 8. Is it the mother of destruction? Yes: My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, Hos. iv. 6.

5. Ought we to have an eye to the word of God in our religious worship? Yes: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin, Rom. xiv. 23. And to glorify God in it? Yes: I will be sanctified in them that come nigh unto me, Lev. x. 3. And ought we to shun all idolatrous worships? Yes: For I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils, 1 Cor. x. 20.

Q. 51. *What is forbidden in the second commandment?*

A. The second commandment forbids the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his word?

1. Is it a sin to worship the true God by images? Yes: for it changes the truth of God into a lie, Rom. i. 25. Are not images laymen's books? No: for an image is a teacher of lies, Hab. ii. 18. Is it possible to make an image of God? No: we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device, Acts xvii. 29. Do we know what to represent God by? No: To whom then will ye liken God? Isa. xl. 18. Do they that pretend to it put a great affront upon him? Yes: for they change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, Rom. i. 23.

2. May we worship Christ by an image? No: For though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more, 2 Cor. v. 16. Is it idolatry to worship the consecrated host? Yes: for it is bread which we break, 1 Cor. x. 16. Is it idolatry to pray to saints and angels? Yes: See thou do it not, but worship God, Rev. xix. 10. and xxii. 9.

3. Must we be careful to avoid all appearances of idolatry? Yes: Take ye therefore good heed to yourselves, lest ye corrupt yourselves, Deut. iv. 15. Should we choose to die rather than worship images? Yes: But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up, Dan. iii. 18.

4. Is it a sin to worship God in any way not appointed in his word? Yes: In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, Matt. xv. 9. May we ourselves invent ordinances of worship? No: They went a whoring with their own inventions, Ps. cvi. 39. Is it not enough if what we invent is not forbidden? No: They offered a strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not, Lev. x. 1. Is it a sin to despise any of God's ordinances? Yes: Ye said also, Behold what a weariness is it! Mal. i. 13. Or to be careless in our attendance upon them? Yes: Cursed be the deceiver that hath in his flock a male, and vows and sacrifices to the Lord a corrupt thing, Mal. i. 14. Are they spiritual idolaters who make images of God in their fancy? Yes: they are vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened, Rom. i. 21.

Q. 52. *What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?*

A. The reasons annexed to the second commandment, are God's sovereignty over us, his property in us, and the zeal he has to his own worship.

1. Is there good reason why we should take heed of idolatry? Yes: Turn ye not to idols, neither make to yourselves molten gods, I am the Lord your God, Lev. xix. 4. Has God a sovereignty over us? Yes: for he is a great God, and a great King above all gods, Ps. xcv. 3. Ought we therefore to worship him, as he has appointed us? Yes: O come let us worship, and bow down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker, Ps. xcv. 6. And not to worship idols? Yes: for they can do neither good nor evil, Isa. xli. 23.

2. Has God a property in us? Yes: for we are the people of his pasture, Ps. xcv. 7. Ought we therefore to worship him? Yes: He is thy Lord, and worship thou him, Ps. xlv. 11. And not to worship other gods? Yes: for hath a nation changed their gods? Jer. ii. 11.

3. Is God jealous in the matters of his worship? Yes: The Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God, Exod. xxxiv. 14. Is he much displeased with those who corrupt it? Yes: They provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger with their vanities, 1 Kings xvi. 13. Do those who do so hate him? Yes: Idolaters are haters of God. Rom. i. 25, 30. Will he visit their iniquity? Yes: In the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them, Exod. xxxii. 34. Will he visit it upon the children? Yes: Our fathers sinned, and are not, and we have borne their iniquities, Lam. v. 7. And is it just with him to do so? Yes: for they are the children of whoredoms, Hos. ii. 4. But will he visit it for ever? No: but to the third and fourth generation, Exod. xxxiv. 7.

4. Will those who love God keep his commandments? Yes: If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, John xv. 10. Will he show mercy to such? Yes: for he hath said, I love them that love me, Prov. viii. 17. Will he show mercy to thousands of such? Yes: for the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, Ps. ciii. 17.

Q. 53. *What is the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

1. Does the third commandment concern the manner of our worshipping God? Yes: That we serve the Lord with fear, Ps. ii. 11. Is it enough that we seek God in a due ordinance? No: but we must seek him after the due order, 1 Chron. xv. 13.

2. Is God's name all that whereby he makes himself known? Yes: He proclaimed the name of the Lord, Exod. xxxiv. 5. Ought we to make use of his name? Yes: By thee only will we make mention of thy name, Isa. xxvi. 13. And to take heed of abusing it? Yes: Neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God, I am the Lord, Lev. xviii. 21.

Q. 54. *What is required in the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment requires a holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works.

1. Does this commandment require us to glorify the name of God? Yes: They shall worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name, Ps. lxxxvi. 9. Are we to think of God's name with seriousness? Yes: They feared the Lord, and thought upon his name, Mal. iii. 16. Are we to speak of it with reverence? Yes: For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few, Eccl. v. 2. Are we to call upon his name with a holy awe? Yes: for we that are but dust and ashes speak to the Lord of glory, Gen. xviii. 27. Are we to worship God reverently in every religious duty? Yes: We must serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, Heb. xii. 28. And is there good reason for it? Yes: for our God is a consuming fire, Heb. xii. 29. Ought we to behave ourselves very reverently in public worship? Yes: for God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him, Ps. lxxxix. 7.

2. Must we be holy in worshipping God? Yes: Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, Ps. xcvi. 9. Must we be holy in prayer and praise? Yes: lifting up holy hands, 1 Tim. ii. 8. Must our thoughts be fixed? Yes: O God, my heart is fixed, Ps. cviii. 1. Must pious and devout affections be working in us? Yes: we must be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, Rom. xii. 11. Must we be very humble in our approaches to God? Yes: as the publican that stood afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, Luke xviii. 13.

3. Must we give glory to God in his word? Yes: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name, Ps. cxxxviii. 2. Must we hear it with reverence? Yes: We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God, Acts x. 33. Must we give glory to God in swearing when we are called to it? Yes: Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt swear by his name, Deut. vi. 13. Must we be cautious in swearing? Yes: we must fear an oath, Eccl. ix. 2. Must we be conscientious in swearing? Yes: Thou shalt swear in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness, Jer. iv. 2. Must we give glory to God in vowing? Yes: Vow and pay unto the Lord your God, Ps. lxxvi. 11.

4. Must we glorify God in his great works? Yes: we must magnify his works which men behold, Job xxxvi. 24. And must we glorify him by our good

works? Yes: Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity, 2 Tim. ii. 19.

Q. 55. *What is forbidden in the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment forbids all profaning or abusing of any thing whereby God makes himself known.

1. Do all hypocrites take God's name in vain? Yes: for they make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth and righteousness, Isa. xlviii. 1. Do they therefore profane that name? Yes: for the name of God is blasphemed through them, Rom. ii. 24. Do hypocritical worshippers take God's name in vain? Yes: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. And is their seeming religion a vain religion? Yes: That man's religion is vain, James i. 26. Can it be pleasing to God? No: Bring no more vain oblations, Isa. i. 11, 13. Can it be profitable to themselves? No: for they receive the grace of God in vain, 2 Cor. vi. 1. Do covenant-breakers take God's name in vain? Yes: for they lie unto him with their tongues, Ps. lxxviii. 36.

2. Is it a sin against this commandment to use the name of God lightly and carelessly? Yes: For thou shalt fear this glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy God, Deut. xxviii. 58. Will God's friends thus affront him? No: Thine enemies take thy name in vain, Ps. cxxxix. 20. Is it the character of the wicked? Yes: Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins, Jer. xii. 2.

3. Is it a sin against this commandment to swear rashly? Yes: Above all things, my brethren, swear not, Jam. v. 12. Is it a sin to swear by creatures? Yes: whether by heaven, or by the earth, or by the head, Matt. v. 34—36. Must our communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay? Yes: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil, Matt. v. 37. Is it a sin to swear falsely? Yes: Thou shalt not forswear thyself, Matt. v. 33. Is prophane swearing a great sin? Yes: for it blasphemes that worthy name by which we are called, Jam. ii. 7. Is it an inexcusable sin? Yes: for they transgress without cause, Ps. xxv. 3. Does it bring judgments upon families? Yes: for the curse shall enter into the house of him that swears falsely, and shall consume it, Zech. v. 4. And upon nations? Yes: because of swearing the land mourns, Jer. xxiii. 10.

4. Is it a sin against this commandment to jest with the word of God? Yes: Be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong, Isa. xxviii. 22. Or to use it as a charm? Yes: as those exorcists which said, We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth, Acts xix. 13. Is it a sin to put a slight upon sacred things? Yes: Ye have profaned my name, in that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible, Mal. i. 12.

Q. 56. *What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?*

A. The reason annexed to the third commandment is, that however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment.

1. Do the breakers of the third commandment commonly escape punishment from men? Yes: for men hear the voice of swearing, and utter it not, Lev. v. 1. And do they fancy they shall escape God's judgments? Yes: the wicked contemn God, and yet say in their heart, he will not require it, Ps. x. 13. But shall they escape God's judgments? No: Be not deceived, God is not mocked, Gal. vi. 7.

2. Shall those who profane God's holy name escape his righteous judgments? No: The Lord will make their plagues wonderful, Deut. xxviii. 59. Shall hypocrites escape them? No: Woe unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, Matt. xxiii. 13. Shall scoffers escape them? No: for they shall be broken, and snared, and taken, Isa. xxviii. 13. Shall covenant breakers escape them? No: Seeing he despised the oath, by breaking the covenant, he shall not escape, Ezek. xvii. 18.

3. Shall swearers go unpunished? No: for he that sweareth shall be cut off, Zech. v. 3. Shall they who use God's name vainly go unpunished? No: for every idle word that men speak they must give account, Matt. xii. 36. And shall their words be witnesses against them? Yes: God shall cause their own tongues to fall upon them, Ps. lxiv. 8.

Q. 57. *What is the fourth commandment?*

A. The fourth commandment is, Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

1. Does the fourth commandment concern the time of worship? Yes: for there is a time to every purpose, Eccl. iii. 1. Must our worship be confined to that time? No: for we must pray always, Eph. vi. 18. But is that appointed for the certain time? Yes: Blow up the trumpet in the time appointed, Ps. lxxxi. 3. Is it the will of God we should take special notice of this command? Yes: for he has said, Remember it. Are we apt to forget it? Yes: they have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, Ezek. xxii. 26.

2. Must we keep holy the sabbath day? Yes: Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, Deut. v. 12. Is

a sabbath a day of rest? Yes: It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, Lev. xvi. 31. Must we labour the six days, and do all our work? Yes: For in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, Gen. iii. 19. But is not work for God part of our work? Yes: for we must work the works of God, John vi. 28. Must we not then do that on the six days? Yes: Every day will I bless thee, Ps. cxlv. 2. But must we especially do it on sabbath days? Yes: for it is the Holy of the Lord, Isa. lviii. 13. Must we therefore rest from other work on that day? Yes: that we may attend upon the Lord without distraction, 1 Cor. vii. 35.

3. Must children keep holy the sabbath day? Yes: Thou, and thy son, and thy daughter. And servants? Yes: That thy man servant and maid-servant may rest as well as thou, Deut. v. 14. And is there good reason for the sanctification of the sabbath? Yes: Ye shall keep my sabbaths, I am the Lord your God, Lev. xix. 3.

Q. 58. *What is required in the fourth commandment?*

A. The fourth commandment requires the keeping holy to God such set times as he has appointed in his word; expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy sabbath unto himself.

1. Must holy time be kept holy? Yes: for every thing is beautiful in its season, Eccl. iii. 11. Can man make time holy? No: For I am the Lord which sanctify you, Lev. xx. 8.

2. Has God appointed a sabbath? Yes: It is as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, Deut. v. 12. Had he authority to do so? Yes: For the day is thine, the night also is thine, Ps. lxxiv. 16. Did he appoint it for us? Yes: for the sabbath was made for man, Mark ii. 27. Did he appoint one day in seven? Yes: For a seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God. One whole day? Yes: for the evening and the morning were the first day, Gen. i. 5.

3. Must we keep it? Yes: Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep, Exod. xxxi. 13. Must we keep it as a treasure? Yes: we must call the sabbath honourable, Isa. lviii. 13. And keep it as a talent? Yes: For thou madest known unto them thy holy sabbaths, Neh. ix. 14. Must we keep it with care? Yes: we must lay hold on it, to keep the sabbath from polluting it, Isa. lvi. 2. Must we keep it holy to God? Yes: For he that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord, Rom. xiv. 6.

Q. 59. *Which day of the seven has God appointed to be the weekly sabbath?*

A. From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly sabbath, and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian sabbath.

1. Was the sabbath appointed from the beginning of the world? Yes: God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, when the heavens and the earth were finished, Gen. ii. 1—3. Was it in remembrance of the work of creation? Yes: because that in it he rested from all his work, Gen. ii. 3. Was it observed before the giving of the law upon mount Sinai? Yes: for before that it was said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath to the Lord, Exod. xvi. 23. Was that appointed to be kept on the seventh day of the week? Yes: For he spake of the seventh day on this wise, Heb. iv. 4.

2. Was the law of the sabbath given more particularly to Israel? Yes: I gave them my sabbath to be a sign between me and them, Ezek. xx. 12. Was it religiously observed among them? Yes: for their enemies did mock at their sabbaths, Lam. i. 7. Did they sanctify the sabbath in solemn assemblies? Yes: Moses of old time is read in the synagogues every sabbath day, Acts xv. 21. Was the blessing confined to the seventh day? No: For the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it, Exod. xx. 11.

3. Was the sabbath to continue in gospel times? Yes: For there remaineth the keeping of a sabbath to the people of God, Heb. iv. 9. marg. Did Christ intend it should continue? Yes: for he said, Pray that your flight be not on the sabbath day, Matt. xxiv. 20. Did he in order to that expound the fourth commandment? Yes: for he showed that it is lawful to do well upon the sabbath day, Matt. xii. 12. Is there the same need of sabbaths now that ever there was? Yes: for I gave them my sabbaths that they might know that I am the Lord, Ezek. xx. 12.

4. Is the sabbath changed now to the first day of the week? Yes: for on the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread, Acts xx. 7. Was it because on that day of the week our Lord Jesus rose from the dead? Yes: for he rose as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, Matt. xxviii. 1. And because on that day the Spirit was poured out? Yes: for that was when the day of Pentecost was fully come, Acts ii. 1. Was it fit there should be an alteration? Yes: For it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth that brought them up from the land of the north, Jer. xvi. 14, 15.

5. Did the apostles observe the first day of the week? Yes: On the first day of the week let every one lay by, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. Did the primitive church call it the Lord's day? Yes: I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, Rev. i. 10. In a thing of this nature ought we to acquiesce? Yes: For if any man will be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God, 1 Cor. xi. 16.

Q. 60. *How is the sabbath to be sanctified?*

A. The sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful in other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.

1. Must we rest on the sabbath day? Yes: six days may work be done, but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, Exod. xxxi. 15. Must we rest from worldly employments? Yes: ye shall hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein, Jer. xvii. 24. And from recreations? Yes: not finding thine own pleasure, Isa. lviii. 13. Is this to signify our being dead to this world? Yes: for he that is entered into his rest has ceased from his own works, Heb. iv. 10. And to awaken us to think of leaving it? Yes: for here we have no continuing city, Heb. xiii. 14. Must this rest be dedicated to God? Yes: it is a holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord, Exod. xxxv. 2.

2. Must we spend time on that day in the public exercises of God's worship? Yes: for it is a holy convocation, Lev. xxiii. 3. Must we do so every sabbath, as we have opportunity? Yes: From one sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord, Isa. lxvi. 23. And must we not absent ourselves from public worship? No: Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, Heb. x. 25. Must we spend time on that day in the private exercises of religion? Yes: It is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings, Lev. xxiii. 3. Did the disciples of Christ thus spend the first Lord's day? Yes: for on the first day of the week the disciples were assembled, John xx. 19.

3. Must we prepare for the sabbath day beforehand? Yes: It was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on, Luke xxiii. 54. Must the sabbath be a day of holy joy? Yes: We will rejoice and be glad in it, Ps. cxviii. 24. Must it be a day of praise? Yes: the psalm for the sabbath day begins, It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, Ps. xcii. 1. Must we be spiritual in the duties of the day? Yes: I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day? Rev. i. 10. And must we take pleasure in them? Yes: Call the Sabbath a delight, Isa. lviii. 13.

4. Are works of mercy and charity proper for a sabbath day? Yes: Ought not this woman to be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day, Luke xiii. 16. And may works of necessity be done on that day? Yes: Do not you on the sabbath lead your ox, or your ass, to watering? Luke xiii. 15.

Q. 61. *What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?*

A. The fourth commandment forbids the omission, or careless performance, of the duties required, profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly employments or recreations.

1. Do we profane the sabbath if we neglect the sabbath work? Yes: I came seeking fruit, but find none, Luke xiii. 7. Or if we perform carelessly? Yes: Ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick, Mal. i. 13. Or if we be weary of it? Yes: They say, When will the sabbath be gone? Amos viii. 5. Or if we idle away sabbath time? Yes: Why stand ye here all the day idle? Matt. xx. 6. And much more if we do that which is in itself sinful? Yes: They have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths, Ezek. xxiii. 38.

2. Do we profane the sabbath by violating the sabbath rest? Yes: What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Neh. xiii. 17. May we not buy and sell on that day? No: Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise, John ii. 16. May we not work harvest-work on that day? No: In earing-time, and in harvest, thou shalt rest, Exod. xxxiv. 21. May we not however think and speak at our pleasure on that day? No: Not doing thine own ways, nor speaking thine own words, Isa. lviii. 13.

3. Was he punished that gathered sticks on the sabbath? Yes: they stoned him with stones that he died, Numb. xv. 36. Are nations sometimes punished for sabbath profanation? Yes: If ye will not hallow the sabbath day, I will kindle a fire in the gates of Jerusalem, Jer. xvii. 27. Is the contempt of the sabbath a contempt of God? Yes: This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day, John ix. 16.

Q. 62. *What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?*

A. The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment are, God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments, his claiming a special property in the seventh, his own example, and his blessing the sabbath day.

1. Has God allowed us six days of the week? Yes: Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work. Has he reserved but one day in seven for himself? Yes: for he hath not made us to serve with an offering, nor wearied us with incense, Isa. xliii. 23. Does he claim a special property in the seventh day? Yes: it is the sabbath of the Lord thy God. Has our Lord Jesus a property in it? Yes: for the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath, Mark ii. 28. Ought we not therefore to devote it to his service? Yes: For will a man rob God? Mal. iii. 8.

2. Did God the Creator set us an example of sabbath rest? Yes: for the seventh day he rested and was refreshed, Exod. xxxi. 17. Did God the Redeemer set us an example of sabbath work? Yes:

for as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, Luke iv. 16. And has he given us encouragement in the work of the Christian sabbath? Yes: for when they were assembled on the first day of the week, Jesus stood in the midst, John xx. 19.

3. Has God blessed the sabbath day, and so put an honour upon it? Yes: The Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it. Is it not an ill thing then for us to put a slight upon it? Yes: As they do that despise the holy things, and profane the sabbath, Ezek. xxii. 8. Has God appointed it to be a day of blessings to us? Yes: There will I come to thee, and will bless thee, Exod. xx. 24. Are not they enemies to themselves then that neglect it? Yes: they forsake their own mercies, John ii. 8.

Q. 63. *What is the fifth commandment?*

A. The fifth commandment is, Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

1. Do the six last commandments concern our duty to our neighbour? Yes: for this is his commandment, That we love one another, 1 John iii. 23. And must we mind that as well as our duty to God? Yes: providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of men, 2 Cor. viii. 21. And are we concerned to be very careful in second-table duties? Yes: that the name of God, and his doctrine, be not blasphemed, 1 Tim. vi. 1. Will our devotions be acceptable without this? No: When ye make many prayers I will not hear, for your hands are full of blood, Isa. i. 15.

2. Is religion toward God a branch of universal righteousness? Yes: Render to God the things that are God's, Matt. xxii. 21. And his righteousness toward men a branch of true religion? Yes: for pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, Jam. i. 27. Does the law of God require both? Yes: To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God, Mic. vi. 8. And does the grace of the gospel teach both? Yes: To live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, Tit. ii. 12. Must every godly man then be an honest man? Yes: for we must live in all godliness and honesty, 1 Tim. ii. 2. And must he be a charitable man? Yes: He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous, Ps. cxii. 4. And will the trial be by this at the great day? Yes: for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat, Matt. xxv. 35.

3. Does the fifth commandment concern our duty to our relations? Yes: For all ye are brethren, Matt. xxiii. 8. And must we be careful to do this duty? Yes: that they who will not be won by the word, may be won by the conversation, 1 Pet. iii. 1.

Q. 64. *What is required in the fifth commandment?*

A. The fifth commandment requires the preserving the honour, and performing the duty, which belongs to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.

1. Is it the duty of children to reverence their parents? Yes: Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, Lev. xix. 3. And must they give honour to them? Yes: If I be a father, where is my honour? Mal. i. 6. And may they upon no account despise them? No: Despise not thy mother when she is old, Prov. xxiii. 22. Ought they to carry themselves respectfully towards them? Yes: King Solomon rose up to meet his mother, and bowed himself to her, 1 Kings ii. 19. And to speak honourably of them? Yes: Her children rose up, and called her blessed, Prov. xxxi. 28.

2. Is it the duty of children to obey their parents? Yes: Children, obey your parents in the Lord, Eph. vi. 1. And to receive their instructions? Yes: Hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother, Prov. i. 8. And to submit to their correction? Yes: The fathers of our flesh corrected us, and we gave them reverence, Heb. xii. 9. Should children labour to rejoice the hearts of their parents? Yes: My son, if thy heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, Prov. xxiii. 15. And to requite them? Yes: let them show piety at home, and requite their parents, 1 Tim. v. 4. And to have their consent in disposing of themselves? Yes: Jacob obeyed his father, and his mother, and went to Padan-aram, for a wife, Gen. xxviii. 7. Is Christ an example of this subjection? Yes: for he went with his parents to Nazareth, and was subject to them, Luke ii. 51.

3. Is it the duty of children to be respectful to the aged? Yes: Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, Lev. xix. 32. And must they be observant of their teachers? Yes: for they will mourn at the last, who obey not the voice of their teachers, and incline not their ear to them that instruct them, Prov. v. 11, 13. And must they order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters? Yes: ye younger, submit yourselves to the elder, 1 Pet. v. 5.

4. Is it the duty of parents to be tender of their children? Yes: for can a woman forget her sucking child? Isa. xlix. 15. And mild toward them? Yes: for a father pities his children, Ps. ciii. 13. And to bear with them? Yes: as a man spares his son that serves him, Mal. iii. 17. And yet must they correct them when it is necessary? Yes: for he that spares his rod, hates his son; but he that loves him, chastens him betimes, Prov. xiii. 24.

5. Is it the duty of parents to pray for their children? Yes: Job offered for his sons burnt-offerings, according to the number of them all, Job i. 5. And to bless God for them? Yes: They are the children which God hath graciously given thy ser

vant, Gen. xxxiii. 5. Are they to bless them in the name of the Lord? Yes: By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, Heb. xi. 20. And are they to provide for them what is convenient? Yes: If any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel, 1 Tim. v. 8.

6. Is it the duty of parents to bring up their children in the fear of God? Yes: Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, Eph. vi. 4. And to teach them the things of God? Yes: Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, Deut. vi. 7. And to oblige them to their duty? Yes: I know Abraham, that he will command his children to keep the way of the Lord, Gen. xviii. 19. And ought they to set them a good example? Yes: I will walk within my house with a perfect heart, Ps. ci. 2. And must they patiently part with their children when God calls for them? Yes: Thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, Gen. xxii. 16.

7. Is it the duty of servants to honour their masters and mistresses? Yes: Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour, 1 Tim. vi. 1. Is it their duty to obey them? Yes: Servants be obedient to them that are your masters, Eph. vi. 5. And to be just and true to them? Yes: not purloining, but showing all good fidelity, Titus ii. 10. Ought they to be diligent in the duty of their place? Yes: not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, Col. iii. 22. And to do it cheerfully? Yes: Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, and with good-will, doing service, Col. iii. 23. Eph. vi. 7. Ought they to be patient under rebukes? Yes: not answering again, Tit. ii. 9. What, though they suffer unjustly? Yes: Servants be subject not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, 1 Pet. ii. 18. And must they have an eye to God in all? Yes: As to the Lord, and not to men, Col. iii. 23.

8. Is it the duty of masters to be just to their servants? Yes: Masters give to your servants that which is just and equal, Col. iv. 1. And to be gentle towards them? Yes: forbearing threatening, Eph. vi. 9. Should all masters of families worship God with their families? Yes: As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord, Josh. xxiv. 15. And should they restrain sin in their families? Yes: Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacle, Job xxii. 23.

9. Is it the duty of wives to be respectful to their husbands? Yes: Let the wife see that she reverence her husband, Eph. v. 33. And to love them? Yes: they must love their husbands, and love their children, Tit. ii. 4. Must they be submissive to their husbands? Yes: Wives submit yourselves to your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord, Col. iii. 18. Must they be faithful and obedient to them? Yes: they must be chaste, keepers at home, obedient to their own husbands, Tit. ii. 5. Must they receive instruction from them? Yes: If they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home, 1 Cor. xiv. 35. Must they be helpers to them in religion? Yes: that they may be won by the conversation of the wives, 1 Pet. iii. 1.

10. Is it the duty of husbands to love their wives? Yes: Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter against them, Col. iii. 19. Must they love them dearly? Yes: Let every one love his wife even as himself, Eph. v. 33. And delight in them? Yes: rejoice with the wife of thy youth, Prov. v. 18, 19. And be tender of them? Yes: Giving honour to the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, 1 Pet. iii. 7.

11. Is it the duty of husbands and wives to be pleasing one to another? Yes: He that is married careth how to please his wife, and she that is married how to please her husband, 1 Cor. vii. 33, 34. Is it their duty to live in the fear of God, and to pray together? Yes: as heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered, 1 Pet. iii. 7. Should they promote the eternal salvation one of another? Yes: What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife? 1 Cor. vii. 16.

12. Is it the duty of subjects to reverence their magistrates? Yes: Fear God, honour the king, 1 Pet. ii. 17. And to obey them in the Lord? Yes: we must be subject to principalities and powers, and obey magistrates, Tit. iii. 1. And to be loyal to them? Yes: for the powers that be are ordained of God, Rom. xiii. 1. Is it our duty to pray for magistrates? Yes: for kings, and for all that are in authority, 1 Tim. ii. 2. And to pay them tribute? Yes: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, Rom. xiii. 7. Must we be peaceable under their government? Yes: that we under them may lead a quiet and peaceable life, 1 Tim. ii. 2. And all this conscientiously? Yes: Ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake, Rom. xiii. 5. Ought magistrates to be as parents to their subjects? Yes: Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers, Isa. xlix. 23.

13. Is it the duty of people to love and respect their ministers? Yes: Know them which labour among you, and esteem them very highly in love, for their work's sake, 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. Ought they to submit to their instructions? Yes: Obey your guides, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, Heb. xiii. 7. And to provide for their comfortable subsistence? Yes: Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teacheth, Gal. vi. 6. And ought ministers to be as spiritual fathers to their people? Yes: We exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, 1 Thess. ii. 11.

14. Is it the duty of equals to be kind one to another? Yes: Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love. Rom. xii. 10. And to be respectful one to another? Yes: in honour preferring one another. Rom. xii. 10. And to be submissive one to another? Yes: Yea, all of ye, be subject one to another. 1 Pet. v. 5.

Q. 65. *What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?*

A. The fifth commandment forbids the neglecting of, or doing any thing against, the honour and duty which belongs to every one in their several places and relations.

1. Is it a sin for children to despise their parents? Yes: Cursed be he that sets light by his father or mother. Deut. xxvii. 16. Or to disobey them? Yes: the eye that mocks at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it, Prov. xxx. 17. Is it a sin for children prodigally to spend their parents' substance? Yes: He that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame. Prov. xxix. 16. Or to grieve their parents? Yes: A foolish son is the heaviness of his mother, Prov. x. 1.

2. Is it a sin for inferiors to be rude and undutiful to their superiors? Yes: For a child to behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable, Isa. iii. 5. Is it a sin for superiors to be harsh and unkind to their inferiors? Yes: Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, lest they be discouraged, Col. iii. 21.

3. Is it a sin to be vexatious to our relations? Yes: Her adversary provoked her to make her to fret, 1 Sam. i. 6. And to be quarrelsome with our relations? Yes: Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren, Gen. xiii. 8. And to be suspicious of our relations? Yes: for charity thinketh no evil, 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5.

Q. 66. *What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?*

A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment, is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.

1. Is there a gracious promise made to those that honour their parents? Yes: it is the first commandment with promise, Eph. vi. 2. Is long life promised? Yes: That thy days may be long in the land. Is outward prosperity promised? Yes: That it may be well with thee, Eph. vi. 3. Are temporal blessings promised to good people? Yes: Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, 1 Tim. iv. 8. And are they promised particularly to pious and dutiful children? Yes: My son, forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments; for length of days, and long life, and peace shall they add to thee, Prov. iii. 1, 2.

2. Do all good children prosper in this world? No: for all things come alike to all, Eccl. ix. 2. But are they most likely to prosper? Yes: for by humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honour, and life, Prov. xxii. 4. Shall they prosper as far as is for God's glory? Yes: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me, Ps. l. 15. And as far as is for their own good? Yes: for we read of those whom God sent into captivity for their good, Jer. xxiv. 5. But shall good children live however in the heavenly Canaan? Yes: there their inheritance shall be for ever, Ps. xxxvii. 18. And are disobedient children often punished in this life? Yes: as Absalom that was hanged in an oak, 2 Sam. xviii. 9.

Q. 67. *What is the sixth commandment?*

A. The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.

1. Does the sixth commandment concern our own and our neighbour's life? Yes: for the life is more than meat, Matt. vi. 25. Has God a tender regard to the life of men? Yes: for he giveth to all life and breath, Acts xvii. 25. Has he by this law made a hedge about life? Yes: that men might not be like the fishes of the sea, Hab. i. 14.

2. Did there need this law? Yes: for men live in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another, Tit. iii. 3. Is it a part of the law of nature? Yes: for the barbarous people said of a murderer, that vengeance suffers him not to live, Acts xxviii. 4.

Q. 68. *What is required in the sixth commandment?*

A. The sixth commandment requires all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life, and the life of others.

1. Are we to take care of our own lives? Yes: No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, Eph. v. 29. Must we endeavour the preservation of them? Yes: Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life, Job ii. 4. Are we to be careful of our diet? Yes: Hast thou found honey, eat so much as is sufficient for thee, Prov. xxv. 16. Are we to use physic when we need it? Yes: Take a lump of figs and lay it upon the boil, Isa. xxxviii. 21. And are we to be cheerful? Yes: for a merry heart doeth good like a medicine, Prov. xvii. 22.

2. But may we deny Christ to save our lives? No: he that so saveth his life shall lose it, Matt. xvi. 25. May we commit any wilful sin to save our lives? No: we must do no evil that good may come, Rom. iii. 8. But what we do for the preservation of our own lives, must it be with an eye to God's glory? Yes: That I may live, and keep thy word, Ps. cxix. 17. Live and praise thee, *v.* 175.

3. Are we to be compassionate even to the brute creatures? Yes: A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, Prov. xii. 10. Are we to be careful of the lives of others as well as of our own? Yes: It was Cain that said, Am I my brother's keeper? Gen. iv. 9. Are we to do what we can in our places for the relief of those who are exposed to violence? Yes: We must deliver them that are ready to be slain, Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. Must we succour the distressed, like the good Samaritan? Yes: Go thou and do likewise, Luke x. 37.

4. Are we to support the lives of those who are in straits? Yes: The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, Job xxix. 13. Are we to be meek towards those that provoke us? Yes: showing all meekness toward all men, Titus iii. 2. And are we to be merciful toward those who need us? Yes: Put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, Col. iii. 12.

Q. 69. *What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?*

A. The sixth commandment forbids the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbour unjustly, and whatsoever tends thereunto.

1. May we dispose of our own lives at our pleasure? No: For surely your blood of your lives will I require, Gen. ix. 5. Is it a sin in any case to kill ourselves? Yes: Do thyself no harm, Acts xvi. 28. Is it an exceeding sinful sin? Yes: it was the sin of Saul and Judas, 1 Sam. xxxi. 4. Matt. xxvii. 5. Is it a sin needlessly to expose our own lives? Yes: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, Matt. iv. 7. But must we not expose our lives to keep a good conscience? Yes: Neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy, Acts xx. 24.

2. Is drunkenness a sin against our own lives? Yes: Take heed lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and so that day come upon you unawares, Luke xxi. 34. Is uncleanness so? Yes: He that commits fornication, sins against his own body, 1 Cor. vi. 18. Is immoderate care and grief a sin against our own lives? Yes: for the sorrow of the world worketh death, 2 Cor. vii. 10.

3. Is it lawful for the magistrate to take away the life of a malefactor? Yes: for he bears not the sword in vain, Rom. xiii. 4. May soldiers kill in a lawful war? Yes: Cursed is he that keepeth back his sword from blood, Jer. xlviii. 10. But is wilful murder a great sin? Yes: The voice of my brother's blood cries, Gen. iv. 10. Is it an iniquity to be punished by the judge? Yes: Whoso sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, Gen. ix. 6. And ought the murderer to be put to death? Yes: A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him, Prov. xxviii. 17.

4. Is murder a great affront to God? Yes: for in the image of God made he man, Gen. ix. 6. Does it make men like the devil? Yes: for he was a murderer from the beginning, John viii. 44. Is it of dangerous consequence to the murderer? Yes: for no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him, 1 John iii. 15. Ought we therefore to pray that God would keep us from it? Yes: Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God of my salvation, Ps. li. 14.

5. Is malice heart-murder? Yes: he that hateth his brother is a murderer, 1 John iii. 15. Is rash anger a breach of this commandment? Yes: But I say unto you, Whosoever is angry with his brother without cause, shall be in danger of the judgment, Matt. v. 22. Is giving foul language a breach of this commandment? Yes: Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, or Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire, Matt. v. 22. Is revenge a breach of this commandment? Yes: Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, Rom. xii. 19.

Q. 70. *What is the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Does this commandment concern our own and our neighbour's chastity? Yes: for this is the will of God, even our sanctification, 1 Thess. iv. 3. Is it needful there should be such a commandment? Yes: for since all are gone aside, they are all become filthy, Ps. xiv. 3. Is it agreeable to the light of nature? Yes: for Abimelech called adultery a great sin, Gen. xx. 9. And is this command for the public good of mankind? Yes: for whoredom and wine take away the heart, Hos iv. 11.

Q. 71. *What is required in the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment requires the preservation of our own and our neighbour's chastity, in heart, speech, and behaviour.

1. Is it our duty to keep our bodies pure from all fleshly lusts? Yes: we must possess our vessel in sanctification and honour, and not in the lust of concupiscence, 1 Thess. iv. 4. Are we to present our bodies to God? Yes: Present your bodies unto God a living sacrifice, Rom. xii. 1. Are we to glorify him with them? Yes: Glorify God with your bodies, 1 Cor. vi. 20. Are we to use them for him? Yes: For your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, 1 Cor. vi. 19. And to employ them in his service? Yes: Yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto God, Rom. vi. 13. May they then be used in the service of our lusts? No: for if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, 1 Cor. iii. 17.

2. Ought we to preserve our chastity in heart? Yes: that we may be holy both in body and spirit, 1 Cor. vii. 34. And must we keep out all unclean

thoughts and desires? Yes: we must flee youthful lusts, 2 Tim. ii. 22. And is that the way to prevent the acts of uncleanness? Yes: for when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin, James i. 15.

3. Ought we to preserve our chastity in speech? Yes: Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, Col. iv. 6. Is it the character of good people to be modest? Yes: I will turn to the people a pure language, Zeph. iii. 9.

4. Ought we to preserve our chastity in behaviour? Yes: we must have a chaste conversation coupled with fear, 1 Pet. iii. 2. And in our clothing? Yes: Women must adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, 1 Tim. ii. 9. Must we abstain from all appearances of uncleanness? Yes: hating even the garment spotted with the flesh, Jude 23. And from all approaches to it? Yes: Come not nigh the door of her house, Prov. v. 8.

5. Must we resolve against wanton looks? Yes: I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid? Job xxxi. 1. Must we always keep our bodies in soberness and chastity? Yes: we must cleanse ourselves from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, 2 Cor. vii. 1. And must we crucify all the lusts of the flesh? Yes: They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, Gal. v. 24. Must the body be subdued? Yes: I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, 1 Cor. ix. 27. And must its sinful desires be denied? Yes: If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee, Matt. v. 29.

Q. 72. *What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment forbids all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.

1. Is adultery a very great sin? Yes: How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? Gen. xxix. 9. Is it an iniquity to be punished by the judge? Yes: The adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death, Lev. xx. 10. Is fornication a very great sin? Yes: Fornication, and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you, Eph. v. 3. Will these sins certainly shut men out of heaven, if they be not repented of, and forsaken? Yes: for fornicators and adulterers shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 10.

2. Are unclean thoughts sins? Yes: for whosoever looketh on a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart, Matt. v. 28. Are unclean reflections sins? Yes: for some multiply their whoredoms by calling to remembrance the days of their youth, Ezek. xxiii. 19. Are unclean desires sins? Yes: inordinate affection, and evil concupiscence, are to be mortified in us, Col. iii. 5. And must all fleshly lusts be shunned? Yes: Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers, and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, 1 Pet. ii. 11.

3. Are unclean words sin? Yes: for there must be neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, Eph. v. 4. Must we therefore take heed of speaking any filthy words? Yes: Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, Eph. iv. 29. May we take delight in hearing filthy talk? No: for evil communications corrupt good manners, 1 Cor. xv. 33.

4. Are all unchaste actions forbidden in this commandment? Yes: not only adultery and fornication, but uncleanness and lasciviousness, (Gal. v. 19.) chambering and wantonness, Rom. xiii. 13. Are the occasions of uncleanness here forbidden? Yes: Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, Eph. v. 11.

5. Is all uncleanness provoking to God? Yes: For I the Lord am holy, Lev. xx. 26. Is it against our bodies? Yes: for the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, 1 Cor. vi. 13. Is it a wrong to our souls? Yes: for fleshly lusts war against the soul, 1 Pet. ii. 11. Is it wounding to conscience? Yes: I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, Eccl. vii. 26.

6. Are idleness and gluttony occasions of uncleanness, and forbidden in this commandment? Yes: for this was the iniquity of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, Ezek. xvi. 49. And is drunkenness also a sin of dangerous consequence? Yes: for drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 10.

Q. 73. *What is the eighth commandment?*

A. The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.

1. Does the eighth commandment concern our own and our neighbour's wealth and outward estate? Yes: for the earth God has given to the children of men, Ps. cxv. 16. Is it necessary there should be such a command? Yes: for every brother will utterly supplant, Jer. ix. 4.

2. Is robbing God the worst theft? Yes: Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me, Mal. iii. 8, 9. And is justice to God the highest justice? Yes: Render to God the things that are God's, Matt. xxii. 21.

Q. 74. *What is required in the eighth commandment?*

A. The eighth commandment requires all lawful procuring and furthering our own and our neighbour's wealth and outward estate.

1. Is religion a friend to outward prosperity? Yes: for in wisdom's left hand are riches and honour, Prov. iii. 16. Does it teach us to be diligent in our callings? Yes: Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, Prov. xxvii. 23. And to keep close to them? Yes: Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, 1 Thess. iv. 11. And is that the

way to thrive? Yes: for the hand of the diligent maketh rich, Prov. x. 4. Does religion teach us to be prudent in our affairs? Yes: the good man will guide his affairs with discretion, Ps. cxii. 5. And is that the way to thrive? Yes: for through wisdom is a house builded, Prov. xxiv. 3.

2. Must we serve God with our worldly estate? Yes: Honour the Lord with thy substance, Prov. iii. 9. And is that the way to thrive? Yes: So shall thy barn be filled with plenty, *v.* 10. Must we cheerfully use our estates? Yes: For I know no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life, Eccl. iii. 12. And must we cheerfully serve God with them? Yes: we must serve the Lord our God with joyfulness and gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, Deut. xxviii. 47.

3. Must we be just to all we deal with? Yes: Render therefore to all their due, Rom xiii. 7. And must we give every body their own? Yes: Owe no man any thing, but to love one another, Rom. xiii. 8. Must we be true to every trust reposed in us? Yes; as the workmen who dealt faithfully, 2 Kings xii. 15. And is honesty the best policy? Yes: for a little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked, Ps. xxxvii. 16. And shall we have the comfort of it in this world? Yes: He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, that despiseth the gain of oppression, and shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, he shall dwell on high, his place of defence shall be in the munitions of rocks, bread shall be given him, and his waters shall be sure, Isa. xxxiii. 15, 16. If therefore we have done any wrong, must we make restitution? Yes: Zaccheus stood and said, If I have wronged any man, I restore him fourfold, Luke xix. 8.

4. Must we concern ourselves for the welfare of others? Yes: Look not every one on his own things, but every one also on the things of others, Phil. ii. 4. And must we do all we can to promote the welfare of others? Yes: If thy brother's ox or ass go astray, thou shalt bring them back, Deut. xxii. 1.

5. Must we relieve the poor according to our ability? Yes: If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him, Lev. xxv. 35. Must we be forward to relieve the poor? Yes: We must be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, 1 Tim. vi. 18. Is that the way to thrive in this world? Yes: for he that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again, Prov. xix. 17. And shall it be repayed in the other world? Yes: Thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just, Luke xiv. 14. And must we make this use of what we have in the world? Yes: we must labour that we may have to give to him that needeth, Eph. iv. 28.

Q. 75. *What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?*

A. The eighth commandment forbids whatsoever does or may unjustly hinder our own or our neighbour's wealth, and outward estate.

1. May we do what we will with our own estates? No: for we are but stewards of the manifold grace of God, 1 Pet. iv. 10. Is it a sin then to waste our estates in prodigality? Yes: for the drunkard and glutton shall come to poverty, Prov. xxiii. 31. Is luxury the way to beggary? Yes: he that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man, Prov. xxi. 17. Is slothfulness a robbing of ourselves? Yes: for he that is slothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster, Prov. xviii. 9. And is that the way to poverty? Yes: for drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags, Prov. xxiii. 21.

2. Is keeping idle company the way to poverty? Yes: for he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough, Prov. xxviii. 19. Is fraud and injustice the way to poverty? Yes: for wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished, Prov. xiii. 11. Can any expect to prosper in a way of unjust gain? No: for he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool, Jer. xvii. 11. Do men rob themselves and their families by foolishness in their affairs? Yes: for every wise woman buildeth her house, but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands. Prov. xiv. 1. And by rash suretyship? Yes: for he that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it, Prov. xi. 15.

3. Is it a sin to rob ourselves of the comfort of that which God has given us? Yes: if a man hath not power to eat of it, it is vanity, and an evil disease, Eccl. vi. 2. And is it a sin to deny it to our relations? Yes: if any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel, 1 Tim. v. 8.

4. Is it a great sin to steal from any body? Yes: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off, Zech. v. 3. Is it a great sin for children to steal from their parents? Yes: Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith it is no transgression, the same is the companion of a destroyer, Prov. xxviii. 24. And for the rich to oppress the poor? Yes: Rob not the poor, because he is poor, Prov. xxii. 22. Will you therefore keep your hands from picking and stealing? Yes: because of the fear of God, Neh. v. 15. Must those who have used themselves to it break it off? Yes: Let him that stole steal no more, Eph. iv. 28. Must poor people especially watch and pray against this temptation? Yes: Lest I be poor, and steal, Prov. xxx. 9.

5. Is it a sin to cheat any body in a bargain? Yes: Let no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter, 1 Thess. iv. 6. Is it a sin to use false weights

and measures? Yes: A false balance is abomination to the Lord, Prov. xi. 1. Is it a sin to give assistance or countenance to any fraud? Yes: Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul, Prov. xxix. 24.

6. Is it a sin to deny relief to the poor? Yes: Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in that man? 1 John iii. 17. Is it a sin to deny the payment of a just debt? Yes: for the wicked borroweth, and payeth not again, Ps. xxxvii. 21. Or withhold wages that is due? Yes: the hire of the labourers kept back by fraud crieth, James v. 4. And is the love of money the cause of all these sins? Yes: the love of money is the root of all evil, 1 Tim. vi. 10.

Q. 76. *What is the ninth commandment?*

A. The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

1. Does this commandment concern our own and our neighbour's good name? Yes: for a good name is better than precious ointment, Eccl. vii. 1. Is there need of this commandment? Yes: for every neighbour will walk with slanders, Jer. ix. 4.

Q. 77. *What is required in the ninth commandment?*

A. The ninth commandment requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbour's good name, especially in witness-bearing.

1. Is it our duty to govern our tongues? Yes: I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue, Ps. xxxix. 1. Is he a good Christian that does not? No: for if any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain, James i. 26. Must we therefore pray to God to keep us from tongue-sins? Yes: Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, Ps. cxli. 3.

2. Is it our duty to speak truth? Yes: Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour, Zech. viii. 16. Is there good reason for it? Yes: for we are members one of another, Eph. iv. 25. And is this the character of a good man? Yes: that he speaketh the truth in his heart, Ps. xv. 2. Are all truths to be spoken at all times? No: for there is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak, Eccl. iii. 7. But may an untruth be spoken at any time? No: for God's people are children that will not lie, Isa. lxiii. 8.

3. Is it our duty, especially in witness-bearing, to speak truth? Yes: for a faithful witness will not lie, Prov. xiv. 5. And the whole truth? Yes: Samuel told Eli every whit, and hid nothing from him, 1 Sam. iii. 18. And nothing but the truth? Yes: for a lying tongue is but for a moment, Prov. xii. 19.

4. Is it our duty to strive to have a good name with God? Yes: for not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth, 2 Cor. x. 16. And should we endeavour to have a good name with good people? Yes: Let those that fear thee turn unto me, Ps. cxix. 79. And if possible a good name with all people? Yes: Demetrius hath a good report of all men, 3 John 12. Must we abound in those things that are of good report? Yes: if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on those things, Phil. iv. 8.

5. In order to our getting a good name, must we live by faith? Yes: for by it the elders obtained a good report, Heb. xi. 2. Must we walk wisely? Yes: for a man's wisdom makes his face to shine, Eccl. viii. 1. Must we do justly? Yes: Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, 1 Pet. ii. 12. And be humble? Yes: for before honour is humility, Prov. xviii. 12. And must we abound in good works? Yes: Let your light so shine before men, Matt. v. 16. But can good people expect to have every one's good word? No: Woe unto you when all men speak well of you, Luke vi. 26. May we hazard a good conscience to preserve our reputation? No: for our praise is not of men, but of God, Rom. ii. 29.

6. Ought we to be very tender of the good names of others? Yes: we must honour all men, 1 Pet. ii. 17. Must we give them the praise of that in them which is good? Yes: We also bear record, 3 John 12. But may we flatter them? No: he that speaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail, Job xvii. 5. Must we charitably conceal their faults? Yes: for charity covers a multitude of sins, 1 Pet. iv. 8. Must we discourage slandering and censoriousness? Yes: We must with an angry countenance drive away a backbiting tongue, Prov. xxv. 23.

Q. 78. *What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?*

A. The ninth commandment forbids whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbour's good name.

1. Is lying a great sin? Yes: Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man, Col. iii. 9. Is it a sin that God hates? Yes: lying lips are abomination to the Lord, Prov. xii. 22. And is it a sin that all good men hate? Yes: I hate and abhor lying, Ps. cxix. 163. Does it make men like the devil? Yes: for he is a liar, and the father of it, John viii. 44. And will it bring them to hell? Yes: for all liars shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, Rev. xxi. 8.

2. Is it lawful to tell a lie to make sport? No: for as a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is he that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport? Prov. xxvi. 18, 19. Is it

lawful to tell a lie to excuse a fault? No: for Gehazi for doing so had a leprosy entailed on him and his seed for ever, 2 Kings v. 27. May we tell a lie with intention to do good? No: We must not do evil, that good may come, Rom. iii. 8. Will what is got by lying do us any good? No: The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is vanity, tossed to and fro of them that seek death, Prov. xxi. 6. Should we therefore pray against this sin? Yes: Remove from me the way of lying, Ps. cxix. 29.

3. Is it a sin to belie ourselves? Yes: As there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches, Prov. xiii. 7. May we be careless of our own good name? No: If I should say I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you, John viii. 55.

4. Is it a sin to belie our neighbour? Yes: They laid to my charge things that I know not, Ps. xxxv. 11. Is it folly? Yes: He that uttereth slander is a fool, Prov. x. 18. Is it a sin to speak evil of any? Yes: Put them in mind to speak evil of no man, Tit. iii. 1, 2. And to be censorious of our brethren? Yes: Judge not, that ye be not judged, Matt. vii. 1. Is it a great offence to God to do this? Yes: He that speaks evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaks evil of the law, and judgeth the law, James iv. 11. Does it make us like the devil? Yes: for he is the accuser of the brethren, Rev. xii. 10.

5. Is it a sin to raise a false report? Yes: Thou shalt not raise a false report, Exod. xxiii. 1. And a sin to spread it? Yes: Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer, Lev. xix. 16. May we proclaim our brethren's faults? No: for charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, 1 Cor. xiii. 6. Is it a sin to speak ill of magistrates? Yes: Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people, Acts xxiii. 5. Is it a sin to be abusive to the poor? Yes: for he that mocketh the poor, reproacheth his Maker, Prov. xvii. 5. May we speak ill of those who speak ill of us? No: We must not render railing for railing, 1 Pet. iii. 9.

Q. 79. *What is the tenth commandment?*

A. The tenth commandment is, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

1. Does this commandment lay a restraint upon the heart? Yes: for the law is spiritual, Rom. vii. 14. Does the heart need this restraint? Yes: for the inward part is very wickedness, Ps. v. 9. Does the light of nature discover this? No: I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet, Rom. vii. 7.

2. Are we forbidden to covet another man's house? Yes: As they that covet houses and take them away, Mic. ii. 2. Or another man's wife? Yes: for her husband is to her a covering of the eyes, Gen. xx. 16. Or another man's goods? Yes: I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel, Acts xx. 33.

Q. 80. *What is required in the tenth commandment?*

A. The tenth commandment requires a full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit towards our neighbour, and all that is his.

1. Has God the disposal of our outward condition? Yes: My times are in thy hand, Ps. xxxi. 15. And does he order all events concerning us? Yes: he performeth the thing that is appointed for us, Job xxiii. 14. Ought we therefore to be content with our condition? Yes: Be content with such things as you have, Heb. xiii. v. Ought we to be content in every condition? Yes: I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content, Phil. iv. 11. Must we be content with a little? Yes: Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content, 1 Tim. vi. 8.

2. Can we expect that our condition should be in every thing brought to our mind? No: for all is vanity, Eccl. i. 14. Is it therefore our wisdom to bring our mind to our condition? Yes: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound, Phil. iv. 12. Is any thing got by this? Yes: Godliness with contentment is great gain, 1 Tim. vi. 6. And is this the way to be easy? Yes: In your patience possess ye your souls, Luke xxi. 19.

3. Is that best which is? Yes: It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, 1 Sam. iii. 18. Must we therefore make the best of it? Yes: for wherefore should a living man complain? Lam. iii. 39. And must we acknowledge it is better than we deserve? Yes: I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, Gen. xxxii. 10.

4. Ought we to desire the welfare of our neighbours? Yes: Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth, 1 Cor. x. 24. And to pray for it? Yes: Supplications and prayers must be made for all men, 1 Tim. ii. 1. And to be well-pleased with it? Yes: Rejoice with them that do rejoice, Rom. xii. 15. And to lay to heart our neighbour's troubles? Yes: Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, Heb. xiii. 3. And is this a charitable frame of spirit? Yes: for charity suffers long, and is kind, 1 Cor. xiii. 4.

Q. 81. *What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?*

A. The tenth commandment forbids all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbour, and all inordinate desires and affections to any thing that is his.

1. Is it a sin to fret at the disposals of God's providence? Yes: for shall we receive good of the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil also? Job ii. 10. Is it a sin to quarrel with them? Yes:

for they that murmured were destroyed of the destroyer, 1 Cor. x. 10. Is it an evil thing to undervalue the mercies we have? Yes: as the Israelites that said, There is nothing besides this *manna*, Numb. xi. 6. And to aggravate the afflictions we are under? Yes: as they that said, We die, we perish, we all perish, Numb. xvii. 12. May we in any thing be discontented? No: for we must in every thing give thanks, 1 Thess. v. 18.

2. Is it a sin against this commandment to envy our neighbour's welfare? Yes: for charity envieth not, 1 Cor. xiii. 4. Is envy an offence to God? Yes: for is our eye evil because his is good? Matt. xx. 15. Is it hurtful to ourselves? Yes: for envy is the rottenness of the bones, Prov. xiv. 30. Is it the cause of much mischief? Yes: for where envy is, there is confusion, and every evil work, James iii. 16. Is it a sin to be pleased with our neighbour's hurt or loss? Yes: he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished, Prov. xvii. 5.

3. Is it a sin to desire to sin? Yes: Lust not after evil things, as they also lusted, 1 Cor. x. 6. Does all sin begin in the lustings of the heart? Yes: for lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin, James i. 15. Is it a sin to desire any temporal good inordinately? Yes: as Rachel, that said, Give me children, or else I die, Gen. xxx. 1. And is it a sin to lust after the delights of sense? Yes: as the Israelites who wept again, saying, Who will give us flesh to eat? Numb. xi. 4. Must we therefore suppress all sinful desires? Yes: and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, Rom. xiii. 14.

4. Is it a sin to set our hearts upon worldly wealth? Yes: Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world, 1 John ii. 15. Is covetousness an offence to God? Yes: for it is idolatry, Col. iii. 5. Will it be a vexation to ourselves? Yes: for he that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, Eccl. v. 10. Will it be a vexation to our families? Yes: for he that is greedy of gain troubles his own house, Prov. xv. 27.

And injurious to our neighbour? Yes: for they that lay house to house, and field to field, would be placed alone in the midst of the earth, Isa. v. 8. Is covetousness the cause of much sin? Yes: for they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, 1 Tim. vi. 9. Must we therefore watch against it? Yes: Take heed, and beware of covetousness, Luke xii. 15. And must we abstain from all the practices of it? Yes: Let your conversation be without covetousness, Heb. xiii. 5. And must we pray earnestly against it? Yes: Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness, Ps. cxix. 36.

Q. 82. *Is any man able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God?*

A. No mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but does daily break them in thought, word, or deed.

1. Are any in this world perfectly free from sin? No: for there is no man that sinneth not, 2 Chron. vi. 36. Was Christ, who was not a mere man, perfect? Yes: he knew no sin, 2 Cor. v. 21. Was Adam before the fall perfect? Yes: for God made man upright, Eccl. vii. 29. Are the saints in the other life perfect? Yes: the glorious church is without spot or wrinkle, Eph. v. 27. But is any mere man since the fall in this life perfect? No: for there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not, Eccl. vii. 20.

2. Are self-justifiers self-deceivers? Yes: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, 1 John i. 8. And do they put a great affront upon God? Yes: for if we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, 1 John i. 10.

3. Are not we able to keep God's commandments better than we do? Yes: If I have done iniquity, I will do no more, Job xxxiv. 32. But are we able perfectly to keep them? No: For when I would do good, evil is present with me, Rom. vii. 21. Though Noah was said to be perfect, yet did not he sin? Yes: for he drank of the wine, and was drunk, Gen. ix. 21. And Job? Yes: for he cursed his day, Job iii. 1. And Hezekiah? Yes: for his heart was lifted up, 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. Was St. Paul himself perfect? No: Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, Phil. iii. 12.

4. Do we sin daily? Yes: in many things we offend all, Jam. iii. 2. Do we daily sin in thought? Yes: for, The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, Gen. viii. 21. Are we guilty of many tongue-sins? Yes: In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, Prov. x. 19. Are the best guilty of many defects? Yes: for when the spirit is willing the flesh is weak, Matt. xxvi. 41. And of many inadvertencies? Yes: They are overtaken in a fault, Gal. vi. 1. Can we tell how often we offend? No: who can understand his errors? Ps. xix. 13. Should we not therefore have recourse to Christ daily by faith and repentance? Yes: If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, 1 John ii. 1.

Q. 83. *Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?*

A. Some sins in themselves, and, by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.

1. Is every sin done in God's sight? Yes: I did this evil in thy sight, Ps. li. 4. Is it heinous in God's sight? Yes: for he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, Hab. i. 13. But is every sin alike heinous? No: He that delivered me unto thee hath

the greater sin, John xix. 11. Are some sins in themselves more heinous than others? Yes: If a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? 1 Sam. ii. 25. Are presumptuous sins more heinous than others? Yes: the soul that doeth aught presumptuously, that soul reproacheth the Lord, Numb. xv. 30. Was ever any sin so heinous as not to be forgiven? Yes: the Pharisees' blasphemy against the Holy Ghost was so, Matt. xii. 32.

2. Are sins against knowledge aggravated sins? Yes: that servant that knew his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, Luke xii. 47. And sins against mercies? Yes: Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise? Deut. xxxii. 6. Especially against spiritual mercies? Yes: As Solomon, who turned from the Lord God of Israel which had appeared unto him twice, 1 Kings xi. 9. Are sins against reproof aggravated sins? Yes: He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, Prov. xxix. 1. And sins against our vows and covenants? Yes: Thou saidst, I will not transgress, Jer. ii. 20.

3. Are the sins of great professors aggravated sins? Yes: for the name of God is blasphemed through them, Rom. ii. 24. And the sins of ministers? Yes: Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Rom. ii. 21. May the place be an aggravation of the sin? Yes: They provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea, Ps. cvi. 7. And the time? Yes: They turned aside quickly, Exod. xxxii. 8.

4. Is it an aggravation of sin, if it be done with contrivance? Yes: Woe to them that devise iniquity, Mic. ii. 1. And if it be done with delight? Yes: They rejoice to do evil, Prov. ii. 14. And without blushing? Yes: They declare their sin as Sodom, Isa. iii. 9. And if it be boasted of? Yes: Whose glory is in their shame, Phil. iii. 19. And if it be often repeated? Yes: They have tempted me now these ten times, Num. xiv. 22. Should we take notice of these aggravations in our confessions? Yes: Aaron shall confess the iniquity of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, Lev. xvi. 21.

Q. 84. *What does every sin deserve?*

A. Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.

1. Does sin provoke God? Yes: Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly, Hos. xii. 14. Does it deserve his wrath? Yes: According to their deserts will I judge them, Ezek. vii. 27. Does that wrath rest upon impenitent sinners? Yes: The wrath of God abideth on them, John iii. 36. And is it just it should? Yes: For when God renders to every man according to his work, he renders indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, to every soul of man that doeth evil, Rom. ii. 6, 8.

2. Does sin deserve God's curse? Yes: Cursed is every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them, Gal. iii. 10. Can any avoid that curse? No: For all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, Deut. xxviii. 15. Can a man bear up under that curse? No: for it shall come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones, Ps. cix. 18. Can a man fortify himself against that curse? No: for it shall consume the house, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof, Zech. v. 4.

3. Does sin deserve God's wrath and curse in this life? Yes: for these things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience, Col. iii. 6. And in the life to come? Yes: for wrath is treasured up against the day of wrath, Rom. ii. 5. Does every sin deserve God's wrath? Yes: for the wages of sin is death, Rom. vi. 23. Is any sin venial in its own nature? No: for the blood of Christ is that which must cleanse from all sin, 1 John i. 7. Does your sin deserve this wrath and curse? Yes: If I be wicked, woe to me, Job x. 15.

Q. 85. *What does God require of us, that we may escape the wrath and curse due to us for sin?*

A. To escape the wrath and anger of God due to us for sin, God requires of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, with a diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption.

1. Is the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin? Yes: we are by nature children of wrath, Eph. ii. 3. Has God provided a way of escape from that wrath? Yes: I have found a ransom, Job xxxiii. 24. Does the gospel show us that way? Yes: He shall tell the words whereby thou mayest be saved, Acts xi. 14. Is it through Christ that we may escape this wrath? Yes: It is Jesus that delivereth us from the wrath to come, 1 Thess. i. 10. Is any thing to be done by us in order to our escape? Yes: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, Phil. ii. 12, 13.

2. Are we concerned to inquire what is to be done by us in order to our escape? Yes: Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord? Mic. vi. 6. Will a convinced conscience put us upon this inquiry? Yes: When they were pricked to the heart they said, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Acts ii. 37. Must we be serious and solicitous in this inquiry? Yes: as the gaoler that came trembling and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Acts xvi. 30. Must we be speedy in this inquiry? Yes: The morning cometh, and also the night, if ye will inquire, inquire ye, Isa. xxi. 12. Must we make this inquiry with resolution? Yes: They shall ask their way to Sion with their faces thitherward, Jer. l. 5. Must we apply ourselves to Christ with this inquiry? Yes: Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? Matt. xix. 16.

3. Is that which is to be done by us for our salvation required of us? Yes: This is his commandment. That we believe, 1 John iii. 23. And are we called upon to do it? Yes: Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die, O house of Israel? Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

4. Is faith in Jesus Christ required that we may escape this wrath? Yes: Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, Acts xvi. 31. Is repentance required? Yes: Repent, and be converted, that our sins may be blotted, Acts iii. 19. Did our Lord Jesus preach these as the two great commandments of the gospel? Yes: The kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel, Mark i. 15. Did the apostles preach them? Yes: testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts xx. 21. And is it required that we diligently use the means of grace? Yes: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, Matt. xxviii. 20.

Q. 86. *What is faith in Jesus Christ?*

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.

1. Are we to believe in Jesus Christ? Yes: Ye believe in God, believe also in me, John xiv. 1. Is Christ in the word the object of our faith? Yes: For the word is nigh thee, Rom. x. 8. Is faith in Christ a grace? Yes: it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, Eph. ii. 8. Is it free grace? Yes: To you it is given on the behalf of Christ to believe in him, Phil. i. 29. Is it a saving grace? Yes: for we believe to the saving of the soul, Heb. x. 39. Is it that by which we live? Yes: The just shall live by his faith, Rom. i. 17. Is unbelief the great damning sin? Yes: They could not enter in because of unbelief, Heb. iii. 19.

2. Do we by faith assent to gospel truths? Yes: He that has received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true, John iii. 33. Do we by faith consent to gospel terms? Yes: Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, Matt. xi. 29. Must both these go together? Yes: He said, Lord, I believe, and he worshipped him, John ix. 38. Is there good reason for both? Yes: for it is both a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, 1 Tim. i. 15.

3. Is this receiving Christ? Yes: Ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, Col. ii. 6. Is it applying the righteousness of Christ to ourselves? Yes: Who loved me, and gave himself for me, Gal. ii. 20. And consenting to it? Yes: We have now received the atonement, Rom. v. 11. Must we receive Christ to rule us as well as to save us? Yes: For him hath God exalted to be both a Prince and a Saviour, Acts v. 31. And is it enough only to receive him? No: as we have received him, so we must walk in him, Col. ii. 6.

4. Do we by faith rest on Christ alone for salvation? Yes: in his name shall the Gentiles trust, Matt. xii. 21. And rely on his righteousness? Yes: That I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, Phil. iii. 9. And do we rejoice in him? Yes: for we are the circumcision that rejoice in Christ Jesus, Phil. iii. 3.

5. Will faith in Christ produce good affections? Yes: for it works by love, Gal. v. 6. Will it purify the heart? Yes: Purifying their hearts by faith, Acts xv. 9. Will it overcome the world? Yes: This is the victory, overcoming the world, even your faith, 1 John v. 4. Will it resist the temptations of Satan? Yes: the shield of faith quenches the fiery darts of the wicked, Eph. vi. 16. Does it exert itself in obedience? Yes: for the gospel is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith, Rom. xvi. 26. And does it subject the soul to the grace and government of the Lord Jesus? Yes: My Lord, and my God, John xx. 28.

Q. 87. *What is repentance unto life?*

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, does with grief and hatred of his sin turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.

1. Is true repentance, repentance unto life? Yes: God hath to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life, Acts xi. 18. Is it a grace? Yes: If God peradventure will give them repentance, 2 Tim. ii. 25. Is it a saving grace? Yes: godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, 2 Cor. vii. 10.

2. Is repentance required of every one of us? Yes: God commandeth all men every where to repent, Acts xvii. 30. Is it necessary to our pardon? Yes: for repentance and remission of sins are preached to all nations, Luke xxiv. 47. Is it given to qualify us for pardon? Yes: God hath exalted his Son Christ Jesus, to give repentance and remission of sins, Acts v. 31. Can we be saved without it? No: Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, Luke xiii. 3.

3. Is it necessary to repentance, that there be a sense of sin? Yes: Cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, Ezek. xvi. 2. Must there be an acknowledgment of sin? Yes: I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me, Ps. li. 3. Must we acknowledge the fact of sin? Yes: Thus and thus have I done, Josh. vii. 20. And the fault? Yes: I have done this evil in thy sight, Ps. li. 4. And the folly of it? Yes: O God, thou knowest my foolishness, Ps. lxix. 5. Must we acknowledge the original of sin? Yes: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, Ps. li. 5. Must we acknowledge

ourselves odious to God's holiness because of sin? Yes: Behold I am vile, Job xl. 4. And obnoxious to his justice? Yes: If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand, Ps. cxxx. 3.

4. Must there be an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ? Yes: There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared, Ps. cxxx. 4. Must that invite us to repent? Yes: The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance, Rom. ii. 4. Is that evangelical repentance which flows from a hope of that mercy? Yes: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, Matt. iii. 2. Can there be true repentance where there is a despair of mercy? No: Thou saidst there is hope; no, I have loved strangers, and after them will I go, Jer. ii. 25. Have we reason to hope for that mercy? Yes: Turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy, Isa. lv. 7.

5. Must there be contrition for sin? Yes: When they heard this, they were pricked to the heart, Acts ii. 37. Must we turn from sin? Yes: Every one mourning for his iniquities, Ezek. vii. 16. Must we mourn greatly for sin? Yes: Peter went out and wept bitterly, Matt. xxvi. 75. Must we mourn after a godly sort? Yes: Ye sorrowed according to God, 2 Cor. vii. 9. marg. Must we mourn for sin with an eye to Christ? Yes: They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn, Zech. xii. 10.

6. Must we hate sin? Yes: I hate every false way, Ps. cxix. 128. Must we loathe ourselves because of sin? Yes: I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes, Job xlii. 6. Must we be ashamed of ourselves before God? Yes: I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God, Ezra ix. 6. And must we humble ourselves greatly in his presence? Yes: as the publican that stood afar off, and would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, Luke xviii. 13.

7. Must we confess our sins? Yes: for he that covers his sins shall not prosper, Prov. xxviii. 13. And must we aggravate them? Yes: I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, Luke xv. 18. And must we judge ourselves because of them? Yes: If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged, 1 Cor. xi. 31. And must we cry earnestly to God for pardon in the blood of Christ? Yes: God be merciful to me a sinner, Luke xviii. 13.

8. Must we turn from sin? Yes: Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, Ezek. xviii. 30. From our own sin? Yes: Return ye now every one from his evil way, Jer. xviii. 11. And must we turn to God? Yes: If thou wilt return, O Israel, return unto me, Jer. iv. 1. Are backsliders invited to return? Yes: Return, ye backsliding children, Jer. iii. 22. And should they accept the invitation? Yes: Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord, our Lord, Jer. iii. 22.

9. In repentance must there be a change of the mind? Yes: Make ye a new heart, Ezek. xviii. 31. Must there be a change of the way? Yes: Cease to do evil, learn to do well, Isa. i. 16, 17. Must there be a full resolution against all sin? Yes: Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? Hos. xiv. 8. And a full resolution of new obedience: Yes: The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey, Josh. xxiv. 24. And must we be serious in our endeavours accordingly? Yes: Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, Matt. iii. 8.

Q. 88. *What are the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?*

A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption, are his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

1. Does Christ communicate the benefits of redemption? Yes: for of his fulness have all we received, John i. 16. Does he ordinarily communicate them by means? Yes: I will for this be inquired of, Ezek. xxxvi. 37. Is he tied to those means? No: for the Spirit, as the wind, bloweth where he listeth, John iii. 8. But are we tied to the use of them? Yes: Where I record my name, I will come to thee, and will bless thee, Exod. xx. 24. Are the ordinances the outward and ordinary means of grace? Yes: I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them, Ezek. xxxvii. 28.

2. Are the word, sacraments, and prayer, the great gospel ordinances? Yes: Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread, and in prayers, Acts ii. 41, 42. Is singing of psalms also a gospel ordinance? Yes: Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, Eph. v. 19. Is it appointed for our own consolation? Yes: Is any merry, let him sing psalms, Jam. v. 13. And for mutual instruction? Yes: Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, Col. iii. 16. And for God's glory? Yes: Singing with grace in your heart to the Lord, Col. iii. 16.

3. Has Christ appointed ministers of the gospel? Yes: he hath given pastors and teachers for the edifying of the body of Christ, Eph. iv. 11, 12. Is the administration of ordinances committed to them? Yes: for they are the stewards of the mysteries of God, 1 Cor. iv. 1. And must they attend that service? Yes: We will give ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word, Acts vi. 4.

4. Are gospel ordinances made effectual to all for salvation? No: for with many of them God was not well pleased, 1 Cor. x. 5. But are they made effectual to the elect? Yes: As many as were ordained to eternal life believed, Acts xiii. 48.

Q. 89. *How is the word made effectual to salvation?*

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.

1. Is the word to be read by us? Yes: I charge you that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren, 1 Thess. v. 27. Is it to be read in solemn assemblies? Yes: Moses is read in the synagogues every sabbath day, Acts xv. 21. Is it profitable to expound the Scriptures? Yes: They that read in the law of God, gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading, Neh. viii. 8. Is the word of God to be preached? Yes: Preach the word, be instant in season, and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, 2 Tim. iv. 2. Is it the duty of all to hear the word? Yes: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, Rev. ii. 7. Will the bare reading and hearing of the word profit? No: the letter kills, the spirit gives life, 2 Cor. iii. 6.

2. But is the reading and hearing of the word the ordinary means of convincing sinners? Yes: for it is mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, 2 Cor. x. 4. And of startling the secure? Yes: by them is thy servant warned, Ps. xix. 11. Is it the ordinary means of conversion? Yes: If the prophets had stood in my counsel, they should have turned people from their evil way, Jer. xxiii. 22. And has it been the conversion of many? Yes: When the law of truth was in his mouth, he did turn many away from iniquity, Mal. ii. 6. Is it the ordinary means of working faith? Yes: for faith comes by hearing, Rom. x. 17. And of renewing of the heart? Yes: for the seed is the word of God, Luke viii. 11. And of reforming the life? Yes: By the words of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer, Ps. xvii. 4.

3. Is the reading and hearing of the word needful to those who are regenerate? Yes: for they are nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine, 1 Tim. iv. 6. Is it a means of building them up in holiness? Yes: it is for the perfecting of the saints, Eph. iv. 12. Will it furnish them for all good? Yes: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works, 2 Tim. iii. 17. Will it fortify them against all evil? Yes: for the sword of the Spirit is the word of God, Eph. vi. 17. Is it a means of building them up in comfort? Yes: That we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, Rom. xv. 4.

4. Does the Spirit of God make the word effectual for all these good purposes? Yes: When the hand of the Lord was with them, a great number believed, and turned to the Lord, Acts xi. 21. Is it effectual through faith unto salvation? Yes: It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes, Rom. i. 16. Is it not a great mercy then to have plenty of the word of God? Yes: Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, Ps. lxxxix. 15. And should we not welcome those that bring it? Yes: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Ps. cxviii. 26.

Q. 90. *How is the word to be read and heard that it may become effectual to salvation?*

A. That the word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer, receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practise it in our lives.

1. Must we read the word of God with seriousness? Yes: we must give attendance to reading, 1 Tim. iv. 13. And not read it as a common book? No: It is not a vain thing, for it is your life, Deut. xxxii. 47.

2. Must we be diligent to hear the word? Yes: Watching daily at Wisdom's gates, waiting at the posts of her doors, Prov. viii. 34. Must we prepare for hearing it? Yes: Lay aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisy, and filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, 1 Pet. ii. 1. Must we come to it with a spiritual appetite? Yes: as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, 1 Pet. ii. 2. Must we set ourselves to receive it? Yes: as Mary sat at Jesus' feet to hear his word, Luke x. 39. Must we bow our souls before it? Yes: Speak, Lord, for thy servant hears, 1 Sam. iii. 9. Must we diligently hearken to it? Yes: Be swift to hear, Jam. i. 19.

3. Must we hear the word with reverence? Yes: When Ezra opened the book all the people stood up, Neh. viii. 5. Must we hear it with care? Yes: Take heed how ye hear, Luke viii. 18. And with meekness? Yes: Receive with meekness the engrafted word, Jam. i. 21. And with delight? Yes: How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Ps. cxix. 103. And with a holy fear? Yes: we must tremble at the word, Isa. lxvi. 2. Must we receive it as the word of men? No: but as it is in truth, the word of God, 1 Thess. ii. 13.

4. Must we take heed of sleeping under the word? Yes: Could ye not watch with me one hour? Matt. xxvi. 40. Must we pray for a blessing upon the word? Yes: Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law, Ps. cxix. 18. Must we receive the word with faith? Yes: for it will not profit if it be not mixed with faith, Heb. iv. 2. Must we receive men's words with an implicit faith? No: Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, 1 John iv. 1. But must we receive God's word with an implicit faith? Yes: for every word of God is pure, Prov. xxx. 5. Must we receive it with love? Yes: I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food, Job xxiii. 12.

5. Must we remember the word we read and hear? Yes: lest at any time we let it slip, Heb. ii. 1. Must we lay it up in our hearts? Yes: Thy word have I hid in my heart, Ps. cxix. 11. Must we meditate on it? Yes: In that law doth he meditate day and night, Ps. i. 2. Must we practise it in our lives? Yes: Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, James i. 22. Will it suffice to hear, though we do not practise? No: If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them, John xiii. 17.

Q. 91. *How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?*

A. The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him who administers them, but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of the Spirit in them, who by faith receive them.

1. Do the sacraments certainly save all that partake of them? No: They who were rejected of Christ could say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, Luke xiii. 26. Are they then effectual by any virtue in themselves? No: for bodily exercise profits little, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Do they of themselves confer grace? No: for if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision, Rom. ii. 25. Is the thing signified of greater consequence than the sign? Yes: for circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, Rom. ii. 29.

2. Does the efficacy of the sacraments depend upon the minister? No: for who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed? 1 Cor. iii. 5. Does the goodness of the minister invigorate the sacrament? No: for Philip baptized Simon, who yet was in the gall of bitterness, Acts viii. 13, 23. Does the badness of the minister invalidate the sacrament? No: For Judas was numbered with us, and obtained part of this ministry, Acts i. 17.

3. Does the efficacy of sacraments depend upon the blessing of Christ? Yes: Lo, I am with you always, Matt. xxviii. 20. And upon the working of the Spirit? Yes: for it is the Spirit that quickeneth, John vi. 63. And are they effectual to those only who by faith receive them? Yes: He that believes, and is baptized, shall be saved, Mark xvi. 16.

Q. 92. *What is a sacrament?*

A. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.

1. Is a sacrament a holy ordinance? Yes: For we minister about holy things, 1 Cor. ix. 13. Must they therefore be holy that attend them? Yes: Be ye clean that bear the vessel of the Lord, Isa. lii. 11. Are sacraments instituted by Christ? Yes: The Lord himself shall give you a sign, Isa. vii. 14. May men institute sacraments? No: Jeroboam, that ordained a feast which he had devised of his own heart, sinned, and made Israel to sin, 1 Kings xii. 33.

2. Is there in a sacrament an outward and visible sign? Yes: Behold the blood of the covenant, Exod. xxiv. 8. Is there an inward and spiritual grace? Yes: for that Rock was Christ, 1 Cor. x. 4. Are outward signs of use to inform our understandings? Yes: for in them Christ is evidently set forth crucified among us, Gal. iii. 1. Are they of use to refresh our memories? Yes: these stones shall be for a memorial, Josh. iv. 7. And to stir up our affections? Yes: They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn, Zech. xii. 10. Are they of use to transmit the things of God from generation to generation? Yes: For your children shall ask you, What mean you by this service? Exod. xii. 26.

5. Is a sacrament a seal? Yes: Circumcision was a seal of the righteousness which is by faith, Rom. iv. 11. A seal of the covenant? Yes: He gave him the covenant of circumcision, Acts vii. 8. Is a sacrament an oath? Yes: They entered into an oath to walk in God's law, Neh. x. 29. Is it an encouragement to our faith? Yes: Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing, John xx. 27. Is it an engagement to obedience? Yes: That henceforth we should not serve sin, Rom. vi. 6. Is Christ applied to us in sacraments? Yes: As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, Gal. iii. 27. Are the benefits of the new covenant applied to us? Yes: To be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee, Gen. xvii. 7.

Q. 93. *Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?*

A. The sacraments of the New Testament are baptism and the Lord's supper.

1. Were there sacraments in innocency? Yes: The tree of life in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Gen. ii. 9. Were there sacraments under the law? Yes: for the law had a shadow of good things to come, Heb. x. 1. Was circumcision a sacrament? Yes: He received the sign of circumcision, Rom. iv. 11. Was the passover a sacrament? Yes: Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, 1 Cor. v. 7.

2. Have we sacraments now under the gospel? Yes: for unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them, Heb. iv. 2. Are baptism and the Lord's supper our two sacraments? Yes: for we are baptized into one body, and all drink into one spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 13. May men add any more sacraments? No: Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, Prov. xxx. 6.

Q. 94. *What is baptism?*

A. Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing

with water, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, does signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

1. Is washing with water the outward sign in baptism? Yes: I am come baptizing with water, John i. 31. Is that well done by sprinkling? Yes: For so shall he sprinkle many nations, Isa. lii. 15. Ezek. xxx. 25. Is that sign significant? Yes: If ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, 1 Cor. vi. 11. But is the outward sign alone sufficient? No: Baptism saves us, not as it is the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, 1 Pet. iii. 21.

2. Must baptism be in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? Yes: Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Matt. xxviii. 19. And not in the minister's name? No: Were ye baptized in the name of Paul? 1 Cor. i. 13. Is it therefore one? Yes: for there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, Eph. iv. 5.

3. Is baptism a door of admission into the visible church? Yes: There were added to the church daily, Acts ii. 47. Are we thereby entered into Christ's school? Yes: Jesus made and baptized disciples, John iv. 1. And listed under his banner? Yes: as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. ii. 3.

4. Is baptism a seal of our ingrafting into Christ? Yes: for being baptized into Jesus Christ, we are baptized into his death, Rom. vi. 3. And of our partaking of the benefits of the new covenant? Yes: Be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, Acts ii. 38. And of our engagement to be the Lord's? Yes: I entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine, Ezek. xvi. 8. Is the covenant sealed in the baptism a mutual covenant? Yes: Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God, Jer. xxx. 22.

5. Are we bound by our baptism to renounce the devil and all his works? Yes: for the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, 1 John iii. 8. And to renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world? Yes: for we must not be conformed to this world, Rom. xii. 2. And all the sinful lusts of the flesh? Yes: for we are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, Rom. viii. 9. Are we bound to believe all the articles of the Christian faith? Yes: we must hold fast the form of sound words, 2 Tim. i. 13. And to keep God's holy will and commandments? Yes: that we also should walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 4. And to walk in the same all the days of our life? Yes: If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, John viii. 31.

Q. 95. *To whom is baptism to be administered?*

A. Baptism is not to be administered to any who are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible church, are to be baptized.

1. Are Jews and Pagans to be baptized upon their believing? Yes: If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest, Acts viii. 37. Will their justifiable profession warrant the administering of baptism to them? Yes: Simon Magus himself believed also, and was baptized, Acts viii. 13.

2. Are the children of believing parents to be baptized in their infancy? Yes: for a seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation, Ps. xxii. 30. Is it possible that they may be in covenant with God? Yes: For you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, John xv. 16. Is it probable they should be in covenant? Yes: For when Israel was a child, then I loved him, Hos. xi. 1. Is it certain they were in covenant? Yes: I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed, Gen. xvii. 7. Is it therefore certain they are in covenant? Yes: for the blessing of Abraham comes upon the Gentiles, Gal. iii. 14. Does the seal of the covenant therefore belong to them? Yes: Every man-child among you shall be circumcised, Gen. xvii. 10.

3. Are the children of Christians members of Christ's visible church? Yes: for of such is the kingdom of God, Mark x. 14. Do the promises belong to them? Yes: the promise is to you and to your children, Acts ii. 39. Does the promise of the Spirit belong to them? Yes: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, Isa. xliv. 3. Are they capable of receiving it? Yes: John was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, Luke i. 15. Are they then to be baptized? Yes: For who can forbid water to them which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? Acts x. 47.

4. Are the children of believers federally holy? Yes: Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy, 1 Cor. vii. 14. Are they so in their parents' right? Yes: if the root be holy, so are the branches, Rom. xi. 16. Are they disciples? Yes: for the yoke of circumcision was put upon the neck of the disciples, Acts xv. 1, 10. Are they to be received in Christ's name? Yes: Whosoever receiveth one such little child in my name, receiveth me, Matt. xviii. 5. Are they born unto God? Yes: Thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast born unto me, Ezek. xvi. 20. Are they bound by relation to be his servants? Yes: I am thy servant the son of thine handmaid, Ps. cxvi. 16. Ought they then to be presented to him? Yes: The firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me, Exod. xxii. 29.

5. Do children need to be cleansed from the pol-

lutions of sin? Yes: for they are shapen in iniquity, Ps. li. 5. Is there provision made for their cleansing? Yes: for there is a fountain opened to the house of David, Zech. xiii. 1.

6. Are the nations to be discipled by baptism? Yes: Go ye and disciple all nations, baptizing them, Matt. xxviii. 19. Are children a part of the nations? Yes: Your little ones stand here this day, to enter into covenant with God, Deut. xxix. 11, 12. And has Christ excepted them? No: Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, Matt. xix. 14. Were the families of believers baptized by the apostles? Yes: Lydia was baptized, and her household, Acts xvi. 15. Did Christ himself receive the seal of the covenant in his infancy? Yes: When he was eight days old he was circumcised, Luke ii. 21.

7. Is infant baptism useful for preserving the church? Yes: That our children may not cease from fearing the Lord, Josh. xxii. 25. Was it a great mercy to you that you were baptized? Yes: For we are the children of the covenant, Acts iii. 25.

8. Must we be careful to improve our baptism? Yes: Be ye mindful always of his covenant, 1 Chron. xvi. 15. Is it a good argument against sin? Yes: How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Rom. vi. 2. And for holiness? Yes: for we also should walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 4. Is it a great encouragement to faith? Yes: Thou art my God from my mother's belly, Ps. xxii. 10. Is it a good plea in prayer? Yes: Save the son of thy handmaid, Ps. lxxxvi. 16. Is it a strong inducement to brotherly love? Yes: for we all are baptized into one body, 1 Cor. xii. 13.

Q. 96. *What is the Lord's Supper?*

A. The Lord's supper is a sacrament, wherein by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth, and the worthy receivers are not after a corporeal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.

1. Was the Lord's supper instituted by Christ himself? Yes: I received of the Lord that which I delivered unto you, 1 Cor. xi. 23. Did he leave it as a legacy to his church? Yes: it was in the night wherein he was betrayed, 1 Cor. xi. 23. Did he intend it should continue? Yes: till he come, *v.* 26.

2. Is bread to be used in this sacrament? Yes: for he took bread, Matt. xxvi. 26. And does that signify it to be a strengthening ordinance? Yes: for bread strengthens man's heart, Ps. civ. 15. Is the cup to be used in this sacrament? Yes: He took the cup when he had supped, 1 Cor. xi. 25. Does that signify it to be a refreshing ordinance? Yes: for wine makes glad the heart, Ps. civ. 15. Must these be given and received? Yes: Jesus took bread, and gave to them,—took the cup, and gave it to them, Matt. xiv. 22, 23. Are the people to partake of the cup? Yes: Drink ye all of it, Matt. xxvi. 27. Is the ordinance doubled? Yes: because the thing is established, Gen. xli. 32.

3. Does the bread signify the body of Christ? Yes: This is my body which is broken for you, 1 Cor. xi. 24. Does the wine signify the blood of Christ? Yes: This cup is the New Testament in my blood, Luke xxii. 20. Are they turned into the very body and blood of Christ? No: for it is the spirit that quickens, the flesh profits nothing, John vi. 63. But is the doctrine of Christ crucified meat and drink to a believing soul? Yes: My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed, John vi. 55. And are we to feed upon that doctrine? Yes: He that eateth me, even he shall live by me, John vi. 57.

4. Is the Lord's supper a commemorating ordinance? Yes: Do this in remembrance of me, Luke xxii. 19. Is it a confessing ordinance? Yes: Ye do show the Lord's death, 1 Cor. xi. 26. Is it a communicating ordinance? Yes: The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 1 Cor. v. 16. Is it a covenanting ordinance? Yes: for it is the New Testament, 1 Cor. vi. 25. Is it a confirming ordinance? Yes: for Christ in it is evidently set forth, Gal. iii. 9. Is it an ordinance of communion with all Christians? Yes: for we have been all made to drink into one spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 13.

5. Is the pardon of sin sealed to believers in this sacrament? Yes: it is the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins, Matt. xxvi. 28. Is the gift of the Holy Ghost sealed to them? Yes: Receive ye the Holy Ghost, John xx. 22. Is the promise of eternal life sealed to them? Yes: That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, Luke xxii. 30. Matt. xxvi. 29. Do we, by receiving this sacrament, bind ourselves out from all sin? Yes: for we reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, Rom. vi. 11. And do we bind ourselves up to all duty? Yes: for being made free from sin, we become the servants of righteousness, Rom. vi. 18.

6. Is the Lord's supper a spiritual feast? Yes: a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees, Isa. xxvi. 6. Is it a marriage-feast? Yes: A certain king made a marriage for his son, Matt. xxii. 2. Is it a feast upon a sacrifice? Yes: Christ is sacrificed for us, let us keep the feast, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. Is it a feast upon a covenant? Yes: As Isaac made a feast for Abimelech when they sware one to another, Gen. xxvi. 30, 31. Are all good Christians invited to this feast? Yes: Come, for all things are now ready, Luke xiv. 17. Are they often to partake of

it? Yes: As often as ye eat this bread, 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Q. 97. *What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's supper.*

A. It is required of them who would worthily partake of the Lord's supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience, lest coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

1. Are the ignorant to be admitted to the Lord's supper? No: for they discern not the Lord's body, 1 Cor. xi. 29. Are those to be admitted to it who are openly profane? No: for what concord hath Christ with Belial? 2 Cor. vi. 15. But must all visible adult believers be admitted to it? Yes: All the congregation of Israel shall keep the passover, Exod. xii. 47.

2. Must those who come to the Lord's supper prepare for it? Yes: We must prepare our heart to seek God, the Lord God of our fathers, 2 Chron. xiii. 18. Must we put away every sin? Yes: Purge out the old leaven, 1 Cor. v. 7. And must we cleanse ourselves from all pollutions? Yes: I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I compass thine altar, O Lord, Ps. xxvi. 6. Must we sequester ourselves from the world? Yes: Tarry ye here, while I go yonder and worship, Gen. xxii. 5. And must we apply ourselves seriously to this service? Yes: We must engage the heart to approach unto God, Jer. xxx. 21.

3. When we come to this ordinance must we examine ourselves? Yes: Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, 1 Cor. xi. 28. Must we examine our spiritual state? Yes: Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Must we examine our particular ways? Yes: Let us search and try our ways, Lam. iii. 40. Must we renew our repentance for sin? Yes: for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged, 1 Cor. xi. 31. And our faith in Christ crucified? Yes: Who loved me and gave himself for me, Gal. ii. 20. Must we stedfastly purpose to lead a new life? Yes: I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments, Ps. cx. 106. And must we be in charity with all men? Yes: First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift, Matt. v. 24. And must we stir up desires towards Christ? Yes: Let him that is athirst come, Rev. xxii. 17.

4. Must we receive this sacrament with great reverence? Yes: In thy fear will I worship towards thy holy temple, Ps. v. 7. And with fixedness of thought? Yes: Bind the sacrifice with cords unto the horns of the altar, Ps. cxviii. 27. Must we receive it with godly sorrow for sin? Yes: they shall look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn, Zech. xii. 10. And with holy joy in the Lord? Yes: they did eat their meat with gladness, praising God, Acts ii. 46, 47. Must we receive it with an affectionate remembrance of the love of Christ? Yes: We will remember thy love more than wine, Cant. i. 4. And with an earnest desire of mercy from God? Yes: I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord, Ps. cxvi. 13.

5. Must those who have received this sacrament be very watchful against all sin? Yes: He will speak peace to his people, and to his saints, but let them not turn again to folly, Ps. lxxxv. 8. Must they abound in all duty? Yes: I will pay my vows unto the Lord, Ps. cxvi. 14. And must they ever preserve a sense of their engagements? Yes: Thy vows are upon me, O God, Ps. lvi. 12.

6. Do those who wilfully resolve to continue in sin receive unworthily? Yes: For what hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, Ps. l. 16, 17. And do those receive unworthily who have no regard to Christ in what they do? Yes: for they say the table of the Lord is contemptible, Mal. i. 7. Are they that do so guilty of a great sin? Yes: they are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, 1 Cor. xi. 27. And are they in great danger? Yes: for they eat and drink judgment to themselves, 1 Cor. xi. 29. But shall weak believers, who bewail their unworthiness, be encouraged? Yes: for he will not break the bruised reed, Matt. xii. 20.

Q. 98. *What is prayer?*

A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

1. Is it every one's duty to pray? Yes: Men ought always to pray, Luke xviii. 1. Can a man be a good man who lives without prayer? No: Every one that is godly shall pray, Ps. xxxii. 6. Are we to pray daily? Yes: Morning, and evening, and at noon, will I pray, Ps. lv. 17. Are we to pray continually? Yes: Pray without ceasing, 1 Thess. v. 17. Are we to pray in secret? Yes: Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and shut thy door, Matt. vi. 6. Are we to pray when we are in affliction? Yes: Is any among you afflicted, let him pray, James v. 13.

2. Are we to pray to God only? Yes: for he only knows the hearts of all the children of men, 1 Kings viii. 39. May we pray to departed saints to pray for us? No: for Abraham is ignorant of us, Isa. lxiii. 16. Is prayer the soul's ascent to God? Yes: Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul, Ps. xxv. 1. Is it the soul's converse with God? Yes: Pour out your hearts before him, Ps. lxii. 8. Are we in prayer to ascribe glory to God? Yes: Give unto the Lord glory and strength, Ps. xcvi. 7. And

to ask mercy of God? Yes: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find, Matt. vii. 7.

3. Are we to pray to God for things agreeable to his will? Yes: If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us, 1 John v. 14. Must we pray for pardoning mercy, and sanctifying grace? Yes: Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need, Heb. iv. 16. Are God's promises to be the guide of our desires in prayer? Yes: Remember thy word unto thy servant, Ps. cxix. 49. And the ground of our faith? Yes: For I hope in thy word, *v.* 81.

4. Must we pray in the name of Christ? Yes: Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, John xiv. 13. Relying on his righteousness alone? Yes: For we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, Heb. x. 19. Must we pray in faith? Yes: Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, Jam. i. 6. Depending on the assistance of the Holy Spirit? Yes: for the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, Rom. viii. 26.

5. Must we in prayer make confession of sin? Yes: I prayed to the Lord my God, and made my confession, Dan. ix. 4. And must we give thanks for mercies received? Yes: Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, Ps. c. 4.

6. Must we be constant in prayer? Yes: I give myself unto prayer, Ps. cix. 4. And humble in prayer? Yes: for we are but dust and ashes, Gen. xviii. 27. And earnest in prayer? Yes: Always labouring fervently in prayer, Col. iv. 12. Must we in sincerity set God before us in prayer? Yes: Let us draw near with a true heart, Heb. x. 22. Must we pray in charity? Yes: Lifting up pure hands without wrath, 1 Tim. ii. 8.

7. Will God hear and accept those who thus pray to him? Yes: He never said to the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain, Isa. xlv. 19. But will the love of sin spoil the success of prayer? Yes: If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me, Ps. lxvi. 18.

Q. 99. *What rule hath God given for our direction in prayer?*

A. The whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer, but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called, The Lord's Prayer.

1. Do we need direction in prayer? Yes: For we know not what we should pray for as we ought, Rom. viii. 26. Should we pray to God for direction? Yes: Lord, teach us to pray, Luke xi. 1. Hath he given us direction in prayer? Yes: Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, Hos. xiv. 2.

2. Is the whole word of God of use to direct us? Yes: I will show thee that which is noted in the Scripture of truth, Dan. x. 21. compare Chron. ix. 23. Is the Lord's prayer to be used as a directory for prayer? Yes: After this manner therefore pray ye, Matt. vi. 9. And is it to be used as a form of prayer? Yes: When ye pray, say, Our Father, Luke xi. 2.

Q. 100. *What does the preface of the Lord's prayer teach us?*

A. The preface of the Lord's prayer, which is, *Our Father which art in heaven,* teaches us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a Father able and ready to help us, and that we should pray with and for others.

1. Is God our Father? Yes: Doubtless thou art our Father, Isa. lxiii. 16. Does he appoint us to call him so? Yes: Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth, Jer. iii. 4. Is he our Father by creation? Yes: Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us? Mal. ii. 10. And by redemption? Yes: Is not he thy Father that bought thee? Deut. xxxii. 6. And by adoption? Yes: I will be a Father to them, 2 Cor. vi. 18.

2. Is God a wise Father? Yes: the Father of lights, Jam. i. 17. Is he a gracious Father? Yes: the Father of mercies, 2 Cor. i. 3. Is he our soul's Father? Yes: the Father of spirits, Heb. xii. 9. Is he the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? Yes: I bow my knee to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Eph. iii. 14. Is he in him our Father? Yes: I ascend to my Father, and your Father, John xx. 17.

3. Are we in prayer to call God Father? Yes: crying, Abba, Father, Gal. iv. 6. And to esteem him as a Father? Yes: I will arise and go to my Father, and say unto him, Father, Luke xv. 18. And is this comfortable in prayer? Yes: For with thee the fatherless findeth mercy, Hos. xiv. 3.

4. Is God our Father in heaven? Yes: For the Lord's throne is in heaven, Ps. xi. 4. Is heaven a high place? Yes: and we must lift up our hearts with our hands to God in the heavens, Lam. iii. 41. Is it a holy place? Yes: and we must lift up holy hands, 1 Tim. ii. 8. Is it a place of prospect? Yes: and therefore our Father sees in secret, Matt. vi. 6. Is it a place of power? Yes: and therefore he is able to do above all that we ask or think, Eph. iii. 20.

5. Ought we therefore to pray with reverence? Yes: for God is in heaven, and we upon earth, Eccl. v. 2. And with holy confidence? Yes: for we have boldness and access with confidence, Eph. iii. 12. For is God a Father who is able to help us? Yes: My Father is greater than all, John x. 29. Does he know our wants? Yes: Your heavenly Father knows that ye have need of all these things, Matt. vi. 32. Is he willing to help? Yes: For the Father himself loveth you, John xvi. 27.

6. Must we pray with others? Yes: There were

many gathered together praying, Acts xii. 12. Must we pray for others? Yes: we must make supplication for all saints, Eph. vi. 18.

Q. 101. *What do we pray for in the first petition?*

A. In the first petition, which is, *Hallowed be thy Name*, we pray, that God would enable us, and others, to glorify him in all that whereby he maketh himself known, and that he would dispose all things to his own glory.

1. Ought we to desire the glory of God in the first place? Yes: that God in all things may be glorified, 1 Pet. iv. 11. Is God glorified when his name is glorified? Yes: They shall worship before thee, O Lord, and shalt glorify thy name, Ps. lxxxvi. 9. Is God's name glorified when it is sanctified or hallowed? Yes: for he is glorious in holiness, Exod. xv. 11. Ought we therefore to sanctify it? Yes: Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, 1 Pet. iii. 15.

2. Are we to pray that we ourselves may be enabled to glorify God? Yes: Open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise, Ps. li. 15. And that we may live for that end? Yes: Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee, Ps. cxix. 175. And be delivered for that end? Yes: Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name, Ps. cxlii. 7. And are we to pray that others also may be enabled to glorify him? Yes: that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven, Matt. v. 16.

3. Do we here pray for the propagating of the knowledge of God? Yes: That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations, Ps. lxvii. 2. And for the conversion of souls to him? Yes: Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee, Ps. lxvii. 3. And for the success of the gospel? Yes: that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, 2 Thess. iii. 1. Do we pray for the fruitfulness of Christians? Yes: that they may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God, Phil. i. 11. And for the flourishing of the churches of Christ? Yes: that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified, Isa. lxi. 3.

4. Do we pray that God would glorify himself? Yes: Father, glorify thy name, John xii. 28. And are we sure he will do it? Yes: for there came a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it yet again, John xii. 28. Do we pray that he would exalt his own name? Yes: Be thou exalted, O Lord, in thine own strength, Ps. xxi. 13. And are we sure he will do it? Yes: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth, Ps. xlvi. 10. May we plead this with him? Yes: What wilt thou do to thy great name? Josh. vii. 9.

5. Do we pray that God would bring glory to himself out of all events? Yes: To thy name give glory, Ps. cxv. 1. Even out of those events that seem contrary? Yes: that the wrath of man may praise him, Ps. lxxvi. 10. Must we desire it concerning ourselves? Yes: that we may be unto him for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory, Jer. xiii. 11. And concerning all our affairs? Yes: That Christ may be magnified in my body both by life and death, Phil. i. 20.

Q. 102. *What do we pray for in the second petition?*

A. In the second petition, which is, *Thy kingdom come*, we pray, that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it, and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

1. Must we acknowledge our heavenly Father's kingdom? Yes: The Lord is king for ever and ever, Ps. x. 16. And must we admire it? Yes: we must speak of the glory of his kingdom, Ps. cxlv. 11. Must we own him to be our King? Yes: Thou art my king, O God, Ps. xliv. 4. Must we heartily wish well to his kingdom? Yes: Seek ye first the kingdom of God, Matt. vi. 33.

2. Has Satan a kingdom in opposition to God's kingdom? Yes: for he is the prince of this world, John xii. 31. Does he rule where sin rules? Yes: for he works in the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 2. Must we pray that that kingdom may be destroyed? Yes: The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee, Zech. iii. 2. Must we pray that the dominion of sin may be broken? Yes: O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, Ps. vii. 9. And that the power of the church's enemies may be crushed? Yes: So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord, Judg. v. 31. And their policies blasted? Yes: Lord, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness, 2 Sam. xv. 31. And their projects defeated? Yes: O my God, make them like a wheel, Ps. lxxxiii. 13.

3. Have we reason to hope that Satan's kingdom shall be destroyed in the hearts of believers? Yes: For the God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly, Rom. xvi. 20. And that it shall be destroyed in the world? Yes: For I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven, Luke x. 18. So destroyed that it shall not destroy the church? Yes: for the church is built upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, Matt. xvi. 18.

4. Is the kingdom of Christ our Father's kingdom? Yes: I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion, Ps. ii. 6. Must we pray that that may be advanced? Yes: Prayer shall be made for him continually, Ps. lxxii. 15. That we and others may be brought into it? Yes: That Christ may dwell in your heart by faith, Eph. iii. 17. And kept in it? Yes: That we may be preserved blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thess. v. 23.

5. Are we to pray for converting grace? Yes: Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, Jer. xxxi. 18. And that others may partake of that grace? Yes: That sinners may be converted unto thee, Ps. li. 13. Are we to pray for confirming grace? Yes: That God would comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work, 2 Thess. ii. 17. Are we to pray for the strengthening of faith? Yes: Lord, increase our faith, Luke xvii. 5. And the increase of love? Yes: This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more, Phil. i. 9.

6. Are we to pray for the advancement of the kingdom of light? Yes: O send out thy light and thy truth, Ps. xliii. 3. And the kingdom of holiness? Yes: The God of peace sanctify you wholly, 1 Thess. v. 23. And the kingdom of love? Yes: That they all may be one, John xvii. 21. Must we pray for the sending forth of ministers in order hereunto? Yes: Pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest, Matt. ix. 38. And for the presence of God with them? Yes: that utterance may be given to them, Eph. vi. 19.

7. Are we to pray for the prosperity of the church? Yes: Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, Ps. cxxii. 6. And for the welfare of all who belong to it? Yes: Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee, Ps. lxx. 4. And for the comfort of all good Christians? Yes: Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, Eph. vi. 24. Must we pray for the enlargement of the church? Yes: My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved, Rom. x. 1. And for the reformation of it? Yes: Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, Ps. lxxx. 19. And for the defence of it? Yes: Build thou the walls of Jerusalem, Ps. li. 18. And for the deliverance of it? Yes: Command deliverances for Jacob, Ps. xliv. 4.

8. May we pray in faith for the advancement and continuance of Christ's kingdom? Yes: For of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, Isa. ix. 7. And have we reason to triumph in this? Yes: Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, Rev. xix. 6.

9. Is the kingdom of glory yet to come? Yes: When the mystery of God shall be finished, Rev. x. 7. Are we to pray that that may be hastened? Yes: Looking for, and hastening unto, the coming of the day of God, 2 Pet. iii. 12. Are we to desire our own removal to that glory at death? Yes: Desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, 2 Cor. v. 2. Are we to pray that we may be ready for it? Yes: Watch therefore, and pray always, Luke xxi. 36. And then that it may be hastened? Yes: Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, Luke ii. 29. Are we to pray for Christ's second coming at the end of time? Yes: Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus, Rev. xxii. 20.

Q. 103. *What do we pray for in the third petition?*

A. In the third petition, which is, *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven*, we pray that God by his grace would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

1. Is the will of God's commands the rule of our action? Yes: we must understand what the will of the Lord is, Eph. v. 17. Are we to pray that we may conform to this rule? Yes: that we may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, Rom. xii. 2. Must we pray that God would give us to know his will? Yes: Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law, Ps. cxix. 34. And to know it fully? Yes: That ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will, Col. i. 9. And to know it in doubtful cases? Yes: Teach me thy way, O Lord, lead me in a plain path, Ps. xxvii. 11. Do all who are sanctified truly desire to know God's will? Yes: What saith my Lord unto his servant? Josh. v. 14.

2. When we know God's will, are we able of ourselves to do it? No: we are not sufficient of ourselves, 2 Cor. iii. 5. Must we therefore pray to God to make us able? Yes: Now, therefore, O God, strengthen my hands, Neh. vi. 9. And must we depend upon his grace? Yes: I will go in the strength of the Lord God, Ps. lxxi. 16. Must we pray to God to make us willing? Yes: Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, Ps. cxix. 36. And to make us entirely willing? Yes: Unite my heart to fear thy name, Ps. lxxxvi. 11.

3. Must we pray that we may be sincere in our obedience? Yes: Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, Ps. cxix. 80. And that we may be exact in our obedience? Yes: O that my ways were directed to keep thy commandments! Ps. cxix. 5. And that we may be universal in our obedience? Yes: That we may stand complete in all the will of God, Col. iv. 12. And that we may be armed against that which would divert us from our obedience? Yes: Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way, Ps. cxix. 37. And must we pray that others also may do God's will? Yes: That they may be perfect in every good work, to do his will, Heb. xiii. 21.

4. Is the will of God's counsel the rule of his actions? Yes: for he worketh all according to the counsel of his own will, Eph. i. 11. Must we desire that this may be done? Yes: The will of the Lord be done, Acts xxi. 14. Rather than our own will? Yes: Not as I will, but as thou wilt, Matt. xxvi. 39. And must we acquiesce in it? Yes: It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, 1 Sam. iii. 18. And must we pray that he will enable us to do so? Yes: That we may be strengthened with all might,

unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness, Col. i. 11.

Do the angels in heaven do the will of God? Yes: they do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word, Ps. ciii. 20. Do they do it readily? Yes: they fly swiftly, Dan. ix. 21. Do they do it zealously? Yes: for they are a flaming fire, Ps. civ. 4. Do they do it with an eye to God? Yes: for they always behold the face of our Father, Matt. xviii. 10. And are we to pray that God's will may so be done on earth? Yes: that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, Rev. xi. 15.

Q. 104. *What do we pray for in the fourth petition?*

A. In the fourth petition, which is, *Give us this day our daily bread*, we pray, that of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them.

1. Are we to pray for the good things of this life? Yes: for the Lord is for the body, 1 Cor. vi. 13. Must we go to God for them? Yes: for he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, Acts xvii. 25. Must we go to him for the comfort of them? Yes: for he gives us richly all things to enjoy, 1 Tim. vi. 17. Do we deserve the good things of this life? No: we are less than the least of all God's mercies, Gen. xxxii. 10. Must we therefore beg them of God as a free gift? Yes: God gives thee the dew of heaven, Gen. xxvii. 28.

2. Are we to pray for riches? No: lest we be full, and say, Who is the Lord? Prov. xxx. 9. Are we to pray for dainties? No: Be not desirous of dainties, for they are deceitful meat, Prov. xxiii. 3. Are we to be content with such a competent portion of these things as God sees fit for us? Yes: having food and raiment, let us be therewith content, 1 Tim. vi. 8. Are we to pray for that? Yes: Feed me with food convenient for me, Prov. xxx. 8. And need we desire any more? No: If God will be with me, and keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come to my heavenly Father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, Gen. xxviii. 20, 21.

3. Are we to pray each day for the bread of the day? Yes: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself, Matt. vi. 34. And must we pray for our bread honestly gotten? Yes: for with quietness we must work, and eat our own bread, 2 Thess. iii. 12. And have we encouragement to pray for this? Yes: for godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, 1 Tim. iv. 8.

4. Do we herein pray for health? Yes: for God is our life, and the length of our days, Deut. xxx. 20. And for success in our callings? Yes: Establish thou the work of our hands upon us, Ps. xc. 17. And for sleep? Yes: for so he giveth his beloved sleep, Ps. cxxvii. 2. And for seasonable weather? Yes: Ask ye of the Lord rain, Zech. x. 1.

5. Must we pray for God's blessing on what we have? Yes: for man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, Matt. iv. 4. And is it then comfortable to us? Yes: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer, 1 Tim. iv. 5. Must we pray most earnestly for bread for our souls? Yes: Lord, evermore give us that bread, John vi. 34. Are we to pray for others' prosperity, as well as for our own? Yes: I wish that thou mayest prosper, and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth, 3 John 2. And for the supply of the poor and needy? Yes: that he will abundantly bless our provision, and satisfy our poor with bread, Ps. cxxxii. 15.

Q. 105. *What do we pray for in the fifth petition?*

A. In the fifth petition, which is, *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*, we pray, that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins; which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

1. Are our sins our debts to God? Yes: There was a certain creditor that had two debtors, &c. Luke vii. 41. Are they great debts? Yes: ten thousand talents, Matt. xviii. 24. Can we discharge these debts ourselves? No: we have nothing to pay, Luke vii. 42. Are we liable to the prison of hell then? Yes: not to depart thence till we have payed the last mite, Luke xii. 58, 59. Is it possible to obtain the forgiveness of this debt? Yes: There is forgiveness with thee, Ps. cxxx. 4.

2. Are we to pray for the forgiveness of these debts? Yes: Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, Ps. cxliii. 2. And to pray earnestly for it? Yes: For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, Ps. xxv. 11. Must we plead God's mercies? Yes: According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions, Ps. li. 1. And Christ's merits? Yes: Through the redemption that is in Jesus, Rom. iii. 24. Must we pray for it every day? Yes: when we pray, Give us our daily bread, we must pray, Forgive us our debts.

3. Must we pray that God would ease us of the burthen of sin? Yes: Take away all iniquity, Hos. xiv. 2. And that he would cleanse us from the filth of sin? Yes: Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, Ps. li. 2. And cure us of the wounds of sin? Yes: Heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee, Ps. xli. 4. And save us from the punishment of sin? Yes: I will say unto God, do not condemn me, Job x. 2.

4. Must we pray to God to give us that grace which will qualify us for pardon? Yes: for Christ is ex-

alted to give repentance and remission, Acts v. 31. And that he would give us the comfort of our pardon? Yes: Make me to hear joy and gladness, Ps. li. 8. And must we, in order hereunto, be particular in confessing sin? Yes: Declare, that thou mayest be justified, Isa. xliii. 26.

5. Must we forgive those who have provoked us? Yes: forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, Col. iii. 13. Must we bear them no malice? No: Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned, Jam. v. 9. Must we be ready to be reconciled to them? Yes: When ye stand praying, forgive if ye have ought against any, Mark xi. 25. Should we be merciful to those that we have advantage against? Yes: Thou shouldst have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, as I had pity on thee, Matt. xviii. 33. Is this required to qualify us for the pardon of sin? Yes: If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, Matt. vi. 14. Will God forgive those that do not forgive? No: If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive yours, *v.* 15.

Q. 106. *What do we pray for in the sixth petition?*

A. In the sixth petition, which is, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, we pray, that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

1. Must we pray that we may not be tempted? Yes: Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation, Matt. xxvi. 41. And that temptations may be removed? Yes: I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me, 2 Cor. xii. 8. And that we may not be overcome by them? Yes: Let no iniquity have dominion over me, Ps. cxix. 133.

2. Must we pray that God would not leave us to ourselves? Yes: Incline not my heart to any evil thing, Ps. cxli. 4. And that he would not withdraw the assistance of his grace? Yes: Take not thy Holy Spirit away from me, Ps. li. 11. But that he would strengthen us against every temptation? Yes: Uphold me with thy free spirit, Ps. li. 12. And that he would preserve us through it? Yes: That our faith fail not, Luke xxii. 32. Have we encouragement to pray against temptation? Yes: For God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, 1 Cor. x. 13. And is prayer a part of our spiritual armour? Yes: Praying always, Eph. vi. 13, 18.

3. Must we dread sin as the worst evil? Yes: That I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, Neh. vi. 13. And must we pray to be kept from it? Yes: to be delivered from every evil work, 2 Tim. iv. 18. And from all occasions of it? Yes: Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, Ps. cxix. 37.

4. Must we pray against pride? Yes: That he may hide pride from man, Job xxxiii. 17. And against lying? Yes: Remove from me the way of lying, Ps. cxix. 29. And against sensuality? Yes: Let me not eat of their dainties, Ps. cxli. 4. And against uncleanness? Yes: Create in me a clean heart, O God, Ps. li. 10. And against covetousness? Yes: Incline my heart to thy testimonies, and not to covetousness, Ps. cxix. 36. And against all tongue-sins? Yes: Set a watch, O Lord, before the door of my mouth, keep the door of my lips, Ps. cxli. 3. Must we pray especially against wilful sin? Yes: Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, Ps. xix. 13. Must we pray that others also may be kept from sin? Yes: I pray to God that ye do no evil, 2 Cor. xiii. 7.

5. Must we pray to be delivered from other evil? Yes: Keep me from evil that it may not grieve me, 1 Chron. iv. 10. Must our eye be to God for our preservation? Yes: Hide me under the shadow of thy wings, Ps. xvii. 8. May we take encouragement in this prayer from God's power? Yes: for he is able to keep that which we have committed to him, 2 Tim. i. 12. And from his promise? Yes: There shall no evil befall thee, Ps. xci. 10. And from our own experience? Yes: He that has delivered, does deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver, 2 Cor. i. 10.

Q. 107. *What does the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?*

A. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, which is, *For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen*, teaches us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to him; and in testimony of our desire and assurance to be heard, we say, *Amen.*

1. Are we in prayer to plead with God? Yes: I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments, Job xxiii. 4. Are our pleadings to move God? No: For he is in one mind, and who can turn him, Job xxiii. 13. Are they to move ourselves? Yes: that we may stir up ourselves to take hold on God, Isa. lxiv. 7.

2. Can we in prayer plead any merit of our own? No: We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, Dan. ix. 18. Must we therefore take our encouragement from God only? Yes: Defer not for thine own sake, O my God, *v.* 19. And must we depend on that encouragement? Yes: Now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee, Ps. xxxix. 7.

3. May we plead that his is the kingdom? Yes: Art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? 2 Chron. xx. 6. And that his is the power? Yes: There is nothing too hard for thee, Jer. xxxii. 17. And that his is the glory? Yes: Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name, Ps. lxxix. 9.

4. May we also plead his mercy? Yes: Save me for thy mercy's sake, Ps. vi. 4. And his promise? Yes: Remember thy word unto thy servant, Ps. cxix. 49. And our own experience of his goodness? Yes: Thou hast delivered my soul from death, wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling? Ps. lvi. 13. But must we especially plead the mediation of his Son? Yes: Look upon the face of thine Anointed, Ps. lxxxiv. 9. And may we hope to prevail in these pleadings? Yes: for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, Jam. v. 16. Is it God's grace in us which alone qualifies us for his favour? Yes: Thou wilt prepare their heart, and then thou wilt cause thine ear to hear, Ps. x. 17.

5. Are we in prayer to praise God? Yes: Every day will I bless thee, Ps. cxlv. 2. Are we to ascribe kingdom, power, and glory to him? Yes: Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne, Rev. v. 13. Must we acknowledge them to be his? Yes: Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty, 1 Chron. xxix. 11. Must we acknowledge them to be his for ever? Yes: Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, Ps. cxlv. 13. And must we desire to be for ever praising him? Yes: I will sing praise to my God, while I have my being, Ps. civ. 33. Is the work of praise good work? Yes: it is pleasant, and praise is comely, Ps. cxlvii. 1.

6. Does Amen signify our desire to be heard? Yes: So be it, O Lord, Jer. xi. 5. And our hope that we shall be heard? Yes: we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him, 1 John v. 15. Is it therefore proper to conclude our prayers and praises with Amen? Yes: Let all the people say, Amen. Hallelujah, Ps. cvi. 48.

CHRIST'S FAVOUR TO LITTLE CHILDREN DISPLAYED,

IN

A SERMON,

PREACHED THE 6TH OF MARCH, 1713.

MARK x. 16.

And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

APPLICATION was made to our Lord Jesus, when he was here upon earth, on a great variety of occasions: some we find imploring his favour upon one account, and some upon another; some for themselves, and some for their relations; some for the body, and some for the soul: thus was fulfilled the prediction of the dying patriarch concerning Shiloh, that *to him shall the gathering of the people be.*[a] And be it observed, for the encouragement of all who humbly, and in faith, apply themselves to him,—of the *multitudes* that spread their complaints before him, he never sent *any* away from him, ashamed of their hope in him: he gave them all an answer of peace; and they had what they came for.

But here in this paragraph, of which my text is the close, we have application made to Christ, upon an errand different from any other, but such a one as those who knew the heart of a parent, of a Christian parent, will be glad to be encouraged and directed to come to him upon, and will therefore bless God that it is here upon record. There were those who brought *young children to him, that he should touch them, v.* 13. In St. Matthew's gospel it is said, *they desired that he would put his hands upon them, and pray.*[b]

Who they were that brought these children, we are not told; whether their parents, or no; it is most likely they were, for who should show so much concern for them as they? Nor are we told what number of children were brought; nor whether they were all of one family; nor just *of what age* they were, but as to that, St. Luke tells us they were τα βρεφη,[c] it is the word which in the story of Christ's birth we translate the *babe*, in swaddling clothes, and in the manger;[d] and it is put for *new-born babes*, that desire the breast.[e] The critics say it signifies a *child at nurse.** They are said to be brought to Christ, which intimates, that they could not go themselves; and it is plain that they were very little, for he took them up in his arms; so little, that he could easily hold them in one arm, for so he did when he put his hands upon them to bless them.

Christ came to teach, and heal, and bless; to teach a world that sat in darkness, to heal a world that was sick and dying, and to bless a world that lay under the curse.

Now, 1. These children were not brought to Christ to be *taught*, for they were not yet capable of receiving instruction; nor could they profit by his preaching, or put any questions to him. Those who are grown up to years of understanding, have need to be busy in *getting knowledge now*, that they may redeem the time they lost, through the invincible incapacities of their infancy.

Nor, 2. Were they brought to Christ to be *cured*, for it does not appear that they needed it. Little children are indeed liable to many distempers, painful, mortal ones. The physicians have a book among them, *De Morbis Infantum—on the diseases of infants.* Death and its harbingers reign even over them who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,[f] but these children were strong and healthful, and we do not find that any thing ailed them.

But, 3. They were brought to Christ to be *blessed;* so they meant when they desired that he would touch them: the sign is put for the thing signified. The laying on of hands was a ceremony anciently used in blessing. When Joseph brought his two sons to Israel, and put one to his left hand, and the other

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[a] Gen. xlix. 10. [b] Matt. xix. 13. [c] Luke xviii. 15. [d] Luke ii. 12. [e] 1 Pet. ii. 2. [f] Rom. v. 14.

* See Dr. Whitby.

to his right, that he might *touch* them, that which he desired was, that he would *bless* them:[g] so these brought their children to Christ, not that he might touch and *heal* them, but that he might touch and *bless* them, with the saving strength of his right hand.

They looked upon Christ as a prophet, as a great prophet, as *that Prophet which should come into the world*, as one who had a great interest in heaven, and consequently a great influence upon this earth. Now, if he be *a Prophet* he shall *pray for thee*;[h] but then thou must pay him so much respect as to desire his prayers. This honour they here give to Christ, (as it is fit those should do, who expect to receive favour from him,) in their humble request that he would lift up a prayer for their children; which they believe will avail much, as the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man.[i]

It is good to have an interest in the prayers of those who are of the spiritual seed of Jacob, who seek God, and know how to wrestle with him. And to improve that interest for ourselves and our children, we should not only pray with, and for, our families ourselves, but engage the prayers of our friends for them, that we may hereby not only put an honour upon prayer, but put an honour upon our brethren; and upon the communion of saints, not only the communion of churches, but the communion of religious families, who all meet in him, in whom all the families, all the praying families, of the earth are blessed.[k] A treasury of prayers laid up for our children, may stand them in better stead than thousands of gold and silver laid up for them. But if we desire this kindness of our friends, and brethren, and ministers, we must remember that one good turn requires another, and must, therefore, make conscience of praying for them and their families, as for ourselves and for our own. St. Paul, who prays so earnestly for his friends, does as earnestly desire their prayers for him.[l] *The Lord give mercy to the households*[m] of our acquaintance, is a petition which (or something like it) should have a place in our daily prayers.

Now the text tells us how they succeeded who brought their little children to Christ, to be blessed and prayed for; how well they succeeded.

And it is recorded by *three* of the evangelists; because it was a manifest indication of the design of Christ, to continue to the children of believers under the New-Testament dispensation, the same covenant right, and visible church membership, that they had under the Old-Testament dispensation, by virtue of God's promise to Abraham and his seed, that blessing of Abraham, which comes upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ;[n] and because it gives us great encouragement, when we come to Christ ourselves, to bring our children with us, and present them also to him.

They who brought these infants to Christ, were frowned upon and discountenanced by the disciples; they rebuked them, because they would not have such a needless trouble (so they thought it) given to their Master, who had other work enough upon his hands. If this be encouraged, they shall see no end of it. Was it not enough that he cured the sick, which none but he could do, but he must bless the healthy too, which others might do? How well is it for us, that our Master has more tenderness and compassion than the best of his ministers have; and is touched more nearly than they are, or can be, with the feeling of our infirmities,[o] and an inclination to gratify those innocent desires of humble and believing supplicants, which those who think themselves polite and refined, look upon with a slight, as not worth taking notice of. In grace and goodness he is God and not man;[p] nay, he is both God and man: as man, he has himself suffered, being tempted, and is therefore able with the greater sympathy, to succour them who are tempted;[q] and as God, in doing good his thoughts and ways are infinitely above ours, the best of ours, above those of the best of us.[r]

As, when God promised to show Moses his *glory*, he proclaimed all his *goodness*, and caused that to pass before him;[s] so our Lord Jesus, when he would let his chosen ones *see his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father*, he showed himself upon all occasions *full of grace*.[t] Among men it is looked upon to be the symptom of a sweet and loving disposition, to take notice of little children, and to be familiar with them.[u] By this, among many other instances, our Lord Jesus showed himself to be kind and benign, meek and lowly in heart; that, upon all occasions, he discovered a particular kindness for little children, and never more than upon this occasion, when he gave a severe reprimand to his disciples for prohibiting those who brought their children to him; he was ηγανακτησε—*much displeased at it*; he was both *sorry* and *angry* that his own disciples did not better know his mind, and that they should be adversaries to those for whom they ought to have been advocates: and he gave orders immediately that *they* should be called to him *who brought the children*, (who, perhaps, upon the disciples' check, were going off,) and that room should be made for them to come to him: by all means *suffer the little children to come to me*, and *do not forbid them*; for they belong to the church *still, as much as ever*; the *kingdom of God* which I come to set up includes them. They are within the allegiance of Messiah the Prince, and he will own them as his subjects.

And not only for the satisfaction of those who

g Gen. xlviii. 13. h Gen. xx. 7. i Jam. v. 16. k Gen. xii. 3. l Rom. xv. 30. m 2 Tim. i. 16. n Gal. iii. 14.

o Heb. iv. 15. p Hos. xi. 9. q Heb. ii. 18. r Isa. lv. 9. s Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19. t John i. 14. u 1 Pet. ii. 3.

brought them, and to please them, but for the benefit and advantage of the children, he took them up, with a great deal of endearing tenderness, in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them; did not only *pray* for a blessing, as they desired, but *commanded the blessing*, as one having authority, even *life for evermore*,[v] which is inclusive of all blessings.

But what encouragement (you will say) does this give to us? Christ is not now among us as he was then; and we cannot either make such addresses to him, or receive such favours from him, as they then might. It is true we cannot in such a sensible manner, but we may as really in a spiritual way, make our applications to him, and expect communications from him; for in him all fulness dwells, to him all judgment is committed, and the knee of every supplicant must bow to him: and we are sure he has blessings as much at command now as ever he had. And, therefore, from the kind entertainment he gave to these children who were *brought* to him, we are warranted to infer his readiness to receive our children that are *offered up to him*, for it is certain never any one was the worse for going to heaven.

From hence observe then, That our Lord Jesus has given us great encouragement to hope, that he will favourably accept our little children, when, in a right manner, we bring them to him for a blessing.

I shall endeavour to show, I. How we must now bring our little children to Christ. II. What entertainment we may promise ourselves they shall find with him, according to this instance in the text. And then, III. Make application.

Those who are truly ambitious of this honour for their children, and covetous of this wealth for them, to have them blessed of Christ, cannot but wish to know how they may bring their children to him, so that they may hope to obtain his favour. *Say not in thine heart, "Who shall ascend into heaven,*[w] where Christ sits at God's right hand, and take my children with him thither to receive his blessing?" No: *the word* of God is nigh to thee; and Christ in the word, and his blessings, to be received by faith, applying the word to ourselves. The tabernacle of God is among us; the priests, the spiritual sacrifices, the Israel of God,—where two or three of them are gathered in his name, he will be in the midst of them,[x] both to receive their homage, and to give out his favours. Where his ordinances are administered according to his institution, and those things which he has commanded, observed and taught, there will he be all the days, even *to the end of the world*;[y] there he records his name, and there will meet his people, and *bless them*; nay, wherever a true Christian is, there is a living temple, in which God is served and honoured, and his blessings and favours communicated, by his Spirit dwelling in the heart. There is still a way of access to Christ, a new and living way, by which we may not only come to Christ ourselves, but bring others to him, bring ours to him, our children, who are pieces of ourselves.

Four ways we must bring our children to Christ:

1. By surrendering them to him. When by a deliberate and solemn act of our souls, we resign and give up, with ourselves, the children also which God has graciously given us, to the Lord Jesus, to be to him for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory;[z] to be Christians, devoted to his honour, and employed in his service; to be members of that body whereof he is the head, servants in that family whereof he is the Master, and subjects in that kingdom of his among men, which is incorporated by that great gospel charter, *Disciple all nations into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*;[a] then we may bring our children to Christ: we present them to him,[b] (a poor present to him who has a world of angels at command, yet such as he requires and will accept of,) as living sacrifices, which we desire may be holy and acceptable; it is our reasonable service.

Parents are invested by nature in a right to their children, and an authority over them for their good. A daughter in her father's house was accounted by the law not *sui juris—her own right*; he could disannul her vows.[c] Now this right in our children we must not only acknowledge to be subordinate to that prior superior title God has to them; for we are only the fathers of their flesh, he is the Father of their spirits;[d] but we must also transfer to our Lord Jesus, whom the Father has constituted the great trustee, both of all the powers with which he intended mankind should be ruled, and of all the *favours* with which he intended mankind should be blessed.

Our children are God's children; (they are *my sons* and *my daughters*, saith God, *which thou hast borne unto me*;[e]) and therefore it is sacrilege to alienate them from him, and to devote them to the service of the world and the flesh; it is profaning the holy things of the Lord our God. And it is our duty to dedicate them and dispose of them as he directs. Now he directs us to give them up to Christ; to enrol them among his disciples; to enter their names among his servants,[f] who being born in his house, belong to his family, and are entitled to the protection and provisions of it, and taken under the order and discipline of it.

That is a great word, and speaks much of the dignity and power of our Lord Jesus; *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands.*[g] All the things that concern his honour and government, all his part of the matters in variance between himself and fallen man, he has put into the hands of the Mediator, as referee of the controversy, the

v Ps. cxxxiii. 3. w Rom. x. 6, 8. x Matt. xviii. 20.
y Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. z Jer. xiii. 11. a Matt xxviii. 19.
b Rom. xii. 1. c Numb. xxx. 5. d Heb. xii. 9.
e Ezek. xvi. 20. f Ps. cxvi. 16. g John iii. 35.

blessed Day's-man, who has laid his hand upon us both. Now that which he requires of us (and with good reason) is, that we love the Son, and give all things into his hand; all our interests and concerns; and particularly our children, who were made and born for immortality, who are entered into a state of probation and preparation for eternity, whom therefore we commit to him as to their Guardian: by whose gospel, life and immortality are brought to light,[h] and brought to hand.

Hereby we do honour to the exalted Redeemer, and recognize his authority; as one to whom the Father has therefore given power over all flesh, especially over the spirits of all flesh, that he should *give eternal life to as many as he had given him*,[i] as many of them. We own his dominion both in heaven and on earth, by owning his indisputable title to our children; both to their bodies, by which they are allied to the earth, and to their souls, by which they are allied to heaven and the world of spirits.

Hereby we confess, that as we ourselves, so our children, are more his than our own; and therefore we desire that both we and ours may live to him. And in thus honouring the Son we honour the Father also; for Christ came to bring us to himself, that he might bring us to God.[k] Our children are therefore brought to Christ, the Mediator of the covenant, that through him they may be brought to God, as their God in covenant. When Israel was taken into covenant with God, express notice is taken not only of their captains, and elders, and officers, but of their little ones, as parties to the covenant which the Lord their God made with them.[l]

Hereby we do *well* for our children, the *best* we can do for them, for we give them up to him who is able to do that for them which we cannot do, and which must be done for them, or they are undone. We know they derive through our loins sinful and corrupt natures; we know they are shapen in iniquity, they are called, and not miscalled, *transgressors from the womb*:[m] what therefore can we do for them, but bring them to him who came to save sinners, to save them from their sins? They are born polluted; and by presenting them to Christ, we bring them to the fountain that was opened for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in from sin, which is uncleanness.[n] They are born distempered; and we thus bring them to the great Physician, to have their temperament corrected, to have their very constitution altered; to have not the mass of their blood, but of their minds, changed for the better, that *as they have borne the image of the earthly, they may also bear the image of the heavenly*.[o]

Now this solemn surrender of our children to God as theirs in covenant, if we ourselves be in covenant with God, I think ought to be done by the ordinance of baptism; an ordinance peculiar to the Redeemer's kingdom, and a seal, as circumcision was, of the righteousness which is by faith,[p] and therefore, like it, belonging both to believers and to their infant seed. Our Saviour, when he instituted that ordinance, gave a double intimation concerning his gospel kingdom which was then to be set up. One was, that it must not be *confined to the Jews*, but *spread to the Gentiles*; therefore go and *make all nations disciples*. The other was, that it should not be *confined to that generation*, and live and die with the apostles. It must not be (as the historian says of the Roman commonwealth) *Res unius ætatis—a thing confined to one age*; no, it must continue, for Christ *will* continue at the head of it, and in the midst of it, always, even to the end of the world. Now, as baptism did subserve the former design, and attended the progress of the gospel to the most distant regions of the earth; so we have reason to think it was instituted equally to subserve the latter design, and to attend the propagating of the gospel to the latest ages of time; that by taking early hold of the seed of the faithful, and giving their parents, and ministers, and consciences, early hold of them, provision might be made (as was by the altar, *Erd.*) that nothing might make them cease from fearing the Lord:[q] that thus a seed might serve the Lord Jesus, which should be accounted to him for a generation.[r] And by keeping up the entail, and as it were by a continual claim, the name of Christ might endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.[s]

But waving this dispute; I insist upon that, in which I am sure we are all agreed, that our children are to be given up to the Lord Jesus; (and *of his own* do we give him, for he has *bought them with a price*;[t]) that they may glorify him in body and spirit, and he may be honoured even by *their* hosannas. We lend them to the Lord, as Hannah did Samuel,[u] that they may be his all the days of their life; and if they be so, they shall be his to the endless ages of eternity.

2. We must bring them to Christ, by seeking to him *for* them, as those who are surrendered to him. They are to be but once baptized, but they are to be daily prayed for, and the promise sealed to them in their baptism put in suit and pleaded with God in their behalf. These brought their children to Christ, when they begged his blessing on them, and thus we must bring ours to him; bring their case to him, the case of their souls, their precious souls, which ought to be laid nearer our hearts than any thing else that concerns them.

h 2 Tim. i. 10. i John xvii. 2. k 1 Pet. iii. 18.
l Deut. xxix. 10—12. m Isa. xlviii. 8.
n Zech. xiii 1. o 1 Cor. xv. 49.

p Rom. iv. 11. q Josh. xxii. 25, 34. r Ps. xxii. 29, 30.
s Ps. lxxxix. 28. t 1 Cor. vi. 20.
u 1 Sam. i 28.

When Christ was here upon earth, we read of many who applied themselves to him for mercy for their children: *Lord, have mercy upon my son*,[v] saith one; *Lord, have mercy upon my daughter*,[w] saith another: and the children fared the better for the faith and prayers of the parents. And we may, as easily, come to him now he is in heaven, and more easily; and with the same petition: Lord, have mercy on my son, on my daughter, who is foolish, and vain, and carnally minded, (which is death,[x]) and much under the power of Satan. Even our little children's souls are to be prayed for; for we believe they are born in sin, and foolishness is bound in their hearts; and we see how soon corrupt nature appears and works in them, and how the tares spring up with the wheat: let us therefore be earnest with God for the operation of his grace upon their hearts betimes; that Christ be formed in their souls when they are young, and they may be sanctified from their infancy. *They are thine, save them.*[y] Ishmael was very young when Abraham prayed so affectionately, *O that Ishmael might live before thee!*[z]

Our children are capable of being prayed for, and of receiving benefit by prayer, before they are capable of being taught, and of receiving benefit by instruction: and as their being baptized lays us under an engagement to teach them, so it gives us an encouragement to pray for them; and we should begin early to do it. Look up to Christ, and beg of him to bless them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things, which will be the best provision and the best portion for them.

Be *constant* in praying for your children; pray for them as duly as for yourselves, as St. Paul for his friends, making mention of them always in every prayer. Be *particular* in praying for them; pray for each particular child, as holy Job offered burnt-offerings for his sons, according to the number of them all;[a] that you may be able to say, as Hannah, *For this child I prayed*;[b] pray for particular blessings for your children, according as you see their case requires, for *that* grace which you observe their natural temper (or distemper rather) calls for.

Let us take heed lest our prayers degenerate into formality, and we pray for them only from custom, and in no better manner than we can soon teach them to pray for themselves, and for us too, by rote: but let us pray for them, from a principle of concern for their precious souls; in the prosperity and welfare of which *their* happiness, and *our* comfort in them, is bound up. When a child is born, there is a candle lighted that must burn to eternity, either in heaven or hell; the consideration whereof should awaken us to pray with all possible earnestness for the salvation of their souls, next to that of our own.

When they are *little*, they cannot pray for themselves; and if you *do not* pray for them, who *should?* When they are *grown up*, it may be they are careless, and will not pray for themselves to any purpose, and then their case is the more piteous; it may be they are wicked and profane, and hate prayer, yet continue to pray for them, for while there is life there is hope, and while there is hope, there is room for prayer; and who knows but he who waits to be gracious, may at length be gracious to you, and your child that is dead may be alive again.[c]

Have an eye to Christ in all your prayers for your children; let the prayer be directed to *him*, as it was here. It was in his name particularly that they were baptized, and therefore in his name they must be prayed for, and into his hands all our petitions to God must be put. We may with him plead their baptism: "Lord, they are given up to thee to be thine; make them thine own, then own them as thine." Plead his interest in them as the children of his family, the lambs of his flock, the pets of his school; plead your dedication of them to him, and his acceptance of them; and resolve to leave them with him.

It is by prayer that we *cast our care* upon God; cast it upon the Lord Jesus, to whom the Father has committed all judgment, and who is intrusted with the administration of the providential kingdom, in subserviency to the mediatorial kingdom. Our children are a considerable part of our care; what they will prove, and what will become of them: we must by prayer cast this care upon Christ; and believe that the children of the greatest are not above the need of his care, nor those of the meanest beneath the cognizance of it.

3. We must bring them to Christ, by submitting them to the disposal of his providence. When we have by prayer sought to him *for* them, we must by a cheerful acquiescence in his wisdom and goodness, make ourselves easy concerning them; believing, that Christ knows what is fit for them and us, better than we do. We bring them to Christ, when we bring our will, concerning them, into an entire submission to his will; believing that he will be sanctified, and resolving that then we will be satisfied.[d]

Let us make Christ guardian to our children, not only when we are dead, but while we live; trust them with him, and put them under his protection; as Jacob did his children when he was parting with them, *God Almighty give you mercy!*[e] and when he was parting from them, *The Angel that redeemed me from all evil*[f] (and that can be no other than the Lord Jesus, the angel of the covenant) *bless the lads!*

When we can refer it to the divine will, whether our children shall be healthful or sickly, high or low, rich or poor, prosperous or crossed, thriving or declining in the world; whether they shall live to

v Matt xvii. 15. w Matt. xv. 22. x Rom. viii. 6.
y Ps. cxix. 94. z Gen. xvii. 18. a Job i. 5.
b 1 Sam i. 27. c 2 Sam. xii. 22. d Lev. x. 3.
e Gen. xliii. 14. f Gen. xlviii. 16

be old, or die young; provided it may but go well with their precious souls, and they may be happy to eternity; then we bring them to Christ, as a skilful, faithful Physician, willing be should take what method he pleases with them, so he will but cure them, and save them. I have read of a good man, whose son being disposed of in the world, met with great affliction, which he once very feelingly complained of to his good father, who answered, (according to the principle I am now upon,) "Any thing, child, to bring thee to heaven."

4. We must bring them to Christ, by subjecting them, as far as we can, to the government of his grace. Having laid their necks under the yoke of Christ in their baptism, we must teach them to draw in it, and use our interest in them, and authority over them, to keep them under that easy yoke, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of our Lord Jesus.[g]

Having got them enrolled among his servants, we must teach them, betimes, to know their Master, and to own his dominion over them, and their obligations to him; bring them into their Master's presence, bring them to see him, bring them to hear him, by bringing them to his word and ordinances. Feed your kids beside the shepherds' tents;[h] let them have family instruction, as soon as they are capable of receiving it, and be brought to sit under the public ministry, as soon as they are capable of not being a disturbance to it.

Bring them to Christ's feet, by taking pains to impress upon their minds the indispensable necessity of their being taught and ruled by Jesus Christ, of their believing his truths, and obeying his laws, in order to their present and eternal welfare. We brought them to Christ, by an instituted *sign* of their being his, in their baptism; we bring them to Christ, by the instituted *means* of their being his, in their religious education; both those we second with prayer, that they may be his: thus far we must go, and further we cannot.

II. You see how you may bring your little children to Christ. I come next to show you, for your encouragement, how you may hope he will receive those who are thus brought to him, and what entertainment they may expect; surely, something like the kind entertainment he here gave to these little ones: He took them up in his arms, put his hand upon them, and blessed them. Such visible, sensible signs of his favour we are not now to expect, but *that* which is more than equivalent in spiritual blessings.

Only let me premise, that we cannot be so confident of God's giving his grace to our children, if we in sincerity pray to him for it, and use the means, as we may be of his giving it to ourselves, if we do so. Many a godly parent no doubt has brought his children to Christ, as before directed, who, yet, have proved wicked and vile, and strangers to Christ, and come short of his blessing, but it has been through their own default. Many are sacramentally regenerated, and born again of water, by which they have been partakers of the Christian name, who, yet, are never really regenerated, and born again of the Spirit, but live and die destitute of the nature of Christians. All we can say is, that if we thus bring our children to Christ, they stand much fairer for, and nearer to, his blessing, than if they be not brought to him. There are promises and precedents which we may take encouragements from, and upon which we are caused to hope, that Christ will give them his grace, will work his *good work* in them, both as a token of, and as a qualification for, his *good will* towards them; and if he do, it will be an addition to our comfort, that it is an answer to our prayers, and the fruit of our labours; if he do not, it will be a support to us under our grief, to have the testimony of our conscience that, by the grace of God, we have in some measure done our duty, and then left the event with God, whose grace is his own.

Let us now observe the instance of Christ's favour to these children; and inquire what we may expect that has some resemblance of it.

1. *He took them up in his arms.* See how Christ does more for humble believing supplicants than they can ask or think: it was only desired he would touch them, but he did more, he embraced them; and it speaks not only his wonderful condescension, but his compassion and affection. A little while previously, when he had occasion to set a little child before his disciples as a pattern of humility, he not only set the child in the midst of them, which was sufficient to answer his intention: but he took him in his arms,[k] to show his tender love to those who are as little children. (*When Israel was a child then I loved him.*[l]) This spake the kindness our Saviour[m] had for the human nature and race: his φιλανθρωπια —*his joy* in the *habitable part of the earth*, and his *delight in the sons of men.*[n]

Christ took up these children in his arms as one well pleased with them, and concerned for them; that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said concerning him, *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather his lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom.*[o] Time was, when he himself was taken up in old Simeon's arms.[p] And he did himself pass through the age of infancy, to make it honourable and comfortable to the *children* of his people; and the expressions of his favour afterwards to *little children*, make it much more so: when their mothers and nurses carry them in their arms, and

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g Eph. vi. 4. h Cant. i. 8. i John iii. 5.
k Mark ix. 36. l Hos. xi. 1. m Tit. iii. 3. n Prov. viii. 31.
o Isa. xl. 11. p Luke ii. 28.

are almost tired with the load, let them refresh themselves with this thought, that the Holy Child Jesus was carried in arms, and did himself take up little children in his arms. When Moses was charged thus to bear Israel, he found himself aggrieved, *Have I conceived all this people?*[q] *Have I begotten them, that thou shouldst say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom as a nursing father bears the sucking child?* But what Moses complained of, Christ had complacency in; he took them up in his arms: it is but one word in the original, ἐναγκαλεσαμενος—*he inarmed* them, he *took them into his embraces;* as he did his spouse, who said with satisfaction, *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.*[r]

But *how* may we hope he will take our children in his arms, when we bring them to him? Surely we may promise ourselves no less than what David promised himself, *When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.*[s] We may hope,

(1.) That he will take them up in the arms of his *power* and providence; that he will *hold their souls* in life, and protect them from, or carry them through, the weaknesses and perils of the infant age: that he will give *his angels*,[t] the *little ones'*[u] angels, *a charge concerning them*, to bear them in *their arms*;[t] and *their* arms are *his* arms, the arms of his power. The name of the Lord is a strong tower,[v] into which the righteous are not only welcome to run themselves, but to bring their children; and where they and theirs may hope to be safe, so safe, as that no real evil, no only evil, shall befall them. The arm of the Lord is revealed in favour of the little ones, even of a sinful race; witness those of unbelieving murmuring Israel: But your little ones, though living in a barren wilderness, and likely to be made a prey, them will I bring into that land which I have promised, and you have despised.[w] Much more shall it be stretched out for the relief and preservation of the faithful seed, whose refuge the eternal God[x] is, and will be, and underneath them are the everlasting arms; such are the arms of the Lord Jesus, which cannot faint or be weary, and by which all things are upheld, else they would sink.

That Divine Providence which supports children in their childhood, and carries them through that helpless age; which puts it into the hearts of parents to provide for them; which preserves to them their limbs and senses, of which they might, by a thousand accidents, be deprived in a moment; by which they grow in strength and stature; is to be mentioned to the honour of the Redeemer, to whom it is owing that the race of mankind continues *in being* upon the face of the earth, though guilty and obnoxious. It is in the Redeemer's arms, by whom all things consist,[y] that children are borne up, and carried on *to* full age; for to him are owing all the reprieves *of* God's patience,[z] and all the gifts of his common providence. This we have all experienced ourselves, and must acknowledge it with thankfulness to the Redeemer's praise, as the royal Psalmist does: *Thou art he that took me out of the womb; thou didst make me hope, and keepest me in safety when I was upon my mother's breast: I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art my God from my mother's belly.*[a] *By thee have I been holden up*, and therefore *my praise shall be continually of thee.*[b] And what we have experienced ourselves, we may humbly expect for our children, if we bring them to Christ, to whom we have brought ourselves.

(2.) That he will take them up in the arms of his *pity* and *grace;* that he will in compassion to their precious souls, the case of which by nature is very piteous, undertake to cleanse and cure them, to sanctify and save them; that, as in his love and pity he has shed his blood to wash from sin, and so prepared the laver, he will, in love *to them*, and pity *to them*, sprinkle that purifying, healing blood upon them, that they may by it be washed from their sin, and sanctified for God, as *their* God.

The loveliest, sweetest babe we ever saw, though like Moses in the ark of bulrushes, exceeding fair, to admiration, yet, like him, it is born in a land of Egypt, in a house of bondage; like him, marked for the sword as soon as born; nay, it is like the infant in Ezekiel's parable, *polluted in its own blood*, and cast out *to the loathing of its person*;[c] it is shapen in iniquity, it is born in sin, and its precious soul is defiled and deformed, and an object of pity. This is a melancholy thought, and a damp to the pleasure we take in our children. But this is a comfort: that Christ has compassion on them, has arms to gather them up in, and has given us hopes that he will say unto them, *Live*, yea, he will say unto them, *Live*;[d] will wash them from their filth, will clothe them with his grace: (and the *time* will be a *time of love* indeed, both to *them* and *us*:) that he will embrace them, as the father of the prodigal did his returning son, when he fell on his neck and kissed him;[e] will receive them into the arms of a covenant of grace, out of which they shall never be plucked, and in which they shall be for ever easy and happy.

2. He put his hands upon them:[f] they desired he would *touch them*, one touch from Christ has done wonders; but he did more, he *put his hands on them*, as he did on John when he said, Fear not; and as he did on many whom he cured; to intimate that virtue went out of him for the purpose to which he intended it.

q Numb. xi. 12. r Cant. ii. 6. s Ps. xxvii. 10.
t Matt. xviii. 10. u Ps. xci. 12. v Prov. xviii. 10.
w Numb. xiv. 31. x Deut. xxxiii. 27.

y Col. i. 16. z 2 Pet. iii. 15. a Ps. xxii. 9, 10.
b Ps. lxxi. 5, 6. c Ezek. xvi. 5, 9. d Ezek. xvi. 9, 10.
e Luke xv. 20. f Rev. i. 17

But *how* may we hope that Jesus Christ will now put his hands upon us and ours?

(1.) If he set us and ours apart for himself,[g] as his own peculiar people, we may say he puts his hand upon us and ours: as the buyer lays his hand on the goods he has agreed for, they are now his own; as Jacob put his hand on the head of Joseph's sons, to signify not only his blessing them, but his adopting them, and taking them for his own, *Let my name be named upon them.*[h] This we hope Christ does for our children, when we bring them to him; he owns them for his; and we may say they do in some degree belong to Christ, are retainers to his family.

It is an honour and comfort to have our little children called Christians, called by Christ's name; to have them numbered among his peculiar ones, among the servants born in his house, distinguished from the children of heathens, who have not the knowledge of God and Christ; to have them added to the church, which is God's treasure in the world; planted in his vineyard, sown in his field, to be a holy seed, a seed for God; especially if we have some good hopes, through grace, that they are not only admitted to a place in the courts of God's house now, but are designed for his holy place above, for the congregation of the righteous there. If Christ will but put his hand upon them, and say, They shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels,[i] we have enough, we have all we wished for in bringing them to him.

(2.) If he give his Holy Spirit to us and ours, it may truly be said, he puts his hand upon us and them. The Spirit is sometimes called the *finger of God*, and sometimes the *hand of God*;[k] so that Christ's putting his hand upon us,[l] not only puts us into a relation to him, but works a real change in us; lays hold on the soul for him, and puts his *image*, as well as *superscription*, upon it. The laying on of hands was a ceremony used in conferring the Holy Ghost; and this we pray for, and hope for, from Christ, for our children, when we bring them to him.

And there are *words* upon which he has encouraged us to hope for this. We find it possible that children may be sanctified from their birth,[m] that they may be filled with the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb;[n] nay, we find it promised, That God will pour his Spirit upon our seed, and his blessing, that blessing, that blessing of blessings, upon our offspring:[o] that *his Spirit upon thee* shall *not depart from thy seed:*[p] that his Spirit shall be poured out upon our sons and daughters:[q] that our children shall all be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace:[r] the *New-Testament* promise is to us and to our children; not only *that* of the forgiveness of sins, but *that* of the gift of the Holy Ghost.[s] These are the true sayings of God; and we may put them in suit, and expect the performance of them for our children, when we bring them to Christ. And O that he would thus *put his hand upon them.*

3. He blessed them. He was desired to pray for a blessing for them, but he did more, he commanded[t] the blessing, blessed with authority; he pronounced them blessed, and thereby made them so; for those whom he blesseth are blessed indeed. Christ is the great High Priest, whose office it is to bless the people of God, and all theirs. When he parted from his disciples at his ascension, he blessed them;[u] he left blessings behind him for his church on earth, and all the members of it the little ones not excepted.

When God took Abraham into covenant, he promised to bless him; and the blessing wherewith he blessed him was, *I will be a God to thee and to thy seed:*[v] but that was not all, he promised that in the Messiah, who should descend from his loins, all the nations of the earth should be blessed;[w] not only blessed *by* him, but blessed *in* him, in that righteousness and salvation which should be wrought out and brought in by him. The transferring of this blessing was the great care and business of the patriarchs; Jacob and Esau strove for it, and Jacob got it; the Jews sinned it away, for themselves, but not for the world; and therefore, by the gospel, this blessing of Abraham comes upon the Gentiles,[x] that comprehensive blessing, that God will be a God to them who believe, and to their seed: this blessing Christ has the conferring of, for he is the Mediator of the covenant, and Trustee of the blessings of it. Now if we, in faith, bring our children to him, as Mediator, we may hope he will bestow this blessing upon *them* with other the children of the church; for St. Peter gives the *Jews* this reason why God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless *them*, because they were the children of the prophets, and of the covenant.[y] Now if we and ours be children of the prophets, and of the covenant, *of* the prophets by our assent to gospel truths; and of the covenant, by our consent to gospel terms, we may hope to inherit (and our seed after us) that blessing which Christ was sent to bestow.

The prayers made by the Israel of God, for all its members, from the *least* to the greatest, are encouraging to our hopes that they shall share in the blessing: our children are not only prayed for by us, as parts of our family, but they are prayed for by all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ,[z] their Lord and ours, as belonging to Christ's family,

g Ps. iv. 3. h Gen. xlviii. 16. i Mal. iii. 17. k Luke xi. 20. l Ezek. iii. 14. m Jer. i. 5. n Luke i. 15. o Isa. xliv. 3. p Isa. lix. 21. q Joel ii. 28. r Isa. liv. 13. s Acts ii. 38, 39. t Ps. cxxxiii. 3. u Luke xxiv. 50. v Gen xvii. 7. w Gen. xii. 2, 3. x Gal. iii. 14. y Acts iii. 25, 26. z 1 Cor. i. 2.

to the *nursery* in that family; the welfare and prosperity of which, all who are concerned for the perpetuating of Christ's name and throne, cannot but have a particular and tender concern for. In bringing them to Christ, we bring them within the prayers of all good Christians; which we hope may obtain a blessing for them.

The promises made to the Israel of God are yet more encouraging; especially since Christ came to *confirm the promises* made to the fathers,[a] that in him they might be *Yea* and *Amen*. Now it is promised, that the *generation of the upright shall be blessed*;[b] that the *seed of God's servants* shall be *established before him*;[c] that they shall be so remarkably pious and prosperous, that *all who see them shall acknowledge them,*[d] *that they are the seed which the Lord has blessed*. Lord, be it unto thy servants according to the word which thou hast spoken.

III. The Application.

1. Let me hence address myself to children, to little children, to the lambs of the flock, to the youngest who can hear with understanding:[e] will not you be glad to hear this, that the Lord Jesus Christ has a tender concern and affection for you; and that he has blessings in store for you, if you apply yourselves to him, according to your capacity? Shall I speak to you in the words of David? *Come ye children, hearken to me, and I will teach you,*[f] as young as you are, *the fear of the Lord;* nay, I would teach you not only the fear of God, but the faith of Christ; and therefore address myself to you, in the words of St. Paul, *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you,*[g] till his image be renewed upon you, and he live in you.[h]

You hear, dear little ones, what Christ has done for you, what favour he has showed to those of *your age:* and will not you put in for an interest in his favour, and the provisions he has made for the entertainment of children? Has he thus loved you, and will not you love him? Has he such kind thoughts toward you, and will not you have dutiful thoughts toward him? Does he invite you to him, and will not you accept of his invitation? He says here: *Suffer little children* not only to be brought to me, but *to come to me;* to come as they can themselves, to make it their own act and deed; and do not forbid them, for it is possible, that of those of their age may be the kingdom of God, that they may get to heaven.

You love those who take notice of you, and play with you, and give you toys; and will you not love those who pray for you, and instruct you, and would bring you to be acquainted with the best things? Will you not reckon them your friends indeed, who seek the welfare of your souls, your eternal welfare?

Be sensible betimes of the corruption of your nature, that *foolishness is bound in your heart;* and give all diligence to get a change wrought in you. Begin betimes to put a difference between God's name and other names, God's book and other books, God's day and other days. Be dutiful to your parents, and labour to be a comfort to them. Love prayer, learn to pray, and be much in it. Mortify your passions, keep them under, and do not indulge them. Hate and abhor lying, and make conscience of speaking truth.

There are little books, both of counsels and examples, suited to your age: "*The Token for Children,*" by Mr. Janeway, and Mr. White's *Little Book for Little Children;* which you should not be strangers to. Love your *catechism*, and hold fast the form of sound words, which you have heard; but above all, see to it that from your childhood you know the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise to salvation.

Lay yourselves at Christ's feet, and he will take you up in his arms. Give yourselves to him, and he will give himself in his graces and comforts to you. Lie in his way, by a diligent attendance on his ordinances, and he will not pass by without putting his hand on you. And if you value his blessings aright, and be earnest with him for his blessings, he will bless you with the best of blessings, such as will make you eternally blessed.

2. This passage affords both direction and encouragement to Christian parents: *I write unto you fathers*, and unto you mothers, who have a tender concern for your children, and desire they may do well, and would fain do well for them. Observe the entertainment Christ gave to the children who were brought to him, and see it written *for your learning.*

(1.) Let this direct us, who are parents, concerning our children. We have seen *how* we are to bring them to Christ; and have we *thus* brought them to him? We brought them to baptism; but did we thereupon bring them to Christ? Was it done as unto the Lord? If it was, let us now make it to appear. Have we brought our children to Christ, with hopes that they have been accepted of him?

[1.] Let us then still *bring them to him,* by faith and prayer, according as their case requires; be daily *laying them at his feet,* by resigning them to his conduct, and referring all events concerning them to his wise and gracious disposal; be daily *putting them in his arms,* by entreating his favour towards them, as that which is the life of their souls, and better than the life of the body.

You see here *what* to desire and pray for, for your children: *that the Mediator's blessing may be their portion;* for that is a portion for the soul and eternity, a good part that shall never be taken away from those who have it. Covet not *great things in*

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a Rom. xv. 8. b Ps. cxii. 2.
c Ps. cii. 28. d Isa. vi. 9.
e Neh. viii. 2. f Ps. xxxiv. 11.
g Gal. iv. 19. h Gal. ii. 20.

the world for them, a little will serve to bear their charges through it: but be earnest with God for blessings for them *in heavenly things by Christ Jesus*: let them have these, and they have enough.

When you bless your children, (and it is good sometimes to do it solemnly,) let your eye be to Christ, in whom alone it is that blessings are entailed on us and ours, and through whose hand they are derived. The patriarchs in blessing their sons had an eye to a Christ to come; and to him, now he is come, much more ought we to have an eye.

Pray daily with your children, and servants: that they may hear you pray for them, and may thereby be taught and quickened to pray for themselves. I hope none of you dare live in the neglect of family prayer, dare omit it, either morning or evening, when you know that, instead of the blessing of Christ, the wrath and curse of God is poured out on the families that call not on his name. While you and your families live without prayer, you live without God: you make no joint acknowledgment of him, and can expect no joint receiving from him. It may justly be feared that those who throw aside so necessary, so comfortable, so advantageous a duty as family prayer is, do not make conscience of secret prayer neither, but frequently omit it, or at least do not make a business of it, but suffer it to degenerate into a formality. And how can you expect *daily blessings* upon your children, if you do not *daily* ask for them? or to have an interest in the intercession which Jesus Christ is continually making for us in heaven, if you do not pray continually morning and evening, in the virtue of that intercession. Have you settled a correspondence between Christ and your families, by devoting your children to him in their baptism? and will you not keep up that correspondence? How can you expect the benefit of it, if you do not on your part keep it up?

You who have the charge of families, remember that you are Christians, and ought in that capacity to confess Christ, and to own and honour him before your families. There is such a general disuse of Christian conference, that most are ashamed by that to acknowledge Christ before their neighbours, but they cannot have that pretence to decline it before their own children and servants. If therefore with the heart you believe unto righteousness,[z] think how necessary it is, that thus with the mouth you make confession unto salvation. Remember that your family is a family of *Christians*, not a herd *of negroes*, I should say a herd of *brute beasts*; (for those who have charge of negroes ought to pray for them, and to have them prayed with;) and you look upon them as no better than brute beasts, if you do not pray with them: nay, and worse, for the ox knows his *owner*, and the ass his *master's crib*, but you go not before them in acknowledging their *great Owner*, nor lead them to the footstool of *their Master's throne of grace*. But I hope better things of you.

Use the baptism of your children, as an argument with yourselves to pray with them; and then you may use it as a plea with God, for the mercies you ask of him for them. "Lord Jesus, I have presented my children to thee, and thou hast accepted them. I still present them to thee, and wilt not thou still accept them? Thou hast blessed them: wilt thou not say they shall be blessed? and then they are blessed indeed."

[2.] Let us then bring them up for him. Have we any good hope, through grace, that Christ has owned our dedication of ours to him, has taken them up in his arms, put his hands on them, and blessed them? let us then receive each of them from him again, as given to us with the same charge that Pharaoh's daughter gave to Moses's mother, *Take this child and nurse it for me*. You are to look upon your children as given up to Christ, and to manage them accordingly.

Has Christ showed such a tender affection to your little children? be not you then hardened against them, do not rule them with rigour; provoke them not to wrath,[a] lest they be discouraged. Be gentle among them, for so the nurse cherishes her children.[b] Study to make your children love you: and then every thing you enjoin them will be easy. When you are angry at them, let it be for that only, for which you know Christ would be angry at them: and that is for their sins, which must be restrained by the rod and reproof, not for their weaknesses and childish infirmities, which time will wear off. Has Christ blessed your children, and put honour upon them? Do not you curse them, and give them such scurrilous language as Saul gave to his son Jonathan,[c] lest you teach them to give the like to their inferiors. *Bless: and curse not.*

Have you given your children up to Christ? bring them up then in his nurture and admonition. It is not enough that you pray with them and for them daily, but you must daily instruct them in the things of God, and in all those things that will be profitable to them. It is observable, that immediately after the laying down of that great truth, *That the Lord our God is one Lord*, and of that great law, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, it follows, as an indispensable duty, and a means of keeping up religion in the world, *Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children*: and look upon it to be one of the most needful pieces of work thou hast to do; more needful to get the knowledge of God for them, than to get estates for them, nay, than to

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z Jer. x. 10. a Rom. x. 10. b 1 Sam. i. 1. a Eph. vi. 4. b 1 Thess. ii. 7. c 1 Sam. xx. 30.

get bread for them. Thou shalt therefore not only hear them their catechism once a week, but thou shalt talk freely and familiarly of the truths and laws of God among them, with all gravity and seriousness, *when thou sittest* with them in thy house, and *when thou walkest* with them by the way.[p] At night *when thou liest down*, read a portion of Scripture to them, and oblige them to take notice of it; and again in the morning *when thou risest up*; that thus the word of Christ might dwell in them richly. You know they cannot learn Latin, but they must go to school every day; nor learn a trade, but must go to shop every day; and ought they not to have daily instructions out of the word of God, in order to their getting the knowledge of Christ, which is infinitely more excellent?

Take particular care to bring your children acquainted with Jesus Christ, the true treasure hid in the field of the Scriptures; Christ and him crucified, Christ and him glorified. You call the baptizing of your children, the *christening* of them. I wish you would consider it; and think, how little it will avail them to have been christened, if they do not learn Christ, if they be not taught the truth as it is in Jesus.[q] Let not your children rest in a mere natural religion; that is *good*, it is necessary, but it is not enough. You must make them sensible of their need of Christ, of their lost and undone condition without him; must endeavour to lead them into the mysteries of our reconciliation to God, and our redemption from sin and wrath, by a Mediator; and O that they may experimentally know him, and the power of his resurrection!

In teaching children the knowledge of God, both the parents are concerned to do their part. Solomon speaks both of the instruction of the father, and the law of the mother;[r] but when they are little, the mother has a greater opportunity of instilling into them that which is good, and ought to improve it. Timothy got to know the Holy Scriptures from his childhood, by being brought up under a good mother and grandmother;[s] and king Lemuel, when he is come to the throne, forgets not the prophecy that his mother taught him.[t]

And as in other accomplishments of your children, so in the business of religion, which is their best and true accomplishment, you must, as they come to be capable, put them on to advance. When they have gone through their learning, you put them into business; when they have served their apprenticeship, you set them up for themselves; and thus when you have brought them to some competent knowledge of Christ, and have some reason to hope that the Spirit of grace has begun a good work in their souls, persuade them to take the covenant of baptism upon themselves, in the use of the other seal, that of the Lord's supper, and so by their own act and deed to join themselves to the Lord. Tel. them, "You brought them to Christ when they were infants, you have been ever since showing them the way to him, and now they must come themselves to him. Though they be weak, if they be willing," you may assure them, "they shall be welcome; for those who come unto him he will not, no, he will not cast them out."[u] If they sit down at his feet to hear his words, he will take them up in his arms, and bless them."

And there is one thing more, in which I must be a monitor, particularly; else I should not be a faithful monitor to parents, who have brought their children to Christ, and who hope that he has blessed them, and that is, that they be careful how they dispose of them in the world when they are grown up, lest by an error here, they undo all that they have been doing for them. In putting them apprentices, placing them in callings, and in marrying them, let Christ be consulted about it; let the interests of the better part be consulted in it. That is best for them which is best for their souls, against which you should not be swayed by any worldly interests or regards whatsoever. If you have laid a good foundation, let it be your care and endeavour that it may be built upon.

(2.) Let this encourage us, who are parents, concerning our children; and enable us to think of them with comfort and hope, in the midst of our cares about them. They are dear to us, we look with pleasure upon these olive plants round about our tables, yet not without a mixture of pain, because children are (as we commonly say) "certain cares, but uncertain comforts;" these arrows in the hand, may prove arrows in the heart;[v] Absalom, whose name signifies *The peace of his father*, lived to be his greatest trouble. But when we consider that we have brought them to Christ, and he has received them, we cannot but thank God and take courage. When we *wish* well to them, we would willingly *hope* well; and this is ground of hope, *that our Lord Jesus has expressed so much favour to little children.*

[1.] *This* may comfort and encourage the tender careful mothers in nursing them, *that they are carrying those in their arms whom Christ has taken up in his.* Not only their *natural affection* to them, as pieces of themselves, may sweeten and ease the pains they take about them; *that* makes even the *sea monsters draw out their breasts and give suck to their young*;[w] but their *gracious affection* to them as members of Christ, as beloved of him, and partakers of benefit[x] by him, may much more do it. You are *careful for them with all this care*; they require a constant attendance, and many a time, it may be,

p Deut. vi. 4—7. q Eph. iv. 20, 21. r Prov. i. 8.
s 2 Tim. i 5. t Prov. xxxi. 1.

u John vi. 37. οὐ μή, a double negative. v Ps cxxvii. 4.
w Lam. iv. 3. x 1 Tim. vi. 1

break your *sleep*; but if you do it as unto the Lord, if you have an eye to Christ in it, "This I do for a child that is adopted into his family, as well as born into mine; you may depend upon him to pay you your wages," though it be your own child. Your care about your little ones keeps you from church, it may be, many a time; and keeps you, that you cannot spend so much time in your closets as you used to do; but if thus it be sanctified by an eye to our Lord Jesus, and by your prayers to God for them as his, more than as your own, you are therein truly serving the Lord Christ yourselves, and not only so, but are breeding up servants for him, that you hope will be vessels of grace and glory.

[2.] *This* may comfort and encourage us if our children labour under *any* bodily weaknesses and infirmities, if they be unhealthful and often ailing, which is an allay to our comfort in them: let this serve to balance that. *If they belong to Christ, and be blessed of him, they are blessed indeed*; and nothing amiss of that kind shall be any prejudice to their blessedness, or diminution of it, but may, being sanctified, become rather a friend and furtherance to it. Many have been the wiser and better, the more humble and heavenly, for their having borne the yoke of affliction in their youth.[a] You see what an affection Christ discovered for these children; and may conclude, by reflecting upon yourselves, that he has a particular tenderness for children in affliction; those are commonly most indulged by their parents that are *sickly*: and like as a father pities *those* children,[b] so does the Lord Jesus much more, as he often evidenced when he was upon earth. As the abiding illnesses of the children are the parents' continual affliction, it is a cross they are to take up daily: so the abiding compassions of Christ toward them, ought to be their continual consolation, and a cordial they may have recourse to daily.

[3.] *This* may comfort and encourage us in teaching and catechising our children, in giving them a pious education, and in praying with them and for them, *that we are doing it for Christ, that we are workers together with him*. And we may hope he will work together with us, and then our labour shall not be in vain. If we have given them to Christ, they shall be taught by his Spirit, and are within the reach of that precious promise, that all shall know God, from the least even to the greatest.[b] It may be they are dull and slow, and not so apt to learn as we could wish: Christ's own disciples were so, yet he bore with them, and brought them at last to *a full assurance of understanding*, and therefore despair not concerning your children who are but of a small capacity. It may be your children are hopeful and forward, and very promising, and it is your joy to see it, in hopes they will be ornaments to your families, but it ought to be much more so, in hopes they will be, in their day, faithful servants to the interest of God's kingdom among men. And what prospect can be more pleasing next to that of our own everlasting bliss, than to have good hope, through grace, that our children shall be praising God on earth, when we are praising him in heaven; and that we and they shall be, together, for ever praising him. *I have no greater joy*, says the apostle, *than to hear that my children walk in the truth*.

[4.] *This* may comfort and encourage us in all our cares concerning our children when they grow up, in providing for them, and disposing of them. If we have in sincerity given them up to Christ, and he has accepted of them, *we may hope, he will dispose of every thing that concerns them for the best*, and they shall in this world reap the benefit of the promises made *to the faithful and their seed*;[c] and the prayers made *by the faithful for* their seed. If they be not feasted, yet verily they shall be fed; if we have but little to give them, yet the blessing of Christ upon that little, will make it every way better to them than the riches of many wicked.[d] Many, no doubt, have had reason to acknowledge, that their comfortable passage through this world has been very much owing to the blessing of Christ, upon their early dedication to him, and education for him. If Christ has taken up our little ones into his arms, provided they do not by their wickedness throw themselves out of his arms, we may be sure, he is able to keep what we have committed[e] to him, through all the attempts of an insnaring world; that he will never drop them, neither shall any pluck them out of his hands.

[5.] *This* may comfort and encourage us, if our children be removed from us by death in their childhood; (this is a common case; that which came forth like a flower, is soon cut down, and the gourd which came up one night, and which we were exceeding glad of, withers the next night, and leaves us in tears. Now it is enough to SILENCE us in such a case, that it is the Lord that gave, and the Lord that taketh away, and if he takes away who can hinder him? May he not do what he will with his own? Let Aaron therefore hold his peace, for God is glorified. But *this* goes further, and may SATISFY us, that *if Christ has raised them in the kingdom of his grace, he will receive them into the kingdom of his glory*. We are indeed kept in the dark concerning the state of those that die in infancy, they are left to the mercy of God: but the children who are given up to Christ by their believing parents, are not left to uncovenanted mercy. *The Lord knows them that are his*, though we do not; but we may hope that it shall go well with those whom Christ has taken up in his arms,

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[a] Lam. iii. 27.
[b] Ps. ciii. 13.
[c] Lam. iii. 27.
[d] Prov. xvii. 1.
[e] Ps. xxxvii. 25, 26.
[f] Deut. x. 29.
[g] Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6.
[h] Lev. x. 3.

and blessed; and, that he was so well pleased with the children's Hosannas, even in the Old Jerusalem, will reckon himself glorified by their *Hallelujahs* in the New Jerusalem.[g]

[6.] *This* may comfort and encourage us if we should be taken away from our children by death, while they are little: (this also is a common case, and a mournful one; we know not how soon we may fall under the arrests of death, and may see the day, that awful day, approaching, which will cut off the number of our months in the midst. In such a case, as to our own souls, we may perhaps be able to say, as our Master did, with an air of triumph, "Now we are no more in this world."[h] O that we may be able, at such a time, with this cheerfulness, to say so! But, though we should, yet, like him concerning his disciples, we must say concerning our children, *But* THESE *are in the world:)* How shall we leave them? Where and with whom shall we leave them? With whom, but with him who has said, *Leave thy fatherless children with me, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me;*[i] who has taken it among the titles of his honour, to be a *Father of the fatherless*, and *a Judge of the widows.*[k] If we have made Christ guardian to our children, let us make it appear we are entirely well satisfied in his wisdom and faithfulness.

But, [7, *& ult.*] *What* may we have to comfort and encourage us, if our children should prove wicked and vile; if they should forsake their God, and the God of their fathers, and walk in the paths of the destroyer, notwithstanding our utmost endeavours to engage them for Christ? It is very often a case in fact; we cannot deny it; it is possible the best parents may have the worst children; yet if we SHOULD SUPPOSE a falling from *grace and holiness adherent*, which, through the divine condescension and compassion, might have availed to the salvation of such as die in infancy, that WILL NOT INFER a falling from *grace and holiness inherent:* what Christ does *herein*, we know not now, but we shall know hereafter.[l] But disputes in this case are cold comforts to the poor parents; whose hearts bleed and break to see the destructive courses which their children take, whom they thought they had lodged safe in the hands of the Mediator, for whom they have prayed many a prayer, and shed many a tear. They thought Christ had taken them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them, but it does not prove so. What shall we say to comfort such?

It may be some satisfaction to them, that however it goes with their children, Christ will be glorified; if they do not give honour to him, he will get him honour upon them. And if God be sanctified we ought to be satisfied, and with reverence to behold both the goodness and severity of God; on them which fall, severity; but towards them who stand, goodness, if they continue in his goodness.[m]

But it will be yet *more* satisfaction to them, if they have the testimony of their consciences for them that they have done their duty; which they did, with a resolution to leave the event with God. They knew they could not give grace to their children; but their hearts can witness for them, that to the best of their power, they digged about these barren trees, and dunged them,[n] as the dresser of the vineyard did; and if they bring forth fruit well, they shall have the comfort, and God the glory; but if not, they must be content to see them cut down, and though they cannot have comfort in that, yet God will have glory, and they acquiesce.

But the greatest comfort of all in such a case is, that the unbelief and disobedience of their children shall not make void God's promise to them, and therefore ought not to make void their comfort in God. *Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious.*[o] Abraham is happy in heaven, though there be those in hell who can call Abraham father. It was the comfort of holy David, though he saw a great deal of sin and trouble in his family, *Although my house be not so with God* as I could wish it, yet I am sure of this, *he has made with me an everlasting covenant, which is well ordered in all things and sure, and that is all my salvation*, and therefore shall be *all my desire.*[p]

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g Matt. xxi. 15, 16. h John xvii. 11. i Jer xlix. 11.
k Ps. lxviii. 5. l John xiii. 17.
m Rom. xi. 22. n Luke xiii. 8, 9.
o Isa. xlix. 5. p 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

MEMOIRS OF MRS. RADFORD.

(FROM A COPY IN MRS. SAVAGE'S HAND-WRITING.)

ELEANOR, the third daughter of Mr. Philip Henry, was born at Broad Oak, July 23d, 1667, being Tuesday. Her father writes in his memorandum of it, "Blessed be God, who was present in the time of need."

She was baptized privately, July 27th, by Mr. Jonathan Edwards, of Jesus College, in Oxford.

Her natural temper, from a child, was timorous.

She had her name Eleanor appointed her by the last will of her grandfather, who died half a year before she was born.

While she was a child, she had frequent illness, which the Lord graciously brought her through. She was of a very tender, loving, and towardly disposition, and became acquainted betimes with the things of God, of which, through her great modesty and self-diffidence, she was not very forward to express herself, but very sincere and industrious in her converse with them.

She began early to write sermons, and the daily family expositions of the Scripture, and what she wrote she made use of; for while she lived, in her daily reading of the Scriptures in her closet, she read along with them the expositions she had written. She gathered, in writing, what she thought observable in the books she read, or in the papers communicated to her, and kept it together.

She was married to Mr. Samuel Radford, a tradesman in Chester, January 1st, 1688-9; and as, by the grace of God, she was enabled to do the duty of, so she had abundance of comfort in, that relation.

What account we can find among her papers since her death, concerning her spiritual state, and her communion with God, is only a constant register which she kept of all her approaches to the Lord's Supper. She made her first approach in the seventeenth year of her age, and then writes thus:

"I was advised by my father to put these three questions to myself, for my help in preparation, and to examine myself upon them: What am I? What have I done? and, What do I want? And by these three questions I did search and try myself, according to my weak ability, and what was amiss therein I humbly beg of God to pardon.

"*Question 1st.* WHAT AM I? Am I in a state of sin, or in a state of grace; a child of God, or a child of the devil? Have I renounced *all* for Christ?

"*Answer.* I hope I can say, in the truth and uprightness of my soul, that I have renounced all my sins, and taken Jesus Christ to be mine, and given up myself to him to be his.

"*Question 2nd.* WHAT HAVE I DONE?

"*Answer.* God knows, and my own conscience knows, how greatly I have sinned against, and provoked, the pure eyes of his glory.

"1. The sin of my nature testifies against me, and I desire to testify against it. Lord, forgive the sinfulness of my nature.

"2. The numberless number of actual transgressions which I have been guilty of.

"In *thought:* Which of the commandments have I not broken? Who can understand my heart sins?

"In *word:* Telling untruths—some, since I have known to do better. I am convinced that my vain and idle words must come into judgment, and my idle unprofitable letters too.

"In *deed: Omitting known duties.* I have not been so frequent and constant as I should have been, in the duty of secret prayer; in reading God's word, and singing his praises alone. *Committing known sins.* I have not carried it aright towards my relations, superiors, inferiors, and equals. I have not been diligent to use my uttermost endeavours, as I should have done, for the salvation of the souls of those with whom I have conversed. I have always had too good an opinion of myself. Lord, humble me for my pride. I have enjoyed great means of knowledge, and yet am very ignorant of what I might and should have known. I have often quenched the motions of the Spirit, and not hearkened to the voice of my own conscience. *Lord, who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.* My sins have been more aggravated than the sins of others, having been committed against

light and conviction. Having drawn up this bill of indictment against myself, next comes in,

"*Question 3d.* WHAT DO I WANT?

"1. I want pardon for these and all my sins.

"2. An interest in Christ, as my Redeemer and Saviour.

"3. I want to have my strong corruptions weakened;

"4. And my weak graces strengthened.

"These, and many more, I expect, and desire, to have supplied at the Lord's table.

"The Lord will supply all my wants out of his fulness. Amen. I was admitted to the Lord's table this February 17th, 1683-4, where I felt unspeakable sweetness; then and there the knot was tied, and the bargain made, which I would not release for a thousand worlds. I desire from the bottom of my soul, to bless God that ever I knew the meaning of a sacrament. I have this day felt that in my soul, which did much warm and refresh me, namely, a full persuasion of the love of God to me; and I desire to love him better than ever. I have heartily closed with him to-day: my soul hath said, *None but Christ, none but Christ.* The Lord make my heart more and more sound herein. The exhortation was that of Christ's, *Go and sin no more.*"

On the next opportunity she writes; "I came away greatly comforted, and more sensible of the love of Christ to me, and I hope I shall have cause to bless God for this day as long as I have a day to live. The exhortation was, Psalm lvi. 13. *Thou hast delivered my soul from death, wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling?* He that hath done the greater will do the lesser."

On another: "This was a price put into my hand to get wisdom. Blessed be God. The duty pressed was, to continue with Christ in his temptation: the Lord help me so to do."

"Another precious day of grace. I was a guest at the blessed table, and must say, as Mephibosheth, *Who am I, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?*"

"Another sweet opportunity, wherein I have, as well as poor I could, given myself to God wholly, only, and for ever. Amen."

On another: "I have to-day, by the unspeakable goodness of my God to me, come away from his table with abundant consolations and satisfaction, because I hope I am in Christ Jesus. I am grieved that I walk no more closely with God. O that the sweetness I have found to-day may engage me to more watchfulness. I have this day, with an eye of faith, seen the great love of Christ to me; I tasted it, and was refreshed. Blessed be God, I had a comfortable day of it; I endeavoured to set faith on work, and came away comforted."

At another time: "A sweet opportunity; the duty pressed was, *Arm yourselves, likewise, with the same mind.*"

At another: "A wonder of mercy, that I, who am not worthy of a crumb from the table, should be admitted to sit at it, and feast, not only with but upon the Lord. How is it? I have renewed my covenant afresh with him, and deliberately chosen him for my treasure; and now, I bless God, I count the world, and all things on this side *him*, but trash."

"Another precious opportunity. The duty pressed was, *To work out my own salvation with fear and trembling.* The Lord help me in it, *and work in me both to will and to do.*"

At another: "From Phil. iv. 1. *So stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.*"

At another: "The exhortation was from Ps. cxvi. 16, *Truly I am thy servant.*"

At another: "From 1 Samuel xii. 24. *Only fear the Lord.*"

At another: "From Romans xii. 1. *Present your bodies a living sacrifice.*"

At another: "This was an avouching day: I did afresh take God to be mine. The Scripture closed with was Deut. xxvi. 17. *Thou hast avouched the Lord.*"

At another: "Job x. 15. *If I be wicked, woe to* me. Woe, and a thousand woes to me, if *I* be wicked. *I* that have known more and professed more, and been more convinced than others. *I* that have had so many mercies from God, and so oft renewed my covenants with him. If *I* be wicked and must go to hell at last, (as all that are wicked must,) it will be hell indeed to *me.*"

At another time: "I was minded of that great duty, in *all my ways to acknowledge God,* from Prov. iii. 6."

"I was exhorted, from Hebrews xii. 1. to *lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth most easily beset me.*

"From 1 John i. 12. *Not to sin.*

"From Psalm xxxi. 23. *To love the Lord.*

"From Rom. viii. 1. *To walk after the Spirit.*

"From 1 Cor. xv. 58. *To abound in the work of the Lord.*

"From 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. *To live to Christ.*

"From 1 Thess. iv. 1. *To walk so as to please God.*

"From Colos. iii. 1—3. *To seek the things above.*

"From 2 Peter iii. 18. *To grow in grace.*

"From Ephes. v. 15, 16. *To walk circumspectly.*

"From Ephes. iv. 22, 23. *To put off the old man, and to put on the new man.* I hope I have done that to-day, which I shall have cause to bless God for to eternity.

"From 1 Cor. x. 12. *Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*

"A sealing day; the Lord did accept, and pardon. I did endeavour to give myself to Christ, deliberately, sincerely, freely, and, it shall be, for ever. The Lord keep it always in the imagination of the thoughts of my heart, and establish my way before him."

At another: "The exhortation was, from 1 Peter i. 13. *Gird up the loins of your mind.* It was a sweet opportunity. What I have in hand is nothing to what I have in hope. *Not unto me, O Lord, but to thy name be the praise.* I had the comfort; God shall have the glory."

At another: "1 Peter i. 22. *Love one another.* I was dead and cold at the ordinance, I would endeavour to make up what was amiss by after-diligence, The Lord set in with me."

"2 Samuel xxiii. 5. *Yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant.* I did afresh take God the Father to be my chiefest good and highest end; God the Son to be my Prince and Saviour; God the Holy Ghost to be my Sanctifier, Teacher, Guide, and Comforter; God's word to be my rule in all my actions, and his people to be my people in all conditions. The exhortation was, to join in the angels' song, Luke ii. 14. *Glory to God in the highest.*"

Thus far before she was married.

At another time: "The exhortation was, Ps. lxxxv. 8. *Not to return again to folly.* All sin is folly, but sin, after God hath spoken peace, is folly with a witness."

At another time: "From Hosea xiv. 8. *To have no more to do with idols.* From Psalm xxiii. 6. *To dwell in the house of the Lord.* From Colos. ii. 6, 7. *To walk in Christ with thanksgiving.* From Isa. ii. 5, 6. *Walk in the light of the Lord;* that is, 1st. To walk closely in my family, in my shop. 2d. To walk comfortably; for God would have his people a comfortable people. From John viii. 10. *To go and sin no more.*"

At another: "I was very dull and drowsy some part of the time, but came away rejoicing that I had what I came for. The Lord help me to be the more busy after. The Scripture closed with was Romans vi. 12."

At another; "The exhortation was from 1 Peter ii. 9. *To show forth the praises of him who hath called us.*"

"From Joshua xxiv. 21—23. *Ye are witnesses.*"

"From Deut. xxix. 9. *Keep the words of this covenant.*"

"From Gen. xxix. 1. *Then Jacob went on his way. Margin,* Then Jacob *lift up his feet.* When he had that view of God, chap. xxviii. 12. and made that vow to God, chap. xxviii. 20. *then* he lift up his feet."

"From Jer. xiii. 11. *To be unto him for a name and for a praise,* and, therefore, to abstain from those things which make a dishonour and disgrace to God, and to abound in those things which are for his honour."

"From Eccl. viii. 11. *Keep the king's commandment, because of the oath of God.*"

"From 2 Timothy ii. 3. *To endure hardness.*"

"From 2 Chron. xv. 14, 15. *To seek with my whole heart.* The Lord grant that the impressions of this ordinance may not wear off."

"From 1 Cor. v. 11. *To purge out the old leaven.*"

"From Daniel xii. 13. *Go thy way till the end be, for thou shalt rest.*"

The last she received was July 4th, 1697. "The exhortation was from the practice of the eunuch, Acts viii. 39. *He went on his way rejoicing.*"

These are some of the memorandums she kept of these opportunities.

In her letters to her sisters there are many very savoury, pious expressions, that speak what her heart was full of.

"This is the world of troubles and disappointments. I never saw so much of it as now. I desire your prayers for me, that I may be weaned from it more and more.

"I desire to be content in the place where God hath set me. O that I had wisdom to do the duty of it. I see we must not have every thing that we would have in this world."

She was seized with a fever, as it proved, though little suspected of several days, August 1st, 1697.

In the beginning of her illness she often expressed an entire submission to the will of God, however he should please to dispose of her.

It was the ninth or tenth day of her illness before it appeared perilous, and then it grew violent, and seized her head.

She breathed out her soul into the embraces of the Lord Jesus, August 13th, being Friday, between four and five o'clock in the afternoon.

She was buried in St. Michael's Church, Chester, August 16th, being Monday.

Mr. James Owen preached her funeral sermon that evening, at her brother's meeting-place, on Rev. ii. 7. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life.*

MEMOIRS OF MRS. HULTON.

ANN, the youngest daughter of Mr. Philip Henry, was born at Broad Oak, November 25th, 1668; she was baptized by her father privately. When she was about a year old, she was sick and nigh unto death of an ague, on which he notes, "that she was freely given up to the will of God. Lord, do thy pleasure with me and mine, but contend not with a dry leaf."

He hath noted another ill fit she had when about a year and a half old, and adds, "No sooner doth any thing ail my children but I am presently thinking it is for death. My own guilt, and sense of my unworthiness, causes such misgivings, 1 Kings xvii. 18. but God is good."

She gave very early indications of a sweet and towardly disposition, and an aptness to learn above most of her sex and age, which induced her father, after she had learned to read English well, before she began to sew, to initiate her in the Latin tongue, which she took very easily, but made no great progress in.

From a child she knew the Holy Scriptures, and read them with delight; spoke intelligently of Scripture stories, and was betimes, as soon as she grew to any capacity, very well affected and inclined to the exercises of piety and devotion.

Yet in her own reflections upon her childhood, (written in the year 1688,) though she blesses God for the advantages of a good education, she bewails that the cursed fountain of original sin soon bubbled up. "My childhood and youth" (saith she) "were sinning vanity. I can remember nothing that I did in the world for many years, much less my sins: but when I now see what follies other children are guilty of, I have no reason to think that I came behind them therein." She accuses herself of loving play, and being froward; though few of her age were more mild and tractable, and loved work and a book better than she did.

She soon made her Catechism very familiar to her, and loved to hear and ask questions concerning the things of God. Before seven years old, she learnt to bear her part in the repetitions of the heads of sermons in the family, having the happiness of a very quick understanding, and a good memory.

When she was about eleven years old, she began to write sermons, and continued it all her days. What she wrote was good sense, well spelled, and the substance of a discourse. She kept her sermon-books very carefully, and in good order; she very frequently looked over and conversed with what she had written long before. Read under her own hand the account of the days of her youth. "I soon learned" (saith she) "a course of external duties, and was pleased with the bare performance of the duty without looking at the *manner* how it was done; but at length it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to call me by his grace, and reveal his Son in me. I cannot be punctual as to the *time*, but rather desire to make sure the *thing*. The merciful circumstances of this good work were, that it was done early in my days, and not attended with such pangs and terrors as some others endure. The Spirit of God convinced me and wrought on me by degrees. Many a time hath God spoken to me in a still small voice, and therein he considered my frame, but the less fine was paid at first, the greater rent I must expect to sit upon afterwards; perhaps, the least terror the more doubts afterwards. I might tell (saith she) long stories of the goodness of God in discovering to me the infinite evil of sin, giving me to mourn over it, quickening me to duty, especially to make sure work about my *foundation*, enabling me to close sincerely with Jesus Christ, which I think I have done as well as I could, though never so well as I would. When God gave me some enlargements in holy duties, I rested much in them, and counted upon comfort and assurance; when, alas! I was not at all ready for it. But oftentimes my secret duties were more long than fervent; more external than internal." She complained to one of her sisters long after, that she found it was possible to lose much time even in the closet. Those that were intimate with her, could not, however, but observe, not only how constant she was to secret worship, and how she abounded in it, but what a discernible pleasure and delight she took in it.

In the sixteenth year of her age, she was admitted to the Lord's supper, February, 1684, and with a great deal of satisfaction both to herself and her

father, joined herself to the Lord in an everlasting covenant never to be forgotten. After the second time of her approach to that ordinance, she made this remark of her spiritual state: "I now fell into a very dull and lifeless frame. Drowsiness prevailed much: it was very grievous to me, and after many foils by it, I resolved, with tears, never to yield to it. How I got out of this frame I cannot tell, but this I know, that it was the work of the grace of God. It was a great hinderance to my progress in religion, that I did not open the case of my soul to those that were able to advise me; which proceeded from my reservedness, and has cost me dear. But this I did seriously promise to one that will be a witness against me if I lie, that whereas there are those who make excuses for non-attendance at the gospel-feast, I will not be excused." Afterwards she thus writes —"I was very full of complaints, and empty of praises. I had great supports, but few suavities; some sweet sabbaths and sacraments, but very many damps to my joys. Sin was exceedingly odious to me, and I remembered, with shame, how I had stifled convictions, and how careless and indifferent I had been in matters of religion; how pride and passion had most easily beset me; and how often God had called by his word and I would not hear. The place where I was planted was a vineyard, but it grieved me to think how I had cumbered the ground by my barrenness; yea, brought forth wild grapes by relative miscarriages, and other sins, both of omission and commission. Blessed be God, that which I did I allowed not; with my mind I served the law of God, and delighted in it after the inner man. I esteemed holiness above any thing in the world, and had chosen God for my portion. I smarted greatly for some tongue-sins; some untrue words, though not devised, yet spoken in haste through inadvertency, were as a sharp sword in my bowels, and my bones were broken through my own carelessness. The spirit of bondage long prevailed sadly; it cannot be expressed what straitness of spirit I found; how the wings of faith were clipt, and how the tempter conquered me. But when the sorrow of my spirit even tied my tongue, yet I loved to be alone before God, to be looked on by him; and many a time hath he had pity. I cannot say that ever he was wanting to me, but made all grace to abound towards me. His word has been a means of conviction, of quickening, of comfort to me many a time, and I have found it sweeter than honey or the honey-comb. He restored my soul, he led me in the paths of holiness for his name's sake. It pleased God, some time after this, to make me more than ever sensible of the insufficiency of my own righteousness to justify me, and to show me my need of Christ, and his fulness; so that I counted all things but loss that I might win Christ and be found in him. Thus did the Lord, many a time, wait to be gracious to me, when I was like him who said, *Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?* At length the Holy Spirit, who came to convince the world, was pleased (as at a certain time I was verily persuaded) to convince me of these ten things: viz.

"1. That God is my chiefest good, and that to know, love, and serve him, is my honour and happiness; the greatest I am capable of.

"2. That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; that he is able and willing to save me, and there is salvation in no other.

"3. That religion is the most amiable, pleasant, and beneficial thing in the world.

"4. That much of the power of godliness consists in the great duties of self-denial and mortification.

"5. That I have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and am undone without Christ.

"6. That the favour of God is better than life.

"7. That sin is the worst of evils, exceeding sinful; an evil and an only evil.

"8. That there will be no getting to heaven without much pains and difficulty.

"9. That I shall never be a loser by doing my duty.

"10. That I am infinitely obliged to God, who hath wrought these things in me."

"Now," saith she in her papers, "I fear I did every day act contrary to these convictions, not keeping up a continual watch over myself; but commonly my daily failings passed not without sad reflections. I was solicitous to make sure my being joined to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, and thereupon I did vocally do it in Mr. Alleine's form of words; and did also subscribe with my hand to the Lord, which remains as a witness against me if I be false to it. Renouncing the world and the flesh, I did cleave to God in Christ alone as my sovereign Lord and Ruler, my chiefest good and highest end; and I never repented it, only that I did it no better. God was pleased sometimes gently to correct me by distempers of body, but in much mercy; for I had been as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, knowing neither how to want, nor how to abound; yet now I see he works all for *good*, and do purpose, by his grace, to be well pleased with every thing that happens to me, because it is the will of God."

In a paper written in the year 1688, she thus mentions the advantages of her education:—"I was born of one who had the honour to be of that office who are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ; (2 Cor. iii. 13.) a labourer in the vineyard, though thrust out by men, yet at work in season and out of season; and being it was so, my education was accordingly, *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*"

"As I grew up I have strained at gnats and swallowed camels, often falling into sin. I did not prefer the word of God's mouth to my necessary food.

My own iniquity prevailed, that is, flesh-pleasing in food and apparel, and sinful bashfulness in profitable questions." "Yet," she adds, "one evidence of my love to God is love to the sabbath day. It is the *best* day of the week to me. I am glad when it draws near; I feel the want of it before it comes. Another evidence is, mean thoughts of the world: my age exposes me to the contrary temptations: but *whom have I in heaven but thee?* and I would get above it. The promise-performing God has begun to perform that promise to me, (Romans vi. 14.) *Sin shall not have dominion.* Pride, that tympany of the soul, by the applications of the heavenly Physician, is begun to be cured, though but begun. Psalm ciii. 2. *Who healeth all thy diseases. Vain thoughts compass me about like bees.* I am stung with them. My pride appears in my thoughts, pleasing myself with my own sayings and doings. O that I could say as David, Ps. cxxxi. 1. *Lord, my heart is not haughty.*" She observes once after a sacrament, "I thought that the apostle's method was taken, *Let a man examine himself and so eat;* yet dull, lifeless, and unbelieving."

"March 28, 1689. I was very proud, given to pleasure, with the neglect of God; and it does find me out; for *they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercies.*"

She mentions her father's particular advice to her to look to *secret* duty. Keep up that whatever you do, nothing will prosper without it; all grace grows, as love to the word of God grows.

This collection of her experiences she drew up when she was about nineteen years old, but, I believe, never any one beside herself saw it, or knew a tittle of it till after her death. For the top of her ambition was to be accepted of that God who sees in secret. Any one that hath read these lines, which were the easy and natural product of her pen, and of a piece with her discourses, will say there is something more in them than is usually found in such tender years, and will wish she had been more large and copious in the account.

She wrote also her father's exposition of the Scriptures in the family very judiciously, and made use of them in her private reading of the Bible. She gave herself much to the reading of good books, yet not neglecting the useful employment of her sex and place. Mr. Clarke's last volume of Lives she read again and again with much pleasure, and was well versed in it: and ready, upon all occasions, to produce pertinent and profitable passages out of that and other good books for the edification of others: she was able, with the good householder, to bring out of her treasury things new and old. She made a large collection, in writing, of what she met with most remarkable in her reading.

How amiable and exemplary her deportment was in all relations, as a daughter, as a sister, as a friend, they who knew her can easily bear record: and, though it never appeared to the discouragement of the rest, yet it could not but be discerned that Mr. Henry had a special dear love for his little Nancy, and sometimes said she was the diamond in his ring.

In the twentieth year of her age she was married to Mr. John Hulton, a tradesman in Chester, April 26th, 1688; and she was equally yoked. Take the account of that turn of her life in her own words, in the continuation of the afore-mentioned papers:—

"After nineteen years' barrenness in the place where I first sprung up, God was pleased, by his providence, to put me into the married state, and transplant me into a new soil. It was an affair I thought of great weight, and I was much afraid of seeking great things for myself in this world therein. When I press it upon my conscience, I cannot but acknowledge that I did therein commit my way unto the Lord, and did lay myself before him as white paper, for him to write his will upon me; and accordingly, his providence brought it to a comfortable issue, after much distraction of mind about it."

April 21, 1688, (a few days before her marriage,) she thus writes:—"I did set myself before the Lord to repent of all the sins of my single state; and if sin were never bitter before, I think it was exceedingly bitter then, and, through grace, I did then renew my hold of God as mine."

Soon after this, she removed to Chester. "That morning," she writes, "reading alone, in course, (Exodus iii.) of Moses's objections against going on God's errand, I was much comforted by God's answer, *v.* 12. *Certainly I will be with thee.* Applying that word to myself was very refreshing. Some time before this, reading Genesis xxviii. concerning Jacob's vow, it affected me, and I then, with some seriousness, entered into a solemn promise, that if God would be with *me*, in that present way, and provide for me, and make the issue comfortable, that then he should be my God; creatures should not have the throne in my soul. I would be more watchful against sin, and be more diligent and careful in his service."

Some weeks after her settlement at Chester she thus writes, under the foregoing record of her solemn vow:—"Because deceit lies in generals, and because after particular foils by temptation my conscience reproaches me that it was for want of resolution, I now, in God's name, go forth resolving, not only in general to serve the Lord in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of my life, but particularly, in the strength of Jesus Christ, I resolve against the following sins:—flesh-pleasing and inordinate appetites; passion and frowardness; drowsiness and weariness in the worship of God; despising others; thinking or speaking ill of any; self-

conceit and pride; a lying tongue; all injustice in the calling wherein God hath put me; discontent in the condition allotted for me.

"I do likewise, in the same strength, resolve upon the following duties:—self-denial; meekness; liveliness in duty; reproving when there is opportunity; humility, and low thoughts of myself; truth, equity, justice, and charity: in general, making conscience of all God's commands.

Thus she set out in her new condition, and how strictly she adhered to the rules she laid down was very evident, as far as could fall under the observation of others. Some time after, she thus writes:—"Because, through the necessity of my outward affairs, my secret duties are commonly limited and contracted more than formerly, I have been ready to fear that I have declined in grace, and left my first love. I am sensible of the prevalency of unbelief, and of God's withdrawings; but, though he slay me yet will I trust in him. I have this day promised seriously, to spend some time every day in converse with God. I see in a trade the shop must be constantly attended, though, perhaps, for some time no profits come in; so the trade of religion must still be followed, though there be not, for the present, any sensible comfort and benefit. In this place where God hath set me, he doth require of me,

"1. That I get much knowledge and grace, because I have means for getting them.

"2. That I be very humble, because my gifts are small, and my attainments poor, graces weak, and failings many.

"3. That I be ready for death, because I see many funerals. And because death at a distance did not affect me, it pleased God to bring it nigh me in the death of a near, and that a very dear, relation, viz. sister Henry, February 14, 1688-9. The quarrel God seemed to have with me therein was upon the account of relative sins, and the omission of relative duties; whereupon I endeavoured to repent of them, and renew my covenant in that matter. And because that providence did not do the work for which it was sent, shortly after, another dear friend whom I loved as my own soul, was suddenly taken away (Mrs. Bradbury); the circumstances of her death being such as I was near falling into myself, viz. child-bearing; it did much affect me with cares and thoughts about another world, which had been too little minded by me. After this providence, I was threatened by the illness of my dear mother; upon her recovery, my sense of the mercy obliged me to promise to be more freely willing to resign to the will of God another time; and surely there is all the reason in the world, when the great God condescends to grant my request, that I should say, His will be done. Sin hath much prevailed. Omissions witness against me, and a constant remissness in my walking. I cannot answer for one of a thousand; but—help is laid upon one that is mighty."

She became a mother, July 29, 1689, (but the child died in the birth,) on which providence she thus writes:—"A day never to be forgotten; wherein I felt the bitter fruits of the sin of my grandmother Eve; that part of her sentence being fully fulfilled, *I will greatly multiply thy sorrow. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth.* The peril and danger was much greater than ordinary; so that, as the Lord liveth, there was but a step between me and death. My flesh and heart were ready to fail, and friends ready to despair; but God became the strength of my heart and my portion; and I trust he will be so *for ever.* But, behold, what have these sheep done? The innocent I cannot say, but the less guilty, must die. O Adam, Adam! what hast thou done? My comforts are taken away before I had well received them. Was it all lost labour? Surely no; I have good hope that heaven is something fuller for my babe. I shall go to her, but she shall not return to me. My God is instead of all to me; and were he not mine, sure it were impossible to bear up without sinking under those pains I endured, but the mercy swallowed up the affliction, and rejoiced against judgment. I often promised to love him, and to live to him; and I do it once more."

From the consideration of this event, concerning her first child, she hath sometimes said, "What need mothers have to pray for their children before they are born!"

Her next remark is, April 26, 1690. "I sickened of the small-pox, and though in perilous circumstances, yet was wonderfully brought through them: when I had received the sentence of death within myself, surely the Lord was ready to save me; and the mercies, the sweet mercies which I experienced in the affliction, I shall never forget.

"I may truly say, with David, *Unless thy law had been my delight, I should then have perished in mine affliction.* But God doth seem by his providence to call me to be heavenly minded; to be more humble; to take up with him as my happiness; to be less afraid of death; to abound always in the work of the Lord. Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of destruction, for thou hast cast all my sins behind my back." Isa. xxxviii. 17.

In this illness, when she was asked how she did, her usual answer was, "I shall be well."

June 29, 1691. "I received," she writes, "special mercy from God, in answer to prayer. He was to me a present help, and did not only spare, but multiply, and gave me a living son, or rather, lent him to me for a while: and I have resigned him and myself to the will and disposal of our heavenly Father. How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! Zech. ix. 17. I look upon every sin, after such a mercy as this, to be more deeply aggra-

vated than before. My great unprofitableness under the means of grace, is that at the serious consideration of which my heart doth even melt, and my spirits sink; finding comfort in that Psalm, (ciii. 12.) *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed my transgressions from me;* I thought, with joy, if it were so good for me to have my transgressions removed as far as the east is from the west, how much better would it be when they shall be removed as far from me as hell is from heaven."

On a sacrament day, May 6, 1694, in which it seems she had more communion with God than ordinary, she thus writes: "Forget not ever, O my soul, the sight that thou hast had this day from Pisgah's mount of Canaan's land. What shall I render to the Lord? I have, at the Lord's table, seen my Redeemer as he was in his blood and sufferings; but shortly I hope to see him as he *is*, though not as I am. See to it then, O my soul, that thou purify thyself, even as he is pure."

May 5, 1695, she writes thus: "This last month past I have received great mercy from God in the recovery of both the children from the small-pox; the one brought into great peril, the other brought through imminent danger, by a fever which seized him about three weeks after the beginning of the small-pox. What shall I render to the Lord for his great benefits? He hath been trying me whether I could freely give up my children, which, I hope, I having done, he turned the scale and restored them to me. God having corrected me by the child's relapse, my own heart condemneth me for my own backslidings. Oh that now I might remember whence I am fallen, and repent and do my first works! I have been this day showing forth the Lord's death, and renewing my covenant with him: surely it is meet to be said unto God, 'I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more.' Amen, Amen."

November 19, 1695. In her confinement, after the birth of a child that died when nine days old, she thus writes: "God hath of late been proving and trying me, to do me good in my latter end. I looked for peace, but beheld trouble. My house not made to grow; but the Lord who gave, quickly took away again; adored be the name of the Lord. And now, what doth the Lord my God require? My greatest concern is to improve this providence. God hath (and so have I) been calling my sin to remembrance, that I may be humbled under his mighty hand, and cleave closer to him in love, dependence, and resolution; for even this is performed for me: and what have I to show now for my interest in him and relation to him? Is not my hope a groundless hope? I do not ground it upon myself and my own righteousness, but Jesus Christ is he, concerning whom I say, *Whom have I in heaven but thee?*"

March 1, 1696. "Dare not, my soul, to deny that thou hast this day met with thy God at his table. Silence, thou loud and clamorous unbelief. Never open thy mouth any more. God is willing to be mine, and who can say against it? For, if he will work, who can let it? Only remember, that having received Christ Jesus the Lord, I must walk in him."

Thus far goes her paper of experience, in which she seems to have given vent to her thoughts when they were more than usually enlarged. And if such as this was her converse with God, it will be of use to inquire what was her conversation in the world. Not to mention the common characters of all the saints, which appeared eminently in her, nor the careful discharge of the duties of her particular relation, there are some things which have been observed concerning her, which were peculiarly exemplary and instructive.

1. That though she was so constant in her secret worship, and took so much delight in her closet work, yet she ordered it with so much discretion, that it did not interfere with nor hinder her from any needful attendance upon her worldly affairs, in the house or shop. Every thing is beautiful in its season; and there is a way of abiding with God, and serving the Lord Christ in the particular calling wherein we are called, as well as in his immediate worship. The virtuous woman will look well to the ways of her household, and yet not neglect the ways of her heart.

2. That she was very industrious to promote the family worship in all the parts of it; contriving for it in its season, that nothing might put it out of time; calling to it; being ready to attend on it; and careful to prevent all disturbance in it. If inferior relations would thus do their part, it would be a great help to the master of the family in the discharge of his duty. In her husband's absence she carefully and constantly performed all the parts of family worship herself. It being their custom to pray together morning and evening, she frequently prayed with him. She prayed much for their children, and carefully instructed them in the things of God as they grew capable. Her tender care of two orphans, the relations of her husband, which the providence of God brought into their family, was very remarkable, especially her great concern for their spiritual welfare.

3. That she was very few of her words, not only in making of bargains, but in her converse, *swift to hear and slow to speak;* but when she did speak it was with wisdom, and to the purpose. She was like the still waters, which run deep but make no noise. One might observe in all her discourse, that she thought twice before she spoke once; and so prevented a deal of that guilt and grief which attend the multitude of words. Her speech was always with grace. She breathed forth a religious air in her common converse; and usually expressed herself in her converse with her friends in Scripture

language. The word of God dwelt richly in her, and, by the divine blessing on her great diligence in reading the Scriptures and other good books, (which was her daily practice,) she acquired a good stock of Scripture knowledge; out of which treasury she readily brought forth things new and old, which rendered her conversation both pleasing and profitable.

4. That she preserved an evenness and composure of spirit under all events; one should seldom or never see her ruffled or disturbed by any provocation, lifted up with any joy or cast down with any sorrow; but, whatever happened to weigh down one scale, her wisdom and grace suggested something to put in the other scale to keep the balance even. Upon the death of her father, an affliction that went so near her heart, how calmly did she apply those words of Thomas to his fellow-disciples when Lazarus was dead, *Let us go and die with him.*

5. That she was very cheerful in her converse, and was far from that sourness and melancholy which some good people indulge themselves in, to the reproach of their profession; she made it to *appear* that she found the ways of wisdom pleasantness.

6. She was very charitable to the poor, and stretched forth her hand to the needy. She was always very careful not to make the poor at her door stay long for their alms, for in that time, she would say, they might get another alms elsewhere. She loved to visit the godly poor, when they were sick, and discourse with them, and relieve them. She was one that devised liberal things, and sought opportunities of doing good.

7. On the Lord's day she commonly had her heart much enlarged in rejoicing and thanksgiving, and she used to refresh herself much on that day with singing of psalms alone at the time of vacancy from other duties.

8. She was very forward to promote works of piety and charity, and to stir up others thereto. Her zeal herein provoked many. She delighted in opportunities of showing kindness to others, and was very courteous in her behaviour towards all.

9. She was very frugal of her time, and was observed by those about her to be continually employed.

SOME SAVOURY USEFUL PASSAGES, GLEANED UP OUT OF SOME OF HER LETTERS TO HER RELATIONS AND FRIENDS.

To a gentlewoman, under some doubts about her interest in Christ, she thus writes:—"I know not what is better for a man when he is out of the way, and is convinced of it, than to turn back and get as fast as he can into the *right* way: if thou art persuaded thou art not yet in Christ, give up thyself to him quickly in a marriage covenant. The word is nigh thee to direct thee; the throne of grace is nigh thee, and to it thou mayst draw near for assistance. I believe there is nothing God is more willing to give than his Spirit."

Upon the occasion of a marriage in her father's house, she hath this observation in another letter: "She that is married careth for the things of the world. Indeed, her opportunities of *doing* good will be more than they were, but of *getting* good less. *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* I find, as to myself, that a little thing abates my zeal and flattens my spirit in duties, which makes me fear the snares of the world. It is an enemy to our souls and our graces, to our duties and to our comforts, to our holy living and to our comfortable dying."

She had a tender sense of sin, as appears by this passage in a letter to the same person: "Indeed, it is difficult to be sensible of sins we think small; they are like knots in a fine thread, or hair, hard to untie: greater sins, like knots in a rope. I am greatly afraid of open presumptuous sins, such as may break my peace as long as I live. I may fitly compare myself to a body full of ill humours: though a sore in one place is seemingly healed, yet it breaks out in another; so when I am better in one respect I am worse in another."

Her mean opinion of herself she expresses in another letter to the same person: "Should I go about to tell you how bad I am, it were more than I could do; surely I am ready to go out of love with myself every day: there is some shift to be made to flee from other things that molest, but not from one's self. Really, Madam, religion is the most amiable thing in the world. If I could be very good, and yet think myself bad, how well were it."

In another, she thus writes about meditation: "I confess I am too little acquainted with it, especially the practical part, which is the sweetest. As to what I have tasted, I cannot tell the one half of the sweetness of it, and many times I have found more of God therein than in prayer; before I can fix there is some preparation necessary, and many a chain of vain thoughts to grapple with, which do often prevail and rob me of all my meditating time. As to my helps in it, my God is he that worketh both to will and to do. What more unruly than the thoughts? it is very hard to govern them! 1. I find a fixed heart a great help; the contrary I find a great hinderance: now where shall we find this, but whence every good and perfect gift comes? 2. An heart like the treasury of the good householder, wherein are things laid up both new and old. There must be knowledge to furnish us with matter. It is easier to know what helps there are than to find ourselves holpen by them. Most of my meditations are con-

fused and torn; sometimes some attribute of God is the subject of them, as his wisdom, power, holiness; sometimes some sin, some scripture," &c.

To her eldest sister,* who was married, she thus wrote:—"I am so well acquainted with myself as to know I am very unfit for the condition thou art in, and hast so much comfort in; the conditions are as the persons are. I sadly fear displeasing God, or doing any thing which will wound conscience. I am ready to think there cannot but be more hinderances in our *great business* in that condition than in my present condition. Dost thou not find it so? If it be not for the glory of God, I hope something will be thrown in the way to hinder it: for, however it is, God is good. It is no small comfort to have infinite wisdom and power engaged for one's good."

To another dear friend:—"I fear thou hast too good an opinion of me, which makes my work more difficult to beat down myself. Be not guilty of blowing up that bladder which is so apt to fill of itself. I shall take it as a part of friendship if thou wilt chide, instruct, and counsel me. Put thyself in my case. Thus far I am determined, and no farther, namely, to be guided by infinite wisdom. I heard something suitable to-day from Psalm xxv. *He will teach sinners:* within that number I come, if not within the latter, *The meek will he guide.* Be thou a fervent intercessor for me at a throne of grace; and pray meet me there at six o'clock on Saturday night, if thou canst conveniently. This morning I met with a suitable promise, Isa. lviii. 11. *And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not:* for the fulfilling of which to me I have no desert to plead, but divine mercy, goodness, and faithfulness; and is not that sufficient? Who but a fool will be in want of any thing, when he may have it for asking? I cannot but reckon it one of the greatest of my earthly blessings, that I am the child of such a family, a branch of this vine: and have often acknowledged it as a great mercy, that as I was the youngest, so I thought the most likely to stay longest here; and who knows but I may? I desire to trust God, however it be: the seed of the upright shall be blessed. Though myself I think unworthy, yet I am come of parents that are in covenant; but this will not save me, unless there be a principle within; it is encouragement to think that the smoking flax shall not be quenched. Mr. Vines† observes, 'That Christ would not have them drowned whom he calls, *O ye of little faith,*' Matt. viii."

To the same bosom-friend she writes, "I have not taken the world for my portion, and I think I have been made willing to take up with little of it for my passage. In my father's house the lines are fallen unto me in a pleasant place, and though I never absolutely resolved against a removal from it, yet I cannot but have dreadful apprehensions concerning it; the proposal of it hath occasioned me many a troublesome thought, and is like to do more. I am passive: delay in some cases is dangerous, but here desirable. Rebekah's relations, Gen. xxiv. 55. said, *Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at least ten.* But I was pleased to find it in the margin, a full year, or ten months. Sure that is a quiet and desirable world, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage: of what little avail will it be there whether we were here single or married! My desire is to depart, and be with Christ, which I am sure is best of all. Dost thou see the providence of God going before me? A stander-by may see more than a person concerned. It is very comfortable to have that to plead which Jacob had when in trouble, Gen. xxxii. 9. *The Lord which saidst unto me, Return.* The Urim and Thummim is now abolished, we must expect direction in an ordinary way: who hath known the mind of the Lord? Certainly this is his mind, that we should live to his glory; this is *his* will, even our sanctification, and it *should* be ours."

To the same gentlewoman, her dear bosom-friend, she thus expresses herself before she was married:—

"Thou art writ upon my heart in capitals easy to be read, as those that converse with me may see; thou hast given me the right hand of fellowship in holy ordinances, but hadst thou seen through me, surely thou wouldst not have suffered me to sit so nigh thee; was there ever such a mispender of time, such a trifler away of opportunities, as I am? When thou thinkest well of me, thou seest me not in my own clothes. I am much afraid of getting hurt by the good opinion thou hast of me. Thou seest in my book the fulfilment of the Scriptures, Isaiah xliv. 5. O that thou couldst see in my life the fulfilling of my own engagements! It is easier to vow than to pay, but it is great encouragement to think that God is a covenant friend. He is not so to every one. Who are we that God should take us into covenant with himself? It is not because he hath need of us, but because we have need of him. And must covenant people walk as other Gentiles? Surely no!"

Soon after her marriage she wrote thus:—

"I scarce know yet where I am, but this I know, that I am under the care of my heavenly Father. It is now come to the trial, more than ever, whether I make conscience of duty or no, I mean my *secret* duty. When I had larger opportunities for it, I could not for shame but, at least, seem to improve them, though, alas, what lost time was there in the closet which others thought not so! It cannot but be bitter now. Yet I would not for something have

* Mrs. Savage.

† A learned and excellent divine, who died A. D. 1655. See Clarke's Lives, fol. p. 48. and Brook's Lives of the Puritans, vol. iii. p. 230.

all undone that hath been done there; but I wish it had been done *better*. Blessed be God for the Redeemer that is come to Sion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob; as it is quoted, Romans ii. 26. though it is otherwise, Isaiah lii. 9. My thoughts are very much of dear parents, and brothers and sisters; but there is danger lest, if I think too much, I should be discontent with my present condition, which is best for me. I have seen a little more of the world than I had seen a little while ago, and, truly, there is nothing in it which affords solid comfort and satisfaction to the soul. One sight, by faith, of the lowliness of Jesus Christ, is enough to make one out of love with every thing else in comparison of him."

Upon the death of Mrs. Bradburne,* she thus wrote to a dear friend:—"As was her way, such was her end, even peace, submission to the will of God, rejoicing in Christ Jesus; expressed in such language as this,—'None but Christ, none but Christ, he is my all in all.' Thus did she go triumphantly to heaven. I shall never forget her whom I so dearly loved; her death made some impression upon this rocky heart of mine. If this be done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? Sure it should make me think more of heaven. We used to fancy to ourselves how our friends and acquaintance, that are at a distance from us in the world, do live; though we never saw how, yet, from what we have heard, we imagine what they do; what company they have, what privileges, &c. And what a happy state do I imagine the soul of my dear friend to be in, whose face always shone, and yet was covered with a veil of humility. It is some comfort to me, that as I loved and delighted in her company here, so I shall enjoy it refined for ever. Though friends fail, yet God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. As to myself, I might be useful in the world if I had a heart according to the price in my hand. Indeed I have lived at ease in Sion, as it speaks mercy; I wish it might not be said so of me, as it speaks a sinful frame. I have been ready to say, My mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved; when it is but God's hiding of his face, and I shall be troubled. When friends are gone, the sting of affliction lies in the reflection upon my misimprovement of them whilst with them. Let us therefore redeem the time, because the days are evil. The world is certainly nothing, and nothingness is all that is in it. Continue to pray for me for all things that may be suitable: spiritual mercies cannot be unsuitable. I pray, forget not in all your enjoyments to enjoy God as the gladness of your joy; for what is all without him but vanity and vexation? Even ordinances themselves are dry and sapless unless he fills them, though there is the likeliest place to find him: more *of* God, but not more *than* God, we should seek for. It is very comfortable, methinks, when with new acquaintance we meet with those that are travelling in the same road with us, and aiming at the same ultimate end.

It is sure God hath his remnant every where, and heaven will not want inhabitants, though such unworthy wretches as I come short through unbelief. You are singing of mercy and judgment, we are mixed; therefore providences are so towards us in this world, a gleam of peace to fit us for a brunt of trouble, that we may not settle upon our lees. Where you are you learned to know what David complained of, when he sojourned in Meshech, and dwelt in the tents of Kedar. In such a place there is good to be *done* where there is none to be *gotten:* and there is this advantage to it, that by doing good we get good; by kindling others our own hearts will burn within us, and who knows whether you may be cast there for such an occasion as this?"

To another of her sisters, upon the death of her sister Henry, in the year 1689, she wrote thus:—"There were few families so little acquainted with the scourges of divine Providence as ours was; but now the days of visitation are come, and coming more and more. These are teaching providences; should we not learn obedience by them, passive obedience, lest the next furnace we are cast into be seven times hotter? It would, I think, be a greater affliction to have such relations as are with us our grief and burthen, whilst with us, than it is to have those that were our comfort taken from us. We must consider that God hath a greater interest in all our creature comforts than we have; they are but lent us, and he may call them when he hath occasion for them; and who are we that we should contend with him?"

To her sister in the country:—"I rejoice to hear of the continuance of your welfare; the same that is good is still doing us good, and loading us with his benefits; we must not expect that our health and prosperity should always last. Shall we receive good and not evil also, forasmuch as we do evil and not good? If we could learn this good lesson in the enjoyment of our creature comforts, to enjoy God in all, and in the want of them, to enjoy *all* in God, it would thereby appear that we lived by faith. It is difficult to learn how to want, and it is no less so to learn how to abound." In a time of affliction she thus writes:—"'Tis pity that prosperity should do us hurt, for no affliction for the present seems joyous, but grievous; and if the heart had been duly humbled by constant mortification, and inured to the cross, these outward afflictions would not have been so hard to bear."

* Memoirs of Mrs. Savage, p. 21.

Upon her recovery from the small-pox she writes. —"I write to let you know that I am going from strength to strength through the divine goodness; yet reprieved, because not ready for heaven. Help me to praise God for sustaining and delivering mercy, and also to pray that I might greatly profit by this visitation, that my God may not complain that yet I have not returned unto him. I cannot but acknowledge with thankfulness the interests I have in the love and prayers of good people here, though unworthy of it."

At a time of public trouble, she writes:—"It is a mercy there are not fears within, as well as fightings without; though, truly considered, public calamities were worse than personal, yet, commonly, personal do more affect;—when the sword doth not depart from the house, as in David's case. It is an excellent thing to have a God to trust to, especially an interest in Him in whose hands our times are; not only events themselves, but the *seasons* of them. I find nothing more prejudicial to me than distrust, both in reference to the concerns of the soul, and of the body also. I hope to see you shortly, but wives must be *housewives*, and sometimes *shopwives*, as I know who. I find it hard to turn into a closet. Let not *thy* farm, nor *my* merchandize, be hinderances to us in the way to heaven. The visiting of several sick and afflicted friends takes up a great part of our evening time now: we must not expect to be ourselves exempted from chastisement; the best we can expect is to have them from a Father—in measure and in mercy. There is no greater or better ground of hope than the truth and faithfulness of God, for that cannot fail; all the question is, Whether we can lay claim to the promises? He is in a sad case that must be miserable if the word of God be true, and he is as happy that must be so if the God of truth be true. Who shall separate us from the love of God? The children of Israel, in their march towards Canaan, removed out of the wilderness of Paran: in the world we go out of one wilderness into another, but the *Canaan* is before us. I am now at Elim, where there are twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees; led into green pastures and fed beside the still waters. The only trouble is my unprofitableness, barrenness, leanness, non-proficiency. It is easier to complain than to amend. I know you rejoice with us when we rejoice: that you may do so, you must know how it is with us;—as yet, health and peace are continued; the nursery prospers, and the little ones; angels watch over us continually; the tediousness of nursing we owe to sin; that which sweetens it is the hope that some of our children may glorify God in the world."

And in another:—"The nurseries continue to prosper, thanks be to Him who comforteth us as one whom his mother comforteth. I am glad to hear you have this breathing-time. Our heavenly Father is, we see, slow to afflict, but swift to show mercy; long in forbearing, not long in contending. If it be that he is preparing to strike, we should prepare to be stricken: what! shall we receive good, and not evil? Faith and patience are the two great bearing graces which are necessary in a time of peril. Base distrust is a sin that doth most easily beset me, either of God's power or will; neither of which can easily be questioned; for is any thing too hard for God?—or is his mercy clean gone? No, no; O pray for more faith! I cannot but pity your frequent sabbaths spent at home, while we have the manna at our tent-door; but remember that the careful Father, if there be no school near, will teach his child at home, rather than he should not learn; so will the blessed Spirit, the great Instructor, do the work himself, teaching his people to profit; and, if he doth it, it will be *well* done; for assuredly, if he be not filling the ordinances, they are but empty breasts; if he pass by and do not speak, there is no meeting. O that we had more of God! not more than God, but more of him. Those same things you beg for yourself, beg for me, especially for faith. I have reason to believe (as Mr. Baxter said to his friends) that God will sooner hear your prayers than mine. In his funeral sermon, with the account of his death, his humility and self-denial appear admirable, and make me think of that Scripture, *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* If he did nothing to boast of, sure I have a great deal to *mourn* over."

To her sister in the country, with common tidings and business, she intermixeth very pertinently such lines as these:—"We need sometimes to be in heaviness, we must look for it: herein is the heart deceitful,—that we think we trust in God; but when creatures fail, we find by our failing, that we trusted in *them:* you will not want spiritual supplies while God is all-sufficient."

"To render good for good is no more than the publicans do; yet, alas! how much *evil* do we render for good to him that is good, and doth good!"

"Pray, pray that we may be found of God in peace, without spot, and blameless. The time is short, and therefore every opportunity ought to be taken hold of for improving relations, both near and far off, that that great talent of society may not be buried in a napkin."

"I have less thinking time here than you have in the country. A solitary life I mightily prized formerly, but the great and wise God did not see it good for me: my temper inclined me to it, but now I can envy the outward condition of none."

"You would not envy my bare enjoyment of gospel privileges if you knew how unprofitable I am under them; it is easier to spend a deal of time in the external performance of holy duties in the old road, than to improve a little time seriously and profitably

therein. If you knew my sad declinings, especially my great remissness in keeping my heart, you would pity me rather than flatter me. Pride is a weed that, in the soil of my heart, needs no watering."

"Poor sister Henry, upon the death of the child, is sitting alone and keeping silence. The consideration of her giving it up to God in baptism, when she was asked by my father whether she could freely do it, hath had influence upon her submission. Let us in a day of prosperity be joyful, and think of a day of adversity."

"Is it any wonder that dying creatures die?"

"In this vale of tears we are full of complaints. It is a bad sign that former afflictions have not done their work, in that he is further testifying against me by the sickness of the children; when the staff and the rod will not do, the cart-wheel and the thrashing instrument are used by him, who is *wonderful in counsel and excellent in working*, Isa. xxviii. 27—29. I need not request your prayers, mostly for divine teachings, that they may accompany divine chastenings. They are bitter things when an interest in covenant love is not clear, but *He knows the way that I take: when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold.* Let not the Almighty put me in the furnace and leave me there."

At another time:—"It is a mercy to have such comfortable homes as we have; such relations, so much health. O, how short do we come of the law of thankfulness; every one of God's mercies, even the least, calls for more praise and thanks than we return for them in general: to reflect upon my own unthankfulness may make me humble. I desire your prayers, as you have mine, for mercy and grace. This is a vain world we live in; time slips while I hold my hand; how busy, how diligent should we be; all will be little enough when we come to die! I heartily sympathize with you in the tediousness of your nursery, but take heed of complaining as Rebekah;—'If it be so, why am I thus?'—why is this child of promise so troublesome? It comforts me as to nursing inconveniences, that bringing up of children, lodging strangers, and washing the saints' feet, are put together as *good works*, 1 Tim. v. 10. Let not evil tidings remove your fixed heart; though when we looked for peace, behold trouble, did not we agree for this—if need be, for a season to be willing to be in heaviness? Our sympathizing with each other is a little help, but, alas! miserable comforters are we. I have sometimes been dejected in remembrance of former zeal, forwardness, and fervency in the good way, from which I fear I have declined; upon which, once calling to mind that Scripture did comfort, (Eccl. vii. 10.) *Say not thou that the former days were better than these.* O, that blessed book of God hath all in it I want! let us study it more. What calamities hath sin brought upon us, and yet *itself* we should count a thousand times worse. It is easy to reckon up afflictions, but my sins and God's mercies are numberless, one of which is the interest we have in the pity and prayers of our dear friends. I may hope that all these things are performed for me, and may gather hence, that seeing the threatening part of the covenant is feelingly made good in afflictions, the promising part (Ps. lxxxix. 30, &c.) will also: the same truth is engaged for *both*. I rejoice to hear of your children's recovery: are we like the one leper, who returned to give thanks, or like the nine? Times of trial are times of gaining experience, for patience works experience. We usually pray often for the preventing the evils we fear, but seldom thanking serves; sure the mercy, the God of the mercy, deserves as many *praises* as prayers. I find worldly cares rightly compared to thorns, but *one thing is needful.* My little girl is learning to walk, and represents the weakness of the heart after it falls into sin. It fears, faints, and flags. The heart's deceitfulness is desperate: when in prosperity, I have thought if I were in affliction I should be very humble and contrite under God's hand; when in affliction,—O, if I were delivered I should and would be very thankful and obedient! but it is neither so nor so; never may it be trusted in again."

Upon the death of her little one, at nine days old, November, 1695, she thus writes:—"It is easier to answer you to your satisfaction, than to answer the call of divine Providence, which sounds louder and louder; it requires more time than I now have to tell you my need of chastisements, and God's wisdom and goodness in choosing this rod to do it with. My fruit towards him hath been untimely; the breasts of the promises have run waste; I have not drawn from them and been satisfied. It brings to my remembrance, as my own sin, so your affliction;—from the same hand, of the same kind, with the same design of good to us. O, that I could improve my present retirement in considering what the Lord my God requires of me! We should learn this by all our disappointments, not to boast of to-morrow, for we know not what a day may bring forth. It is no hard usage that I should be diminished whilst others are increased; for do not all things come alike to all? Nay, as many as our heavenly Father *loveth* he rebukes and chastens, and though it be a mighty hand, and therefore good reason why I should humble myself under it, yet it is the hand of a *Father*, which, whilst it is on to afflict, is under to support; and death itself shall not separate us from the love which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory for ever. When I have been a few days from home, I begin to think myself a wanderer from my place, as a bird that wanders from her nest. I wish I do not settle on the lees, being so much a stranger to that sojourning state which Abraham was

in in the land of promise. We are changing our servants; all changes are troublesome; this world, therefore, is a troublesome world, because so full of changes: sufficient to every day is the evil thereof."

A letter which she wrote to one of whom she heard something scandalous, taking care it should not be known from whom it came, may be inserted here.

"Mr. ———

"To ease myself, and, if it might be, to do you good, is my design in writing this. I having joined with you in gospel ordinances, cannot hear of your fall without fear and trembling. Very loth I was to believe it; speak of it I may not, 'tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon;' but first to yourself, whom I cannot expect to inform of that which you know not, but remind you of that you do know, that the prevailing love of God in the heart will no way consist with the love and liking of any sin. Whoever they be that name the name of Christ and do not depart from iniquity, I am sure their profession will carry them but a little way, at farthest but to heaven's gates: dissembled piety is double iniquity, and shall receive greater damnation. I do wonder how, and with what face, any one can appear before God, among his people, in solemn ordinances, that is yet resolved to go on in sin. Consider, you may deceive us that join with you, but not him that searcheth the heart, and knows what is in man. Is your spot the spot of God's children? It is true David fell foully, and I fear some have encouraged themselves in sin by his example; but let them consider it was once, in an hour of temptation, and it cost him dear. He came home by weeping cross, and I believe he would not for his kingdom have repeated the sin: after which he had scarce a good day. Wherefore is his sad fall recorded, but that all people may take heed of *entering* into temptation, and watch and pray that they may not? Is it a light matter that religion is so much reflected on? By your means the blessed name of Jesus Christ suffers. People say, Yea, they are all alike; whereas, God knows, as you have opened the mouth of the wicked, you have saddened the hearts of the godly, who mourn in secret for your miscarriages. May I advise you, nay, doth not the word of God command you, to remember whence you are fallen, and to repent; and let your repentance be public, as your fall hath been. There is yet hope if you return, but none if you go on: there is a fountain opened for poor sinners, to wash from sin and from uncleanness, but then you must look up to him whom you have pierced, and *mourn*. I know not what frame you are in, but God knows. This comes from the true love I bear to your soul, and the interest of religion, which greatly suffers: offences do come, and will come, but woe to them by whom they come! Can there be baser ingratitude than to make him suffer *by* us who suffered so much *for* us? Do you thus requite the Lord? Dare any come to the table of the Lord for a cloak to vile practices? O profound madness! Is the holy Jesus a pattern of sin? Is Christianity a bare name? No, I will never believe it! What shall I say? Return unto the Lord, for you have fallen into iniquity: take with you these words, and say, *Take away all iniquity*, Hosea xiv. 2. I shall cease speaking to you, but not praying for you, who am

"Your soul's friend."

When sickness had long been in the family (and breach upon breach made) of a near neighbour and relation, she thus writes:—"The hand of God is going out against us; his providence shows his controversy to be great and long, and something more than ordinary. Judgments begin with us, the distemper spreads, and where it may end we know not; the dregs of the cup may yet be reserved for ourselves: I cannot say but I have had fair warning, and yet I have not got above the fears of death, that king of terrors. It is a great attainment: I can think of nothing future with so much certainty as dying; that *great* work, *once to die*."

When her children had the small-pox she writes:—"They and we are in good hands; it is a great mercy we are not singled out for some uncommon and *extraordinary* judgment, but visited with the same that many are tried with. I hope that you will entreat for us that this affliction may not be lost."

Writing the news of one who died suddenly, she added,—"What need have we to be ready to die at very short warning! Desire sister Radford, though she be abroad from her family, yet being there where she is *useful*, not to be too thoughtful of home, as I myself have sometimes been, when I found afterwards that I was not so much missed, as through my pride, and minding my own things, I thought I was."

After the death of her sister Radford she thus wrote to her sister Savage:—"The good tidings we have had of your safe delivery, (which was the next day after her sister Radford's death,) and that God was to you a present help, and both root and branch are spared, mixeth our song of judgment with mercy, and God hath set the one over against the other. We have been continued together many years, and after the crown fell from our head,* God let us alone another year also, but now the knot is broken. O for a sense of divine displeasure in this dispensation, and wisdom to spell out the meaning thereof! *for all this his anger is not turned away, but*

* An allusion to her father's death.

his hand is stretched out still. Dear sister Tylston* is very weak. We want our Aaron, the priest of the family, who would have stood between the living and the dead, that the plague might be stayed. God is angry, and yet I am not humbled as I should be under the mighty hand of God; and a mighty hand indeed it is. O, pray for me that I may be more so! I find there is no putting off the great work of closing with Christ till sickness and death come, for that is a very unfit time. And when it is done I see it is not easy then to have the comfort of it."

And in another:—"This is a loud-speaking controversy, and where it will end God only knows; but he is no less wise and good than ever he was, however it is. This shall afterwards yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. Pray, pray hold up the hands and the heart, and you may do more than I."

And a little after:—"That you may know the better how to direct your prayers and praises, this comes to acquaint you that we are not consumed, and it is of the Lord's mercies it is so. The Lord will perfect that which concerns us; and what is that but our eternal happiness mostly? if that be sure, all is well. We have our infirmities, and is this our rest? If concerning this life only we had had hope, it had not been much worth."

When she had not occasion given her by providences to write such lines as these to her friends and relations, then she would fill her letters (and abundance of them are so filled) with the heads of sermons she had heard last, giving a concise account of the substance of them, and especially what in them did most affect her, and do her good. This practice would never leave us unfurnished with matter for pious and profitable letters, and might help very much to spread the savour of the knowledge of Christ.

A CATALOGUE OF SINS FOR HELP IN THE CONFESSION OF SIN.

"Who can understand his errors?"

ORIGINAL corruption; actual transgressions; sins of ignorance; sins against knowledge; sins in infancy, childhood, youth, and riper age; sins in the single state; sins in the married state; sins in unregeneracy; backslidings; sins against God, my neighbour, my own soul. More particularly.

Ignorance of God, aggravated by the enjoyment of the means of knowledge; atheism, questioning his being or providence; hard thoughts of God, forgetfulness of him; sins against the first commandment, which requires to know, love, and believe in God, to fear him, and trust in him; giving that glory to any other which is due to him alone, in reference to God's worship, natural or revealed; neglect of prayer and praise; negligences in them; lothness to be beholden to God for any thing; ascribing the glory of deliverances to somewhat else, not to God.

Drowsiness; vain thoughts in prayer; sins in reference to God's Word; not hearing or reading it with attention, reverence, seriousness, but slightly and cursorily. Sabbath sins; want of preparation for it; slothfulness on that day; omission of sabbath duties; doing my own works; vain thoughts; weariness of the sabbath. Sacrament sins; baptismal covenant oft renewed, but forgotten, not improved. Covenants against particular sins, to particular duties broken, especially as to the spending of some time daily in converse with God, by meditation; neglect of that great duty, both solemn and occasional, and of daily self-examination; backslidings as to this from wonted care. Slovenly performance of closet work; taking the name of God in vain; spiritual pride and ostentation in religious duties; pride in apparel, in words, in thoughts, self-conceit, self-love; flesh-pleasing, gratifying inordinate appetites, the body fed, the soul starved; excess in food, sleep, recreations; God is not in all my thoughts, lying down and rising up; my aims every morning not actually set right at God's glory; the great gospel laws of repentance and faith broken; time, precious time, mispent; time of youth not improved; love of ease and pleasure; disobedience to governors; despising others better than myself; doing that which was good to be seen of men; no relation filled up with duty; many that I might have done good to dead and gone; others that I might have got good by; the opportunity past, sermons lost; reproofs lost and forgotten; anger and bitterness; unchaste thoughts or affections; abuse of lawful things; loving, and overloving; doing any wrong to any person, whether knowingly or ignorantly; uncharitableness; giving grudgingly; not devising liberal things; lying through heedlessness; impatience of reproof; slandering, or reporting of slanders; speaking evil of others; hearing evil spoken with delight; discontent; covetousness; love of this present world, appearing in worldly thoughts; many, constant, welcome; envying, and inordinate affections; neglect of reproving and watching over others; sinful bashfulness; little grief for others' sins; sin sits light; love of Christ little thought of; signal mercies ill-requited for; afflictions not improved; brought low, raised up again, yet not amended; no attainments made in grace answerable to the means I enjoy; great carnality; oppositions to the Spirit's motions of late and heretofore; prevailing dejections and despondencies of spirit. *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

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* Catharine, the wife of John Tylston, M. D.

HEADS OF MERCIES FOR HELP IN THANKSGIVING.

Common Mercies.

A BEING, and that rational; mercies of my conception, birth, nursing, infancy, rational faculties, natural understanding, limbs and senses, preservation in the cradle, at the breast, sustenance, clothes, food, not only for necessity, but for delight; parents continued; other relations provided to take up before they forsook; mercies at school; a capacity to learn, a memory able to retain truths; continuance almost twenty-one years in the world; divine patience exercised; scarce a day's sickness in all this time, as I remember; daily bread; varieties; drink hath not been tears. Much comfort in the single estate, in the married estate; suitableness in relations; extraordinary deliverance when in the valley of the shadow of death, July 28, 1689.

Less common Mercies.

Godly education; daily instructions; special means for getting of knowledge; wise and seasonable reproofs; holy ordinances duly administered; admitted to the Lord's supper about fifteen years old; the example of godly parents; line upon line; Sabbath; some measure of knowledge.

Special Mercies.

Election from eternity; free, effectual calling betimes in youth; strivings of the Spirit; checks of conscience; admonitions; quickenings from the Word; strength vouchsafed to perform duties; victory over temptations; comfort in sorrow; preventing mercies; taught to pray; answers to prayers for relations in working good for them.

Family Mercies.

The house preserved from fire when begun very near, June, 1690; the family begun to be built up; children preserved from the perils of infancy. Two of my near relations' children taken off quickly by death; mine, of the same age, spared. March 27, 1693.—One child of a dear friend burnt to death; another neighbour's child drowned lately, yet mine preserved; one of the children preserved from a dangerous fall down a pair of stairs into the street; the recovery of both of them from the small-pox, May, 1695. January, 1695-6.—Both recovered from a malignant fever when they had been given up; at the same time two servants brought low by it, yet raised up. Ourselves preserved from the same distemper when two dear relations, mother and daughter, fell by it: wonder of mercy not to be forgotten.

National mercies.

Great plenty; no famine; deliverance from the French fleet at sea, 1692, and victory over them, the wind turning for us; London delivered from the earthquake the same year when some kingdoms have been overturned and ruined by them.

SOME ACCOUNT OF HER LAST SICKNESS.

SHE was at public ordinances both morning and evening on the Lord's day, August 29: she had been with her relations, who were ill the day before, and that day also. Though the distemper had seized her a day before, yet she kept it to herself, as loth to be taken off by it from her work and duty. But that night it appeared that she was under the violent assault of a high fever, the alarm of which she received with her usual evenness and composure of spirit; and though she seemed from her first arrest to have received the sentence of death within herself, yet she was not at all disturbed at it, but spake of her circumstances with much cheerfulness. She was exceedingly afflicted with pain in her head, which quite deprived her of rest, and sleep departed from her eyes.

On Monday she sat up most of the day, spoke of her spiritual state with great humility and self-diffidence, repenting of sin, yet rejoicing in Christ Jesus: she said she was afraid of saying too much of her hope and comfort, because the heart is deceitful.

All that week she continued worse, (notwithstanding all means used,) but kept in a very patient, submissive, heavenly frame. When asked how she did, she answered, "Better than I deserve." Often said, "I know whom I have trusted." She desired to have the beginning of Isaiah xliii. read and opened to her; that Scripture which Mr. Bilney the martyr supported himself with,—*When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee.* She desired pardon for her omissions in the duty of her relations. The following sentences she uttered:

"I am not weary of living, but I am weary of sinning: I would live *as* Christ lives, and *where* Christ lives, and that I am sure will be *heaven.*"

"There are many passages in the Psalms not so proper for us but at such a time as this; as that, *My flesh and my heart fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.*"

"Let none think the worse of religion, nor of our family worship, for the afflictions that are in our families, nor have a hard thought of God, for however it be, yet *God is good.*"

When her pain and extremity were great, she said, "I know the great God can do me no wrong: who would desire to go so many steps back which

must some time or other be gone over again, when now I have but one stile more and I shall be at home?"

"I have hope in my death, for Christ hath said, *Because I live, ye shall live also.*"

"I have distrusted God, and am ashamed of it, for God is truth."

"Now for a promise."

"I hope this is no surprise."

"You are miserable comforters, but Jesus Christ is my abiding portion."

"I shall now be gathered to my people, and I have loved those that are godly, both poor and rich."

"Blessed be God for the Scriptures now."

Towards Saturday night she grew delirious; yet even then it was evident her heart was upon nothing so much as God, and the things of her soul; speaking often with a smiling cheerful countenance of psalms of praise and hymns of joy.

While she was under this disturbance she often recollected herself with this word,—"Here is nothing but Tahu and Bohu, (referring to Genesis i. 2.) confusion and emptiness, but it will not be so long."

After eight days' conflict with her distemper, on Monday, September 6, 1697, between the hours of seven and eight in the morning, she fell asleep in the Lord.

She was buried September 8, in St. Bridget's church, attended to the grave with abundance of true mourners, with whom her memory is and will be very precious.

Mr. Samuel Lawrence* preached her funeral sermon that evening at her brother's meeting-place, on Job vii. 16. *I would not live always.*

* See an account of this excellent divine in this volume.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF

DOCTOR JOHN TYLSTON.

He was born at Whitchurch in Shropshire, March 15th, 1663-4. His father was Mr. John Tylston, of Fair Oak in Staffordshire, a very pious man, and of exemplary conversation, especially for a holy contempt of the world, and the things of it, which he dealt in with a manifest indifferency. I would not mention so trifling a thing as the coat of arms of his family, but that the Doctor sometimes observed with pleasure, that it was the same with that which archbishop Tillotson gave, for whom he had so great a veneration. His mother was Mrs. Hannah Weld, of Rushton in Cheshire, who was likewise a very serious, humble Christian. Under his religious parents he was carefully brought up in the fear of God, and discovered early inclinations both to piety and learning. His father died, March 13th, 1683-4, his mother, April, 1688. He often blessed God for his religious parents, and spoke of them with much respect. His father did not design him for a scholar, being his eldest son; nor did he encourage his inclinations to learning, till he saw him so strongly addicted to it, that to divert him to any thing else, would have been to put a force and hardship upon him, too great for such a kind father to put upon so good a child. He entered upon learning at Whitchurch school, afterward made considerable progress in it at Newcastle, and for some time at Salop; but Mr. Edwards, master at Newport school, put the last hand to his school learning, and gave it some very happy strokes. To speak of his industry at school, and great application, is needless, since that is supposed in such as afterwards become eminent, for the time lost at school is seldom recovered; nor are those likely to make a good day's journey that let slip the morning.

After he left Newport school, he spent some time with two or three young men in the family, and under the tuition, of the Rev. Mr. Malden, at Alkington near Whitchurch, till it pleased God to take their master from their head, by death, May 21st, 1681. Here he attained to such perfection in the Greek and Hebrew, as made both those languages very familiar to him; and the half year he spent in them with Mr. Malden (for he had gone in them as far as boys ordinarily do in schools) he often reflected upon with satisfaction. The Hebrew language, though not serviceable to him in his profession, yet he carefully retained, by using his Hebrew Bible in his attendance on the public reading and expounding of the Scriptures.

In his earnest pursuit after learning, his affections and attendances to the exercises of piety were not less vigorous. He learnt betimes to write the sermons he heard in short-hand, and many of them he took pains to write at large, for the benefit of his friends. Soon after the death of Mr. Malden, by the advice of his near kinsman, and very dear friend, Mr. John Benion, Vicar of Malmsbury, he went to Oxford, and was admitted in Trinity College: his tutor was the learned Mr. Thomas Sykes, now Dr. Sykes, the Rev. Margaret's Professor of Divinity in that University. He was soon taken notice of and countenanced by the Rev. Dr. Bathurst, President of that college, who directed him in his studies. Here he so well approved himself for diligence and sobriety, that his worthy tutor, many years after, thus expresseth himself concerning him; "that he never had more reason to be pleased with the share he had in any man's education, than in his." When he was about Bachelor's standing, though he had very much applied himself to the study of divinity and the Scriptures, yet his inclinations led him to the study of physic, which he had laid a good foundation for, by his improvements in Natural Philosophy, *nam ubi definit physicus ibi incipit medicus.* Pursuant to this resolve, after he had for some time

directed his reading into this channel, in the year 1684 he removed to London, where he applied himself very closely to that study under the direction of that eminent physician, the honour of his profession, Dr. Blackmore, now Sir Richard Blackmore. After some time the learned Dr. Sydenham, (to whose ingenuity the faculty is thought to owe a great deal of its modern improvement,) hearing of him and of his character, sent for him, and was so well pleased with him, that he took him into his house, and gave him all the advantages imaginable, of acquainting him with the best methods of practice. Read what he himself had occasion to write concerning these happy instruments of his learning, in a letter to a friend, not long before he died.

"I have ever looked upon my obligations to those to whom my education was committed as inexpressibly great, and beyond all possibility of return. My tutor, the Rev. Dr. Sykes, was always to me as a father, and as such I still love and honour him. I love the very name of Sir Richard Blackmore, who first encouraged me to the study of physic, gave me the first invitation to London, recommended me to several good friendships there, took care of me in the small-pox, put me in a way of acquainting me with the city practice, and honoured me with the freedom of his own most ingenious and instructive conversation, as well as the use of his library. As for the great Dr. Sydenham, who received me into his house, carried me with him to his patients, led me into the mysteries of the faculty, and with a most generous freedom, and perpetual expressions, both verbal and real, of a true affection, treated me not only as a son, and disciple, but as a friend and companion, interesting himself with a paternal kindness in all my concerns: I cannot think of him otherwise than as a father, a friend, and benefactor; and as such his memory must ever be sacred to me. He often told me, that if it were possible for him to get loose from his engagements at London, he could gladly come and spend the remainder of his days with me in the country. All this was the effect of his own generous temper of mind; for which way could I either desire such a degree of friendship, or make any suitable returns?"

It was a very great kindness which Dr. Sydenham retained for him while he lived. Thus he expresseth himself concerning him, in one of his letters: "I do assure you, upon the word of an old man, I have a very entire love for you, and if it lay in my power, I should be more glad to do you service, than any one in the world, next my own children." Such an interest he had in the affections of that ingenious man, who in his last sickness gave him this character, that he was the most grateful man in the world. Those who knew any thing of Dr. Sydenham's principles of religion, ought to know likewise, that Dr. Tylston was his disciple in physic, but far from being so in divinity. Dr. Sydenham taught him, that the study of physic was not the framing of a curious hypothesis, and being able to support and contend for it; but learning by experience, and the observations of others in practice, how to cure diseases by assisting nature in its struggles with them. Every one knows how far to seek a lawyer would be in his profession, that should spend many years in reading books, and descanting upon them, and never attend the courts, nor acquaint himself with the methods of practice; and a physician that would take the same course, would be no less at a loss in his profession. It is ill trusting a guide that knows no more of the road but what he hath learned by the map.

The Doctor was soon aware of the quickness and ingenuity of his pupil, which made him very free in communicating to him the arcana of his practice; so that in a few months he became master of that treasure of observations, which that great man by many years large practice had gathered. This made his way at the first setting out very plain, and enabled him to proceed with very great assurances; which was a mighty advantage to one, whose natural temper was very far from being confident and daring, and who never knew how to *boast of a false gift*, as the wise man expresseth it, Prov. xxviii. 14. nor to pretend to that knowledge, which certainly he had not.

In the beginning of the year 1687, by the advice of Dr. Sydenham, in company with the Doctor's son, he took a journey to the university of Aberdeen, in Scotland, which gave him an opportunity of enlarging his acquaintance, and there they both took the degree of Doctor in Physic, which that university conferred on them with particular marks of respect.

His great readiness to advise and assist sick people, wherever he came occasionally, his care never to give any thing that might occasion abortion, and strict caution, never to reveal any of his patients' secrets, were three instances of his careful observance. Soon after his return to London, Dr. Sydenham very much pressed him to launch out into the business of his profession. Accordingly, in May, 1687, he came down into the country, and settled in his native soil, at Whitchurch: nor did any ask, as men usually do of a prophet, in his own country, *whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?* for his early genius had promised something great and considerable, and had anticipated the prejudice. When some of his friends at London had offered him their interest in some of the country gentlemen, to whom they would recommend him, he very thankfully declined making use of their kindness, saying, his practice he hoped could recommend him; nor did it fail to do so, for he quickly fell into very good business, and that which was useful to many; and without any great difficulty he

got over the prejudices which people commonly have against a young physician, and gave experimental proof, that though days should speak, and multitude of years should speak wisdom, yet neither skill nor success are tied to age.

June 30th, 1687, he married Katharine, the second daughter of Mr. Philip Henry, of Broad Oak, by whom he had six children, three sons and three daughters: one of his sons died of the small-pox, the other five he left behind him.

In the beginning of the year 1690 he removed to Chester; earnestly invited there by many of his friends, among whom he had given occasionally such proof of his abilities, as were sufficient to make a way for his advantageous settlement there, where there were several other physicians; and the event, both in the city and country about, rather outdid than fell short of expectation. Having thus brought down the story of his life to his settlement at Chester, where he spent the last nine years of it, we come to consider his character, which, in many particulars of it, was very exemplary and instructive. And we shall take a view of him,

I. As a scholar. While he lived he continued very industrious in the pursuit of knowledge; though his attainments in learning were very great, yet he was still pressing forward, and redeemed the time he could spare from practice, for study. His closet and books were to him what the tavern and glass of wine are to many men of business, a diversion from the cares, and the filling up of the vacancies, of business. Few new books came within his reach, but he found time to make himself master of their notions; but his delight was mostly in the writings of the ancients. Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch he much admired, and made them very familiar to him. Pliny's epistles he took great pleasure in. These, and other the like, he did not only look into, or cast an eye upon, now and then; but read them through and through, digested their discourses, and was able to give a good account of their reasonings. The passages he met with, which he thought useful to illustrate any text of Scripture, he transcribed at large, into his interleaved Bible, or some other repository. He likewise marked in his book what was most considerable, that he might review them with more ease, and advantage. Some of the ancient writers of the Christian church he likewise acquainted himself with, as Tertullian; and not long before his death, he spent a great deal of time in Lactantius's works, much to his satisfaction. Out of these also he selected many things, as before, and was communicative of what he read, in discourse with his friends. In natural philosophy, he was somewhat sceptical, and though he was well able to discourse of the history of nature, yet he was always ready to own himself unable to determine concerning the secret springs and causes. Of this he thus expresseth himself in a letter to a friend, upon occasion of his inquiry into or concerning the causes of muscular motions.

"I think it more ingenuous (and cheaper I am sure it is) for a man to confess his ignorance, than be at a great deal of pains to discover it; for my own part, I hope I can employ my time better than in such disquisitions as, after all my search and thought, will afford me no good satisfaction; it is as good to be unsatisfied at first as at last, when I find that a progress in the search does not lessen the difficulty."

Let us view him,

II. As the master of a family. In this capacity, his conversation was exemplary,

1. For prudence and virtue in his carriage towards his family and relations, as a husband, a father, and master. A very happy mixture of authority and love I have often observed in his domestic conduct, and such as renders parents and masters both easy to themselves and their families. He managed his children with great wisdom and tenderness, having them in subjection, with all gravity, as the apostle speaks, 1 Tim. iii. 4. and yet without harshness or severity, but on the contrary, with a discreet indulgence.

2. For piety and devotion in his family worship; in the discharge of which he was conscientious. Though his business hindered him often from observing a constant time for it, yet the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and praise, and that most commonly with reading the Scriptures in course, and singing psalms, were duly offered up in his family. He furnished his house with several of Mr. Tate's new translation of the Psalms, and sung them over in order, without reading the lines. I have observed it, as an evidence of his careful and profitable reading of the Scriptures, that in discourse, he would frequently mention what he had particularly taken notice of in that course of his reading.

The sermons he heard on the Lord's day, he constantly wrote, and diligently repeated them to his family at night, that they might give the more earnest heed to the things which they had heard. Upon occasion of any special providence, merciful or afflictive, in the family, he frequently desired the assistance of some of his relations, with his family, in prayer and praise. For some years before he died, he kept an annual thanksgiving to God in his house, for the recovery of his eldest son from a dangerous fever.

III. As a physician. The calling wherein he was called is confessedly needful and honourable, and a great blessing to mankind; and all that knew him, could not but look upon him as an ornament to it. Some of his own profession were pleased to say, they doubted not but if he had lived he would

have been one of the eminentest physicians in all these parts of England. In the study of physic he was constant and indefatigable, and even after he had obtained a considerable reputation by his practice, he continued as diligent in study as if he were again to lay the foundation. He read and collected many things out of the writings of the ancient physicians, Hippocrates, Galen, and others, and few of the modern improvements that were considerable escaped his notice. He laid out himself very much to procure books that might be helpful to him, and oft complained of his distance from London and Oxford, where he might have the advantage of large libraries. Of the writers in physic, he generally valued those most who wrote by way of narrative, and of matters of fact, and observations upon them, rather than those that raised hypotheses, and built upon them. Dr. Sydenham's works he had justly a great value for, and after he had often read them over, that he might yet more thoroughly acquaint himself with them, he drew a very large and complete index to them, alphabetically.

He had, for some years before he died, laid the scheme of a great project, which, if God had spared him to carry on and finish, would no doubt have been very acceptable to the learned world. It was a universal history of epidemic diseases, digested in the order of time, through all the ages and places of the world that we have any record of, to be collected out of the most authentic historians and best physicians. From such a collection as this, he thought many useful hints might be taken, not only for the discovery of the changes of the constitution of acute distempers, but also for their cure; for what is there of which it may be said, *See this is new*, Eccl. i. 10. He laid the plan of this design, and proceeded in it as far as his own library and his friends would furnish him with materials, but let it stand for want of such books as were necessary to the conducting of it, but could not possibly be procured. What he knew, he was very willing to impart to others, that were like to do good with it. "I hate concealment (saith he in a letter to a friend) and monopoly, especially in a faculty that is conversant with the lives of men."

In the practice of physic, he was exemplary for three things:

1. His diligence, faithfulness, and concern for his patients, whose case he did naturally care for. He took pains to study such cases as had difficulty in them, and consulted his books about them. He was more frequent in his visits than most physicians are, and was very industrious in his personal attendance, to prevent any mistake in making up or administering what he prescribed; in either of which an error may be fatal. He would never (unless in a very plain and common case) prescribe any thing till he himself saw the patient, for he looked upon the right understanding of the case (which is scarcely to be obtained but by personal view and examination) to be half the cure. In many acute diseases, he found it necessary to be much with the patient, that he might be aware of every curative indication, and observe which way nature strove to help itself, and might immediately come to its assistance. His labour and pains in travelling early and late, was not so much a fatigue to him, as his great care and concern of his patients, even those that were strangers to him, and those he got nothing by. One might see by his countenance, when he had a patient under his hand in perilous circumstances, and where life hung in doubt. Such cases often broke his sleep, and drew from him complaints, what a heavy burthen it was to him, to have the lives of people in his hands; but the great success he frequently had in the most difficult cases, yielded him a pleasure and satisfaction proportionable to the exigency of the case.

He was not very apt to give a patient over in despair of a recovery, but while there was any room left for the use of means, he would continue them; complaining that many were lost by being said to be so; and yet, where he apprehended the case very dangerous and desperate, he made conscience of letting the patients or their friends know it. He admonished them if the house were not set in order, to do it immediately. He had so great a tenderness for them that were under his care, that some of his patients have said, that he was to them no less a true friend, than a skilful physician.

2. In his charity to the poor. This he was very eminent for; as in other things, so particularly in the business of his profession. I believe I may safely say, that his patients whom he gave his advice to freely were many more than those he received fees from, for he was *the poor man's doctor*. He has sometimes travelled many miles to advise a poor body gratis, with as much kindness and cheerfulness as ever he visited the most generous and wealthy of his patients, and never neglected any for their poverty; nay, he not only gave his advice freely to the poor, but frequently gave them their physic too, to his great expense, and often lamented it, that so little care is taken of those poor, when they are sick, who, when they are well, make shift to subsist without being troublesome, and much desired that some liberal things might be devised for the support of such. To excite himself to all acts of kindness and beneficence, he wrote two Scriptures in Greek in the beginning of his pocket dispensatory, which he always carried about with him; one speaking the example of our Lord Jesus, Acts x. 38. *He went about doing good*; the other, the words of our Lord Jesus, Acts x. 35. *It is more blessed to give than to receive*. And because he was sometimes kind to those who were so rude and ungrateful as

not to own his kindness, that this might not discourage his charity, he wrote in the same book that remark of Pliny's, "It is most pleasant to be kind to the grateful, but most honourable to be kind to the ungrateful."

3. His piety and religion, which appeared even in the business of his profession, was sufficient to give the world another idea of *Religio Medici*, than it hath sometimes had. It was plain, that in following his practice, he aimed at the glory of God, and doing good, more than at getting wealth, and raising an estate. I have often heard him say, he would not take five hundred a-year to leave off his practice, (though perhaps he never got half so much by it,) such a mighty satisfaction had he in being useful and serviceable to his generation, as unto the Lord, and not unto men. It was an excellent saying, which he made his own, *Let me be God's hand.* His frequent and earnest prayers to God for his patients, and for a blessing on what he administered to them, and for direction in his prescriptions, did speak not only a tender concern for his patients, but also an active and lively belief of the providence of God, and of our dependence upon that providence, *that every man's judgment proceedeth from the Lord.* The observations he made of the influence which very small and minute circumstances had upon turning the event, strengthened his belief of the divine conduct, guiding the means to the end.

IV. We come in the last place, to take a view of him as a Christian. And here we find him in many particulars very exemplary.

He was a strict observer of the laws of morality and virtue, sobriety and temperance, justice and charity, which he looked upon as essential to pure religion, oft appealing to the most distinguishing character of good and bad men, 1 John iii. 7, 10. *He that doth righteousness, is righteous, and he that doth not righteousness, is not of God.* As he made it his business to do good unto all he was concerned with, so it was his care to do evil to none. He was ready in the Scriptures, and mighty in them. Some very judicious divines that have conversed with him in matters of religion, have been surprised and ashamed, to find one whose profession led him to other studies, as well acquainted with the Scriptures, as most of those whose profession obligeth them to that study. He was very much in meditation upon divine things; and when his thoughts fastened upon a subject, that was more than ordinary affecting, he committed them to writing. Many sheets of divine contemplation he has left behind him on some of the most important subjects. As, arguments to prove the being of God; another, concerning God's eternity; another, of the arguments of the truth of the Christian religion; another, of the present darkness we are in concerning the particulars of a future state; another, concerning the extent of divine grace; another, concerning religious joy, on 1 Thess. v. 16. *Rejoice evermore;* another, which he calls *thoughts on human life*, with divers others. Some curious and uncommon things there are in these dissertations, but all savouring of great piety and devotedness to God, and an experimental knowledge of divine things. Though he was himself thoroughly furnished for every good work, yet he was very diligent in his attendance upon public assemblies for religious worship, and often complained of it, (as one of the greatest infelicities of his profession,) that it very often unavoidably took up a good part of his sabbath time, and hindered him from the public worship of God, which would have been an intolerable grievance to him if he had not had this to comfort him, that our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us to prefer mercy before sacrifice, whenever they are rivals.

In his profession of Christianity he was a great enemy to narrow principles, and was actuated by a spirit of catholic charity and communion; and disliked nothing more in any party than their monopolizing of the church and ministers, and unchurching and unministering those who in matters of doubtful disputation differed from them, and forbidding those members to join at any time with such religious assemblies as could not be denied to have among them all the essentials of divine worship. He had a very great veneration for the pious and moderate divines of the church of England, no man more, and joined as seriously and reverently in the Liturgy as any man, when he was occasionally present at it, but in the choice of his stated communion he was determined (though to his prejudice in secular interest) by these two rules:

1. That we should choose to attend ordinarily upon those administrations, (as far as the divine providence puts them within our reach,) which we find to be most for our edification in knowledge and faith, in comfort and holiness, and most likely to answer the end of ordinances. He particularly pleaded for himself, that he that had so little time to spare for his soul from the business of his profession, had reason to improve that little to the best advantage. What is most edifying and advantageous every man is best able to judge for himself.

2. That it is most comfortable to join with those who take all occasions to express their love and respect for those Christians that differ in their apprehensions from them, and uncomfortable to hear those upon all occasions condemned in the lump, and put under the blackest characters, some of whom we have reason to believe fear God and work righteousness, and therefore doubtless are accepted of him.

These I know to be the principles he went upon, and in his practice according to them he was

steady, uniform, and constant; and I think he was not to be called a dissenter from the church of England, but a dissenter from all parties, or a consenter to catholic Christianity. He gave this reason among others why he would have his children baptized publicly, because he would publicly own a ministry which was condemned by many as null and invalid.

He was a great promoter and encourager of works of charity and mercy, was very ready to every good work of that kind, often mentioning the rule of judgment at the great day, Matt. xxv. 36. as giving the surest rule of practice now. His generous present which he made towards the building of the new chapel at Trinity College in Oxford was one instance of his forwardness to any good work, as it was of his gratitude to the nursery of learning in which he had his education.

Two things more I shall observe as very exemplary concerning his piety in its causes and principles.

1. His good thoughts of God. He delighted to speak, and much more to think, of the infinite mercy of God; that he is a being that doth not delight in punishing his creatures, but in doing them good; and would therefore by no means admit those opinions which exclude from salvation all Gentiles and unbaptized infants. The plain and undoubted truth of God's eternal goodness to all his creatures, that have not forfeited their interest in it, must be relied upon, and nothing which divine revelation has left us in the dark about set up in contradiction to it.

In reference to the manifestly deplorable state of a great part of mankind, he pleased himself with the thought, that this earth is but a small part of the universe, and that it is probable there are many worlds of holy and blessed beings which we know nothing of; and he was very inclinable to believe, that though in this earth they who find the way to life are comparatively few, yet taking the whole creation together, the everlasting monuments of God's mercy and love will be many more than those of his wrath and justice.

He took great pleasure in speaking of his own experience of the goodness of God to him, often mentioning with comfort that Scripture, Jer. iii. 4. *My Father, thou art the guide of my youth;* and observed with pleasure, to the glory of God, and the encouragement of his friends, how the hand of divine Providence had wisely managed his affairs to his comfort, beyond any design or foresight of his own.

2. His low thoughts of this world, which he often spoke of with great contempt, as vanity and vexation of spirit, and unworthy the affections of an immortal soul. So far was he from indulging the body, that there was nothing he complained of more, than that he found it such an entanglement and encumbrance to the soul. So little love he had to this life, that he often said he did not think it worth while to live, unless it were to do good; and as to worldly wealth, what more is it (said he) than food and raiment, and having that one may be content.

Taking example from his father-in-law, Mr. Henry, (of whom he was a very great admirer, witness the ingenious Latin epitaph he made upon him,) he interlined in his almanack each year a remark upon his birth-day, in Latin well worthy the transcribing, as speaking his thankfulness to God for the mercies of his life, his further dependence upon God's providence, and his desires and hopes of everlasting life.

On March 15th, 1696-7, he thus writes, "Ebenezer. I have been a sojourner and pilgrim in the earth these three-and-thirty years. I am obliged to say my days have been few. I cannot say they have been evil, for but few of the sorrows of mortality in events more afflictive, or health less constant, have happened to me. Divine Providence has afforded me a constant supply of life, and of all the happy conveniences of it, and with a tender care to aid me from the invading fury of those evils to which I have sometimes apprehended myself exposed."

"The issues of futurity set out by God in vast eternity shall never be viewed by mortal eye.

"March 15th, 1697-8. The fifteenth of March, 1663-4, was the day of my own birth; the fifteenth of March, 1683-4, was the day of my father's funeral: on one and the same day at the distance of twenty years, my own mother, his consort, delivered me into his tender arms, and our common mother, the earth, received him into the enclosure of the grave. So that the same time was a spring of day to him, and of grief to me. God had set the one over against the other, to prevent a luxurious mirth on the one hand, and disanimating sorrow on the other; but I am still within the lines of affliction, and that there is more occasion to lament myself, who am yet waiting for the goal, than him, who is safely arrived at it, is a thing indisputable. We are born to anguish, we die to triumph; and oh! thou happy soul, who, having piously and honourably discharged the duties and fatigues of mortality, art with endless pleasure and triumph at once got up to everlasting bliss, it remains that I follow thee. Heaven grant I may arrive at thee."

"March 15th, 1698-9. Infancy commences at birth, and continues to the 5th year of life. Puerility begins there and goes on to the 18th year. The time between that and 25 affords us the style of young men. The space between that and the 35th year is our most flourishing time. Afterwards till we arrive at 49 we are said to be middle-aged. That being once passed we are justly declared old. I have therefore this very year and day entered on the last stage but one of mortality. It is most equal that now at last I abandon the vanities not only of childhood, but of youth too, and compose myself to designs that are manly. If human age must not be

reckoned beyond the 70th year, I have run over half my course. What dangers have I escaped! What blessings have I enjoyed by the mercy of my most kind God! Wherefore I entirely depend on him. I entirely commit myself to him who will certainly afford me seasonable relief in this weary pilgrimage, and bestow on me a blessed immortality in the native country of my then happy soul."

All that remains now, is to give some account of the period of his life, having seen the end of his conversation. From what he was and did it was easy to prognosticate to what an eminency he was likely to arrive, and how great a blessing his older years would prove to his age and generation; but this prospect was attended with melancholy prognostication that he would not be long-lived. His constitution was very tender and nice, his digestion bad, his body unable to bear much fatigue, and, in short, his soul too big and too active for it, and a lamp that burnt too fast to burn long.

Some slight fevers he had at his coming to Chester, which went off without any threatening symptoms, but left him very careful in the management of himself, which he did not in the way of self-indulgence, but of self-denial. But what fence can there be against the messengers of death when they come with commission from the God of life. The fever that was mortal to him arrested him March 29th, 1699, about noon, immediately after he had written a long letter to his dear friend and kinsman, Mr. Benion of Malmsbury. He feared he had taken cold the night before in the bookseller's shop, where he was detained by the perusal of a new book, but he had had a very good night and visited his patients that morning. The first invasion the disease made was very violent, in an extreme coldness and shivering, succeeded by a burning, no less violent, which after some hours went off in a very profuse sweat. He presently took the alarm, and apprehended it not unlikely that it might prove a summons to the grave.

He said he had now lived past half the age of man, which was longer than he had expected some years ago. Thus the arrests of death are no surprise to those who all the days of their appointed time wait till their change comes. He expressed much satisfaction in the mercy and goodness of God, and fastened upon his oath, that he hath no pleasure in the death of sinners. He likewise cheerfully resigned himself to the will of God whether for life or death, "What we will (said he) we think is best, but what God will we are sure is best." He addressed himself to his dying work with great seriousness and application. "I cannot think of death (said he) without concern, but I bless God I can think of it without terror;" and frequently in his sickness he spake of dying with all the concern and satisfaction that became a wise man, and a good Christian, and one who very well knew both that it is a serious thing to die, and yet that death hath no sting in it to a child of God. Many excellent things he said in his illness which spake a great contempt of the world, an entire resignation to the divine will, and a cheerful expectation of the glory to be revealed, which cannot be recovered in his own words, but deserved to be written in letters of gold. The disease after the first onset (which was fierce) seemed to retreat for two days, and gave good hopes of a speedy recovery, though he himself spoke doubtfully of his case; but on the 4th day it rallied again, and seized his spirits with such a violent assault, that he received the sentence of death within himself, and though afterwards there were some lucid intervals, yet from thenceforward he manifestly declined apace, and set himself very solemnly and deliberately to take his leave of this world, and to make his entrance into another; and one time or other, as his distemper gave leave, he scarce left any thing untouched that was proper to be said by a dying man. He several times said, that when he reflected upon his manifold failings and defects, he had reason enough to tremble at the thoughts of going to give up his account to God, but (said he) with an air of courage and cheerfulness, "I trust to the infinite mercy of God and the all-sufficient merits and mediation of the Lord Jesus;" and here he cast anchor, as one abundantly satisfied. Sometimes he was much enlarged in blessing God for the experience he had had of his goodness to him, which he said he could never enough admire; particularly he thanked God that he had kept him from deism, or from imbibing any corrupt principles of religion when he was abroad; also that he had not lived altogether a useless life in the world, but that God had owned him in his profession, and given him success in it. "I cannot express (said he) how good God hath been to me all my days, and it is my comfort that I am going to a world where I shall be for ever praising him." He said if he had thought his time would have been so short, he would not have spent so much of it as he had done in the study of heathen authors, but he did it with a good design, that he might acquaint himself with the dictates of the light of nature, and knew how far they went, and he had found this search a very great confirmation to him of the truth of the Christian religion, which doth so highly improve and perfect natural religion, and relieves us there where that is manifestly defective, and leaves us at a loss.

He frequently expressed a great willingness to die, though he had upon many accounts reason enough to desire to live, but (said he) "every man must go in his order; let this be the order appointed for me, I am very well satisfied." He encouraged his relations and friends cheerfully to resign him up to the will of God, and desired they would do it without murmuring. He much delighted in prayer,

and joined with much affection in the prayers that were frequently made with him. During all his illness he seemed to have a very great composure of mind, and settled peace, except one night when he was in a delirium, or, as he called it afterwards, a stupor, which he could give no account of; and in that he expressed a dread of God's wrath, and some amazing fears concerning his everlasting state; but in a short time (through God's great goodness) that storm passed away, and he enjoyed a constant serenity of mind till he entered into everlasting peace. He bore the pains of his distemper with an exemplary patience and easiness of mind, making the best of every thing, and seldom complaining, but very thankful to those that attended him and ministered to him. He took a solemn farewell of those about him, spoke to his dear yoke-fellow with good words and comfortable words, kissed and blessed all his children, and to them that were become capable of receiving it gave good advice. He charged his son to be sure to study the Scriptures, and make them the guide of his ways; and, said he to him, "Whatever new opinions thou mayst meet with in philosophy, play with them as thou wilt, but never affect new notions and new opinions in religion, but stick to the good old religion of Christ and his apostles, and that will bring thee to heaven." He desired his children might read Mr. John Janeway's Life, and Mr. Baxter's Poor Man's Family Book, which latter he had read a little before he sickened; as he had sometime before read with abundant satisfaction (and abridged) his Reasons for the Christian Religion, and particularly expressed himself greatly pleased with that summary of religion which is there in a few words, *p.* 227. "Religion is nothing else, but faith turning the soul by repentance from the flesh and world, to the love and praise and obedience of God, in the joyful hope of the heavenly glory."

He called for his servants, and took leave of them with prayer and good counsel; he earnestly pressed upon them diligence in religion, and to take heed of all sin; and "see to it (said he) that you do that which you may reflect upon with comfort when you come to be in my condition." He commended the ways of religion and godliness to those about him as good ways, and such as he himself had experienced to be ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace.

It was an expression, among many, of his great humility, that to one of his affectionate farewells he gave me (Mr. Matthew Henry) he added, "and I pray God that those who survive me may profit more by your ministry than I have done, abundantly, abundantly more." He remembered his love and respects to many of his friends in the country, and (said he) "I must not forget the church of God. Though it be a time of trouble with the church in many places, yet those that are gone before, died in this belief, that God would do great things for his church in the latter days, and so do I too; Lord, do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion." He often comforted himself with the believing hopes and expectations of a better state on the other side death, and recited many Scriptures that speak of it: "Oh the glorious mansions (said he) in our Father's house, and glorious inhabitants in those mansions; pleasures for evermore." When he had some food given to him he said, "What a blessed state will that be when I shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more." When he was sometimes asked how he did, he answered, "I am going to another world, and I hope, through grace, to a better. I know (said he) whom I have trusted, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him." One present answered, "A great truth." He replied, "Yes, and a great trustee." He said, "If it were the will of God, he would desire to die in the actual contemplation of the goodness of God, and the glory to be revealed."

No advice, no help, no means that could be had, were wanting, but the weakness of his constitution came against him, and forced nature to yield to the disease; which he was himself first aware of, and spoke with much cheerfulness, and submission to the divine will. The two last days of his sickness, though he continued sensible, yet he took little notice, but lay easy, and declined gradually, and on Saturday night, April 8th, about eleven o'clock, a little before the entrance of the sabbath, he entered into his rest, and went to keep an everlasting sabbath within the veil. I never saw any who seemed to die so easily and quietly as he did; there was no conflict, no struggle, no agony in his death, but he breathed his last without the least sigh, or groan, or wrestling. There was not only no sting in his death, but no bands in his death. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

The Tuesday following he was interred in Trinity Church in Chester, attended to the grave with abundance of tears and honourable testimonies; and it might be truly said at his funeral, as it was at Jacob's, "This is a grievous mourning." In so great a congregation there has seldom been so few dry eyes.

The Rev. Mr. Newcome of Tattenhall, his dear and intimate friend, preached his funeral sermon on Phil. i. 21. *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*, and by the character of him did him honour at his death.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE ORDINATION OF MR. ATKINSON,

IN LONDON, JANUARY 7TH, 1712-13.

ISAIAH vi. 8.

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

IT is no absurdity at all, at the ordination of a gospel minister, to borrow instructions from the mission of an evangelical prophet; for the treasure is for substance the same, which is lodged in both these earthen vessels. And though there are diversities of gifts,[a] and administrations, various degrees of light, and methods of revelation, yet in all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit; the very same Spirit of the Lord, that both came upon the Old-Testament prophets, and remains with the New-Testament ministry.[b] In allusion to the Old-Testament way of revelation, gospel preaching is called prophesying, let us *prophesy according to the proportion of faith.*[c] And the prophets are called the brethren of gospel ministers. The angel says to John, *I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets.*[d] The *ordinary* influences and operations of the Spirit, and its plentiful effusion, in *gospel times*, in the prediction and promise of it, is represented by the *peculiar and extraordinary* ways of discovery of the divine will *then* in use: *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*,[e] they shall have a *clear insight* into the things of God, and be able to *speak clearly* of them to one another.

None perhaps of all the Old-Testament prophets had a more awful and solemn mission than the prophet Isaiah; who spake so plainly and fully of Christ, and the grace of the gospel. Ezekiel's mission was likewise very awful; whose errand chiefly was to prove and threaten, and display the terrors of the law: but the vision that introduced his mission was more dark and mystical.

We dispute not, whether this was Isaiah's first mission; it is likely it was not, the sermons in the foregoing chapters being placed before it. He had, if I may so say, prophesied for some time as a candidate, that he might, first, be tried, and might himself make trial of his work; in that he was owned of God, and yet he had this solemn mission afterwards. He was, before, sent of God, spake in his name, and knew he did; but his commission was then virtual and implicit, but was now more expressly recognized, when his work grew more upon his hands, and the difficulties and oppositions he met with in it increased. Now this ambassador made his *public entry*.

If we look back to the preparatives for this solemnity, (which we have an account of in the foregoing verses of this chapter,) we shall find the prophet very deeply touched with a humbling sense of his own sinfulness, and a comfortable sense of the pardon of sin, and his acceptance with God. I take notice of these for instruction to you, brother, who are this day dedicating yourself to the service of God in the gospel of his Son, that you may walk in the same Spirit.

1. He was much affected with a sight and sense of his own sinfulness and unworthiness. See how he cries out, upon a sight of God in his glory, and hearing his holiness praised: *Woe is me, for I am undone;*[f] I am *cut off*, so the word is; I deserve to be cut off from all my privileges and hopes as an Israelite; for *I am a man of unclean lips*, unfit, una-

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a 1 Cor. xii. 4, 11. b John xiv. 16. c Rom. xii. 6.

d Rev. xxii. 9. e Joel ii. 28. f Isa. vi. 5.

ble to be employed in speaking for God: I dwell, indeed, *in the midst of a people of unclean lips*, who deserve to be reproved, and need to be reformed, but how unfit am I to be made use of as an instrument herein, who am myself a man of unclean lips; and never saw so much of it, nor so much of the evil of it, as now that mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

God looks upon those as *fittest* to be honoured by him, and employed for him, who are humble and low in their own eyes. When a soul is brought to cry out, Woe is me, for I am undone, it is then in a fair way to be saved for ever. As Christ, so Christians, are first humbled, and then exalted; like a corn of wheat, die first, and then revive.

And as to particular services, "Before honour is humility." When we see ourselves utterly unworthy of the honour, and unfit for the service, we are called to, then free grace will be the more magnified in passing by our unworthiness, and making us strong out of weakness. They who abase themselves under strong convictions of their own sinfulness and vileness, into an entire subjection to God's grace and government, and a cheerful condescension to the meanest services, these are they whom the King of kings delights to honour. *They* stand fairest for preferment in the Messiah's kingdom, and are likely to be great in it, who humble themselves like little children;[g] who do it naturally, and with sincerity, not artfully, affectedly, and with design.

2. He was likewise impressed with a comfortable assurance of the pardon of his sin, and his reconciliation to God. A coal from the altar was laid upon his mouth;[h] not to burn it, but to purify it, to take away the uncleanness of his lips which he complained of, for the sin that truly humbles us, shall not ruin us; and it was said to him, *Lo, this has touched thy lips, thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.* And *blessed is the man*, thrice blessed is the minister, *whose iniquity is forgiven*,[i] and who knows it, by the witness of God's Spirit with his spirit. They who are thus sprinkled from an evil conscience, are best prepared to serve the living God,[k] and can come boldly to and from the throne of his grace.

None are so fit to display to others the riches of gospel grace, as those who have themselves received the comfort of it. They can best preach Christ crucified, who have known experimentally the power of his death, and are themselves clothed with that everlasting righteousness, which by it he brought in. And how feelingly may they preach repentance and remission of sins to others, who have themselves tasted the bitterness of discovered guilt, and the sweetness of a sealed pardon. And this is one reason why the ministry of reconciliation is committed to men like ourselves, who labour under the same burthens, and lie open to the same dangers, with the rest of mankind. The great prophet cries out, *Woe is me, I am undone*,—the great apostle cries out, *O wretched man that I am*,[l] that others, who make the same complaints with them, may be encouraged to hope for the same relief that they found; and that they may recommend to others the same foundation which they have themselves built upon, and comfort others with the same comforts wherewith they themselves were comforted of God.

The prophet being thus prepared to have so great a work and so great a trust put into his hand, we have, in the text and the following verses, the committing of that *work* and that *trust* to him; for as God sends none but those whom he has first prepared, so those whom he has by his grace prepared, he will some time or other find an opportunity to send, for God makes nothing in vain. Jeremiah, who is *formed* for a prophet, shall be *ordained* a prophet.[m]

Now observe in my text the solemn treaty and transaction between God and Isaiah upon this matter. Behold a communion between God and man; as, of old, God talked with Abraham.[n] *Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and wonder, O earth*, the Lord of life and glory converses familiarly with poor sinful dying worms of the earth, as one friend converseth with another. Isaiah hears the voice of the Lord, and understands it, returns a direct answer to it, and receives a reply; and thus a correspondence is settled between him and heaven, in order to the carrying on of the work that was before him.

This communion with God is that which all Christians must keep up by faith; both in receiving the word from God, and in lifting up their prayers to him. *When thou saidst, Seek ye my face*, I heard what thou saidst; understood the meaning of it, applied it to myself, and complied with it; my heart presently answered, *Thy face, Lord, will I seek.*[o] *Return ye backsliding children—Behold we come unto thee.*[p]

And it is that which ministers, particularly, are concerned to acquaint themselves with; for an *experimental* knowledge of the mystery of communion with God, which the greatest part of the world are such utter strangers to, is, without doubt, a very *necessary* qualification for that office and work, which was instituted on purpose for the maintaining and carrying on of that communion. How can we expect that God should speak *by* us, if we never heard him speaking *to* us; or that we should be accepted as the *mouth of others* to God, if we never spoke to him intelligibly and sincerely *for* ourselves? How can we carry on the treaty of peace between God and man, if we have not, by searching the Scriptures, come to know something of the mind of

g Matt. xviii. 4. h Matt. vi. 7. i Ps. xxxii. 1.
k Heb. ix. 14. l Rom. vii. 24.
m Jer. i. 5. n Gen. xvii. 3.
o Ps. xxvii. 8. p Jer. iii. 22.

God, nor, by searching into our own hearts, come to know something of the case of man? Moses was first well acquainted with God himself; inquired concerning his name, and heard it proclaimed; before he was employed as a mediator between God and Israel. And Samuel was first brought to know the Lord and his word, and then was established a prophet.[q]

Now, in the text we have two things concerning Isaiah's mission:

I. The counsel of God concerning it, *Whom shall I send?*

II. The consent of Isaiah to it, *Here am I, send me.* Each of these will furnish us with some useful observations, proper to the present occasion.

I. We have here *the counsel of God concerning it;* and it is good to trace all divine things to the divine counsels, the streams to the springs. God is here introduced, as it were, deliberating and advising with himself whom he should send, to show the house of Jacob their sins, and their misery and danger because of sin; as if he were considering and consulting about it, *Whom shall I send?* We have a like representation to Micaiah; when he saw the Lord sitting on his throne, surrounded with the host of heaven, and heard him saying, *Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up, and fall at Ramoth Gilead?*[r] Now this is spoken *ανθρωποπαθως—after the manner of men*, and therefore, according to our rule, we must take care to understand it *θεοπρεπως—so as becomes God*, so as not to derogate from the glory of any of his infinite perfections.

As God needs not to be counselled by others; for *who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him;*[s] so he need not consult with himself; for deliberating supposes something of hesitation, which is not to be supposed in the Eternal Mind. As God never varies from himself, so he never wavers in himself; *Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world.* When Christ asked Philip, *Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?* he said it only to prove him, for he himself knew *well* enough what he would do.[t]

But sometimes the wisdom of God, though never at a loss, is expressed by a solemn consultation, to show that what God does is the result of an eternal counsel. And some have observed that God is never represented consulting with himself, but in cases wherein man was concerned, who is the particular care of the divine providence. As, about the creation of man, *Let us make man;*[u] and after the fall, *The man is become as one of us;*[v] and when the nations were to be dispersed, *Let us go and confound their languages.*[w] God would hereby show that there is a counsel in his whole will;[x] and would teach us to ponder the path of our feet,[y] and to consider our ways,[z] and to do nothing rashly, but to make use of our own wisdom, by communing with our own hearts; and of the wisdom of others, by asking advice of them, for in multitude of counsellors there is safety.

And God's being introduced here *considering* whom he should send, intimates that the sending forth of ministers, is a work not to be done but upon very mature deliberation, and with good advice. Christ did not send out his apostles to preach, till he had kept them some time with him as his pupils; and our rule is, to lay hands suddenly on no man, lest we be partakers of other men's sins.[a]

Now we may here observe:

1. Who *it is that is here consulting;* "I heard the voice of the Lord" proposing the question: and it is God "*in his glory;*" and it is God in *Three Persons.*

(1.) It is God *in his glory*, the same that he saw in the first verse, *upon his throne, high and lifted up.* Not that he saw his essence, no man has seen that or can see it, but such a display of his glory in vision, as he was pleased at this time to manifest himself by, as to Moses and Israel at mount Sinai.

When God thus appeared in his glory and majesty, attended with a glorious retinue of holy angels and their adorations, then was he considering whom to send upon an embassy to man: and it tends very much to set off the condescension of God's grace to us, that he is so highly exalted, and yet so kindly takes cognizance and care of us. His goodness is his glory, and adds lustre to his greatness. And, among men, those are truly the greatest who are the best, and do most good; *as* it magnifies his goodness, that though he is infinitely happy in the enjoyment of himself, was so from eternity, and would have been so to eternity, if we had never been, or had been miserable, yet he has an eye to man, and a concern for him. Though he be infinitely *above* the possibility of *being* benefited by us, yet thus he *visits and regards us.*[b] Thus God's *majesty* makes his *mercy* shine the brighter; as where he says, that the same God who rides upon the heavens by his name Jah, is a Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows.[c] Though God be high, yet he has respect unto the lowly; and though it be condescension to behold the things done *in heaven*, yet his regards stoop much lower, and he dwells *with men upon the earth.*[d]

And methinks it puts a great honour upon the work of the ministry, that when God was about to send a prophet to speak to his people in his name, he would thus appear in the glories of the upper world, upon a throne high and lifted up, as one who is God over all, blessed for evermore; higher than the highest. Though ministers are, themselves, men upon a level with you, despicable and despised, the *foolish things of the world*, and the *weak;* yet he

q 1 Sam. iii. 7, 20. r 1 Kings xxii. 19, 20. s Isa. xl. 13, 14. t John vi. 5, 6. u Gen. i. 26. v Gen. iii. 22. w Gen xi. 17. x Eph. i. 11. y Prov. iv. 26. z Hag. i. 5. a 1 Tim. v. 22. b Ps. viii. 1, 4. c Ps. lxviii. 4, 5. d Ps. cxiii. 5. 6.

that *sends* them is enthroned, is greatly exalted. Though their original is mean, their character is truly great, they are the ambassadors of the King of kings.

Let this support and encourage faithful ministers under all the contempts that are put upon them, and the reproaches they are loaded with, that how much soever they are trampled upon and run down, he that sent them, and will bear them out, whose messengers they are, and whose messages they bring; who does protect them, and will reward them; is the Lord, high and lifted up. Such an honour does it put upon the gospel ministry, and such encouragement does it give to gospel ministers, that our Lord Jesus gave these gifts unto men, when he ascended on high, when he entered upon the glories of his exaltation, and rode in triumph, leading captivity captive.[e] Ambassadors have respect paid them according to the dignity, not of their private families, but of the prince who sends them.

(2.) It is God *in Three Persons;* which is plainly intimated in the plural number here used, *Who will go for* US? It is *one God* who says, Whom shall *I* send; and yet this ONE is *three persons*, the very same who said, Let US make man; and it is intimated in the *plural* termination of "*Elohim*," yet joined with words of the *singular* number; as *In the beginning* אלוהים ברא *DII creavIT*. As sometime "*Eloah*," which is *singular*, is joined with a word *plural*, *Where is God my Maker*, אלוה עושי—*God my Makers*.[f] *Remember now thy Creator*, בוראיך—*thy Creators*. Which (says Coccejus) though they are not full proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity, yet they are memorials of it, intimations of it for the present, till it should be more fully revealed in the New Testament.

The adversaries of this truth seek to avoid the force of the argument from this text, and the like, by saying, That when God says, *Let* US *make man*, and *Who will go for* US, he speaks *more regio—in the style of kings.* "*We* will and command;" *so the Socinians;* but it was not so used in the Hebrew language. That it is God consulting with his *house of judgment;* so the Jews; but they know not, nor can tell us, what they mean by it;—with the angels; so says Grotius. But do prophets go on the service of angels? or are they sent on their errands? No, these are mere evasions. It is the SAME that says, *Whom shall I send?* in the singular number; and, *Who will go for us?* in the plural number.

And to throw more light upon, and add greater weight to, this, it is observable, that the *words* which follow in the two next verses, *which* the LORD said, *Go make the heart of this people fat*,[g] are, in the New Testament, applied both to the SON, and to the HOLY GHOST. They are applied to the SON, where Esaias, *when* he said these things, is said to have seen HIS *glory*, the glory of CHRIST, (for of him the evangelist is there writing,) and to have spoken *of* HIM;[h] and, to the BLESSED SPIRIT, where it is said, *Well spake the* HOLY GHOST, *by Esaias the prophet, unto our fathers; saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand.*[i]

The three persons in the blessed Trinity gloriously concur, as in the creating of man, so in the redeeming and governing of man, and particularly in sending messengers to the children of men, to bring them revelations of the will of God. Ministers are ordained, in the same name into which Christians are baptized, *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;*[k] nor could they baptize in *that* name, if they were not commissioned by the authority, and devoted to the glory, of *that* name. The *three* that *bear record on earth; the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood*,[l] that is, the Scriptures, and the two sacraments, are derived from the *three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit.* And the *last named* of the three that bear record in heaven, is the same with the *first named* of the three that bear record on earth; as the *nexus* or bond of union between them. And the Spirit speaking to the churches:[m] by ministers, as expositors of the Scripture, and stewards of the mysteries of God, they may therefore be justly looked upon as sent by, and going for, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

2. *What the consultation is, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?* Some think *this* refers to the particular message of wrath against Israel, which we have in the next verses: Who will be willing to go upon such a melancholy errand? Who can be prevailed with to carry a message which they cannot but carry, as the prophet Ezekiel did, in the bitterness of their souls;[n] and as St. Paul, with great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart?[o]

But I rather take it, more largely, for all the messages which he was intrusted to deliver in God's name to that people; the *secondary* EFFECT of which was, the making of their "heart fat, and their ear heavy," but it was by no means the *primary* INTENTION. The proper tendency of the word, was to be a savour of life unto life; but, if it prove a savour of death unto death,[p] that is their fault who make an ill use of it.

"*Whom* shall I send?" Some one must be sent, this perishing self-destroying people must have fair warning given them; but it was hard to find a proper messenger. Not that God was in doubt whom to send; when he has work to do, he will not want instruments to do it by, for he can either find men fit, or make them so; but it intimates, that the business was such as required a well accomplished mes-

e Eph. iv. 8. f Job xxxv. 10. g Job ix. 15.
h John xii. 40, 41. i Acts xxviii. 25, 26. k Matt. xxviii. 19.
l 1 John v. 7, 8. m Rev. ii. 7. n Ezek iii. 14.
o Rom. ix. 2. p 2 Cor. ii. 16.

senger, beyond those whom he had hitherto employed: he must exalt to this honour one *chosen* out of the people,[q] and qualified with uncommon abilities. "*Who* is a chosen man," a choice man, "that I may appoint over her, and who is that shepherd that will stand before me?"[r]

God now appeared attended with holy angels, bright and blessed seraphims, who had each of them six wings, and could make more haste, and deliver a message better, than any of the sons of men could; and yet he asks, *Whom shall I send?* for he would send by a man like themselves. When Ahab's *false* prophets were to deceive him to his destruction, it was done by a lying spirit who went forth from before the Lord.[s] But when gospel grace was to be prophesied of by a *true* prophet, no created spirit is employed, but God's own Spirit comes upon the prophets.

Now hence we may gather three observations:

(1.) It is the unspeakable favour of God to us, that he is pleased to communicate his mind to us, and to make it known by men like ourselves. Divine revelation is a signal token of the divine good will, and ought so to be accounted. Man, by reaching at forbidden knowledge, forfeited all that which would be saving and serviceable. And how well did he deserve to be deprived of all the *light* of divine revelation, who had hid his *light* of human reason under a bushel, and had almost buried it in darkness; and by his ignorance had wilfully *alienated himself from the life of God.*[t] Justly might God have said, that he would never *speak any more* to such a rebel; and then his case had been as desperate as that of fallen angels; and he must have wandered endlessly, had not God been his guide.

But in pity to poor man, and in order to his recovery and redemption, beams of divine light are afresh darted from heaven; the great Shepherd sends after this stray sheep to fetch it home; *He hath showed thee, O man, what is good;*[v] *unto man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;*[w] *unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men.*[x] Notice is given us of the displeasure of God against us, that we may avoid it; of the kindness and good will of God to us, that we may improve it; and of the duty God requires of us, that we may perform it. He has not hid from our eyes the things that belong to our peace and welfare, but has at sundry times, and in divers manners, given us to understand them, and put us in mind of them.

These notices he sends to us by those of the same nature with us. The people of Israel were so frightened at the terrors of Sinai, that they desired thenceforward God would speak to them by Moses; *Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die.*[y] Herein they spoke the sense of all mankind, and God agreed to it; and though, since then, angels have been often sent upon particular errands, yet the ordinary instructions of the church have been by *men formed out of the clay*, whose *terror shall not make us afraid*, nor *their hand be heavy upon us;* and they are, *according to our wish, in God's stead.*[z] And this is very agreeable to a state of probation; in which, it were not a fair trial if, by the appearance of angels, those things were made sensible, which are now the objects of faith. The Scriptures were not written by angels, but by holy men of God, and the dispensing of the gospel is committed to faithful men.

How ungrateful are those to God, who, instead of giving him thanks for the favour of divine revelation, ridicule it, and asperse it; and, under pretence of free-thinking, shake off all the sacred obligations of it, and thereby forfeit and renounce all the advantages of it. It is the greatest indignity that can be done to God, and the greatest injury to mankind. God has, in tenderness to us, sent us his mind by *men like ourselves*, and they abuse this favour, by making *themselves* equal with those who spake by divine authority. But if they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.[a]

(2.) It is a rare thing to find one that is fit to go for God, to carry his messages to the children of men. God here asks, *Whom shall I send?* Where is the person who may be intrusted with such an errand; *Who is sufficient for these things?*[b] A skilful, faithful interpreter of the mind of God, who shall show unto man his uprightness, is one of a thousand.[c] He must be an able man indeed, who is fit to be a minister of the New Testament.[d]

Such a complication of gifts and graces, as are requisite to the right discharge of this great trust, is very seldom found. Such a degree of insight into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, as is necessary to make a man skilful; and such a degree of courage for God, and concern for souls, as is necessary to make a man faithful; is hardly to be met with. Many are willing enough to go, who yet are not fit to be sent; as there are some fit to be sent, who are not willing to go. Solomon speaks of the inconvenience of sending messages by the hand of fools; they who do so, he says, *cut off the feet and drink damage.* And though men have talents, it is little better if they have not application; for *as vinegar to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to him that sends him.*[e] Of what ill consequence is it then, to have God's messages sent by the hand of fools or sluggards; so that considering how much folly and sloth prevail, we may well ask, as those at a loss, Who shall be sent, and who will go on God's errands?

q Ps. lxxxix. 19. r Jer. xlix. 19. Jer. l. 44. s 1 Kings xxii. 20, 23. t Eph. iv. 18. v Mic. vi. 8. w Job xxviii. 28. x Prov. viii. 4.

y Exod. xx. 39. z Job xxxiii. 6. 7. a Luke xvi. 31. b 2 Cor. ii. 16, c Job xxxiii. 23. d 2 Cor. iii. 6. e Prov. x. 26.

(3.) None are allowed to go for God, but those who are sent by him. He will own none but such as he himself appoints. As the ordinances must be only such as are of his institution, so the ministers of the ordinances must be of his designation, else they cannot expect that his presence should be with them, or that his power should accompany their administrations. It is fit the master should nominate his own servants; he *knows whom he hath chosen.* When Christ would send forth apostles, he *called unto him whom he would.*[f]

We are not now to expect *immediate* calls, such as the prophets and apostles had; called *not of men or by men.* Ministers have no extraordinary commissions to produce, nor any miraculous ratifications; they undertake not to foretell things to come, by the accomplishment of which to prove their mission; those were requisite to set the wheels in motion, both in the Old Testament and in the New, but they cease when the thing is settled. Nor do we think that the mission of a minister depends upon the uncertain thread of a lineal succession from the apostles, which we cannot believe to be either requisite on the one hand, or sufficient on the other. But there is some resemblance between God's calling of ministers now, and his calling of prophets of old. Prophets *were* called when they were qualified for the office, when the word of the Lord came to them; and there were schools of the prophets, in which young men were trained up in preparatory exercises; so, *now*, those whom God has by his Spirit qualified for the work of the ministry, have ONE considerable step toward a divine call: to which was, *then*, added a strong inclination to this work, purely for its own sake; Jeremiah says, that God's word was as a burning fire shut up in his bones;[g] and that is, *still*, the OTHER step toward a divine call,—a sincere desire to glorify God, and serve the interests of Christ's kingdom, and promote the salvation of precious souls, without regard to any secular advantage whatsoever. They in whom such qualifications for the work and such dispositions to it meet, may be accounted sent of God. And on these two the church of England seems to lay the stress of a *due call* to the ministry, in the question put to all who offer themselves to be ordained, whether they think themselves moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them the office of the ministry? For it is certain, none are moved to it by the Holy Ghost, who are not in some measure fit for it, or who desire it for the sake of secular advantages. But those who are thus "called of God," ought to have their qualifications examined by proper judges; and, then, by the word and prayer, (in which they will have to be employed, whose office it is to give themselves to the word and prayer,) they must be solemnly recommended to God, and to the word of his grace; and their dedication of themselves to God, and the service of his church, must be recognized. They who by office *ministered unto the Lord, as prophets* and *teachers*, were *ordered*, by fasting, and prayer, and the *imposition of hands*, to separate Barnabas and Saul to the work *whereunto God had called them.*[h]

This is entering in by the door; as all who will approve themselves good shepherds must. *How shall men preach except they be* thus *sent?*[i] God complained of those who ran, and he did not send them;[k] and he tells them (which is threatening enough) that therefore they should not profit the people at all: those who go without *sending*, will come back without *speeding*. God will own his own work, and his own appointments, but not men's usurpations. Both the external and internal call are necessary; and neither must be set up exclusive of the other. There must be an *internal* call, for God will be served with the spirit in the gospel of his Son; and there must be likewise an *external* call, for God is the God of order, and will have his own work done in his own way. And those in whom both these meet, may, with St. Paul, thank Christ Jesus for putting them into the ministry, and may expect that he will own them, and stand by them.

II. We have here the consent of Isaiah to this mission. When he heard God ask, *Whom shall I send?* he readily answered, *Here am I, send me.* How well does it become all who love God, and have a zeal for his honour, to step in to the service of his kingdom and interest, when there is most occasion, and when the necessity of its affairs calls most for it; to be ready to go on God's errand, when none else will, and there is a failure of messengers, "Do you as you will, *I will serve the Lord.*" It is an honour (though it cannot but be a grief) to be singular, in appearing for God; and to appear active for him, when multitudes decline his service as mean and perilous; to make offers to work for him, when others seek, by excuses and evasions, to shift it off.

O what backwardness is there in many to a good work, when it has any thing of difficulty or disgrace attending it; or to any service for God, when other employments are more gainful and creditable in the world. Jonah is called to go to Nineveh, but he has no liking to the errand, and therefore flees to Tarshish. The tribes of Israel are summoned to appear in defence of the public liberty and property, against Jabin king of Canaan, to come in to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty; and, while *Gilead abides beyond* Jordan, and Dan cautiously *remains in ships*,[l] for the princes of Issachar, that intelligent [m] as well as industrious tribe, bravely to

f Mark iii. 13. g Jer. xx. 9. h Acts xiii. 1—3. i Rom. x. 15.

k Jer. xxiii. 21. l Judges v. 17. m 1 Chron. xii. 3.

appear with Deborah, even Issachar and Barak; for Zebulun and Naphtali to *jeopard their lives to the death in the high places of the field*,[n] in the common cause, this is thankworthy. He is the truly Christian hero, who dares lay his hand to a despised plough, and a deserted one, who has courage to submit to a yoke, which so many, like the nobles of Tekoa, are ashamed and afraid to put their necks under.[o] Those who thus boldly appear for the keeping up of religion's interest, are worthy of double honour. This was it that gained Levi the honour of being God's tribe, the holy tribe, that when Moses made proclamation in the gate of the camp, *Who is on the Lord's side, to avenge the quarrel of his covenant* upon the makers of the golden calf,[p] that tribe distinguished themselves, and came in to Moses. Thus did Isaiah here; when every one was shy of the office, he was eager to receive it.

The errand on which Isaiah was to go, was a very melancholy errand, *Go make the heart of this people fat;* and yet he offered himself to the service. When we are called to act or speak for God, we must not say, We would go, if we were sure we should have good success, and our message would be acceptable; but we must *go*, and leave the success to God. Lord, make what use thou pleasest of me, I will not murmur or dispute. Though in the *event* our ministry should prove contrary to what it is in the *intention*,—to harden people instead of softening them, and to aggravate their condemnation instead of preventing it, which is a very uncomfortable, discouraging consideration, yet we must go on in it, knowing that in the issue God will be glorified.

Isaiah had been himself in a very melancholy frame in the 5th verse, *Woe is me, for I am undone*, much indisposed and burthened; yet now he has courage enough to offer himself to the work, which then he could not think of without terror; for he had been assured that his sins were pardoned, his iniquity taken away, and then his fears are silenced, the clouds are blown over, and all is well. Many have come to be eminently serviceable to God and his church in their day, that at first were low-spirited, and laboured under great discouragements. When God by his Spirit speaks to the heart good words and comfortable words, those who like Daniel were fallen with their faces to the ground, are wonderfully lifted up and encouraged, and are ready to say, as he did, *Now let my Lord speak, for thou hast strengthened me.*[q]

Isaiah's saying, *Here am I, send me*, speaks three things, for direction, to those who are setting out in the work of the ministry. His readiness; his resolution; and his referring himself to God.

1. His *readiness*. He does not make objections, as Moses did, *O my Lord, I am not eloquent*, or, *Send by the hand of him whom thou wilt send*,[r] any body but me; but, Behold me; I present myself to thee, to be employed as thou pleasest: *Here I am, send me*. He was a volunteer in the service; not pressed into it, but willing in this day of power:[s] in this as in other things God loves a cheerful giver,[t] a cheerful offerer. *My heart* (says Deborah) *is towards the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly.*[u] It is recommended to the elders to feed the flock of God, not of constraint, but willingly, and of a ready mind.[v] In all acts of obedience to the calls of God, and assistance to the work of God, we must be free and forward, as those who know that we serve a good Master, whose work—not only his for us, but ours for him—is honourable and glorious; it is its own wages. Let us be brought under the yoke of Christ, by the constraining power of his love to us, drawing out our hearts in love to him again; and *that* is the acceptable sacrifice, that which is bound to the horns of the altar, with these cords of a man, these bonds of love.

How ready is God to hear and answer our calls; he says, *Behold me, behold me*,[w] even to those who were not *called by his name*. Much more ready is he to say, *Here I am*,[x] to those that *call upon him*. And should not we then be ready to answer his calls, though the service we are called to be never so difficult and hazardous? Desire not to be excused, when God has work for you to do, nor let any thing keep you back from that honour.

2. His *resolution*. He gives not only a free consent, but he is firm and fixed in it; does not hesitate or waver, but is ready both to swear to it, and to perform it; and he will not be beaten off it, no more than the people of Israel, when they said, *Nay, but we will serve the Lord;*[y] or Ruth, when she said, *Entreat me not to leave thee, or to turn from following after thee.*

Here am I, not only ready to go, but resolved, in the strength of divine grace, to encounter the greatest difficulties, and to abide by the service to the end. Send me, and I will adhere to it whatever it cost me, and will never draw back. Thus Christians, thus ministers, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, should war the good warfare with courage and constancy; *Who is this that engageth his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?*[z] What an acceptable servant is this, that binds his soul with a bond to the work of God, and is willing to have his ear bored to God's door-posts, to serve him for ever. And good reason have we, *thus*, to serve Christ, for with *such a steady and unshaken resolution* did he undertake to save us; when it was asked, Who will be man's redeemer? *who will take the book, and open the seals?*[a] and there was found none who would venture upon it; then said Christ, *Lo I come;* and finding it written of him

n Judg. v. 15, 18. o Neh. iii. 5. p Exod. xxxii. 26. q Dan. x. 19. r Exod. iv. 10, 13. s Ps. cx. 3. t 2 Cor. ix. 7.

u Judg. v. 9. v 1 Pet. v. 2. w Isa. lxv. 1. x Isa. lviii. 9. y Josh. xxiv. 21. z Jer. xxx. 21. a Rev. v. 5.

in the volume of the book, he determines, he delights to do the will of God;[b] and shall not fail or be discouraged.[c]

We find this prophet, long after, reflecting with abundant satisfaction upon that steadiness of resolution with which he entered upon his prophetical office; and in it he was both a type of Christ, and a pattern to Christians. *The Lord God*, says he, *hath given me the tongue of the learned*, which he did by touching his lips with a coal from the altar; *he hath opened mine ear*, he has promised to *help me*, and *he is near that justifieth me*, and therefore *I have set my face like a flint, I know that I shall not be ashamed.*[d] Those who thus set out with resolution, may depend upon God to bear them out.

3. His *referring himself to God.* His expressing himself thus generally, *Here am I, send me*, intimates this; Lord, employ me as thou thinkest fit; cut out what work thou pleasest for me. I will never PRESCRIBE, but ever SUBSCRIBE. Here am I, ready to go to whom, and on what errand, thou wilt, whatever objections may be made against it. Lord, I am at thy service, entirely at thy disposal. Let the will of God be done *by* me, and done *concerning* me.

Thus we should address ourselves to the work of the Lord; with an entire resignation of ourselves to his wisdom and sovereignty. The heart must be *tabula rasa—white paper to his pen*, soft wax to his seal: let him write upon me what he pleases, and make what impressions *he* pleases upon me. We must enter upon the service of God, with Joshua's question, *What saith my Lord unto his servant?*[e] And with St. Paul's, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* And with the implicit faith and obedience of the child Samuel, *Speak, Lord, for thy servant hears.* I desire nothing more but the honour of receiving thy commands, and a heart to comply with them.

The mind thus entirely referred to God, is most easy and quiet to itself, as waiting to know his mind; in dependence upon his promise, that the meek he will guide in judgment, and teach his way. If we impartially search the Scriptures, we may thence learn, what, in *general*, God will have us to say and do for him; and if we keep our eye upon his providence, we may by that be assisted in the application of the general rules of the word, for in it God guides us with his eye; and thus by committing our way and works to the Lord, with, *Here am I, send me*, we may find a leading star in all our counsels, and firm footing for all our resolves; thus we stand in an even place.[f] And certainly, we are most *our own possessors*, when we are least *our own masters*; and have the greatest enjoyment of ourselves, when we are most cheerfully and unreservedly devoted to God, with, *Here am I, send me.*

[b] Ps. xl. 7, 8. [c] Isa. xlii. 4. [d] Isa. l. 4, 5, 7, 8. [e] Josh. v. 14.

APPLICATION.

Of the many observable, useful hints we have given you from these words, I shall only resume two, upon which to ground a word of exhortation; which I trust may be profitable to all of us who are ministers, and particularly to you, brother, who are now devoting yourself to the service of our great Master in this high and holy calling, for the advancing of the common interests of his kingdom among men, and the common salvation of precious souls. We are here taught, 1. Whom we are sent by. It is God who says, *Whom shall I send?* and to him the prophet addresses himself, *Send me.* And, 2. Whom we go for; we go for God; *Who will go for* US?

1. Going forth into the ministry, we must look up to God to be sent by him. It is the work of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, to send ministers, the ambassadors of reconciliation; and therefore to him our eye must be: "Lord, send me. When thou art sending abroad thy messengers, let me be one; for unless thou send me, I cannot go." At our first setting out in the service of God, and when we go forth upon any particular errand, this must be our prayer, *Lord, send me.*

We who have been many years engaged in this work, are concerned to inquire, what manner of entering in we had,[g] and whether we looked up to God at our setting out; whether we had our eye up unto him, and a single eye; whether our desire was toward him, and our dependence upon him? Whether we took our ministry from *his* hand, and devoted it to *his* praise? I hope we did; and we have had the comfort of it many a time, with reference to the infirmities we have laboured under, and the many difficulties we have struggled with. I am weak, I am forgetful, and meet with much discouragement from without, and from within, but, *O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant.* Let us still look up to him, and derive fresh encouragements from day to day, from his promise to be with his ministers always to the end of their day, and to the end of the world.[h] If God sent us, he will stand by us, will own us, will carry us on, and bear us out, and will never leave us. Our Master often speaks of God, as of him that sent him, and for that reason doubted not but that he was with him; so that when all his disciples fled and left him alone, yet he was not alone. And as the Father sent him, so he sends his ministers, who, therefore, ought to have an eye to his hand, as he had to his Father's, which upheld him.

And you, brother, who are now to be listed under the banner of Christ, may from hence take direction; it is by prayer that you are to be set apart, not only

[f] Ps. xxvi. 12. [g] 1 Thess. i. 9. [h] Matt. xxviii. 20.

by ours for you, but by yours for yourself. That you may, therefore, take God along with you, and have him with you in this great undertaking, lift up your heart to God in this short but comprehensive petition, *Lord, send me; Lord Jesus, send me;* for it is the Son of man that holds the *stars* in his right hand.[i]

Lord, *send me*, that is,

(1.) Lord, give me a *commission*. The gospel we are to preach is not our own, or of our own framing, but it is the gospel of God, *the glorious gospel of the blessed God*,[k] it is the contrivance of his wisdom, it is the proposal of his grace; and, therefore, from him we must receive our warrant to publish the covenant, to apply the seals to it, and take in subscriptions. All who are duly qualified for the work, and inclined to it, and enter regularly upon it, and obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful in the discharge of it, may look upon themselves as sent of God; and the honour of being of that number, is what you should be ambitious of.

Lord, send me, is, Lord, let me know that thou sendest me, and that I am a minister not *of man, or by man*, but *by Jesus Christ, and God the Father*.[l] Let me know it by Christ's powerful, gracious *breathing on me*, and saying, *Receive the Holy Ghost*. Lord, let me have my credentials under the broad seal of heaven, and know myself authorized to be an ambassador, or resident, to carry on the treaty of peace and reconciliation between God and man; let me know it by the working of the Spirit upon my heart, as an enlightening, quickening, sanctifying Spirit, and that shall be the witness of the Spirit with my heart, that I have not taken this honour to myself, nor am an intruder, but am called of God to it.

We may not now ask for sensible signs, as Gideon did, who once and again proved God with the fleece; but we may and must ask to have more abundant satisfaction concerning our call, by the bestowing of spiritual gifts upon us, and the enriching of us with divine graces, and with strength in our soul. That the *ministry* is a divine institution, appears from the Spirit in the word; that *such a minister is of divine designation*, appears by the Spirit in the heart, which yet, sometimes, is such a new name, as *no man knows, saving he that receives it*.[m]

(2.) Lord, give me the necessary *qualifications* for this service. *Send me*, that is, fit me for this work, and enable me to do it as it should be done. God never sends any, but such as he gives to be in some measure well apprized of the errand they go upon; his ambassadors never have credentials without instructions. When the apostles were sent forth to *preach*, they were told *what to preach*, and were filled with the knowledge of the gospel mysteries. When therefore we beg of God to send us, we beg of him full instructions what to say and do in pursuance of our commission, that we may give a good account of our stewardship, when we must be no longer stewards.

Lord, send me, is, Lord, give me a mouth, and wisdom; a door of utterance, that I may speak the word boldly; a spirit of wisdom, that I may know the things which are freely given us of God. Teach me what I shall say. Put that word into my mouth, which shall reach the consciences of those who hear me. The Hebrew phrase for consecration is, *filling the hand;* which intimates, not only the greatness of the work of the ministry, for they who are called to it have their hands full, but its dependence upon divine aids and supplies. We have nothing to give out to God's people, but what he gives in to us; nothing wherewith to fill their hearts, unless he fill our hands; as, in Ezekiel's vision, the man clothed with linen had his hands filled with coals of fire from between the cherubim.[n]

God gives ministers their *commission* by his Son, who, when he ascended on high, conferred those gifts upon men; but he gives them their *instructions* by his Spirit,[o] who is given to make up the want of Christ's bodily presence, and to carry on his undertaking; and of whom Christ has said, *He shall take of mine, and show it unto you*.[p] We must therefore pray for the Spirit; all Christians must, and are encouraged to do so by that promise: *He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him*.[q] Ministers have special need of the Spirit, as a spirit of revelation, that they may know the things of God; and, as a spirit of truth, to rectify their mistakes, and to lead them into all truth.

And ministers' work being to speak not only *from* God *to* his people, but *to* God *for* his people, they have as much need of the Spirit to assist them in prayer as in preaching, and to be in them a spirit of supplication as a spirit of illumination. And for this, also, God will be *inquired of;* to him we must go with this request, Lord, teach me what I shall say, both in the word and in prayer, for I cannot, in either of them, order my speech by reason of darkness.[r] Lord, give me the heart of the upright, and the tongue of the learned, and thus, *Lord, send me*. Ministers are stars that shine by a borrowed light: to the fountain of light they must therefore apply themselves; and he having said to us, *From him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away*, will not turn away from us, if we come to borrow of him; especially when it is to borrow a stock wherewith to trade, in his service, for his glory.

It is a very proper sign which some churches use in the investing of ministers in their office, to

i Rev. ii. 1. k 1 Tim. i. 11. l Gal. i. 1.
m Rev. ii. 17. n Ezek. x. 2, 7.
o John xiv. 26. p John xvi. 14.
q Luke xi. 10. r Job xxxvii. 19.

put the New Testament, or Bible, into their hands; not only to signify, that they have authority to preach the word of God, but that they must fetch all their furniture for their work from the Scriptures; those they must consult, those they must study. That is the rule they must go by, the model they must build by; there is the pattern showed them in the mount; that is the card and compass they must steer by. *Lord, send me*, is, Lord, put the Bible into my heart, Lord, make me ready and mighty in the Scriptures, that thence I may be thoroughly furnished for every good word and work.

(3.) Lord, give me *opportunity*. This door also God has the key of, as well as the door of the heart, and of the lips; and our eye must be to him for the opening of it, and the making of it a wide door, and an effectual one, though there be ever so many adversaries.[s] *Lord, send me*, is, Lord, having hired me into thy service, find me but something to do for thee; having sent me into thy vineyard, cut out work for me there, that I may not stand all the day idle, because no man has hired me.[t] Place me in what sphere thou pleasest, higher or lower, larger or narrower, only let me be some way serviceable to thy glory, and not thrown by as a despised broken vessel.

And in *this*, we must refer ourselves to God: Lord, send me whither thou pleasest, order me into what circumstances thou thinkest fit; make any use of me, so that thou wilt but make some use of me; let me have a place in the body, though it should not be a place of honour. Send me, with Jonah, to Nineveh; with St. Paul to Macedonia, to *help there;* to the highways and hedges, to pick up guests for the marriage, and I will cheerfully go. You must set out in the ministry, with an entire resignation of yourself to God: "He shall *choose my inheritance*, my employment, for me." Send me whither thou wilt, send me to a pulpit; send me to a prison, (and it is good to think of that, and to provide accordingly; we are not better than our fathers, nor know we what trying times may yet be before us,) I am ready to go, as St. Paul, bound in the spirit to Jerusalem: send me on what errand thou wilt, though ever so unpleasing to myself, ever so displeasing to others. Servants must go whither they are ordered, and do as they are bidden, and say what is put into their mouths, without murmuring or disputing, and so must we, as those who have no will of our own, but what is swallowed up in the will of our master, in all which we desire to stand complete.

And it is a great satisfaction to a minister in all his settlements and removals, to see God going before him, and leading him in a plain path; as it is his duty to pray for direction, and his wisdom to follow providence, and not to force it, to do the work of the present day and place, and leave to God what is to come: *Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord.* And if we see him setting before us an open door, we may comfort ourselves in this, that no man shall shut it.

(4.) Lord, give me *success*. *Send me*, and the message by me, as the rain and snow from heaven, which returneth not thither, but accomplisheth that for which it was sent.[u] Send me; and let the Spirit go along with me to make the word effectual, that it may not be as water spilt upon the ground; that I may not labour in vain, or spend my strength for nought. Those whom God sends, he sends armed with such weapons as are mighty through him, to the pulling down of Satan's strong holds.[v] O let me be furnished with those weapons! that I may see of the travail of my soul to my satisfaction.

Lord, send me to their hearts, let the word be quick and powerful for that purpose; send it between the joints of the harness; send it between the joints and the marrow;[w] send it, and let a divine power go along with it; send the report, and with it let the arm of the Lord be revealed;[x] that many may be brought to believe it, for it is the *power of God to salvation to every one that believes.*[y] O that it might now appear so, as it appeared when the *word of the Lord*, at first, *grew and prevailed* so *mightily*. How can we expect that our labours should be successful, and that we should profit the people we preach to, if we do not sincerely design it, and earnestly desire it.

But we must go forth in the strength of the Lord God,[z] or we shall go to no purpose. If we think to succeed in the strength of our own parts or resolution, by our own wisdom or importunity, we do but deceive ourselves; for St. Paul himself owns he can do nothing of himself, but *all things through Christ* strengthening him;[a] this divine strength we must pray for and depend upon, and by faith must fetch it in, whenever we have any work to do for God. And this is our comfort, that God's strength is often perfected, and most praised, in our weakness, for it is ordained *out of the mouth of babes and sucklings*.

Pray thus, pray daily thus, and you shall not seek in vain. If, when God calls to you to appear and act for him, you cheerfully say, *Here am I*, you may be sure, when you call to him to appear with you, and act by you, he also will say, *Here am I*. If you say, *Lord, send me*, he will say, *Go, and I will be with thee*. If you say, as Peter, *Lord, bid me come to thee upon the water;*[b] he will say, *Come*, and will keep you from sinking.

2. Going on in the ministry, we must remember WHOM we go for. *Who will go for us;* as agent for God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? Not that God has need of us, or of our services; he has angels at command ready to go on his errands, and to

s 1 Cor. xvi. 9. t Mark xx. 6, 7. u Isa. lv. 10, 11. v 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. w Heb. iv. 12.

x Isa. liii. 1. y Rom. i. 16. z Ps. lxxi. 16. a Phil. iv. 13. b Matt xiv. 28, 29.

fly swiftly; but he is pleased to employ us, to bid us go for him. We go for God the Father, to bring the souls which he has made to him, as their chief good, and highest end; for God the Son, to bring the souls to him he has redeemed, as their Prophet, Priest, and King; for God the Holy Ghost, to bring the souls he has the charge of under his conduct, and his sanctifying power and influence.

Let us see how improvable this consideration is.

(1.) If we go for God, then we have no reason to be *ashamed* of our office, but to *magnify* it. Work for God cannot but be great work, and put honour upon them who are called to it. The preachers of a gospel, which, *to all that believe, is the power of God unto salvation*,[c] how much reason soever they have to think meanly of themselves, as unworthy of the honour, yet have a great deal of reason to think highly of their work. St. Paul, who went for God to the Gentile world, though for that he was reproached by the Jews, yet magnified his office.[d] The messengers of the churches are the glory of Christ,[e] how scornfully soever they are looked upon by the children of men. If we be not a shame to our office, it is well; we have no reason to be ashamed of it.

Ministers are not common messengers; they are ambassadors for Christ,[f] for the King of kings, and that is a high post of honour; in which though we pretend not, as ambassadors, to the title of *Excellency*, yet we ought to approve ourselves of an excellent spirit, and labour to excel in gifts and graces. And let not any think themselves too good to be thus employed, as if the lowest of the people were as fit to be messengers for Christ, as Jeroboam thought them to be priests to the calves; no, it is no disparagement, to the greatest, to go for God. King Solomon valued himself upon his being a preacher.

(2.) If we go for God, then we must *faithfully deliver his* MIND, *in his name;* and when we do so, we may speak as having authority. If we go on his errand, THAT, the whole of THAT, and THAT only we must deliver. Ezekiel must speak *God's words* to the people, and speak them *as his;* whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.[g] We must deliver that which we have *received of the Lord*, and our doctrine must be *not ours*, but *his that sent us*.

Let this therefore imbolden us in our work, and give us a holy, humble assurance. *We* pretend to no dominion over you, we are your fellow-servants; but *he* who sends us, and whose mouth we are to you, claims dominion over you, and commands your obedience. He is the God who gave you your being; and therefore has authority to give you law, and will not suffer his authority to be slighted, or his crown profaned.

If we obtrude that message in God's name which is not his, and say, *Thus saith the Lord*,[h] when it is a false dream, fancy, or forgery of our own, we cannot speak with any confidence; (what is the chaff to the wheat?) but as long as we keep close to our instructions, we may rely upon our commission; and as far as what we say agrees with the law and the testimony, it demands acceptance, *not as the word of man*, a poor, frail, dying man like yourselves, but *as the word of God*,[i] for so indeed it is; the word of a living God; a living word that abides for ever.

(3.) If we go for God, then far be it from us, that we should seek ourselves and our own things. One of the first lessons Christ will have his disciples to learn, is to deny themselves, that they make him all in all. Self will be apt insensibly to steal into the study to us, and into the pulpit with us, and as far as it is indulged, the ends of our office are perverted, and our work spoiled, and stript of its dignity and power. We are ministers of Christ; and therefore must not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord,—and [declare] ourselves your servants for *his* sake:[k] that the Lord alone may be exalted in our ministry, that he may be *all in all*.

We must not seek our own praise and applause, but must humble and abase ourselves; must not aim at the making and maintaining of any secular interest for ourselves,—that is prostituting what is honourable, and profaning what is sacred. It is a sad complaint which Paul makes even of the ministers of his time, that all sought their own, not the things that were Jesus Christ's;[l] I wish we have not all of us too much reason to charge the same upon ourselves; I am sure, we have all of us need to watch and pray against this sin. Ministers, of all people, must not live to themselves, nor please themselves, nor aim to enrich themselves; for thereby they contradict, and so depreciate, their office, which is intended to bring souls from self to God. None of us, if he lives like himself, lives to *himself*, but to the *Lord*.[m] Let self therefore be abased, and annihilated, that to us to live may be Christ,[n] nothing but Christ. We are friends of the bridegroom, and are unworthy the honour, if we speak one word for him, and ten for ourselves, when we ought to be entirely devoted to him.

(4.) If we go for God, then to him we must give account of our negociation; if you send your servant on an errand, you expect when he comes back, he should tell you how he has done his errand, and how he sped. The Lord of those servants that are sent for him, will come and reckon with them, what they have done, and what they have gained by trading with the talents committed to them. Angels give account of their messages; they run and return, descend and ascend; and ministers are hastening towards their day of account.

c Rom. i. 16. d Rom. xi. 13. e 2 Cor. viii. 23.
f 2 Cor. v. 20. g Ezek. ii. 7. h Jer. xxiii. 31, 32.
i 1 Thess ii. 13. k 2 Cor. iv. 5. l Phil. ii. 21.
m Rom. xiv. 6, 7. n Phil. i. 21.

We must give an account of ourselves to God; it will be inquired into, whether we have faithfully delivered our message, whether we have declared the whole counsel of God, and whether we have not pulled down with one hand what we built up with the other. It concerns us therefore to do our work as those who know it will be reviewed.

We must give an account likewise of those to whom we have been sent; and a heavy account it will be if they perished through our ignorance, carelessness, or treachery. If the watchman warn not the sinner of his danger, the sinner shall die in his iniquity, but his blood shall be required at the watchman's hands. How pathetically did Augustus Cæsar upbraid the general, who, by his ill conduct, had lost him a brave army, *Quintili Vare redde legiones—Quintilius Varus, restore my legions.* Much more terribly will they be reckoned with, who by their treachery have been the ruin of precious souls. But how *comfortable* will the account be, of those who are the seals of our ministry, whom we have been instrumental to bring to Christ; as it was to this prophet, concerning some, of whom he said, *Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me;*[o] though the generality believed not his report.

If we are sent for God, we must consider, as the prophet did, what answer we shall return to him who sent us;[p] as the servant who was sent to invite to the wedding feast, when he met with repulses and slights, came and showed his Lord all these things.[q] O that this thought might quicken us to the utmost care and diligence in our work, and that we might be found watching for souls, to win them over to Christ, as those who must give account, and who know not how soon.

(5.) If we go for God, then he will certainly bear us out, and stand by us, in all we do according to our commission. If we go for God, he will go with us; as he promised to go with Moses, when he sent him to Pharaoh. Those who are God's servants he will uphold; he will strengthen, according to their day;[r] he will plead their cause, and not suffer them to be wronged. Kings shall be made to know, that it is at their peril, if they do his prophets any harm.[s] Princes take injuries done to their ambassadors as done to themselves, and will resent and revenge them accordingly; and so does our Lord Jesus. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me.* Mocking God's messengers and misusing them, was once and again Jerusalem's measure-filling sin.

Ambassadors have their charges borne. God has provided, that as those who served at the altar might live, and live comfortably, upon the altar; so those who as his messengers preach the gospel, should be suitably maintained, that they may live of the gospel.[t] Yet sometimes the case is such, that ministers lose by their ministry: (the disciples left all to follow Christ, and preach the gospel:) but in that case, confide it to him to indemnify them; one way or other it shall be made up to them.

(6.) If we go for God, and approve ourselves true to the trust lodged in our hands, he will abundantly recompense all our services and sufferings. We shall not only be saved harmless, and have our losses made up, but we shall have God himself to be our bountiful rewarder, and our exceeding great reward. St. Peter encourages ministers, the under-shepherds, to feed the flock of God, and to do it willingly, with this, that when *the chief Shepherd shall appear*, they shall *appear with him in glory.*

The labours of a few days shall be rewarded with everlasting pleasures and riches; God will be sure to pay his messengers well; nor will he keep back the hire of the labourers, who have reaped down his corn-fields;[u] nor shall it *abide with him all night, until the morning*[v] of the resurrection; but when the sun of their life goes down, and the day of their service is ended, the labourers are immediately called to receive their penny; even those who came in at the eleventh hour, who died young, and so did but an hour's work, as well as those whose labours were long, and who bore the burthen and heat of the day.[w] St. Paul doubts not, but that when he departs he shall immediately be with Christ;[x] and in the assurance of it pleases himself with the thought, That he was now ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand; and thenceforth was laid up for him an abundant recompence.[y]

Encourage yourselves, brethren, and one another, with this word: you *go for God.* You aim at his glory, and make his work your business; you lay out yourselves in sincerity to advance his name, and honour, and interest, and his kingdom among men. And do you so indeed? *Though* Israel *be not gathered yet shall you be glorious,*[z] and *a sweet savour to God not only in them that are saved, but in them that perish.*[a] And therefore be of good courage, and lift up the hands that hang down; a particular account is kept of all your travels, toils, and tears in Christ's work, and they shall all be abundantly recompensed. *In due season you shall reap, if you faint not; be not weary* then *in well-doing.*[b] Hold out faith and patience yet a little while, and your warfare will soon be accomplished; only be faithful unto death, and the crown of life is as sure to you as if it were already upon your heads.

o Isa. viii. 18. p 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. q Luke xiv. 21.
r 1 Cor. x. 13. s Ps. cv. 15. t 1 Cor. ix. 14.
u Jam. v. 4. v Lev. xix. 13.
w Matt. xx. 8, 9. x Phil. i. 23. y 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.
z Isa. xlix. 5. a 2 Cor. ii. 15.
b Gal. vi. 9. c Rev. ii. 10.

THE

EXHORTATION,

AT

MR. SAMUEL CLARK'S ORDINATION, AT ST. ALBANS.

(SOMEWHAT ENLARGED.)

THAT which yet remains, before we part, is to address an exhortation, give me leave to call it a charge in Christ's name, to you, my dear brother, who have now dedicated yourself, and have been very solemnly dedicated, to the service of Christ in the work of the ministry; which I trust has left such a truly indelible character and impression upon you, that you will remember this day by a good token as long as you live; as the day in which your heart was more than ever fixed for God, as the Master you love, and resolve by his grace to live and die with; and your *ear bored to his door-post, to serve him for ever;* never to go out free *from* his service, but to go on more and more free *in* it.

Think you hear Christ saying to you, as he did to his disciples, when he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again: *Know ye not what I have done to you?*[a] I say, what Christ has done to you, for it is he who puts you into the ministry,[b] not we. Do you know, do you consider, what an honour he has put upon your head, what a trust he has lodged in your hand, and what a bond he has laid upon your soul? And will you not next consider, what he expects and requires from you, in consideration of this which he has done to you?

I hope you have such a sense of the excellency of the work to which Christ has called you, and its direct tendency to advance the honour of your Creator and Redeemer, and the true welfare of your fellow-creatures and fellow-Christians, that if we should now say to you, as Elijah said to Elisha, when he had cast his mantle over him, *Go, return, for what have I done to thee?*[c] you would reply as Ruth to Naomi, *Entreat me not to leave thee*, or to *turn from following after thee;*[d] for from the plough, to which I have this day laid my hand, I trust I shall never so much as look back.[e] *The Lord keep it always in the imagination of the thought of your heart, and establish your way before him!*[f] You have, as Jephthah, opened your mouth unto the Lord; and you cannot go back.[g] Go forward then, in God's name; go on and prosper, and the Lord be with you.

You have this day received a commission from the Lord Jesus, according to the true intent, and full extent, of the institution of the gospel ministry, to be an officer in his *army*, to train up his soldiers to, and lead them on, in all the services of the Christian warfare; to be an officer in his *kingdom*, to see that his laws be observed, his ordinances kept, and the peace and order of his kingdom preserved, for the honour of the prince, and the protection and welfare of all his loving subjects.

The apostles, prophets, and evangelists, were extraordinary ambassadors, employed to set the treaty on foot between God and fallen man: to them first was committed the *ministry of reconciliation.*[h] Pastors and teachers are, as residents or consuls, to carry on the treaty of peace, and to maintain all the branches of that commerce and communication between heaven and earth, which is founded upon it; their business is to negociate affairs between Christ and his church; they are *taken from among men*, and *ordained for men in things pertaining to God*,[i] as the priests under the law were; that Christ may have the rents, honours, and services, which he

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a John xiii. 12. b 1 Tim. i. 12. c Kings xix. 20.
d Ruth i. 17. e Luke ix. 62. f 1 Chron. xxix. 11.
g Judg. xi. 35. h 2 Cor. v. 20. i Heb. v. 1.

was to receive from his church, and the church may have the favours and benefits which it is to receive from Christ.

Now, as the officers in a kingdom or corporation are commonly sworn to execute the office they are put into according to law; so you are this day sworn, as it were, to do the work of a gospel minister, according to Christ's institution.

It is therefore requisite that you rightly understand what the business of your office is, and what is the work that you are called to; that you may both prepare and apply yourself accordingly. I doubt not but you know it, and have considered it, yet I hope you will now give me leave to put you in mind of it, and myself too. This charge is given you, *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust*;[x] it is a great trust that is committed to you, and which you must shortly give an account of, and therefore it concerns you to be *faithful, by mercy obtained from the Lord*. You have accepted the trust, acquaint yourself with it, and be faithful to it, that you may in the great day give a good account of it.

I. There is a *trust committed to you, in common with all Christians*, and that is, your own precious soul. This charge therefore we are to give you, in the first place, which St. Paul gives to Timothy, *Take heed to thyself*, that thou mayst *save thyself*;[y] and to the elders of Ephesus. *Take heed therefore to yourselves*.[z] Those are very unfit to take care of other people's souls who are careless of their own; and to guide others in the way to heaven, who appear not at all solicitous to find the way thither themselves, or seem as if they had found some other way than that of strict and serious godliness, which the Scripture directs all to, and to which they direct others to; who, in another sense, must join with the spouse in her confession, *They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept*.[a]

Look well to the state of your own soul, and the terms on which it stands with God, and there make sure work about your calling and election; make it more and more sure to yourself, more and more evident, that you may be able to speak by experience, and then you will speak best, of regeneration, and the new birth; of union with Christ, and of reconciliation to God, and communion with God through him; may be able to say in some measure, with the apostle, *That which I have seen and heard, looked upon*, tasted, *and handled of the word of life, that declare I unto you, that you may have fellowship with us*.[b]

Look well to the frame of your own spirit; that you not only approve yourself a Christian indeed, but that you always maintain a Christian temper, and evidence it. You have made it appear to us at this time, that your judgment is rightly informed concerning the things of God; now, make it appear that there is a divine *heat* accompanying the divine *light*; for wherever the Sun of righteousness arises upon any soul, he brings both along with him; and our Lord Jesus, in those two remarkable operations of his upon the minds of his disciples, after his resurrection, his opening their understandings to understand the Scriptures, and his making their hearts to burn within them,[c] gave a specimen of what he would do for and in all his faithful ministers.

As we should labour to understand that ourselves which we would lead others into the understanding of, so we should ourselves be affected with that wherewith we desire to affect others; for the expressions of seriousness and earnestness are but affectation, further than as they flow from true affection. Let what we say come *from* the heart, and then it will be likely to reach *to* the heart. But whatever influence it has upon others, let us take care that it have a good influence upon ourselves, that we be leavened by it, and delivered into the mould of it; that one poor soul, at least, may be the better for every sermon we preach, that is *our own*.

I have often, with a great deal of pleasure, thought it a mighty advantage, which we who are ministers have above others for the keeping up of our acquaintance with heaven, and the carrying on of the interests of the spiritual and divine life in the soul, that the business of our profession is such as obliges us to be much in converse with the Scriptures, and the things of God, to *meditate on those things*, and *give ourselves wholly to them*.[d] And besides our stated devotions, in secret and in our families, which we have more time for than those have whose business lies in the world, we have occasion to be frequent in prayer with the sick, and the afflicted, and the families of our friends; and in good discourse with them: which if it be, as it ought to be, a *pleasure* to us, and we be in it as in our element, it will be something more, it will be a *profit* to us; and unless we be very much wanting to ourselves, will contribute abundantly to the prosperity of our own souls.

Yet this is not all: look well to the tenor of your conversation, that it be even and regular, and such as becomes your character; that by its evangelical tendency you may be preaching daily to those with whom you converse. It is not enough that it be blameless and harmless, and without rebuke, but your light must shine in every thing that is virtuous and praise-worthy. It is not enough for us who are ministers to say, none have learned *any ill* by us; but what *good* have they learned? It is part of the charge to Timothy, *Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*.[e] It is not enough that we do not pull down

x 1 Tim. vi. 20.
y Acts xx. 28.
z 1 Tim. iv. 16.
a Cant. i. 6.
b 1 John i. 1, 3.
c Luke xxiv. 45, 32.
d 1 Tim. iv. 15.
e 1 Tim. iv. 12.

with one hand what we build up with the other; but we must build up with *both* hands, both with our doctrine and with our example; then, and then only, are we burning and shining lights. The account we have of our Master is, Of what he began both to *do* and to *teach*;[s] which is an intimation to us, that our teaching and doing should be of a piece.

II. There is a *trust* committed to you *as a minister*, which you must be true to. Every servant in the house has his work assigned him; but the steward is not only employed but intrusted; there is more referred to his prudence and care than to the other servants: now the ministers of Christ are stewards of the mysteries of God,[t] and it is required in stewards that they be faithful; they are *rulers in the household*, under the Master, *to give them their portion of meat in due season*;[u] and in order to the due discharge of their trust, have need to be wise as well as faithful. Now when a steward enters into his office, it is usual to give him a particular account of the things put into his hand, and the trusts committed to him; the keys of such and such a storehouse are lodged with him, and he is to be accountable for what is in it, and what is given out of it. Perhaps Christ alluded to this, when he gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven,[v]—and, in him, to all faithful ministers who are intrusted to dispense the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that kingdom, according to the direction of their Lord, and for his honour.

When the Levites had *their hands filled*—as the Hebrew phrase is, for consecration—that is, had the charge of the sanctuary committed to them, and the parts and utensils of the tabernacles put under their custody, each of the three families had their part committed to them, and knew what they were to take care of, and account for: the Kohathites had the charge of the ark, the table, the altars, and the vessels of the sanctuary; the Gershonites of the tent, the curtains, and hangings, &c. the Merarites of the boards, bars, pillars, &c.[w] Thus care was taken, that each should know his charge; and it is said, that *the instruments of the charge of their burthen were reckoned to them by name*;[x] that they might be engaged to the utmost circumspection in the discharge of their trust.

Give me leave, brother, in like manner to be particular in giving you an account of the holy things put into your hands, that good thing which *is committed to you; to keep*, not by any skill or strength of your own, but *by the Holy Ghost that dwelleth in us*;[y] and I hope you will not think we take too much upon us, if we *charge you, in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and of Christ Jesus, who, before Pontius Pilate, witnessed a good confession, that you keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*;[z] and in the discharge of this stewardship, remember that our Master expects we should approve ourselves both faithful and wise servants, as those who, through grace, have both skill and will for our work.

1. You must, faithfully and wisely, explain and apply the oracles of God. You have declared, that you receive the Holy Scriptures as of divine authority, and the standing rule of your faith and practice, and as such we commit them to you, to be your treasury and touch-stone, the fountain whence you must derive your knowledge, and the foundation on which you must build your faith; for by them is the *man of God perfect*, accomplished as a man of God, and thoroughly *furnished for every good word and work*.[a]

The book of the law was committed to the custody of the priests;[b] and it is a very proper and significant usage in some churches, to put the Bible into the hand of ministers when they ordain them. That is one of the great things we commit to you. Keep the Bible as a sacred deposit of inestimable value, which being a light shining in a dark place, it is not strange if the powers of darkness level all their force against it, to corrupt it, to slacken the obligation, or lessen the reputation of it, to take it away from us, or, which would come all to one, to take us off from it to follow some false light. It is therefore given in charge to all Christians, but to ministers in an *especial* manner, To *hold fast that form of sound words* which we have in the Scriptures, in *faith and love*, and to hold to it. Let us be true to this trust, as faithful keepers both of the words and things contained in the Scriptures; as the Masorites, among the Jews, were of the *letter* of the Old Testament, who could tell how often each letter of the alphabet was to be found in their Hebrew Bible; and let us not come under the black character of those, who in the primitive church were called *traditores—traitors*, or *betrayers*; because, to avoid suffering, they gave up their Bibles to their persecutors.

In all your preaching, keep close to the Scripture; and fetch both matter and words thence. *To the law and to the testimony*.[c] It is Scripture philosophy, and Scripture oratory, that ministers must be masters of, and serve Christ and his church with: if they speak not according to that rule, it is because there is not that light in them that should be. You have a gospel to preach, not a gospel to make; and then only are faithful to your commission, when you strictly pursue your instructions, and deliver *all that*, and *that only, which you have received of the Lord*, in its native purity and simplicity, as one who dares not add thereto, or diminish from it, nor make any alteration.

Study the true and genuine sense of Scripture,

s Acts i. 1. t 1 Cor. i. 2. u Luke xii. 42.
v Matt. xvi. 19. w Numb. iii. 25, 31, 36. x Numb. iv. 32.
y 2 Tim. i. 24. z 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14. a 2 Tim. iii. 17.
b Deut. xvii. 18. c Isa. viii. 20.

by consulting the originals, and comparing spiritual things with spiritual; and rest not in Scripture words and phrases, without understanding the true import and intention of them, and doing what you can that those you speak to may rightly understand it too: for what will it avail us, *hærere in cortice—to worship in the outer court?* Paul, when he was a Pharisee, had his Bible at his fingers' ends, and yet owns he was *without* the law,[d] because he was a *stranger to the true intent and meaning* of it; and what does it profit *then?* Nay, if we do not take pains thoroughly and truly to understand the Scripture, we shall be in danger of handling it deceitfully, and wresting it to our own and others' destruction.[e] In plain texts, keep to the plain sense; in difficult ones, be modest and humble in your searches, and *keep to the proportion of faith,*[f] expounding them by those that are more plain.

Accustom yourself to a Scripture language; and labour to be ready, as well as mighty, in the Scriptures, that you may speak of divine things in the words which the Holy Ghost teaches;[g] for in those words they are brought with the most power, both to convince and to comfort. Do what you can, therefore, to make them familiar both to yourselves and to your hearers. Whence can we better fetch both strength and ornament to what we say, than from the Scripture?

In order to all this, I earnestly wish that the reading and expounding of the Scriptures were universally practised in all our congregations, as, blessed be God, it is in many. It has been, and would be, of great use to increase Scripture knowledge both in ministers and people; and some plain and obvious observations gathered out of a chapter in the exposition of it, might do as much to enlighten the mind, and direct the conscience, as a long studied train of arguments in a sermon. *Dulcius ex ipso fonte bibuntur aquæ—Water drank from the spring-head is sweet indeed.*

2. You must, faithfully and wisely, administer the ordinances of Christ, according as your opportunity is. Divine institutions are to be kept pure and entire, not kept *from* the church, but kept *for* it, and you are intrusted with the custody of them, and the dispensing of them, so as to serve the great ends for which they were appointed; both those which are common to all revealed religion, as the word, prayer, and the sabbath day, and those which are peculiar to the Christian economy, as baptism and the Lord's supper.

The preaching of the word is a divine institution, not only for the bringing in of those who are without the church, as if none needed to be preached to but heathens and Turks, but for the bringing up of those who are born within the church, as they come up to years of understanding, and the building up of those who are grown to maturity, who, as long as they are on this side heaven, need the constant preaching of the word, for the increasing of their knowledge, the refreshing of their memories, the assisting of their meditations and devotions, and the directing of their affections and conversations; besides the necessity there is of it, for the conviction and conversion of sinners, even in Christian nations: *I charge you, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom, preach the word, the* pure word of God; be constant, *be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.*[h] Prepare for this part of your work; it is the wisdom of the preacher, still to teach the people knowledge; let him give good heed, and seek out, and set in order, many proverbs; let him study to find out acceptable, profitable words.[i] Manage it as an ordinance of Christ, instituted for the advancing of his honour and interest, and therefore preach not yourself, but Christ Jesus the Lord,[k] as one who has determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified,[l] and desires to acquaint others with him. "Preach Christ, brother," said an aged minister, to one who asked his advice; "whatever you do, preach Christ."

Prayer is another divine institution, and you are to give yourself to that, as well as to the ministry of the word;[m] and this part of your work is as necessary to be done, and to be done well, as that. You must be the people's mouth to God, to declare all their concerns to him, as well as God's mouth to them, to declare all his counsel to them. And for this also you must prepare, by meditation and secret prayer, and acquainting yourself more and more with the Scriptures and your own heart, and the several cases both of saints and sinners. Know and observe the great intentions of this ordinance, not to prescribe to the providence of God, but to plead and put in suit his promises, to give him the honour due to his name; and to fetch in that grace, strength, and comfort, which he has encouraged us to ask and hope for in the name of Christ: keep this in your view in every prayer.

The Lord's day is a divine institution; the religious observation of one day in seven to the honour of God, is as ancient as the world; the fixing of it to the first day of the week, in honour of Christ rising from the dead, is as ancient as the Christian church; and the thing itself is necessary to the keeping up of religion in the world; and, therefore, study to keep up the honour of the Christian sabbath, that you may keep up the power of it; call it a *delight, the holy of the Lord, and honourable,* and teach others to call it so too.

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d Rom. vii. 9. e 2 Pet. iii. 16. f Rom. xii. 6.
g 1 Cor. ii. 13. h 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.
i Eccl. xii. 9, 10. k 2 Cor. iv. 5.
l 1 Cor. ii. 2. m Acts vi. 4.

The two sacraments, of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, you are likewise intrusted with the administration of; and must therefore study the nature of them, and furnish yourself well with that which is pertinent and proper to be said in the administration of them, both in the word, and prayer, by which they are sanctified; and get your heart affected with the great things contained in those ordinances, that you may administer them not only so as to instruct, but so as to affect others also. And in your administrations have an eye to the institution; that is your warrant on which you must depend for your authority, and, therefore, that must be your rule to which you must adhere for your direction. *See thou do all according to the pattern showed thee in the mount.*

3. You must faithfully and wisely maintain and defend the great truths of the gospel. From the beginning, the gospel was preached with much contention,[l] and our Lord Jesus himself endured the contradiction of sinners; and the like must be still expected, till we come to that world where there is no pricking brier nor grieving thorn. The ministers of Christ are not only labourers in his vineyard, but advocates for him at the bar, to plead his cause; soldiers for him in the field, to fight his battles; and you must furnish yourself accordingly.

There are matters in variance among good Christians and good protestants, like those of old about meats and days, in which we must study mutual forbearance, humbly and honestly walking according to the light God has given us, and charitably believing that others do so too. But there is opposition given to the gospel we are the ministers of, by atheists and deists, Socinians and papists; against whom we must contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints;[m] and to whom we must not give place by subjection, no not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel may continue with us. In controversies of this nature, you must know how to handle your arms, and to stand to them, those weapons of our warfare, which, though not carnal, yet are mighty through God to the pulling down of Satan's strong holds;[n] must be able to give a reason of the hope that is in you,[o] and to convince gainsayers in meekness, and yet with all faithfulness, instructing those who oppose themselves.[p]

Ordinarily, it may be best, in your preaching, to handle the truths of the gospel as if they were never controverted; setting them before people in their true light and evidence, and rather obviating and anticipating objections than raising them; but still you must be furnished with answers, whenever there is occasion for them, to those who contradict. Know what to say, and be ready to say it, to those who question the being of God, and the dominion of his providence; who oppose the Scripture and divine revelation, who set up any other light and power in competition with it; to those who deny the Trinity, the Godhead of Christ and his satisfaction; and to those who advance the pope's supremacy and infallibility, who worship images, and give that honour to creatures which is due to God and Christ only: here you must put on resolution and holy zeal, and set your face as a flint. And never betray these great truths of Christ by a cowardly silence; but in things wherein the Lord your God is jealous, be you so too. Buy the truth, and sell it not. As you need not distrust your cause, so you need not distrust him whose cause it is; his advocates shall never want instructions, but if you humbly and honestly depend upon his assistance, and aim at his glory, it shall be *given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.*

There are some controverted things, in which we must be careful not to run into extremes; we must hold fast both the truth as it is in Jesus,[q] the truth which gives all the honour to Christ, and exalts free grace, and yet we must hold fast the truth which is after godliness,[r] the truth which strengthens our obligations to holiness in heart and life. The gospel does not make void the law, but perfects it. Duty must be done, and must be preached; but still Christ must be *all in all*, both for strength and righteousness. What *seeming* differences there may be between one Scripture and another, your business must be to accommodate them, not to aggravate them, for we are sure there are no *real* differences; and when we meet with difficulties that we cannot solve, let us abide by that which is plain and without controversy, and wait till God shall reveal even this unto us.

4. You must, faithfully and wisely, preside in religious assemblies; for as a minister, you are appointed to be one of the stewards of Christ's courts, and one of the masters of those assemblies.[s] The holy convocation is a divine appointment. Though every particular family and person, apart, might get the knowledge of God's will from his word, and praise him, and pray to him, yet he has ordained that Christians should associate at stated times for his worship, under the conduct of a gospel ministry: the Jews had their synagogues, which it was our Saviour's custom to attend in, with his neighbours, every sabbath day, to set us an example. Religious assemblies are appointed, for the glory of God and Christ, for the keeping up of the countenance of religion in the world, for the joint profession of our most holy faith and hope, and a joint concurrence in prayers and praises, and for the testifying and promoting of holy love, to be pledges of the communion of saints, and earnests of heaven.

God promises to Joshua, that if he will keep his

l 1 Thess. ii. 2. m Jude 3. n 2 Cor. x. 4. o 1 Pet. iii. 15.

p 2 Tim ii. 25. q Eph. iv. 21. r Tit. i. 1. s Eccl. xii. 11.

charge, he shall keep his *courts*:[t] these courts you are to keep, for *him*; in his name, and not your own; for his honour, and not for your own; and so as to answer the great designs of their institution. God's tabernacles are amiable, study to make them more and more so; his service reasonable, evidence that it is so. The assemblies of his people are both his praise and his pleasure; let us therefore preside in them, so that he may be both praised and pleased. When the sons of God come together, to present themselves before the Lord,[u] remember it is your business, as their mouth, to present them to him; both as learners at his feet, and supplicants at his footstool. And have this in your eye.

Let every thing in our religious assemblies be done decently, and in order, as becomes the solemnity of them; and nothing that is vain or light, that sullies the beauty of the service, interrupts the thread of it, or tends to distract and draw away the mind from it, be said, or done, or suffered in our assemblies; but let every part of the service be managed with that seriousness, and reverence, and due decorum, which becomes those that worship God in the Spirit, and know and consider who he is with whom we have to do, and what it is we have to do with him. So that if an unbeliever, or one prejudiced, should come in, he might see and say, that God is with us of a truth.[w] This charge therefore we commit to you, that you maintain the honour of religious assemblies; for that will redound much to the honour of Christ, who has promised to be there where two or three are gathered together in his name.

5. You must, faithfully and wisely, witness against sin, and carry on the holy war against it, for the suppressing of it, the breaking of its power, and the checking of its prevalency; for the Lord has sworn, that he will have war with that Amalek, that enemy to his church and people, that rebel against his crown and dignity, from generation to generation.[x] Every baptized Christian is an enlisted soldier, but every minister a commissioned officer, to fight under Christ's banner against sin, the world, and the devil. Your business, therefore, is to strive against sin; to strive against it, in yourself, in others, in those especially who are under your charge.

Bear your testimony against all instances of vice and immorality, all appearances of sin, and approaches toward it. That which is confessedly evil, and a violation of the law of God, faithfully reprove, and warn against it; that those who have sinned may be brought to repentance, and others may hear and fear. Here you must be *zealously* affected, as the angel of the church of Ephesus, that could *not bear them which were evil, and hated*, though not the persons yet *the deeds of the* Nicolaitans, *which Christ also hated*;[y] here the zeal of God's house should even eat us up, and make us so far to forget ourselves, as not to fear the face of man.[z]

The charge given to God's prophets, was to cause Jerusalem to know her abominations,[a] to show the house of Jacob their sins; and herein to cry aloud, and not to spare;[b] not spare those, not spare themselves. A minister is a reprover in the gate, a reprover by office, and, therefore, ought to speak as having authority, and to be bold for God; O that we were all more so! And had we but more boldness in the cause of Christ now, it would be a comfortable earnest to us of boldness in the day of Christ shortly. Some sinners must be rebuked sharply,[c] and saved with fear, plucking them out of the very fire.[d] And this consideration should awaken us to a holy zeal herein, that we have no other way of delivering our souls, but by warning the wicked man of his sin and danger. If we do not reprove our neighbour, we suffer sin upon him, and are in danger of bearing sin for him.[e]

In the difference that arose between Christ's disciples who followed him, and one who cast out devils in his name, but did not follow with them, Christ laid down this rule of CHARITY, *He that is not against me is with me*;[f] but in the controversy between Christ and Beelzebub, between holiness and wickedness, he laid down this rule of ZEAL, *He that is not with me is against me*.[g]

6. You must faithfully and wisely separate between the precious and the vile. It was required of the priests, that they should put a difference between holy and unholy, between unclean and clean,[h] and this was the condition of a prophet's acceptance with God, *If thou take out the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth*.[i] Not that we must pretend thoroughly to part between the tares and the wheat, the sheep and the goats, in this world; that will never be done, till the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory; yet Christ has lodged with his ministers a power, according to the word, to *bind* and *loose*.

In your preaching you must distinguish, as the gospel does, that you may speak terror and comfort to those to whom they respectively belong, and may neither strengthen the hands of the wicked; nor make the hearts of the righteous sad, whom God would not have to be made sad.[k] The business of the steward, is to give to every one their portion of meat in due season; to every one that which is appointed for them, and is fit for them; and you must do so, by dividing the word of truth aright.[l] *Suum cuique—to every man his portion:* acquaint yourself with, and then accommodate yourself to, the state of the souls of those you preach to, that they may readily say, *This is for me, it suits my case.*

t Zech. iii. 7. u Job i. 6. w 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.
x Exod. xvii. 16. y Rev. ii. 2, 6. z John ii. 19.
a Ezek. xvi. 2. b Isa. lviii. 1.
c Tit. i. 13. d Jude 23. e Lev. xix. 17.
f Mark ix. 40. g Matt. xii. 30. h Lev. x. 10.
i Jer. xv. 19. k Ezek xiii. 22. l 2 Tim. ii. 15.

In administering special ordinances, you must go by rule, and not lay them in common. Those who are ignorant or scandalous, and openly profane and vicious, ought not to be admitted to eat of the holy things now under the gospel, any more than they who were ceremonially unclean under the law. *Procul hinc, procul inde, profani—Far hence, far away, ye profane!* We cannot know men's hearts, but must be guided by a judgment of discretion, to do that which will be most for the honour of Christ and his institutions, and for the welfare of the souls of men.

7. You must faithfully and wisely comfort afflicted consciences. The great Shepherd gives the under-shepherds a particular charge to strengthen those of the flock who are diseased, to heal that which is sick, to bind up that which is broken, and to bring again that which is driven away;[m] from him therefore take this part of your charge. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak ye comfortably to Zion.*[n] Among those who have spiritual senses *exercised*, there cannot but be some who are wounded in spirit; learn how to deal with such, how to pour oil into their wounds, and to bind them up. Those have indeed the tongue of the learned, who know how to speak a word in season to them who are weak.[o]

Learn how to deal tenderly with them, and with a spirit of meekness; putting your soul into their soul's stead; that you may heal their bruises, and yet not heal them slightly; may not add to their trouble, and yet may not show them the wrong way to peace. Their case is often difficult, and to be studied, but very pitiable, and not to be slighted.

Direct those who are of a sorrowful spirit, to fetch all their comfort from Jesus Christ, and to build their hope on him; show them the way to that city of refuge; and teach them not to look for that in themselves which is to be had in Christ only, that is, a perfect righteousness; not for that on earth which is to be had in heaven only, that is, a perfect holiness; not for that in the world, which is to be had in God only, that is, a perfect happiness.

If their souls refuse to be comforted, and they hearken not to you for anguish of spirit, yet do not give up their cause, but continue to speak comfort to them, and to pray for them; if indeed they be righteous, light and joy are sown for them,[p] and will come up again in due time; and we must wait for it, as the husbandman does for the harvest, with long patience. Remember it is a part of your charge, to be a helper of the joy of the Lord's people, and to be an instrument in the hand of the Spirit as a comforter.

8. You must faithfully and wisely intercede for the church of God, and pray for all the parts of it, and for the advancement of all its interests. God has set the watchmen upon Jerusalem's walls for this purpose, that they may cry day and night to him, and give him no rest until he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.[q] Receive this charge therefore among the rest, to pray constantly and earnestly for the peace of Jerusalem; yea, and for the welfare of all men, and the fruits of divine compassion to the *whole* world that lies in wickedness: for *so* extensive must your intercessions be, not only for all saints, but, in the first place, for all men.[r]

Public persons must be of a public spirit; which Christ intimated when he taught his disciples to pray, *Our* FATHER, as taking along with them all that can call God FATHER, even those to whom he is so only by creation. You are especially to bear Zion's concerns much upon your heart; as Aaron did the names of all Israel in his breastplate, when he went in to minister; hereby you must testify your love to the *whole family that is named from Christ*, and must keep up the communion of saints, and do your endeavour to enlarge the hearts of those among whom you minister, to a catholic concern *for all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours.*[s] As in our family worship we should pray for all Christian families, so in our public worship, for all Christian assemblies, which you, as presiding therein, have the charge of.

In times of desolating, threatening judgments, when the hand of God is gone forth against a people, it is expected that Aaron stand between the living and the dead, with his censer in his hand, to stay the plague; that the priests, the Lord's ministers, weep between the temple and the altar, saying, *Spare thy people, O Lord;*[t] that they beseech God that he will be gracious to us.[u] *If they be prophets*, says Jeremiah, *and if the word of the Lord be with them, let them make intercession to the Lord of hosts.*[v] If we cannot otherwise be serviceable to the public, we may and ought to be so by our prayers: and how much the issue of the struggle between Israel and Amalek in the valley, depends upon the constancy and faith of the intercessors in the mount, who hold up their hands to God,[w] we cannot tell; but it would be very sad if, by our neglect to pray for it, or by our formality and carelessness in prayer, the righteous, glorious cause of God and religion should languish and be lost.

9. You must, faithfully and wisely, transmit that good thing which is committed to you, pure and entire, to the next generation; you must not only keep it yourself, but keep it for, and leave it with, those who shall come after you, that one generation may praise God's work unto another. Timothy must commit what he has heard and received to faithful men.[x] That which was *commanded our fathers*, is

m Ezek. xxxiv. 4. n Isa. xl. 1, 2. o Isa. l. 4.
p Ps. xcvii. 11. q Isa. lxii 6, 7. r 1 Tim. ii. 1.
s 1 Cor. i. 2. t Joel ii. 17. u Mal. i. 9.
v Jer. xxvii. 18. w Exod. xvii. 11. x 2 Tim. ii. 2.

made known to us, that we may make it known to *our children*, and they to the *children which shall be born*, who shall *arise and declare it to their children*;[y] such care as this must be taken (and may the grace of God make it an effectual care) to preserve the entail of religion, that that light may not die in our hands, nor that treasure be buried in our graves.

We charge you with the *lambs* of the flock;[z] have an eye to them, a tenderness for them: the first charge Christ gave to Peter was, *Feed my lambs*; and the same charge is given to all the under shepherds, not only by the precepts, but by the example, of the chief Shepherd, who with a particular care gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom, and gently leads them. If Christ have such a concern for them, he expects you should; and you may expect that, *therefore*, your concern for them shall not be in vain.

Lead them, therefore, into the green pastures, and feed them beside the still waters; lay before them *that* in the word of God, which is *milk for babes*; let your doctrine drop upon them as the rain; and labour to instil into their hearts, betimes, the pleasing, but commanding, principles of love to God and Jesus Christ, delight in the word and prayer, good thoughts of religion and the ways of God, and joyful prospects of the glory to be revealed, and every thing that may invite them, and win upon them, to set their faces heavenward.

In preaching, in visiting the families under your charge, you must be a teacher of babes, for Christ is so, and a very meek and compassionate one. The catechising of youth is a very good work, either publicly or privately, and if the blessing of God go along with you in it, it will contribute very much to the good progress and success of all your other work. Invite, encourage, and persuade those who are young, *to join themselves to the Lord* in the days of their youth, and to *subscribe with the hand* to be his;[a] and if we do our endeavours, though we should not gain our point, it will be a comfort to us to have been found in the way of our duty.

And now, brother, you see what the trust is that is lodged in your hand, and the ministry which you have received of the Lord Jesus. You hear your charge; what do you think of it? I doubt not, but you have considered it before you came under these bonds, and have already sat down and counted the cost; and therefore, I hope, the repeating of this charge, though you see how great your work is, and what difficulties you must expect to meet with in it, yet it does not make you repent your choice, nor wish yourself at liberty again; nor make you despair of going through with the undertaking. This use you should make of it, To be brought to see your own utter insufficiency for it, by any ability of your own. "Is all this to be said? *Ah, Lord God, I cannot speak it, for I am but a child*, unless God give me a mouth and wisdom. Is all this to be done? Ah, Lord God, I cannot do it, unless God *work in me both to will and to do of his own good pleasure*.[c] *Who is sufficient for these things?* Whoever is, I am not."

But instead of being disheartened by the greatness of your work, and the difficulties that attend it, you should rather, thereby, be animated and stirred up to set about it, and go on in it, with resolution such as becomes the Christian hero, the good soldier of Jesus Christ, who knows WHOM *he has trusted*, as well as *what* he is *trusted with*, and how to commit that again to Christ, which Christ has committed to him against that day.

Let me therefore say something in the close, both to quicken you to your work, and to encourage you in it, and not you only, but myself and other my brethren, who have laid our hand to this plough.

1. Let us propose to ourselves such considerations as are proper to quicken us to our work, and to the diligent, faithful discharge of the trust reposed in us.

(1.) The things we are employed about are of vast importance, and such as highly deserve our utmost care and application. Our business lies not in the little trifles of sense and time, in the merchandise of silver, or the gain of fine gold; no, it has reference to the upper unseen world, the world of spirits; to the future state, the state of retribution, and to this present state, only with regard to that. Let us often consider, that we are dealing for an eternal God, with immortal souls, about their everlasting state, and we shall see how well worthy our business is of the whole man. What an awful thought should *that* give us, which the apostle speaks, concerning the work of ministers, that they watch for *souls*.[d] It is no time to trifle, when there is a soul in the case, and its endless weal or woe.

Those who are concerned about the lives and estates of their *patients* and *clients*, have need to be both skilful and careful; much more should those be so who are concerned about precious souls, one of which is of more value than the whole world of inferior creatures. What greater care can lie upon a man, than the care of *souls*, which Christ purchased with his own blood, and thereby taught us how to put a value upon them.

Our business lies in the *things pertaining to the kingdom of God*;[e] (his kingdom among men;) concerning *those*, we have received instructions; and in comparison with those things, what are all the affairs of the kingdoms of this world, but children's play? It is the word of reconciliation that is committed to us, that word by which we must all be judged, shortly; and therefore we are concerned to be skil-

y Ps. lxxviii. 5, 6. z Isa. xl. 11. a Isa. xliv. 3, 5. b Jer. l. 6.

c Phil ii. 13. d Heb. xiii. 17. e Acts i. 3.

ful masters of our business, and faithful, careful ministers to it. We work for God; and therefore should see to it, that we do our work well. We work for Christ; who did his work for us with indefatigable industry, and did not fail, nor was discouraged, nor gave it up, till he could say, *I have finished the work that was given me to do.* Mr. Perkin's motto was, *Minister Verbi es, hoc age—If we be ministers of the word of God, we must mind our business;* for it is a *word* that will be a savour either of *life unto life*, or of *death unto death.*

(2.) Our Master's eye is always upon us, wherever we are, and whatever we are doing; whatever we say, whatever we think, he perfectly knows it, its principles, and all its circumstances. He sees us when we trifle, and do the work of the Lord deceitfully; when we offer the torn, and the lame, and the sick, for sacrifice, how plausibly soever it may be palliated before men. If we aim at self, and at our own praise, when we should seek the honour of Christ, he is acquainted with those corrupt glances of an eye that goes astray from him.

Now if God has such an observing eye upon us, we ought to have a jealous eye upon ourselves, and upon the frame of our spirits. God's servants need not do better than to serve him with eye service, because they are always under his eye; ministers who are more immediately employed *for* him, are more immediately observed *by* him. Those who execute the priest's office, are said to *walk before God.* O that we could thus walk before him, as always in his sight, that that consideration may not only restrain us from every thing unbecoming us, but engage us to go on in our work with the more cheerfulness and courage. As it is the terror of the slothful and wicked servant, so it is the pleasure and encouragement of the good and faithful servant, to be under his master's eye. If we take pains in studying, be constant and lively in prayer in our closet, he sees our *secret services* to his name, as he does also the secret *springs* of our public performances, which men cannot judge of; and if in these our hearts be right with him, and we approve ourselves to him, we may have the satisfaction of this, that He approves of us; and then we may reckon it a very small thing to be judged of man's judgment. He who judges us, is one who knows us, and we are sure that his judgment is according to truth.

(3.) Our time is very precious, and our day is hastening toward a period. When we see what a deal of work we have to do, and what a little time we have to do it in, we shall see how strongly we are bound, by a close application of mind, to do a double work in a single day, that our work may not be unfinished when our time is done, or (which perhaps may be much sooner) when our opportunity is done.

We cannot but be conscious to ourselves, that we have lost a great deal of time: how many empty spaces are there in our best days, and how many more in our worst? What a great deal more good might we have done to the souls of others, and got to our own souls, than we have, if we had been busy! Now though the time that is lost cannot be recalled, yet it may be *redeemed*, may be *bought back*, with a little self-denial and industry, in the improvement of the present time. Thus a spend-thrift, when he sees his folly, and begins to take up, knows he has no other way to recover his past losses, but by being so much the more frugal for the future. O that we would all learn this good husbandry, to be very sparing in our expenses of time, not to lavish away any of the precious moments of it in trifles. "An hour saved is an hour got," is a more valuable principle of good husbandry, than "A penny saved is a penny got."

We know not how little time may yet be before us, nor how soon, and how suddenly, we may be sent for home. Our commission runs, *durante bene placito—during pleasure;* and we may be displaced at less than an hour's warning; may be commanded away by death, or rendered useless by sickness, or may be silenced and driven into corners; or, some way or other, laid aside as despised broken vessels; and therefore, we should be quickened to work the work of him that sent us, while it is day, because the night comes.[f] Peter stirs up himself, to stir up others, and by preaching and writing to be a remembrancer to the churches, with this consideration, that *he must shortly put off this tabernacle.*[g] If Christians must exhort one another, surely then ministers must exhort *them, so much the more as they see the day approaching;*[h] the day of trouble, the day of restraint, the day of death;[i] and therefore, improve the day of opportunity. If we find death working in us, it concerns us to be so much the more busy in the work of life, and whatever our hand finds to do, let us do it with all our might; it will be time enough to rest when we come to heaven. It well becomes us to abide by that resolution, *Non propter vitam, vivendi perdere causas—Not for the sake of life, to lose the intent of living.*

(4.) If we obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful, there is hope that we may obtain this further mercy of him, to be useful. It is true, there are many who faithfully do their duty, and yet are disappointed of the success: they *toil all night, and catch nothing;* they labour in vain, and spend their strength for nought; and go in the bitterness of their souls because of this. But yet, if we do not the good we wish, we may hope that, through grace, we shall be instrumental to do *some* service to Christ and the souls of men; and the prospect of that should quicken

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f John ix. 4. g 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. h Heb. x. 25. i Isa. liii. 10.

us to diligence. Our Lord Jesus was animated to go on in his work, with an assurance that he should *see his seed;* should *see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied,* and that the *good pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hands.*[k]

Let this, therefore, quicken us, that we know on whose errand we go, and carry a word that shall not return void. St. Paul was quickened by this consideration, that he did not *run as uncertainly,* nor *fight as one that beats the air.*[l] It is good work we are about, and we are not without hopes it may turn to a good account; that though we are the weakest and unworthiest of all our Master's servants, yet we may by his grace be instrumental to save some soul from death, to turn some sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; we may have some who may be our joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord. By a holy ambition of such an honour as this, let us be spurred on to the utmost diligence and courage in the service of Christ. The more we magnify *our office,* though we have all the reason in the world to be ashamed of *ourselves,*[m] the more we shall think it worth our while to take pains in it.

(5.) We must shortly give account of our ministry; either with joy or grief, according as we are, or are not, diligent and faithful in the ministry. O that we were filled with this, and influenced by it, That the talents, put into our hands to trade with for our Master's honour, must be reckoned for; after a long time it may be, but at the set time.[n] And whether, upon inquiry, we shall be found among the good and faithful servants, or among the wicked and slothful servants, is now worth while to consider; for it is what our everlasting weal or woe depends upon.

Blessed Paul stirred up himself to the utmost care and diligence in his work, with a holy fear, lest while he preached to others, he himself should be a castaway at last:[o] much more reason have we to quicken ourselves with such a consideration. We have souls of our own to save; and if we prove false to our trust, and the souls of men perish through *our* treachery and neglect, it will be a righteous doom upon us, *Thy life shall go for his life;* thy soul for theirs. We are watchmen; and ought to watch for souls, as those who must give account, and know not how soon. And woe to us if the blood of souls come to be required at our hand.[p]

Let us, therefore, be humble, diligent, and faithful in our work, and often calling ourselves to account whether we are so or no; and wherein we find we come short of our duty, let us judge ourselves, that we may not be judged of the Lord, and get our accounts balanced, by the satisfaction of Christ; then shall we lift up our heads, with joy in our hearts, when our Lord comes, and enter into his joy; when the servant, that because his Lord delayed his coming grew insolent and abusive, shall have his portion with the hypocrites.[q] That work had need be done carefully, which will have this serious issue.

2. Let us also furnish ourselves with such considerations as are proper to encourage us in our work, and to support and comfort us under the difficulties we meet with in it; that the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, may be strengthened and confirmed, and we may go on in our work, not only with resolution, but with cheerfulness.

(1.) We are employed in work, wherein God is working with us, and we are workers together with him.[r] Nothing could be more encouraging to those, whom Christ has sent to preach and baptize in his name, than that parting promise of his, *Lo, I am with you always,* you and your successors, *even to the end of the world.*[s] The tokens of his presence immediately appeared; for when the apostles went forth preaching, it was evident that the Lord was *working with them, and confirming the word by signs following;*[t] which was an early specimen of the lasting fruits of that promised presence of his with his church and ministers, which they are encouraged to depend upon.

If Christ have sent us, he is with us; and his word in our mouth shall not return void, but, as the rain from heaven, shall *accomplish that for which he sends it*[u] by us, whether it be sent, as Elihu says of the rain, *for correction, or for his land, or for mercy;*[v] and though Israel be not gathered, they who are faithful shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord;[w] and we shall be a sweet savour unto God in them that perish, as well as in them that are saved.[x] And if our labours have not the desired success, yet they shall have the designed success; our peace shall rest on the sons of peace; and if it find none to rest upon, yet we shall be no losers, it shall return to us again.

(2.) We shall find God's grace sufficient for us, if we be not wanting to ourselves in making use of it. It was with reference to the many difficulties and hardships Paul met with in his ministerial work, that Christ said to him, and in him to every faithful minister, *My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*[y] He knows what measures of grace we and our work call for, and will be sure to give what is requisite; for not only all our supply is from him, but such a supply as is a sufficiency.[z]

If we go about our work in the strength of Christ, depending upon it, and deriving from it, we shall find, that as our day so shall our strength

k Isa. liii. 10. l 1 Cor. ix. 26. m Rom. xi. 13.
n Matt. xxv. 19. o 1 Cor. ix. p Heb. xiii. 17.
q Luke xii. 42–46. r 2 Cor. vi. 1.
s Matt. xxviii. 20. t Mark xvi. 20. u Isa. lv. 10, 11.
v Job xxxvii. 13. w Isa. xlix. 5. x 2 Cor. ii. 15.
y 2 Cor. xii. 9. z 2 Cor. iii. 5.

be, and we shall be enabled to do all things through Christ strengthening us;[a] all those things which Christ has appointed us to do for him. And the more humble the sense we have of our own insufficiency, the more confidently we may depend upon his all-sufficiency. Whatever charge is given us, grace is promised with it, to enable us to discharge it, if we will but by faith fetch in that grace as we have occasion for it, and make use of it. The Spirit of Christ was sent, to assist the disciples as ministers, to teach them who were to teach others, to lead them into all truth, who were to be the guides of the church, and to bring all things to their remembrance, as they had occasion for them; and it is a comfort to us, that that presence and power, that influence and operation, of the Spirit is to abide with the church and its faithful ministers always. If, therefore, we do not quench, and grieve, and resist the Spirit, and provoke him to withdraw; if we pray to God to give his Holy Spirit to us, as he has promised to give to them who ask him, and walk in the Spirit, and act in a believing dependence upon him; he will work all our works, in us and for us; and then, and then only, we shall be able to work for him.

(3.) We serve a Master, who, if our hearts be upright with him, is ready to pass by and pardon our many failings and defects. It is a great encouragement to all Christians, and to ministers particularly, that though our work be great and difficult, and our strength no way proportionable to it, yet we are under grace, and not under the law. The rule is strict, and we must aim at perfection in our conformity to it; but though in many things we come short of the rule, and cannot do so well as we should, yet if with a willing mind we do as well as we can, we shall be graciously accepted through a Mediator, and what is amiss shall be passed by and pardoned upon our repentance.

Let not this comfortable word be abused to the indulgence of our sloth and negligence, but rather let it quicken and encourage us in the service of such a God, with whom there is forgiveness that he may be feared.[b] Blessed Paul, the most active, zealous servant that ever our Master had, found cause to complain of a body of death he carried about with him, by reason of which he could not do the good that he would;[c] and if that which was his complaint be ours, that which was his comfort may be ours too, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.*[d]

It was a strict charge which Christ gave his disciples, when he sent them forth. But we find them defective in many instances; in their faith, in their humility, and in the diligence of their attendance on him, witness their sleeping in the garden; yet because they truly loved and honoured him, and believed in him, he not only continued them in his family, but favourably excused their infirmities, imputing them to the weakness of the flesh, while he *knew* the spirit *was* willing;[e] and praised them, at parting, for continuing with him in his temptations.[f]

(4.) We have many encouraging examples set before us, of those who, in their day, experienced the grace of God, and his consolations bearing them up, and carrying them on cheerfully in their work. Our fathers bore their testimony to the goodness of God, and the truth of his promise, and the power of his Spirit; they received the same charge that we have done; laboured under the same infirmities, and struggled with the same difficulties, that we do; and yet they were enabled to go on in their work, to persevere to the end, to finish well, and to give up their account with joy: and they owned to the last, it was by the grace of God that they were what they were, and did what they did; they were no better than that grace made them. Whenever they told us what God did for their souls, and what he did by their ministry, they were sure still to ascribe all the glory to free grace.

Now this is a comfort to us, that how weak soever we are, we have the God of our fathers to trust to, and depend upon; who did not fail *them*, and therefore, we hope, will not forsake *us*. He says to us, as he did to Joshua, when he was called to carry on that work which Moses had been long employed in, *As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.*[g]

We who have had our hands for many years at this plough, can assure you from our own experience, if that will be any encouragement to you, brother, that we have all the reason in the world to speak well—of our *Master;* he is our best friend—and of his *work;* it is its own wages. We have cause enough to be ashamed of *ourselves*, that we have done our work no better; but the *gospel of Christ*, which we are intrusted with the preaching of, we hope we shall never be ashamed of.[h]

(5.) Great will be our reward in heaven, if we be faithful. Though we can merit nothing at the hand of Christ, but when we have done all, must say *we are unprofitable servants*,[i] much more when we have done so little, nay, though there is so much sin and folly mingled with our best performances, as might justly cut us off from all hope of acceptance, yet, through Christ and his merit, we are encouraged to look for that crown of glory, which the chief-Shepherd, when he appears, shall bestow upon all the under shepherds who are faithful to him.[k]

Our Master himself had an eye to the *joy set before him.* And this enabled blessed Paul to triumph, when he was now ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand, not only

a Phil. iv. 13. b Ps. cxxx. 4. c Rom. vii. 19.
d Rom. viii. 1. e Matt. xxvi. 44.
f Luke xxii. 28. g Josh. i. 5. h Rom. i. 16.
i Luke xvii. 10. k 1 Pet. v. 4.

that his warfare was accomplished, and his toilsome course finished, but that thenceforth there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness; and not for him only, but for all those who love both the first and second appearing of Jesus Christ.[l]

Your success in your ministry will add to your comfort; the souls you win for Christ will be your joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord,[m] which should engage you to *aim* at success in your work: but though you should not be honoured with much of that, God will not be unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, and if but little encouraged here, it shall without fail be recompensed in the resurrection of the just.

You must count upon sufferings. When Christ sent forth his disciples, he told them, not only what great things they should *do*, but what great things they should *suffer, for his name's sake*;[n] persecution and opposition from without, contempt and contradiction from within. Suffering ill for doing well you may think *hard* of, but must not think *strange* of; your Master is before-hand with you in his sufferings, and will not be behind-hand with you in his recompences; your journey may be tedious, and your voyage perilous, but hold out with faith and patience, you will be at home shortly, and one hour in heaven will make amends for all.

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l 2 Tim. iv. 6—8.

m 1 Thess. ii. 19.

n Acts ix. 16.

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

FUNERAL OF THE REV. JAMES OWEN,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL IN SHREWSBURY, APRIL 11, 1706.

Acts xx. 37, 38.

And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him; sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more.

My text is a short account of the solemn farewell which was interchanged between St. Paul and the elders of Ephesus; and you see upon the reading of it, that it was a very mournful farewell: no improper subject, therefore, for a mournful funeral, such a one as we have now been attending. For what are funerals but our farewells to our friends? And this farewell in the text being pronounced by the Spirit of prophecy a final farewell, it was a sort of funeral.

And there is one circumstance of the story, which makes the resemblance the more lively and affecting; it is that which is added, (*v.* 38.) that *they accompanied him unto his ship.* For methinks, when we follow the remains of our deceased friends, who we trust sleep in Jesus, to the grave, and lodge and leave them in that close and dark cabin, we do in effect the same; we accompany them to their ship, so I would rather call it, than their prison, for the body, though confined to it for a time, is to pass through it to its glory. Let us, therefore, say concerning those whose earth we have committed to the earth, in hope of a resurrection to eternal life, that we have put them on ship-board; not to be tossed with tempests, for there the weary are at rest; but rather to be becalmed and wind-bound a while, till the embargo shall be taken off in the resurrection, and then, like the ship into which Christ was willingly received, it shall immediately land[a] its passengers in the desired harbour of endless bliss and joy. Or we will suppose, that we shut them up in such a ship as God shut up Noah in, not so much for passage as for preservation; in which they shall be safe from the waters of the flood, and kept secret till the appointed time comes for God to remember them,[b] as he remembered Noah;[c] and then they shall be brought out with joy, and led forth with singing, into a new world.

How does this alter the property of death and the grave! Let the thought of it, therefore, give us quite another prospect of them, than that which we are apt to amuse ourselves with. The sanctified soul, after it is delivered from the burthen of the flesh, goes immediately to joy and felicity, under a convoy of blessed angels; and the deserted body too is taken care of, it is shipped off in a very good vessel, under the protection of a covenant with the dust, which shall be remembered; so that it is sure not to be lost; it is dust which shall never be the serpent's meat, but shall without fail meet its soul again in due time, in the better country, that is, the heavenly, to be separated no more for ever.

In the account here given of this solemn farewell, it is observable, that St. Paul took leave of his friends with prayers, and they of him with tears. Prayers and tears are not only the church's artillery, with which her enemies, as there is occasion, are attacked and repulsed; but they are likewise a part of the church's treasure, with which her friends are enriched and entertained.

1. St. Paul, as became him, took leave of them with prayer; so he concluded his farewell sermon.

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a John vi. 21.

b Job xiv. 13.

c Gen. viii. 1.

When he had thus spoken, with the utmost expressions of reverence and fervency, *he kneeled down and prayed with them all;* knowing, that what he had said to them would not edify them, as he desired, without the grace of God's working by it, he thus implored that grace. Being to leave them, in return for all their respects to him and his ministry, he thus left his blessing behind him, and a prophet's prayers will at any time amount to a prophet's reward.[d] He had told them, (*v.* 32.) he *commended them to God*, which he did effectually by this solemn prayer. If he must leave them, he will leave them in the best hands, and engage his gracious presence with them, who has promised never to leave nor forsake those who trust in him.[e] Our Lord Jesus concluded his farewell to his disciples with a prayer for them, (John xvii. 1.) and at last was parted from them as he blessed them.

Many a prayer St. Paul had put up for those Ephesians, which he gives them a specimen of once and again in his epistle to them; nor would he, after his departure from them, cease to pray for them.[f] This is one way, by which the communion of saints is kept up in their present dispersion. But this prayer he prayed with them, partly for their instruction, and the riveting of the things he had said to them in their minds; for which reason, in his epistles to the churches, he tells them particularly what it was that he asked of God for them, that they might study to answer the intention of his prayers, as well as of his preaching and writing; and partly for the alleviating of their griefs, which in this prayer he poured out before the Lord, and that, afterwards, they might reflect with some comfort and satisfaction upon this part at least of the sad solemnity.

It is good for friends to part with prayer, the rather, because when we part we are not sure that ever we shall meet together again; but here we may suppose, the duty was performed with the more affection, and warmth of devotion, because they knew it was to be the last prayer that blessed Paul was to pray with them: and it is very fit that at death we should take leave of our friends with prayer, because then we are to take leave of prayer itself; farewell prayer, and welcome praise, everlasting praise.

2. They, as became them, took leave of him with tears. They wept at prayer, and it was a very proper expression of their pious importunity. Jacob commenced Israel, a prince with God, when he wept and made supplication;[g] and our Lord Jesus himself, in the days of his flesh, offered up his prayers with strong crying and tears,[h] though he had no sin to lament in prayer as we have. They wept at parting with so good a friend. Paul had, in this discourse with them, more than once intimated how often he had wept over them; such was his tender affection to them, and hearty concern for their welfare; he had served the Lord among them with many tears, (Acts xx. 19.) and had warned them night and day with tears, *v.* 31. And now, in a just and grateful return for his love, they weep over him: for *he that watereth shall be watered also himself.*[i]

Let us observe on this sad occasion,

(1.) Who the mourners were. They were the elders or presbyters of the church of Ephesus, whom Paul sent for to attend him at Miletus, *v.* 17. It appears by the scope of the foregoing discourse, that St. Paul now, in the clear foresight, and actual consideration, both of his own death, and of the rise of heresies and sects thereupon, was deliberately and solemnly committing the conduct and government of the renowned church of Ephesus to the presbyters, or presbytery of that church, for a pattern to other churches; plainly telling all these elders,[k] and not any one more than the rest, than the Holy Ghost εθετο επισκοπους—*had made them overseers,*[l] or bishops of that church, and that therefore it was incumbent upon them to feed it; that is, not only to teach, but to rule it; committing the discipline as well as the doctrine of Christ to their ministration, without the least intimation of his doing it only *pro tempore—for the time being*, and with a purpose to alter the constitution afterwards. Accordingly, he charges them with the utmost diligence and application of mind, to set about the discharge of this great office, *v.* 28. *Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock;* and plainly intimates, that they must not any longer expect the personal residence either of himself as an apostle, or of Timothy as an evangelist, among them, nor depend upon them for any further particular direction in the affairs of their church; but under Christ, and in his strength, take the work into their own hands, and manage it according to the rules they had already received; *Take heed to yourselves. As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, and beareth them on her wings,*[m] to teach them to fly, as soon as she perceives they are fledged; so does St. Paul here, by these elders, putting some of his honour and spirit upon them, and exciting them now to do that themselves,[n] which hitherto himself or Timothy had done for them; and to make full proof of their ministry,[o] as hitherto they had under their direction made good proof of it.

Now though this was a great advancement to these elders, thus to come of age, and to be no longer under tutors and governors, yet they were so far from being pleased, or puffed up with the honour, that they fell a weeping at the thought of it; that they should never again have Paul to preside among them, and direct them. Thus the disciples

d Matt. x. 41. e Heb. xiii. 5. f Eph. i. 16.
g Hos xii. 4. h Heb. vii. 7. i Prov. xi. 25.
k 1 Tim. iv. 14. l Acts xx. 28. m Deut. xxxii. 11.
n Numb. xi. 17. o 2 Tim. iv. 5.

of Christ, though he told them when he parted with them, that greater works than he did should they do,[p] yet sorrow filled their hearts, because they should want the advantage of his bodily presence. Those know not their own weakness, and the peril that attends the posts of honour, who are ambitious to stand in the front, and lead the van, to carry the standard, or give the word of command among the soldiers of Jesus Christ. Since it is so difficult to rule well, it is very desirable rather to be well ruled.

But though the presbyters, or ministers only, are mentioned, as attending Paul at Miletus, yet it is probable that some of the people were with them, to pay their respects to that great apostle; for we find at another place, soon after this, that he was thus brought on his journey after a godly sort,[q] and accompanied to the ship, by all the disciples with their wives and children, *ch.* xxi. 5.

(2.) Observe how they expressed their sorrow. We read of nothing they said on this occasion; but,

[1.] *They all wept sore*, ικανος δε εγενετο κλαυθμυς παντων—*There was an abundant weeping of them all;* so the phrase is, perhaps in allusion to that saying of the Canaanites, concerning the lamentation that was made at Jacob's funeral, *This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians.*[r] It was not one or two of them, whose spirits were more tender than the rest, that could not forbear weeping on this occasion, but they all wept; there was not one dry eye among them. Nor were they women and children who mourned thus passionately, but the elders of the church, who did not think it any diminution to their gravity, or dignity, in this way to give vent to their sorrows.

Our Lord Jesus was often in tears,[s] particularly at the grave of his friend Lazarus; and it is probable, his frequent weeping was that which made those, who fancied him to be one of the prophets risen from the dead, to conclude, that certainly he was Jeremias the weeping prophet.[t] Our way lies through a vale of tears, and it becomes us to conform to the climate: *Blessed are they that mourn,* that *sow in tears.*

[2.] They *fell on Paul's neck and kissed him;* signifying hereby how dear he was to them, and how loth they were to part with him. They took him in their arms, and laid him in their bosoms, to show how near he lay to their hearts, and that he was to them as their own souls. Thus they embraced at parting, as Jacob and Joseph did at meeting,[u] with all the affection that can be supposed, between the tenderest father and the dearest children. Could they have detained him in the cords of love, and with those powerful bands constrained his stay, he had not left them; but there is no remedy, he must go. He loves them well, and would gladly abide with them, but he loves his Master better, and must preach his kingdom in other cities also.[v] Yet they will make it appear, it is with the utmost regret and reluctance imaginable that they bid him farewell; their life they think is bound up in his.

See here one fruit of the gospel of Christ; as far as it took possession of men's hearts, it not only slew all enmities, but strengthened all endearments. If the followers of Christ showed themselves thus mutually kind upon all occasions, well might they say among the heathen, *See how these Christians love one another:* and by this would all men know, that they were the disciples of him, who loved us first.[w] O that this fruit might revive, might remain! How happy is it, where there is such sincere and flaming affection as this between people and ministers, between Christians among themselves, and ministers likewise one to another; for where love thus reigns, the God of love no doubt commands the blessing, even life for evermore.[x]

(3.) Observe what was the matter of their sorrow, it was chiefly this, because he had said, and had said it with an observable air of assurance, that they should *see his face no more;* which bid them to think that he was now ready to be offered, and that the time of his departure was at hand;[y] and for this sorrow filled their heart. He could himself finish his course with joy, it was a pleasure to him to think of it, but to them nothing could be mentioned more painful; this put him into a dilemma between life and death, Phil. i. 22, 23. The joy and gain set before him made death desirable, and yet the grief and loss he should leave behind him, made him, with a noble self-denial, willing to live.

Yet whether he was to die quickly, or live a good while longer, he does not inform them, only that they for their parts should *see his face no more;* this was the word which was as a sword in their bones. We have no reason to think, that St. Paul had any thing charming in his face above other men, it did not shine as the face of Moses did; but, on the contrary, we know that his bodily presence was weak and despicable; and it was probable, his visage, like his Master's, was marred more than any man's, furrowed with tears and toils. But it was not the show of his countenance that they looked at; they therefore loved to see his face, because then they were sure to hear his voice, and the voice of Christ speaking in him; then they were sure to have some spiritual gift[z] or other imparted to them, for their instruction and edification; but now they must never expect that privilege again. It is true, after this they might hope to hear from him by letter, and did do so, and his very enemies owned that his letters were weighty and powerful; they had likewise his other epistles to the churches, besides that to them-

p John xiv. 12. q 3 John 6. r Gen. l. 11.
s John xi. 35. t Matt. xvi. 14. u Gen. xlvi. 29.
v Luke iv. 43. w John xiii. 34. x Ps. cxxxiii. 3.
y 2 Tim. iv. 6. z Rom. i. 11.

selves, to consult and converse with; yet it troubles them to think that they shall never see him in the pulpit, never hear him preach any more; and though that which is written remains, yet that which is delivered *viva voce—with the living voice*, is more likely to *affect*; and we cannot but desire with St. John, if it may be, to *see the voice that speaks to us*.[a]

But why should they sorrow most of all for this word, that they should *see his face no more*? There was another thing which he had said, for which, in my mind, they had more reason to be sorrowful than for this; for he had told them, that *after his departure grievous wolves should enter in among them; nay, that some of themselves*, it should seem, he means some of these very men he was now speaking to, should arise and preach *perverse things*, to *draw away* the *disciples after them*, v. 30. For this, methinks, they should have sorrowed most of all, as the disciples of Christ did, who are said to have been exceeding sorrowful, when their Master told them that one of them should betray him.[b] But the truth is, the things of sense make deepest impressions upon us, and affect us most; we grieve for sin less than we ought, and for trouble more. Or we may suppose, that therefore they thus lamented Paul's departure from them, because this would be the sad consequence of it, which they hoped might have been happily prevented, if he could but have tarried with them.

However, that it grieved them thus to part with him, was both his honour and their praise.

[1.] It was his honour. It was a sign he lived in esteem among them, as one who did good *in* Ephesus, (as Jehoiada had done in Israel,[c]) that he went away attended with so many unforced, undissembled tears.

It is a mark of disgrace to depart without being desired,[d] and as an evidence of that, without being lamented, none to say, *Ah! lord!* or, *Ah his glory*,[e] but a branch of honour to be wept over, as Josiah was, and dismissed with the genuine and unbribed lamentations of those that are wise and good.

It is true, there have been those who have triumphed in the fall of the worthiest and best of men; when Christ's two witnesses are conquered and slain, the inhabitants of the earth will rejoice in it, and make merry;[f] their lives were their torment, and therefore their deaths are their joy; they who took away their lives, *cast out their names as evil*, that they might make the world believe they had done God and their country good service. And, probably, the mighty industry of the persecutors, to blemish the memory of the martyrs, might give occasion to their surviving friends so much the more to magnify them, and pay the greater respect to their names; even such as in after-ages degenerated (as good things are apt to do) into superstition. But the removal of virtuous and useful men, though it may be the sport and joy of profaneness and bigotry, will be the grief of all wisdom's children. Though Stephen was cast out of the city and stoned, in a popular tumult, as one not fit to live, yet there were found devout men, (who, it should seem, were not as yet professed Christians, but proselytes of the gate, hearty well-wishers to religion in general,) and those carried Stephen to his grave, and made great lamentation over him.[g]

St. Paul, for his part, was loaded as much as any man with disgrace and ignominy, wherever he went, and yet there were those of whom he was had in honour.[h] Thus did he pass by evil report and good report; some hated and vilified him, others loved and magnified him. Let none, therefore, be deterred from religion and godliness by the contempt put upon them; if they have their reproach, they have their praise: set the one, therefore, over against the other, balance the dishonour with the honour, and see the advantage unspeakably on religion's side; for the reproach is groundless and trifling, may be easily despised, and will quickly be rolled away, but the honour is just, and real, and weighty, and will last to eternity.

[2.] It was their praise. It is upon record to the commendation of these elders, that they thus lamented St. Paul's removal from them; it was a sign they loved him, and valued him, and had been edified by their conversation with him; a sign they judged of persons and things not by outward appearance, or according to the corrupt but common sentiment of a vain and inconsiderate world, that sits in darkness; but that they were governed by their believing regards to an eternal God, an immortal soul, and an everlasting state; for the sake of which they had this mighty affection and esteem for blessed Paul. A citizen of Zion honours all his fellow-citizens,[i] but the priests, and the Nazarites, those precious sons of Zion, are counted worthy of double honour: such was the honour those elders here generously and gratefully yielded to Paul.

We will, therefore, take it for granted, that these tears were truly pearls, pearls of great price, and that in them part of a just debt was paid to St. Paul now at his going away; and so we may

Observe, That the removal of a good minister from *us, is a thing to be greatly lamented by us*. Our parting with a faithful minister cannot but be, if we consider it aright, a very sorrowful parting.

I have already seen so many of the tears of this congregation upon this sad occasion, that I could not think of any subject more suitable, nor more pertinent to my purpose, than this. I wish I were able to improve the fair occasion it gives me, to ac-

a Rev. i. 12. b Matt. xxvi. 22. c 2 Chron. xxiv. 16.
d 2 Chron. xxi. 20. e Jer. xxii. 18. f Rev. xi. 10.
g Acts viii. 2. h 2 Sam. vi. 22. i Ps. xv. 4.

count for the justice of your tears, and to direct them into the right channel; to affect you with the providence you are under, and yet to reconcile you to it, and satisfy you in the will of God.

Had your aged pastor's voice (that least considerable of the qualifications of a minister) been but as good as his head and heart, now in his advanced years, and likely to have reached this great assembly, the work had been at this time in much better hands than mine;* but after all our endeavours, the best part of the work, even the sanctifying of this sad event to the spiritual benefit of every one of you, and the furtherance of the life of your souls by the death of your minister, must by faith and prayer be humbly left to a better hand than any of ours; even to that of the blessed Spirit, who worketh all in all.

Tears for the dead carry with them their own justification; when the body is sown in corruption, it is fit it should be watered; we are allowed to sorrow, even for those that we have reason to hope sleep in Jesus, and are only cautioned not to sorrow as those who have no hope.[k] The house where death is, is supposed to be a house of mourning,[l] and many a good lesson the man of wisdom will learn there.

But it is a particular case we are now to speak of, and to our grief it is a *case in faith*; it is that of a dead minister, whom we have special reason to weep over; and *oh! that our heads were waters, and our eyes fountains of tears*, for this purpose! Mourning for the dead, even for a priest when he died, by the law of Moses contracted a ceremonial pollution;[m] because that law could not take away sin, which is the sting of death, so that that mourning was then attended with a conscience of guilt unremoved; but the gospel of Christ having abolished death, and altered the property of it, and so enabled us to triumph over it, our sorrow for the dead is now so far from defiling us, that, if it be duly improved, it may, by the grace of God, become a happy means of our cleansing: God grant ours may be so upon this occasion!

I shall endeavour briefly to show, 1. Who it is, whose removal is to be thus lamented; and, II. Who they are, from whom it is justly expected that they lament it; and both from the text and context, as God shall enable me.

I. I say, it is a good minister whose removal is to be thus lamented. Shall I give you, in short, the character of such a good minister, as is worthy of this double honour?[n] Honour while he lives, and honour when he is gone? You here have lost one, who of his standing, was justly numbered among the first three, for eminent gifts and attainments, and a capacity of serving Christ and his church with them; but thanks be to God, a man may come far short of him, and yet be found a good and able minister of the New Testament; and not to be parted with without sorrow. We will, therefore, draw the portraiture of this good minister, by his interest and fidelity, not by his learning, or the arts and languages he is master of; and we will borrow it from the testimony of St. Paul's conscience here, in the preceding discourse concerning himself; in which he did not intend to magnify himself as some great one, but only to justify himself against his accusers, as one who had obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

And here let me premise, (and yet, I hope, we are in this matter so manifest in your consciences, that I need not mention it,) that we abhor the thought of drawing into the character of a good minister, his being in every thing of our mind. Far be it, far be it from us, to monopolize Christianity, or the ministry, and confine either within the pale of our own particular opinion, in things that concern not the vitals and essentials of religion. We are not here seeking to advance the reputation of a party, nor appropriating the good characters to those of our own denomination; no, we take all occasions to protest against it, and while we walk according to what we have attained, endeavouring therein to approve ourselves to God in our integrity, we charitably believe that others do so too; and therefore we heartily love and honour good men, and good ministers, however, in the less weighty matters of the law, we differ from them in sentiment and apprehension, and practise accordingly; and we highly value all who cast out devils in Christ's name, though they follow not with us.[o] We have a spiritual communion with them in faith, hope, and holy love, we pray for their success, we rejoice in their usefulness, we would be helpers together with them, endeavouring as we are able to promote the common interests of Christ's kingdom, and the common salvation[p] of precious souls; we desire their lives, we lament their deaths; God forbid we should do otherwise, for without doubt, *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and should be approved of us.*[q]

Who then is that good minister, whose removal is to be thus lamented by us.

1. He is one, who having entirely devoted himself to the glory and honour of God, makes it his business to serve him. Thus St. Paul was among the Ephesians, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears.[r] You call us your ministers, and we are very willing to be so called, for we are your servants for Jesus' sake;[s] but we

* The Rev. Mr. Tallents, now in the 87th year of his age, and a constant preacher.

k 1 Thess. iv. 13. l Eccl. vii. 2. m Lev. xxi. 1.

n 1 Tim. v. 17. o Luke ix. 49, 50. p Jude 3. q Rom. xiv. 17, 18. r Acts xx. 19. s 2 Cor. iv. 5.

rather look upon ourselves as ministers of God to you for good; Christ is our Master, and he is a good minister who seeks his master's favour, consults his master's interest, and makes it his business to do his master's will and work.

Nothing is more essentially necessary to the making a man a minister, than self-dedication to the glory of God; nor does any thing go further to denominate a man a good minister, than to act in pursuance of that self-dedication, by a diligent and serious attendance upon God in all instances of devotion, and a wise, faithful, and zealous activity for him, and for the interests of his kingdom; studying by all means possible to do good to the souls of men, and to advance religion in the power of it. He who thus waits on his Master, by *waiting on his ministry*, shall be honoured.[u]

He is a good minister who seeks not his own glory, but his who sent him;[v] who serves not his own belly, but the Lord Christ;[w] who aims not at the applause of his fellow-servants, but at his Master's acceptance; for if we please men otherwise than for their edification, we are not the servants of Christ.[x] He is a faithful friend of the bridegroom, who seeks the bridegroom's honour, and does all he can to engage people's affections for him, that he alone may be exalted. Let us be nothing, so that Christ may be *all in all*.

St. Paul was a great scholar, and a chief speaker; yet he reflects with more comfort and satisfaction upon the humility of mind, and the many tears, with which he had served the Lord, than upon the strength of his reasonings, and the eloquence of his discourses, with which he had served him. He is a good minister, and does good service to Christ and his church, who is humble and affectionate in the work of his ministry, though he do not excel in gifts. *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.*[y]

2. He is one who faithfully preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus St. Paul, though born at Tarsus, a Gentile academy, bred up at the feet of Gamaliel, a Jewish rabbi, yet in his preaching set aside all his learning, and testified the gospel of the grace of God;[z] pressed both upon Jews and Gentiles nothing else but repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.[a] Gospel grace and gospel duty were the subjects he dwelt upon at all seasons, both publicly, and from house to house; of these he kept back nothing,[b] with these he mingled nothing, ministering the gospel both pure and entire.

And he is indeed a good minister who makes the gospel his oracle, the gospel his touchstone, the gospel his treasury and storehouse, out of which he furnishes himself for every good word and work. Who dares not preach another gospel, nor corrupt this: knowing it is only a dispensation that is committed to him,[c] for which he is accountable; who delights not in preaching any thing but the gospel, knowing nothing so entertaining, nothing so edifying, as that great summary of the gospel, *Jesus Christ, and him crucified*.[d]

He is a good minister, who fills not your heads with airy notions, nor troubles your minds with matters of doubtful disputation, who affects not to gratify a vain fancy with fine speculations, or an itching ear with the enticing words of man's wisdom; but aims, by the plainness and simplicity of the gospel, to win your hearts to the faith and love of Jesus Christ. *We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord*.[e]

3. He is one who cares much for the state of precious souls. Concerning this, St. Paul here appeals to the elders of Ephesus, that he ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.[f] His care was extensive, he had an eye to every one under his charge, high and low, rich and poor, to those who were his grief, as well as to those who were his crown; it was constant, he never ceased night or day, but filled up all his time, both of business and conversation, with that which tended to their edification; and it was very affectionate, he warned with tears of love, and tenderness, and holy fear, lest they should come short, and miscarry at last. Thus zealous was blessed Paul, for the edification of the body of Christ, not seeking his own profit, or secular advantage, but the profit of many, and their spiritual advantage, that they might be saved;[g] for upon that was his heart fixed.

And he is a good minister, who has a tender and compassionate love for the souls of men, trembles at the thought of their eternal ruin, and earnestly desires their eternal welfare; for the securing of which he would gladly spend and be spent;[h] who studies to find out acceptable words, by them to teach the people knowledge;[i] who, in his preaching and converse, aims and endeavours to make those with whom he has to do, some way or other wiser and better; who even *travails in birth again*, as it were with labouring pangs, to see Christ formed in them;[k] the height of whose ambition is, to be some way instrumental for the conviction and conversion of sinners, and the building up of saints in holiness and comfort; humbly subscribing to St. Paul's protestation. *We do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying*.[l]

4. He is one who, by the grace of God, lives in some measure above this present world. This was St. Paul's rejoicing here, even the testimony of his conscience, concerning the temper of his mind, *I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel*;[m] he never desired to be as rich, and look as great as his

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u 1 Tim. v. 18 | v Rom. xv. 7 | w 1 John viii. 10
x Gal. i. 10 | y 1 Cor. viii. 1.
z Acts xx. 21 | a Acts xx. 21.
c 1 Cor. ix. 17. | d 1 Cor. ii. 2. | e 2 Cor. iv. 5. | f Acts xx. 31
g 1 Tim. iv. 16 | h 2 Cor. xii. 15 | i Eccl. xii. 9
k Gal. iv. 19. | l 2 Cor. xii. 19. | m Acts xx. 33

neighbour; he was perfectly dead to worldly greatness and gaiety. He had likewise the testimony of his friends, concerning the course of his life; they knew very well he was so far from aiming to get wealth, that he laboured in an honest calling to get bread, rather than be burthensome to them, to the prejudice of his ministry; *You yourselves know, that these hands have ministered to my necessities*, and not to mine only, but to *theirs that were with me*.[n] In his whole conversation, he discovered a generous contempt of this world, as became one who was so well acquainted with another world, and the great and everlasting things of that world.

And he is a good minister, whose life is in this, as in other instances, of a piece with his doctrine. Whose eyes are not dazzled with the glittering lustre of gold and silver, nor his heart drawn, or held, by the magnetic virtue of this earth: who seeks not yours for himself, but you[o] for Christ. Minds no high things, but heavenly things; no pleasure so much as that of doing his duty; no preferment in comparison with that of being accepted of God;[p] no business in competition with the business of his ministry. Who having engaged and employed himself in the affairs of another life, entangles not himself in the affairs of this life. Whose conversation is in heaven,[q] and in whose forehead, as well as his heart, *Holiness to the Lord* is engraven in legible and indelible characters. The apostles betimes taught gospel ministers the proper place for their worldly wealth, when they ordered the money that was brought them, to be laid not in their hands, much less in their bosoms, but at their feet.[r]

You see now who, and what manner of men, those ministers are, whose removal is so great a loss, and to be so much lamented. God grant that we all, who are called by this worthy name of ministers of the gospel, may answer these characters. How far our deceased brother did so, some of you know very well, and need not that any man should testify.

II. I come in the next place to show you who they are, who are concerned to lament the removal of such ministers as these, and what cause they have to do so.

They were the elders of Ephesus, elders in office, not in age, who here wept sore for the departure of Paul from among them: and they may be considered, 1. As ministers; 2. As ministers just setting out in the work of the ministry; and, 3. As, at this time, and upon this occasion, the representatives of the people or church of Ephesus. And so,

1. We who are ministers, are taught to bewail the removal of our fathers and brethren from us, and that we shall see their faces no more in this world. Even Paul the aged speaks of the recovery of a young minister, Epaphroditus by name, from a dangerous fit of sickness, as a very great mercy of God to himself, *lest* (says he) *I should have sorrow upon sorrow*.[s] Though he had as little need of the help of others, as ever any minister had, yet the death of Epaphroditus would have been a very great affliction to him, and would have added as much as any thing to his sorrows. Elijah lays very much to heart the death of the prophets, and himself being left alone, though he was so well able to stand alone.[t]

Let the priests, therefore, the Lord's ministers, weep on such sad occasions, between the porch and the altar,[u] mingling their tears with their sacrifices, and their prayers with their tears, saying, *Spare thy people, O Lord.* When the harvest is plenteous, and the labourers, the skilful, faithful labourers so few, our Master has appointed us to pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into the harvest;[v] and are we not to lament it greatly, when some of the most industrious of the labourers are called out of the harvest, when they could so ill be spared?

Our hands are this day weak; and by such providences as these, they are much more weakened. God is contending with us; our glory is waxen thin; the death of every good minister, (and we have parted with a great many of late, in the midst of their usefulness,) is *as when a standard-bearer fainteth; and* alas, *the rest of the trees of our forest are so few, that a child may write them.*[w] It is time for us, with the prophet Ezekiel, to fall down on our faces, under a deep sense of God's displeasure, and to cry as he did, with a loud voice, *Ah! Lord God, wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?*[x] high time to cry, *Help, Lord,* when *the faithful,* the faithful helpers, *cease* and *fail.*[y]

And by the sadness of our countenances upon such occasions as these, let our hearts be made better,[z] and let us be quickened with more care and diligence to work the works of him who sent us, while it is day, because the night comes, and before it comes, *wherein no man can work.*[a] Let us not only be true to our trust, but busy at our work, because we must shortly give account of our stewardship, and be no longer stewards. By such a providence as this, God speaks aloud to us, as he did to Moses, (Numb. xxvii. 13.) *Thou shalt be gathered to thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. Whatsoever,* therefore, *our hand finds to do, let us do it with all our might; not counting life itself dear to us,* not being too tender of it, *so we may finish our course with joy.*[b]

2. The sons of the prophets are, in a particular manner, taught by this instance to lament the removal of their master from their head. And it will be a good sign that they are genuine sons, and will be a good presage of their inheriting a child's

n Acts xx. 34. o 2 Cor. xii. 14. p 2 Cor. v. 9. q Phil. iii. 20. r Acts iv. 37. s Phil. ii. 27. t 1 Kings xix. 10. u Joel ii. 17. v Matt. ix. 38. w Isa. x. 18, 19. x Ezek. xi. 13. y Ps. xii. 1. z Eccl. vii. 3. a John ix. 4. b Acts xx. 24.

portion of their spirit. If with a filial affection, they cry out as Elisha did, *My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!*[1] When Elisha had, in those words, erected a monument to the honour of his departed tutor, immediately he took up his mantle, and did wonders with it.

Those who are setting out in the ministry, or setting their faces toward it, have great reason to lament the removal of the elder ministers, especially such an one as we are now particularly lamenting, whom God had eminently qualified for the committing of the treasure of the gospel to some of the earthen vessels of the rising generation, and the putting of the light into their hands; who did, not only as a minister, *preach them him—beget sons to* Christ by the gospel; but as a tutor, *preach patria —beget nurses* for those children, and fathers to bring others to Christ. We cannot express the greatness of the loss of such an one, which they, in a special manner, have reason to be sensible of, who sat down under his shadow.

When John Baptist was beheaded, it is said, *his disciples took up the body and buried it, and then went and told Jesus.*[2] Let those do so who were brought up at the feet of this well-instructed scribe. Go and tell Jesus that you are orphans, and take him for your guardian, with whom the fatherless find mercy, and who has promised not to leave his disciples orphans.[3] Resolve, that from this time, more than ever, you will cry unto him as your Father, and the guide of your youth,[4] and be assured he will never fail nor forsake those, who trust in the shadow of his wings.

3. The people that sat under the constant instruction and inspection of a good minister, ought to lament the removal of such an one from them. When our temporal comforts are removed from us, our relations, or friends, in whom we had sensible delight, or by whom we had sensible advantage, our grief then has more need of a bridle than of a spur: but when those are taken from us by whom we had, and hoped for, benefit, to our souls only, then it is necessary something should be said to us, to make us sensible of our loss, and to stir us up to mourn for it: for this is an affliction, which, if not duly weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, we shall not be enough affected with; or at least the impressions of it are apt to wear off quickly, and are soon forgotten and lost.

Let me, therefore, show you briefly what reason you of this congregation have to lament the loss of a faithful shepherd, though, thanks be to that God, who graciously continues his aged servant among you, labouring in the word of doctrine, you are not as sheep having no shepherd. I have reason to think you are very sensible of the breach made upon you; I desire you may be so upon right grounds, that you may sorrow after a godly sort; that you may not, like children, cry for you know not what, but may be able to give a rational answer to such a question, as that which Joseph put to his fellow-prisoners, *Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?*[5] You may reply to that question with such questions as these:

(1.) Should we not grieve to part with a near relation, to whom we are joined in a close alliance? *Ah! my brother, or Ah! sister!* is mentioned as sufficient matter for lamentation, Jer. xxii. 18. And shall the bonds of kindred by blood and nature be stronger than those of kindred by the Spirit and grace? You have had fathers of your flesh, whom it may be you have followed to the grave, and you gave them this reverence, you lamented them: you would have reproached yourselves, as void of natural affection, if you had not done so; and will you not show this respect to your spiritual fathers, that thereby you may do honour to the Father of your spirits, and live.[6]

Ministers are yours, you have an interest in them, an interest by promise; *Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, are yours*, 1 Cor. iii. 22. (It was one of the last subjects your deceased minister preached upon among you; I hope you will not forget it: he told me of it when I visited him in his illness.) It follows, *or life, or death*, which may be understood particularly of the life and death of your ministers; their life is for your service, and their death too, if you make a due improvement of it, may be for your awakening and quickening, for whether they live or die, they are the Lord's,[7] and yours for his sake.

They are yours, for they are gifts which the exalted Redeemer gave unto men for the perfecting of the saints,[8] which he gave unto you to be your guides, overseers, and rulers; not to have dominion over your faith, we do not in the least pretend to it, but to be the helpers of your joy,[9] and nurses to the *new man* in its infancy, *and a comfort to the perfect man*.

You see how nearly related your ministers are to you; they are appointed to be friends to your souls, and if, as you ought, you account them your best friends, it cannot but be a grief to you to part with them.

(2.) Should we not grieve to part with those who have loved us, and been kind to us? As we are bound in duty to lament the departure of our relations, so we are bound in gratitude to lament the departure of our benefactors; whom God by his grace has made blessings to us. Even the unthankful Israelites had so much sense of honour in them, as to mourn for Moses thirty days,[m] in consideration of the great things God had done for them by his

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[1] 2 Kings ii. 12. [2] Matt. xiv. 12. [3] John xiv. 18, marg. Jer. xl. 4. [4] Deut. xi. 7.

[5] Neh. ii. 2. [6] Rom. xiv. 8. [7] Rom. xiv. 10, 12. [8] 1 Cor. i. 24. [9] Deut. xxxiv. 8.

hand; and shall we be less sensible of those invaluable benefits we enjoy by the mysteries of God, which ministers are the stewards of?

My brethren, we have nothing in ourselves to boast of, but a great deal to be ashamed of, yet, we hope, we can appeal to God as our record, how sincerely we long after you all in the *bowels* of Jesus Christ;[n] how dearly we love you, how earnestly we desire your spiritual welfare, how jealous we are over you with a godly jealousy; and as far as you have perceived this Spirit to be working in your ministers toward you, that must certainly be a grief to you, to have them taken from you. Do you lie so near their hearts, and shall not their departures be laid near yours?

There is something of a generous gratitude in these sorrows we are now calling for, such as well becomes those, who ask in sincerity, *What shall we render?* and would be found, as they are able, rendering according to the benefit done to them. Thus the memory of the just should be precious to us, especially theirs, who, by the grace of God, turned many to righteousness; thus should their names be preserved, and embalmed in tears. If for a good man,[o] a useful man, some would find in their hearts to die, to obtain a reprieve for them; shall not all find in their hearts to mourn, when they are past reprieve? Especially, since it is mentioned as a piece of gross stupidity, and a sad presage of approaching ruin to a people, when the righteous perish, and none consider it, or lay it to heart.[p]

(3.) Should we not grieve to part with those, who can very ill be spared, and that we shall certainly find the loss of? We shall see ourselves engaged to this, by a sense of interest, as well as duty and gratitude. The death of a good minister is a loss, a loss to you, and as such is to be lamented; a loss which, it may be, you are not so sensible of now, as you will be hereafter, when you will know that a prophet *hath been* among you;[q] hath been, *but now is not;* when you will wish to see some of those days of the Son of man, which you have seen, and may not.

Alas, says the true mourner, if we be bereaved of our ministers, we are *indeed* bereaved; we shall find more and more the want of their preaching and praying, their instructions of us, their intercessions for us, their prudent counsels, their faithful reproofs, their directing and encouraging examples; we may have another minister, but not such another; or such another, but not such another *to us;* it is well if the gap be not too great to be filled up. *Our soul desireth the first ripe fruits,*[r] but where are they.

It is a public loss, a loss to the town and country, to the land and nation; and public spirits cannot but bewail public losses. How ill can the church of God spare any of its good ministers! They are the chariots and horsemen[s] of the land; strip us of these; and we are naked and defenceless. They are our treasure; rob us of these, and we are impoverished. They are the burning and shining lights: put out these, and we walk in darkness. They are our glory and joy: take away these, and our pleasant things are departed, our songs are made to cease, our honour laid in the dust, and the crown fallen from the head, *Woe unto us; for we have sinned.*[t]

It is true, our God has the residue of the Spirit, nor is he tied to particular instruments; he can raise up a seed to serve him, as well qualified as those who went before; *instead of the fathers,* when he pleases, *shall be the children,*[u] and will be so, if their spirit descend and rest upon us; *with God all things are possible:* but, alas, we have not this hopeful prospect to give you; we who are risen up, come too far short of those who are gone, and going off, into whose labours we are entered, to be able to excuse you from deep lamentations of the death of your elder ministers, and from sighing out your Ichabod, *Where is the glory?*[v]

Is it nothing to you, then, all ye who pass by, is it nothing to you, that the gold is thus become dirt, and the most fine gold changed;[w] that we have reason to fear such an alteration in the house of our God among us, as was in the temple of Jerusalem in Rehoboam's time, when the shields of gold were carried away, and shields of brass were provided instead of them.[x] God look upon us, and prevent the fatal consequences of such a change as this! How far God may carry on his work by prerogative of power, even when he has removed such workmen, I cannot say; but this I am sure of, their removal is a very threatening omen, which we are all concerned to have awful apprehensions of.

It were now easy to draw a great many inferences from this melancholy subject; to reprove those who lay not to heart such sad dispensations, and much more those who rejoice in the extinguishing of our lights, because they love darkness rather; to encourage ministers to diligence and fidelity in their work, that they may finish their course with honour, as well as joy; to quicken and engage you all to a careful improvement of the labours of your faithful ministers, while they are continued with you, that you may not have tears for your own hardiness and unprofitableness, to mix with your tears for their removal; to inquire whether you have made a due improvement of the former afflictions of this kind you have been under, in the death both of good ministers, and good Christians, who have shone as lights among you, holding forth the word of life.

But it is time I apply myself more particularly to the sad occasion of our being together here this even-

n Phil. i. 8. o Rom. v. 7. p Isa. lvii. 1.
q Ezek. xxxiii. 33. r Mic. vii. 1. s 2 Kings ii. 12.
t Lam. v. 16. u Ps xlv. 16. v 1 Sam. iv. 21.
w Lam iv. 1. x 2 Chron. xii. 9, 10.

ing. Though it is not a Paul, it is not an apostle, we have now parted with, and are now lamenting; we compare not our fir-trees with the cedars of Lebanon; yet it is one who, I believe, was manifest in the consciences of many of you, to be a good minister of Jesus Christ, and one who had obtained mercy of the Lord to be found both skilful and faithful in that great work.

The earthen vessel, now a broken vessel, we have lodged in the dust, with the expectation of its being raised shortly a vessel of honour; and now, what improvements shall we make of this sad providence, and how shall we pay some part of that debt of respect we owe to the surviving name and memory?

Were this a proper place and time for me to express my own sorrow on account of this breach made upon us, I could not find out better words, nor more apposite and expressive to do it in, than those of David, when he lamented the fall of one, who had been dear to him as his own soul; *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan, very pleasant hast thou been unto me.*[y] If while I live I forget him, I must lie under the imputation of forgetting my own friend, and my father's friend.[z] A friend, with whom I have had an intimate acquaintance about seven or eight and twenty years, with whom I have many a time taken sweet counsel, and by whose conversation and correspondence, I either have been edified, or might have been; having always found him, not only well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven,[a] but ready to distribute, and willing to communicate.[b] Such was the pleasantness of his life, and the distress by his death must be proportionable; *Lover and friend hast thou put far from me;*[c] *and my acquaintance into darkness.* In our lives we were not much divided, either in time or place; how far, and how long, we may be so in our deaths, he only knows in whose hands our breath and times are. God, by his grace, make me ready and willing to go after him!

But we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying;[d] that is my design, that is my desire; and I hope, by the blessing of God, it will be some way edifying to you, if, 1. I give you some short account of his character; 2. If I make some remarks upon his removal; and, 3. If I then briefly direct you to some of the work of this day in its day.

1. If I would expatiate upon his character, I have a very wide field before me, and am really sensible there is a justice owing to so good, so great a name. I confess I am not fond of making every friend I love and honour a *nonsuch*; it must be left to him, to whom all hearts are open, to put that into any man's character, that there is none like him in the earth;[e] yet, I think, that this is not to be deposited as common dust, nor his monument to be inscribed with common characters; and yet, as an advocate for his honour, shall only make that very reasonable demand, *Give him of the fruit of his hands, and let his own works praise him in the gates.*[f]

But aiming, as I said, at your edification, two things I shall suggest, which I think have a direct tendency that way, and may turn to a good account.

(1.) Let that be observed concerning him, which will furnish us with matter for praise and thanksgiving to God. And a great deal of reason we have to give thanks, not only in general, for all the saints and servants of God, who are departed this life in the *faith and fear of his holy name;* to the general assembly of whom, we are come in faith, hope, and love; but in a particular manner for those who have been in their day the lights of the church, and justly accounted fathers in it; for who is their Father? who but the Father of lights and spirits, *the Lord God of the holy prophets?*[g]

What we call the endowments of nature, a great genius, a solid judgment, a clear head, a strong memory, a quick fancy, a ready utterance, and the like, are all gifts from above; from his hand who formeth the Spirit of man within him. *The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord has made even both of them.*[h] All souls are his, even the greatest, the largest souls are so.

What we ascribe to industry, and close application of mind, attainments in knowledge, and a great compass of learning, God must have the praise of; for he it is that giveth men power to get this wealth, and it is not got by their might, and the power of their hands.[i] He it is that giveth the tongue of the learned, and who, in order to that, openeth the ear to hear as the learned.[k] He it is that lighteth the candles; and it is with a borrowed light that the church's stars shine, with a light reflected from the Sun of righteousness, that great light of the world.

It is to God, therefore, that we should give the praise of all those excellent gifts and graces, which we have observed in our deceased brother. Bless the Lord, who raised him out of a remote and obscure part of the kingdom, as a root out of a dry ground, to be so eminently serviceable to the interests of Christ's kingdom in his day, qualified him for service, called him to it, and signally owned him in it. Let us glorify the God of Israel, who has given such power unto men, and put such treasures into earthen vessels.

(2.) Let that be observed concerning him, which is proper for our imitation. What you have heard from him, and seen in him, that was virtuous and praiseworthy, transcribe it into your own hearts and lives, speak and do in like manner, and the God of peace shall be with you.[l] Those who were exemplary while they lived, should be made use of as

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[y] 2 Sam. i. 26. [z] Prov. xxvii. 10. [a] Matt. xiii. 52.
[b] 1 Tim. vi. 18. [c] Ps. lxxxviii. 18. [d] 2 Cor. xii. 19. [e] Job i. 8.
[f] Prov. xxxi. 31. [g] 1 Sam. x. 12. [h] Prov. xx. 12.
[i] Deut. viii. 17, 18. [k] Isa. l. 4. [l] Phil. iv. 9.

examples when they are dead. It is required in general, that we be followers of all those, who are now through faith and patience inheriting the promises.[m] But particularly, that we follow the faith and holiness of those who have been by office our guides in the good ways of the Lord, considering the end of their conversation;[n] yet with this necessary proviso and limitation, that we follow them as they followed Christ,[o] and blessed Paul himself, that great example, was to be followed no further.

Here let all who know him observe for themselves, and preach to themselves; his children, his pupils, his familiar friends and acquaintance, let them recollect what they have taken notice of in him, that was fit to be imitated, and improve it for their own direction, caution, and quickening. I shall only mention two or three things, wherein I would, for my part, propose him to myself for a pattern, and endeavour to imitate him.

Marcus Antonius the Emperor, that great teacher and example of virtue, begins his celebrated book *των εν εαυτον—concerning himself*, that is, his diary, with an account of the particular good lessons, or rules of conversation, which he learned from his parents, tutors, and others, whom he names with respect, who were the guides and companions of his youth. Were I to draw up such an account, I should be unjust to him, if I should leave him out of it, in whom I have thought these things, among others, well worthy imitation:

[1.] That he was a good husband of precious time; and that is a piece of good husbandry, which I am sure is good divinity. I have always known him to be an indefatigable student, and one who took so much pleasure in his work, both as a scholar, and as a minister, that one might see he accounted it not only its own wages, but its own recreation.

Even till his Lord came he gave a constant attendance to reading, exhortation, and doctrine, not neglecting the gift that was in him, but continually meditating upon these things, giving himself wholly to them; so that his profiting (even in his early days) appeared unto all men.[p] His Lord having intrusted him with five talents, he continually occupied the same, and traded with them, till, by the grace of God, he had made them five talents more. When he was sometimes urged to abate of the constancy and intenseness of his studies, in consideration of his health, he would say, "You must excuse me, I have but a little time to be working in, and I must be busy." *And seest thou a man* thus *diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings*, and *not before mean men.*

It was often observed concerning him, how uneasy he would be, when forced and kept from his studies by that conversation which was only entertaining, and not edifying, and with what pleasure, as soon as possibly he could, he would retire from it to his work; that he might fill up time with something that would turn to a good account, according as the duty of every day required. This is in a happy sense *living fast.*

[2.] That he was ready and mighty in the Scriptures, and made them above any thing his meditation. His large acquaintance with other learning, did not at all abate his value and pursuit of Scripture learning, to which all his other studies were made subservient. As he lived a Scripture religion, so he preached a Scripture divinity. Scripture language was his eloquence, like that of Apollos, who was *an eloquent man*, because *mighty in the Scriptures*;[q] Scripture reasons were his arguments, like the same Apollos, who *mightily convinced the Jews, showing* what he taught *by the Scriptures.*[r]

Thus he came to be such an excellent expositor as you know he was; opening the Scripture by itself, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and speaking the things of God, as they ought to be spoken, in the words which the Holy Ghost teaches.[s]

Thus he was furnished with milk for babes, and pasture for the lambs of the flock, witness his great dexterity in explaining the catechism; and with strong meat also for strong men, witness his solid and substantial discourses, in which he set before you the great things of God with admirable clearness, and in the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.

Thus he adhered to the good old way, and testified the pure gospel of the grace of God, which exalts the Lord Jesus alone, as all in all, for strength as well as righteousness, and teaches us to cast every crown at his feet; taking all occasions to witness against those notions, which set up man's sufficiency in competition with Christ.

[3.] That he was a faithful and wise reprover of sin, and bold in bearing his testimony against it. Though you know, he was very courteous and obliging in all his behaviour, and not willing to make any man angry or sad, yet when there was a just occasion, he would admonish and rebuke with all authority, and yet with meekness and long-suffering.

Here he set his face as flint, and clad himself with zeal as with a cloak; as one who knew very well whose cause he pleaded, when he pleaded against sin; and how faithful and kind the wounds of a friend are, while the kisses of an enemy are deceitful; and as one, who believed there was a truth in Solomon's observation, which amounts to a divine promise, Prov. xxviii. 23. *He that rebuketh a man* for his faults with wisdom and tenderness, though for the present he may incur his displeasure for his

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m Heb. vi. 12. n Heb. xiii. 7. o 1 Cor. xi. 1. p 1 Tim. iv. 13—15.

q Acts xviii. 24. r Acts xviii. 28. s 1 Cor. ii. 13.

plain dealing, yet *afterwards he shall find more favour*, and be looked upon as a better friend, *than he that flattereth with his tongue*.

[4.] That he was a man of true catholic charity; though no man was clearer in his own judgment, better understood the grounds on which he went, nor was better able to give an account of the hope that was in him with meekness and fear, yet he maintained an extensive charity for those from whom he differed, and a temper of mind toward them that was truly Christian, and became a follower of the Prince of peace, and a servant of the God of love.

As he wrote, he thought and lived: MODERATION was his VIRTUE, it was STILL his virtue; and it is not long since he took an effectual course to let it be known unto all men, as if he had foreseen that the Lord was at hand. And this is a virtue which has, and will have, its praise, with all those who know how to distinguish between the weighty and uncontested matters of the law and gospel,[t] *judgment, mercy, and the love of God*, and the matters of doubtful disputation,[u] such as the distinction of meats and days. This is the virtue, by which the unity of the Spirit is kept in the bond of peace; notwithstanding a diversity of opinion, and practice accordingly. The triumphs of this virtue over bigotry on all sides, will contribute abundantly to the peace of Zion's walls, and the prosperity of her palaces.

2. We are next to consider the end of his conversation,[v] εκβασιν—the *issue*, or *outlet*, of it. Having seen how he went on in the world, we are now to inquire how he went out of the world. Others had more of his life than you of this place had; but God sent him hither about six or seven years ago, to finish his testimony first, and then to finish his course among you; so that it is but a little time that you have had to improve by his life; God, by his grace, enable you to improve so much the more by his death: and a very improvable providence it is. It is a cloud mostly black and dark, yet not without its bright side.

(1.) We are here presented with a very melancholy and afflictive scene, which we ought to have very awful, serious thoughts of; something there is more than ordinary in this house of mourning, which the living should lay to heart.

To see a man so well qualified with gifts and graces for the service of Christ and his church, as he was; so well furnished, by the blessing of God upon the many years' hard studies of an uncommon head, with all sorts of useful knowledge; so inquisitive after more knowledge; and withal so communicative of what he did know. To see such a man thus taken away, in the midst of his serviceableness to his generation, when he had but little exceeded the fiftieth year of his life; though his strong constitution of body, and prudent management of himself, gave encouragement to hope, that though these treasures were in an earthen vessel, yet there were goods laid up for many years; and though his zeal and unwearied industry promised us a great deal more of public service, and that he should long be a blessing to his generation, yet to have the number of such months cut off in the midst, such a tongue silenced, such a hand withered, such a head laid in the dust, and at such a time as this, when it could so ill be spared: *What shall we say to these things?* What construction can we make of such a providence as this? We must have recourse to our first principles, abide by them, and resolve to hold them fast, and not let them go, how difficult soever it may be to reconcile some particular events to them. However it be, we are sure that God is neither unwise, nor unjust, nor unkind: he is not only an absolute Sovereign, who may do what he will; but a religious Ruler, who does no wrong to any of his creatures; a tender father, who designs no hurt to any of his children. However it be, yet the Lord Jesus takes care of his church, secures its interests, and the glory of his own name; which, whatever becomes of us, will endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. Under the threatenings of providence, we must fly to the promises of the word, and cast anchor there; God knows what he is doing, though we do not; and we are sure dwells in perfect light, though as to us he makes darkness his pavilion. *Thy way*, O God, *is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters*; such as cannot be fathomed, cannot be tracked; but we are confident of this very thing, that thou art *righteous in all thy ways, and holy in all thy works*.

Were we not certain that the soul is immortal, and that there is another life after this, we should be tempted to expostulate with our Maker, as the psalmist does, *Lord, wherefore hast thou made all men*, especially such men as these, *in vain?* So long in the making, so admirably well made; and yet so suddenly unmade, and so little use in comparison made of them? Such a living temple reared, and yet the people of thy holiness to possess it such a little while? Many continued who are the burthens of the earth, under which it groans, as sadly weary of them; and yet those removed who were the blessings of it, after which it groans, as sadly wanting them? We now are at a loss, and cannot expound such dispensations as these; but the resurrection of the just, and the glories of the future state, will solve the problem, and clear up this seeming paradox; *What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter*; when the mystery of God shall be finished. How those lights still shine to the praise of the Sun of Righteousness, which we count extinguished; and how these ser-

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[t] Matt. xxiii. 23. [u] Rom. xiv. 1. [v] Heb. xiii. 7.

vants of Christ still serve him in his temple, the period of whose usefulness we are here lamenting, we cannot tell, nor how much to their advantage, the time that is lost on earth may be made up in heaven. Yet still, on us it looks black, and is a very sad presage; the Lord's voice by it cries in the city, cries in the country. God grant we may understand what it says, and may return a good answer, that our God may not proceed in his controversy.

(2.) Yet even in this afflictive providence, the grace of God presents us with something very encouraging and reviving to us; and that is, the great comfort and joy with which our deceased brother finished his course; which I ought to take notice of, to the glory of God, and for your instruction. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man*, though it be not always rapture and ecstasy, yet *it is peace:* the *effect of righteousness* will be *quietness* and *assurance for ever*.

I came short of being a witness of his translation, but those who were about him when he was taken up, saw with what a wonderful serenity and composure of mind he performed his dying work; that work which is to be done but once, and therefore had need be well done. He had often prayed for grace to finish well, and it appeared that his prayer was answered, and that the grace of God in him was not in vain; so cheerfully did he look the king of terrors in the face and bid his message welcome. Though he had as much reason as most men have, upon all accounts, to desire life, yet it appeared that to depart, and to be with Christ, was to him much more desirable.

The strong pain of the stone, (that *flagellum studiosorum—scourge of the student*, as it has been called,) with which he was frequently exercised, he bore not with the senselessness and stupidity of a stoic, but with the humble patience and submissiveness of a Christian, who had learned of his master to take up his cross. And when upon the continuance of a threatening and fatal symptom, he received the sentence of death within himself, with what ease did he take leave of the world, as one well pleased to think of being no more in it.

His solemn farewell to his children and pupils, the good counsels he gave them, the blessing with which he blessed them in the name of the Lord, and the testimony he bore with his dying lips to the good ways of God wherein he had walked, I hope they will never forget; and that particularly, they and we will ever remember and practise what he said, after many other good counsels, should be the last and great thing he would recommend to them, and that was, humility; "It is" (said he) "one of the brightest ornaments of a young minister to be humble."

The words of God which he had made his songs in the house of his pilgrimage, were his delightful entertainment when his tabernacle was in taking down. How pleasantly did he triumph then, in the words of blessed Paul, *I know whom I have believed, and he is able to keep what I have committed unto him against that day*, 2 Tim. i. 12.

When he was asked in his illness, whether he would have some of his friends sent for to keep him company, he answered, "My fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and he that is not satisfied with that company, does not deserve it."

Another time, being asked would he not be glad to see his brother from Warrington, for whom he had an entire affection, he replied, "I know no man after the flesh; my elder Brother is in heaven, who is the first-born among many brethren." Thus he seemed to be taken up *with* heaven, before he was taken up *to* heaven.

Coming to himself again once after a fit, in which those about him thought him departing, he asked, "Have I not finished yet? I thought I should have finished now." Thus did he, with the sucking child, play upon the hole of the asp, and, with the weaned child, put his hand upon the cockatrice's den; knowing, that death itself cannot hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain, Isa. xi. 8, 9.

Overhearing his dear and affectionate yoke-fellow bemoaning herself, and saying, "*O this is a sad day!*" being the Lord's day, and some few hours before he died; he replied, with some show of resentment, "A sad day do you call it? No, it is not a sad day, I thank God; it is a comfortable day to me." And it was observed that he departed with a smiling countenance.

As he found himself drawing near to his end, he was ever and anon lifting up his heart to God, in such devout and pious breathings as these: "Blessed be God for Jesus Christ. How long, Lord, holy and true? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." And not long before he departed, "Now let the blessed angels come and do their office."

Thus, my brethren, thus he finished his course; this was the end of his conversation. In such a heavenly temper as this he removed to the world of spirits, as one who was already acquainted with that world, and longed to be better acquainted with it. Blessed be God, who thus crowned his own work in him, and brought forth the top-stone of that blessed building with shoutings, and let us cry, *Grace, grace to it.*

Let this help to confirm our faith in the gospel of Christ, and to assure us that its original and tendency is divine and heavenly. That we see it furnishes the professors of it with effectual supports, and real solid joys, then when they most need them, and when all other comforts fail, and are insufficient.

The everlasting covenant, and particularly the promise of eternal life, you see is a fountain of living waters, which will refresh and make glad the heart, when all those things which the world offers us to be depended upon, and delighted in, will be dried up as the brooks in summer. I beseech you, sirs, build upon a foundation which will hold firm, when this deluge comes; treasure up comforts which will stand you in stead in a dying hour, and which will indeed make the clods of the valley sweet to you, *sit tibi terra levis—the very earth itself light to you.*

Let this encourage us in our Christian race and warfare, that those who have fought this good fight with courage and constancy, have had the comforts of it in their last extremities; and having run their race with patience, have finished their course with joy. Christ's faithful soldiers die not only in the bed of honour, but in the bed of peace and rest. Let us hereby be quickened to make our calling and election sure, for so we shall have, not only an entrance, but an abundant entrance, ministered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

3. I shall now close with a word of exhortation to you, my friends, who are here lamenting the loss of your faithful minister, that you may be sowing in your tears, doing your duty now you are bewailing your affliction. We will take it for granted that, like those Ephesian elders, you sorrow most of all because you shall see his face no more in this world; from that consideration, therefore, what I have now to say to you by way of counsel and direction shall take rise.

(1.) Now you shall see his face no more, thank God that ever you did see his face. When Job's comforts were taken away, he blessed God who gave them. Own yourselves indebted to the divine favour, for the setting up of such a burning and shining light here in your candlestick. There is a particular providence displayed in the removal and settlements of ministers. Be thankful for that providence which sent him hither, and that grace which, I trust, made him a blessing to you. Be thankful for what you have seen, and heard, and tasted of the word of life in his ministry, and that you have had reason to say, that God was with him of a truth.

Thank God for all the good ministers, whose faces you have seen to your comfort, and who were, in their day, the helpers of your faith and joy. Remember your guides, the guides of your youth, which have spoken to you the word of God; and remember to give God thanks for them, and for the good they were instrumental of to your souls. We do not desire you to build or garnish the sepulchres of the prophets, but here set up your Ebenezer to the honour of him who raised them up to you, saying, *Hitherto the Lord hath helped us;* helped us with good ministers, having never left himself without witness, nor you without helps for your souls, and directors of your way in this wilderness. Thanks be to God, we never knew the meaning of a famine of the word, the heavenly manna; though it has been often despised, yet has never been withheld.

Thank God for those whose faces we yet see, for the remnant that is left of the messengers of the Lord, and that when so many are removed into graves, the rest are not removed into corners. Though your pulpit be in mourning, thanks be to God, it is not empty. You of this place have particular reason to be thankful for the lengthening out of the days of your aged minister, and for the fruit he still brings forth in his old age. I pray God that your profiting, in proportion to that and other your advantages, may appear unto all men.

(2.) In the hiding of his face, take notice of the hiding of God's face, and look upon it as a token of his displeasure. Hear it as the Lord's controversy, and inquire diligently, and beg of him to show you wherefore he contendeth with you. It is not seven years since God removed one faithful good minister by death, (Mr. *Brian*,) who had long laboured among you in the word and doctrine; and now another taken away from the midst of you. Is not this an indication of God's anger? and ought not you to humble yourselves under his mighty hand? Let *our brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning, which the Lord has kindled;* and by serious repentance help to quench the flame.

It was certainly in displeasure to the people, that God silenced Ezekiel, and told him, he should no more be to them a reprover, Ezek. iii. 26. and you are now under such a rebuke. Now is a time for you to look into your own hearts, and to inquire what you have done to provoke God thus to break you with breach upon breach. Lay not the blame on others, but each of you take it to yourselves, and give your consciences leave to deal faithfully with you. It is sin that separates between you and God, between you and your ministers. Find out the sin that has done you this mischief, and mourn for that. Weep not so much for them who are gone, but rather weep for yourselves, and for your own sin and folly, which have forfeited the advantages you have lost. Ask seriously, have not I been a careless, trifling hearer of the word? Has not my heart gone after my covetousness, when I have come before God as his people come, and sitten before him as his people sit? Has not the word been unprofitable to me, not being mixed with faith? Has not my conversation been disagreeable to my profession, and my practice contrary to what I have heard, and been taught? Have not I left my first love, and is not that the reason wherefore the candles are thus removed, and thereby the candlestick itself threatened? How long has God come seeking fruit, but has found none, or next none? And therefore, though he has not

yet cut down the barren tree, he has in displeasure removed one of the dressers of it.

O let this providence awaken you to repentance, for your little proficiency under the means of grace; and set yourselves to mortify those lusts and corruptions, which have been the hinderances of your profiting; and have made your hearts like the highway, or the rock, or the thorny ground, under the seed of the word. It is said, that when David lamented Saul and Jonathan, he took care to *teach the children of Judah the use of the bow*, 2 Sam. i. 18. Which may be understood of the military bow; those great men being slain by the archers of the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxxi. 3. He endeavoured to make the men of Judah more expert archers, that they might revenge the death of their princes upon the Philistines. Let us meditate such a holy revenge this day, and resolve by the grace of God to be the death of our sins; finding them to be the death of our friends, particularly of our ministers.

(3.) Now you must see his face no more, recollect what you have heard from him, and seen in him, for your edification. Now this faithful witness has finished his testimony, will you set yourselves to sum up the evidence, and do it faithfully. Review what you have seen, and give what you have heard a rehearing, to better purpose than before. Call to mind the subjects he has preached upon among you, the good truths he has taught you, and treasure them up, that they may be ready to you upon all occasions. The people who attended the ministry of John Baptist, after he was dead, remembered what they had heard from him, and improved it for the assistance of their faith in Jesus Christ; *All that John said of this man was true.*

Remember, I beseech you, what you have received and heard, and hold fast, continuing in the things which you have learned. His last sermon, particularly, I hope you will never forget; when in the midst of his illness, God granted him such a reviving (which proved a lightening, as you call it, before death) that he thought himself able to preach. His love to his work and to your souls brought him hither. If it were to his own injury, as perhaps it was, let it be so much the more to your profit; live that life which he then taught you; get to be experimentally acquainted with that great mystery of godliness, which he then endeavoured to lead you into, from Rom. i. 17. *The just shall live by faith.* Live by faith now, and you shall live by sight for ever. Look back upon the years of his ministry with you, and the words you have heard from him which quickened you, never forget them. Now he must break the bread of life to you no more, *gather up the fragments which remain, that nothing may be lost.*

(4.) Now you must see his face no more in this world, seriously consider, how you will look him in the face in the great day. Believe it, sirs, that day will come, and we shall as sure see it as we see this: it concerns us to inquire whether we shall see it to our comfort, or to our confusion; whether it will be to us a day of trembling, or a day of triumph. It is certain, when our Lord Jesus shall come in the glory of his Father, he will be attended by the ten thousands of his saints. Enoch foresaw this, and foretold it. Among those holy myriads, no doubt, we shall meet our faithful ministers; and if we shall know any of our relations in this day, as I see no reason to think but that we shall, sure we shall take particular notice of those, who were sent to us as ambassadors for Christ, ministering the gospel of the grace of God. Nay, they will then be to give account of the souls committed to them, and of the success of their negociation; the servant who was sent to invite to the marriage, came and showed his Lord all the slights that were put upon him; and by the word which you now hear, you will then be judged, according as our testimony is or is not believed.

Think then, with what shame and confusion those will see the faces of their ministers in that day, who lived and died in an unsanctified, unregenerate state, whom Christ, by his ministers, long and often invited to light and life, but they refused, and persisted in their refusal, loving death and darkness rather, and so will their doom be. Their ministers then will be called to appear as evidence against them, and dreadful to the condemned sinners will such a testimony as this be. Lord, *we called* them, but *they refused; we stretched out our hands, but no man regarded.* We laid before them the terrors of the Lord, showed them his wrath revealed from heaven against their ungodliness and unrighteousness, but it prevailed not to startle and awaken them. We gave them warning, told them many a time what would be the end of their evil way, but they would not take the warning; we have delivered our own souls, but we could not deliver theirs. We invited them to Christ, and to the marriage supper of the Lamb; we told them often of the glories of redeeming love, the riches of gospel grace, the consolations of the new covenant, the pleasures of serious godliness, and the joys at God's right hand for evermore; but we could not win upon them, to give up themselves unto the Lord. *We have piped unto them, but they have not danced; we have mourned unto them, but they have not lamented.* How will this aggravate the misery of those that perish, and bring oil to their flames!

But I hope better things of you, my brethren, *and things that accompany salvation, though I thus speak*; the labour of your ministers among you, I trust, has not been in vain, and shall not be so. The apostle expresses, with a holy triumph, the prospect he had of meeting his friends with comfort in that day; *for what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing*, which

we have our eye much upon in our present services and sufferings, *are not even ye,* not so much now in this imperfect state, but *in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?* O let us live so, that our ministers may thus give up their account of us with joy, for that will be profitable and comfortable for us. Then how sorrowful soever our parting with them is at death, our meeting with them again at the resurrection will be joyful; and under our present griefs, we may comfort ourselves and one another with the hopes and expectations of it.

Lastly, Now you must see his face no more, look more by faith upon the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. All flesh, you see, is as grass, and all the glory of man; the greatest eminency of gifts and usefulness, is as the flower of grass, sullied, withered, and laid in the dust; but the glory of the Lord in the word endures for ever, and is liable to no decay.

Our deceased brother, when near his death, hearing one who stood by say, "Alas! what shall we do if he be taken from us?" answered, "Be not concerned at that, *The* LORD *liveth.*" Trust therefore in the living GOD, and in him secure to yourselves living comforts. You change your ministers, but you do not change your Master. The law made them priests who had infirmity, who, therefore, could not continue by reason of death, and the gospel does the same; but the Lord Jesus has an unchangeable priesthood, for he is consecrated for evermore. The blessed Spirit is given to abide with us for ever, and in him our Lord is, and will be, with his church always, even unto the end of the world. When you have another minister, you shall not have another gospel, nor another Saviour, but still the same treasure, only in another earthen vessel. Let not your religion then die with your minister, not your faith, and love, and holy zeal be buried in his grave; for you are built not upon the apostles and prophets themselves, but upon their foundation, Jesus Christ himself, the everlasting foundation, and the chief corner-stone.

Keep your eye, therefore, upon the Lord Jesus, and set your hearts on him; rejoice in him always, and rely upon him, and that joy shall never be turned into sorrow, nor will that hope ever make you ashamed. Our candles are soon extinguished, and at the longest burn out of themselves, but the Sun of righteousness shines perpetually. *Walk,* therefore, *in the light of the Lord.* Cisterns are dried up, but the fountain of life is ever full,—ever flowing. You see the end of your minister's conversation, but *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.* To him I commend you all, and to the word of his grace; as blessed Paul did, Acts xx. 32. his mourning friends here; knowing very well, that that grace is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

FUNERAL OF DR. SAMUEL BENION,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL IN SHREWSBURY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED, A CONCISE MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE.

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1 PETER i. 24, 25.

All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.

SURE I need not remind you, brethren, you cannot but remember it, you cannot but be thinking of it at this time, that it is not full two years since we were upon a like sorrowful occasion met together in this place, to solemnize the funeral of a very able, faithful minister of this congregation, whose memory I hope is, and will be, precious among you, Mr. James Owen. If you and I had made a due improvement of that severe stroke, surely we had not felt the smart of this: but, LORD, when thy hand is lifted up, and men *will not see, they shall see.* If God judgeth, he will overcome. God grant, that this present dark dispensation of providence may so revive the impressions of that, as by both together we may be duly humbled under the mighty hand of God; that Elihu's complaint of old, Job xxxiii. 14. may not be taken up against us, *God speaketh once, yea, twice,* yet *man perceiveth not,* does not understand the meaning, nor answer the ends of what he says; or that of the prophet, that *the righteous,* as to our world, *perish,* and *no man lays it to heart,* or is duly affected with it; nay, merciful, useful, good men are taken away, and none consider it. O that we knew how rightly to expound, and that you knew how rightly to apprehend, such events as these.

He whom we have now followed to the silent grave, and left there, then followed with us, and was a deep sharer in our griefs on that occasion. But must the successor in the work of life so soon succeed in dying work too? All who go before us, say to us, as Christ to Peter, *You cannot follow me now,* because your work is not done; but *you shall follow me hereafter,* John xiii. 36. But here is one, who soon followed to the grave his predecessor in this pulpit; for death is not tied up to the rules of proportion, or due distances; every man must go in his own order, the order appointed by him in whose hand our times are.

Considering age, and bodily strength and vigour, we who are ministers must think, that he whom we have now laid in the dust was, a few days ago, likely enough, in a course of nature, to have seen most of us laid there. I thought concerning him,—This is the Joseph, that shall put his hand on my eyes, Gen. xlvi. 4. and do that office for me, which I am now doing for him: but living and dying, it seems, do not go by livelihoods: the Sovereign Lord of life has ordained otherwise, and the number of his months (which were far from being months of vanity) are cut off in the midst.

Now, what shall we say to these things? *What is this that God hath done unto us?* For my part, I am quite at a loss, am full of confusion, and know not what to say. The tidings astonished me, and made me cry out to God, as the prophet did, Ezek. xi. 13. *Ah! Lord God! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?* But what shall I say to you? I wish I were better able to perform this service which your aged pastor has called me to. How to order the course before you I know not, and yet something I must say, both as a mourner with you, and as a monitor to you, that I might both soften the ground, and break it up.

I have something to say as a mourner with you: I am willing to hope you have no need to raise up

your mourning, of singing men, or singing women, to move your passions; you are sensible of your loss, and here is a grievous mourning for it; we are lamenting one, that I perceive is universally lamented, and have the tears of many mingled with ours on this occasion. But my business will be, to show you what reason we have thus to lay to heart this breach made upon us, that we may be able to give a good answer to that question, which, whenever we are of a sorrowful countenance, we should put to ourselves. *Wherefore look we so sadly to-day? Why art thou cast down, O my soul?* That if there be no good reason for the grief, we may dismiss it; if there be, we may direct it aright.

For my own part, I have all the reason in the world to bewail the loss of a very dear and affectionate friend, with whom I have many a time taken sweet counsel. You, for your part, have reason to bewail the loss of an able, faithful minister, from whom you have many a time received good counsel. And that we have of late lost so many such, cannot but aggravate the grief. *O that our heads were waters, and our eyes fountains of tears*, that we might sorrow after a godly sort; not for them who are gone; if we loved them we should rejoice rather in their joy, that joy of their LORD, into which they are entered; but for ourselves, and for our children, who are left behind: and God give us grace to sow now in these tears for them, that we may hereafter reap in joy with them. And the truth is, as there are none of the afflictions of this present time that has more in them to justify our grief, nor over which we may more safely say, *We do well to mourn*, than the death of good people and good ministers; so there are none that (when the matter is considered entirely) has more in them to qualify our grief, and to balance it; for to them, whom to live was Christ, to die is gain, everlasting gain. By St. Stephen's death the church lost a minister, and therefore, justly, when they carried him to his burial, made great lamentation over him, which well became devout men, Acts viii. 2. and is recorded for our imitation; yet, at the same time, it gained a martyr. And, *if I be offered* (says St. Paul) *upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice*, not only myself, for my crown, but *with you all*, for the benefit which may accrue to you thereby.

The wise man recommends it to us as an excellent means of increase in wisdom, to frequent the house of mourning, and to accommodate ourselves to the temper of it: there (says he) *the heart of the wise is*, and there it learns many a good lesson, while the heart of fools is in the house of mirth, and there learns many a bad one. Two houses of mourning this death, this so great a death, calls us to. Go to the house whence we fetched those dear remains we have now laid by, or laid up rather, in the dust, and that is a house of mourning for its father, for its master, who was every way its glory and blessing; this is a more common case, and what occurs often; but besides that, here is another house of mourning, this place of your religious assemblies is so. The gates of the daughter of Sion are covered with a cloud; and justly, when one of the masters of the assembly is removed, his light to be seen, and his voice to be heard, no more among them. We find it made the character of those whom God will gather, gather with everlasting loving-kindness, that they are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, and that to them the reproach of it is a burthen. When the solemn assembly is thus deprived of its guides and glories, one after another, and broken with breach upon breach, all who wish well to it ought to be sorrowful: and coming thus from one house of mourning to another, we are inexcusable, if by both together some good impressions be not made upon our souls, which will abide and command there, and if by the sadness of the countenance our hearts be not made some way better, God by his grace make them every way better.

I must say something also as a monitor to you; for the business of your watchmen is to give you warning, which you are to take at your peril. Believe it, sirs, this rod has a voice, a loud voice; whether you perceive it or no, the man of wisdom will. That you therefore may approve yourselves wisdom's children, *hear ye the Lord's controversy*, and send us not to plead it with the rocks and the mountains, to as much purpose as with you; for a hearing it will have, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear. You are called to hearken to the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war; for when ambassadors are recalled, heralds are sent: none of you, I hope, have said, *We will not hearken.*

God has a controversy with you of this place, of this congregation, from the head of which two such eminently useful men have been removed in so short a time, in both of whom you thought you had goods laid up for many years. He has a controversy with us who are ministers; for hereby our hands are very much weakened, and our glory is waxen thin. Lord, *show us wherefore thou contendest with us.* It highly concerns us, I am sure, to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, which is gone forth against us, and by earnest prayers to stand in the gap, at which our glory seems to be going out, and our ruin to be breaking in, that we may make good the breach. The putting out of our candles is a bad omen of the removal of our candlestick; it is, at least, a call to us, to remember whence we are fallen, and repent, lest it be removed. We know what our sins have deserved, and what Providence threatens us with, and are concerned to meet God in the way of his judgments; in such a day as this, he may well wonder if there be no intercessor; for even the Jews themselves, when our Saviour spoke of taking the

vineyard from them, and giving it to others, startled at the very mention of it, saying, *God forbid.*[a] And shall we be less solicitous about privileges more precious?

The text I have read to you, will lead us both to the lamentations we have to make, and to the admonitions we have to give, on this solemn occasion.

1. In the places from which it is quoted, it is the voice of one crying in the wilderness, who, that he might prepare the way of the Lord, even in the desert, is ordered to proclaim this, *All flesh is grass*, &c. Isa. xl. 6—8. I need not tell you, John Baptist was that voice;[b] it is his testimony concerning himself, and a modest testimony. He was only the voice, God was the speaker. And I am apt to think, that as John was the voice crying, so he was the grass that was to wither, and the flower that was to fade, which he was to give notice of, that the people, which mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not,[c] might be satisfied he was only his forerunner; for all his glory was to be done away, and would be no glory, in comparison with the glory of the Messiah, which excelled, and would remain. John's ministry and baptism soon came to an end, and gave way to him who was to come. He himself spoke of it to his disciples, when they were jealous of the growing honour of our Lord Jesus, and he spoke it with all possible satisfaction, *He must increase, but I must decrease.*[d] And Christ speaks of John's being but for a season, a burning and shining light.[e] His office was *pro tempore—for the time being*, an introduction of good things to come, and his brightness like the morning star, which disappears when the sun rises. This grass began to wither about eighteen or nineteen months after his first showing unto Israel, when he was cast into prison by Herod, and was quite cut down, some time after, when he was beheaded: and his baptism did not long survive him, but his followers soon became the followers of Christ, to whom he had justly and generously consigned them, and turned them over.

Ministers, who, like John Baptist, are friends and servants of the bridegroom, like him must wither as grass, and all their glory fade. But Christ their Master, the *Word of the Lord*, the essential, eternal Word, *endureth for ever*, the *Word of life.*[f] For though he also, like John Baptist, was cut off in the midst of his week,[g] yet he rose again, rose to die no more; *Death has no more*, no longer, *dominion over* him. And *of him it is witnessed that he liveth.*[h] This is he who by the gospel is preached unto us, as an everlasting Father, and everliving Priest: his word also, which he has spoken and delivered to us, as it is a quickening so it is a living word, the last revelation, and which shall last through all the revolutions of time to the endless ages of eternity.

2. Here it is brought in by way of instruction and encouragement to the young converts, whom the apostle in the foregoing verses is exhorting to holiness and love. Be *holy*, and *love one another*,[i] and so prepare yourselves for the blessedness of heaven, which consists in the perfection of holiness and love; for you are born again, not of corruptible seed,[k] not of the Gentile learning, or the Jewish law, both which wither as grass, and will perish in the using, but by the word of the gospel, which is quick and powerful, and abides for ever; which will continue in the world while that stands, and in the sanctified soul while it lives: in the former it has lighted a candle which all the devils in hell cannot blow out; in the latter it has opened a well of living water, *springing up to life eternal.*

This consideration is very proper, and should be very powerful to quicken and confirm those who have delivered themselves into the mould of the gospel, and are leavened by it, that the principles they go upon are not doubtful or mutable, but eternal truths that will never fail; and though their ministers die, (Christ's followers as well as his forerunners are as grass, and their glory as a flower,) yet their faith does not die with them, for it rests not on the testimony of mortal men, but of the immortal God: they are lights, but they are not *that light*;[l] they seem to be pillars, but they are not our foundation; we soon see the end, the exit, of their conversation, but Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. To him therefore let us stedfastly adhere, and in him let us encourage ourselves and one another, on such a sorrowful occasion as that which brings us together at this time.

Two doctrines naturally arise from this text,

I. That man and his glory are fading and withering. *All flesh is grass.*

II. That God and his word are everliving, and everlasting. *The word of the Lord endures.* The former of these will furnish us with matter of lamentation, the latter of consolation; and God by his grace make both instructive, both to him that speaks and them that hear.

I. That man and his glory are fading and withering. We may truly say, This day is this Scripture fulfilled before our eyes, as we have heard so have we now seen, *All flesh is as grass*, and that grass withers. Nay, all the glory of man, all that which he is most valued and admired for, is as the flower of the grass, and that flower fadeth and falleth away.

1. Every funeral proves that *all flesh is as grass*, and that that *grass withers*. The body is here called *flesh*, because as flesh it is apt to putrify, it has no consistence, nor can any confidence be put in it; flesh is continually wasting, and would soon be consumed if not continually supplied, and, there-

a Luke xx. 16. b John i. 23. c Luke iii. 15.
d John iii. 30. e John v. 35. f 1 John i. 1.
g Dan. ix. 26, 27. h Heb. vii. 8. i Heb. vii. 15, 22.
k Heb. vii. 23. l John i. 7, 8.

fore, from it rather than from the bones (which without the flesh are a skeleton, and the very image of death) the living body has its denomination. Flesh is sometimes put for the corruption and sinfulness of our nature, to which our frailty and mortality are owing: *The body is dead because of sin*, and therefore it is fitly called flesh when it is spoken of as withering.

All flesh is grass, that is,

(1.) It is weak, and low, and little as grass. Mankind is indeed numerous as the grass of the field, multiplies, replenishes, and covereth the earth; but like grass, it is of the earth, earthy, mean, and of small account. Alas, the kingdoms of men which make so great a noise, so great a figure, in this lower world, are but as so many fields of grass compared with the bright and glorious constellations of stars, made up of the holy and blessed inhabitants of the upper regions. Man in his present state looks great, when set in the scale against the beasts that perish; but very little, yea, less than nothing, and vanity, when compared with the angels, and spirits of just men made perfect.

Proud men think themselves like the strong and stately cedars, oaks, or pines, but they soon find themselves as grass, as the grass of the field, liable to be nipt with every frost, trampled on by every foot, continually insulted by common calamities of human life, which we can no more resist or guard ourselves against, than the grass can secure itself from the fatal blast, when the wind passeth over it, and it is gone.

(2.) It is withering, and fading, and dying as grass; having both its rise and maintenance out of the earth, it hastens to the earth, and retires to its root and foundation in the dust. It soon withers, and is gone ere we are aware. In the morning, perhaps, it is green and growing up, its aspect pleasing, its prospect promising; but when we come to look upon it in our evening work, we find it cut down and withered. Nay, the grass upon the house-top, which seems advanced above its fellows, and proud of its advancement, withers first, and is least accounted of, withers before it grows up, and never fills the mower's hand; as if the nearer it came to the habitations of men, the greater impression of frailty it received, and the plainer instruction of frailty it gave.

If it be not cut down by disease or disaster, it will soon wither of itself; it has in it the principles of its own corruption.* Age will certainly wither it, and it shall not return to the days of its youth; it will be withered in the grave, there it will be mingled with, and not distinguished from, common dust. The bones will there be unclothed presently, and the poor remains of this withered grass the worms shall feed sweetly on. Let but the earth open her bosom a little, and it will appear like Ezekiel's vision, a *valley full of dead and dry bones; very many* they are, and lo, *they are very dry*:[m] but see, with an eye of faith, what they shall be shortly; these dry bones shall live, and shall again be clothed and covered, not with corruptible flesh, but with incorruptible, when what is sown a natural body shall be raised a spiritual one.

Is all flesh grass? all, without exception of the noble, or the fair, the young, or the strong, the well-born, or well-built, the well-fed, or well-bred? Is all grass, weak and withering?

[1.] Then let us see ourselves to be grass; and humble and deny ourselves. Is the body grass? Then be not proud, be not presumptuous, be not confident of a long continuance here; forget not that the foot may crush thee. Am I grass? Then I must expect to wither, and prepare accordingly, and lay up my portion and happiness in none of the delights and accommodations of this animal life, which will all wither and perish with it, but in something suited to the nature of an immortal soul, and which will last as long as it lasts. Am I grass? Then I may wither suddenly, and know not how soon, and therefore must never be secure, nor adjourn the necessary preparations for my removal hence to any further day; but what I do, must do it quickly, before I wither, and it be too late. Grass falls; let me not be such a fool as to lay up my treasure in it. Stars fall not; let me therefore be so wise as to lay up my treasure above them, where neither moth nor rust corrupt.

Is the body grass? Then let us not indulge it too much, nor bestow too much time, and care, and pains about it, as many do, to the neglect of the better and immortal part. After all, we cannot keep it from withering, when its day shall come to fall; let us, therefore, be most solicitous to keep the soul from perishing, and to get that nourished up to life eternal; for that labour will not be in vain, but will turn to a good account.

[2.] Let us see others also to be as grass, and cease from man, because he is no more than thus to be accounted of. If all flesh be grass, then let us not trust in an arm of flesh, for it will soon be a withered arm, and unable to support and protect us; and they who make it their arm, will be like the heath in the desert, destitute and dejected. Grass is too short, too slender, to lean upon: the Egyptians are flesh, and not spirit, and therefore they shall help in vain. Let the Rock of Ages then be our stay, and let our hope always be in the Lord our God.

This is given also as a reason why we should not be afraid of the power of man, when it is most threatening, so as by it to be either driven from our

* *Mors sola fatetur quantula sint hominum corpuscula.*—Death only discovers the feebleness of the human frame.—*Juv.*

m Ezek. xxxvii. 2.

duty, or discouraged and disquieted in it: *Who art thou*, what a fool, to be *afraid of a man*, that cannot only do no more but *kill thy body*, (which is our Saviour's argument,) but must himself die, and the son of man, that shall be made as grass? Sure, thou forgettest the Lord thy Maker, whom thou oughtest to fear, and on whom thou hast all imaginable encouragement to depend: if he be for thee, what can a handful of grass do against thee?

Let this consideration also moderate our affections to all our creature comforts and enjoyments: If we set our hearts upon them, when they wither, where are we? What was too well beloved, will then be too much bewailed; and the flowers that are laid in the bosom, or much smelled to, will soonest go to decay. Let those, therefore, who have yoke-fellows, children, and friends who are dear to them, take heed of making them too dear; but labour to be as though they had none, because they are all grass, whose time is short, and the fashion of which passeth away.

Thus let this be read as the inscription on every grave, even the graves of the common people; let this be heard as the voice of every funeral knell, *All flesh is grass.* But,

2. Such a funeral as this we are now solemnizing, goes further into the text, and proves likewise, that *all the glory of man is as the flower of grass*, the beauty or verdure of it, and that *that flower falleth away.* If the grass wither, it follows of course, that the flower thereof falleth away; so that the Ethiopic version reads the text, *When the grass is dried the flower thereof is shaken off.* Life indeed may survive its beauties and joys, but take away that, and those fall of course.

We are now to consider, not common men, but men of distinction, and to see them withering and falling; which will bring us closer to this sad occasion. And here,

(1.) Let us inquire, What is the glory of man in this world? and what of it may be found in the character of that man, that son of man, whose death we are this day lamenting, and whose mortal part we have just now laid in bed?

There is indeed a glory of man, which is counterfeit, and mistaken for glory; Solomon says, *For men to search their own glory, is not glory*, Prov. xxv. 27. The glory men commonly pursue and search for, is no glory at all; it is nothing to the weight, the substantial weight of glory, which all who are governed by the principles of divine revelation set their eyes and hearts upon; yet, because it is taken for glory, and is courted and caressed accordingly, we must not pass it over without observing, that that also withers and falls away, as the flower of the grass, and leaves those ashamed of their pride and confidence, who called it glory, depend on it, and have nothing wherewith to balance the loss of it.

Is beauty and comeliness of body the glory of man? So they pass with some, who judge by the sight of the eye; but at the best, they are only the goodliness of grass; they are deceitful, they are vain, they are a flower which death will certainly cut down: and commonly it is withered first: either time, or the end of time, will change the countenance; either wrinkled age, or pale death. Look into the coffin and tell me, where is the rosy cheek, the ruddy lip, the sparkling eye, the charming air, and all the delicate features: they are all cut off, like the foam upon the water. The bubble is broke, and as the prophet speaks, *Instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of well set hair baldness.* We should therefore make sure the beauty of grace, the hidden man of the heart, which neither age nor death will sully.

Is wealth the glory of man? Laban's sons thought so, when they said concerning Jacob, Of that which was our father's hath he gotten *all this glory*, Gen. xxxi. 1. But this also is a fading flower; *riches make themselves wings*, and sometimes flee away from us. However, when we take wing, we must be stripped of them, and go naked out of the world, as we came naked into it.

Is pomp and grandeur the glory of a man? That also withers away: they who are advanced ever so high must come down to the grave, and their glory shall not descend after them. Great names and titles of honour are written in the dust. And if after death they be written on the dust, yet how is the inscription reproached by that which lies under! Pompous sepulchres, like the whited ones our Saviour speaks of, appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead men's bones,[n] which yet they who go over them are not aware of.[o]

Let us therefore be dead to these glories, not value them, nor ourselves, or others, by them, in comparison with spiritual glory; let us not envy those who have these glories, nor fret at our want or loss of them; but always look upon them with a gracious and generous contempt and indifference, as those who know better things, and hope for a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, a glory that fadeth not away.

But besides these glories of men, which they who are wise can humbly put a slight upon, there is a glory, which is in this world truly the glory of man, and which they who are wise justly put a value upon; and yet that, as to its bright reflections upon this world of ours, withers and fades, and falls at death as the flowers in the grass. The continuance of the best gifts is in the other world, when they are transplanted thither, not in this.

n Matt. xxiii. 27. o Luke xi. 44.

p Matt. vi. 29, 30.

The flowers in the grass are most pleasant to the eye, and most taken notice of; those are the pride and pleasures of the spring. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like that part of the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven.[p] Yet the flower fades and falls away before the rest of the grass does, and the fairest is first cropt. The choicest fruits keep the worst; and that we are least sure of, which we think we have reason to be most fond of. Witness this funeral. We have left in the dust, not only grass, but the flower of the grass; one who had very much of that which is really the glory of a man in this world, and was thereby distinguished and endeared. It is one of the lilies of the field that is withered in our hand, and dropt out of it. Give me leave to show you in some instances what I think there was in him that was really the glory of a man, that you may duly lament his fall, and be affected with it.

[1.] Is a large capacity of mind the glory of a man? That he was blessed with above most I have known. Every soul is upon some account called the great soul of man; so high is it advanced above the beasts, and so nearly allied to the world of angels: but that soul which is now retired from the world, was in a peculiar manner a great soul; it was an extraordinary genius that presided in it, piercing in its searches, quick in its perceptions, and vastly extended to take in a great multitude and variety of ideas. God gave to him much of that largeness of heart which he gave to Solomon, that is, *wisdom and understanding exceeding much*.[q]

Those who knew him well, and sat down under his shadow, could not but observe in all his performances, both sacred and learned, such a compass of thought, and copiousness of expression, as showed him to have an uncommon constitution of mind, formed for something great, and likely out of its abundance to enrich many: it was a soul too great indeed to be long confined to a body, and pent up in a house of clay, which is such a cloud upon the prospects, and such a clog to the elevation, of a mind thus raised and enlarged. His soul, I confess, has sometimes seemed to me fluttering and struggling to get clear of its cage, and longing to fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven, to remove to the glorious light and glorious liberty of the children of God; ambitious to see that which is within the veil, and which cannot be seen in this land of darkness and mistake; where, at the best, we know but in part, and prophesy but in part, and must be content to do so, till that which is perfect is come.

[2.] Is learning to be reckoned the glory of a man? It is certainly so; for it is the elevation of that part of man which is most his honour: and the dust of a learned man we have now been mingling with the common earth. His soul (that great and stately room) was richly furnished with all manner of precious things, and there was no reason to complain either of confusion or of emptiness in it; it was neither bare walls, nor set about with toys.

How early he began to gather, in the days of his youth, (and manna must be gathered in the morning,) we who knew him then, well remember; and were pleased to observe what great and good preparation he made for the temple, and the service of it; what a noble offering of dedicated things he brought into it, when he devoted himself to the work of the ministry; what a full stock he began to trade with, and how well able, with the good householder, to bring out of his treasury things new and old.

And while he has been trading with this stock, he has been manifestly adding to it; for there is who scatters, and *yet* increases; who scatters, and *so* increases. He sat not down content with what he had attained to, but was still eager and vigorous in the pursuit of knowledge, still pressing forward; and how greatly God prospered him in those pursuits they know very well, who for some years past have been under his tuition, and have lighted their candle at his taper; and to all others also that conversed with him, it recommended him as a lovely and pleasant flower, though the treasure being in an earthen vessel, it was but a flower of the grass, now withered and fallen away.

That part of his education which he had in the university of Glasgow, he often reflected upon with a great deal of pleasure; and took all occasions to mention with honour the learned professors at whose feet he sat there, and the great advantages he had by their instructions; which I thought myself obliged to take notice of, both in justice to them whom God made blessings to him, and to his praise likewise, that he always retained a grateful remembrance of those who were the guides of his youth. It was a great refreshment and encouragement to St. Paul, to hear that those whom he had had the teaching of, had good remembrance of him always, and that he was not out of mind when he was out of sight.

[3.] Is tenderness and humility, modesty and sweetness of temper, the glory of a man? They are so, and therefore we call compassion by the name of humanity, as if there were nothing that did better become a man than that, nor were more his ornament; this is true manhood, though another disposition, very different from it, commonly goes under that name. The most mild are really the most manly. While the fierce show themselves brutes, the gentle, and easy to be entreated, show themselves men.

And this glory of a man was one of the glories of that man we have now parted with, and it made him a flower above the common grass. On the humble in spirit God looks with particular regard, and so

p Matt. vi. 29, 30.

q 1 Kings iv. 29.

should we. How often has he expressed to me such a diffidence of himself, and such a mean opinion of his own abilities, and all his performances, as has really been an hinderance to his cheerfulness, and sometimes to his usefulness! I have seldom heard him speak of any thing he did, but as one ashamed of it, though he was, as much as most, a workman that needed not to be ashamed. Such an humble sense as this of our own defects, will contribute much to our improvement. Those who never think they do well enough, will be striving (and not in vain) to do better; while those who always think they do well, are in danger of doing worse.

I have likewise observed in him a most tender concern for others, and for their comfort, and a care that all about him should be easy and pleased; his conversation was as endearing as it was edifying: herein he aimed to follow the great apostle, who made himself the servant of all, and became all things to all men, that he might recommend religion to their good opinion; and a greater than he, for even Christ pleased not himself, but taught us by his example, as well as by his doctrine, to deny ourselves.

His compassion for the sick and pained, the poor and needy, was that which first put him upon the study of physic, as his *παρεργον—his by-business*, in which how serviceable he was to the sons and daughters of affliction, and how sensibly he sympathized with them, many who have been the better for it will witness. Bowels of mercies well become the elect of God, who are holy and beloved.

[4.] Is the faithful discharge of the ministry of the gospel the glory of a man? It is so, and it was his glory, and made him one of the flowers of the grass, a sweet savour to God in them who are saved and in them that perish. This earthen vessel, which is now broken and laid aside, had a treasure lodged in it of inestimable value, even the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

What greater glory can a man have on this side heaven, than to be employed as an ambassador for Christ, and an angel of the church, and to obtain mercy of the Lord, to be found faithful in that embassy, in that ministration. We have all the reason in the world to humble and abase ourselves; but the office we are in we have reason to magnify. Let none be ashamed of it, but those who are a shame to it: then indeed we may blush to think that we are called by so worthy a name, when we walk unworthy of it, otherwise it is a high, because a holy, calling.

It is now about eleven years since, with an exemplary seriousness and humility, he laid his hand to that plough, immediately upon the death of my honoured father, who had been one of the guides of his youth; how hardly he was persuaded to succeed him, and how modestly he preached his first sermon on Elihu's apology, *Days should speak, and the multitude of years should teach wisdom*, I well remember. How can I forget that ingenious and judicious confession of faith, which he made some time after at his ordination, and with what a clear head, and fixed heart, he then solemnly devoted himself to the service of God in the work of the ministry, and with such a diffidence of himself, as was really a presage of something great; for *before honour is humility*.

How abundantly he laboured in the work of the Lord, and what pains he took in expounding, catechising, praying, preaching, visiting, as well as studying, many here can witness. I wish his dust were not a witness of it, fearing that his close application of mind to his work, his indefatigable prosecution of his several designs to do good, together with the tenderness of his spirit, and the too deep impressions which his cares and griefs made upon it, contributed to the shortening his days. They talk of some who live fast, who hasten their own deaths by their intemperance; but truly, those who live ill, cannot be said to live fast; for they do not live at all to any purpose, they do not the work of life, nor answer the ends of it: rather say, they die fast; for those who live in pleasures are dead while they live.[r] But here was one who did indeed live fast, did spend and was spent in the business of life, and gave this reason why he took so much pains in his work, because he thought he had but a little time to be working in. His heart seemed to be much set on that Scripture, and it is not long since he preached upon it on occasion of the death of a worthy good friend of his at Whitchurch, *I must work the work of him that sent me while it is day; the night comes when no man can work.*

[5.] Is great usefulness the glory of a man? and a delight in doing good? No doubt it is so: it was the honour of our blessed Saviour himself, and is mentioned as one of the proofs of his divine mission, that he went about not only working miracles, but doing good; and it was the honour of our deceased brother, in his low and narrow sphere, and according to the grace given to him.

Besides the labours of his ministry, what pains did he take for some years of late in the education of youth, for which God had every way wonderfully qualified him, and what pleasure did he take in those pains, because he had reason to think he did good that way, not only to the few that he taught, but to the many who hereafter might be taught by them. And there are those who, I hope, will, while they live, bless God for him, and for his happy care in that part of his work, in which he was as in his element,

[r] 1 Tim. v. 6.

and by the fruits of which, being dead, he will yet speak.

And his spending his spare hours in caring for and ministering to the sick, and so doing good to the bodies of others, (perhaps to the prejudice of his own,) was a further instance of his delight in being useful, and a benefactor to mankind. And *who is he that will harm us,* or *can, if we be* thus τ᾽ αγαθ᾽ μιμηται—*followers of him that is good,*[s] and doth good, in his goodness and beneficence?

Well, here is the glory of man, of this man; let us be ambitious of this glory, and not of vain glory. See true honour in the paths of wisdom and virtue, and seek it there. This is honour that comes from God, and is in his sight of great price. He who in humility, sincerity, and holy love and charity, lays out himself to serve Christ and his generation in his place, shall be accepted of God, which is what he aims at, and over and above, shall be approved of all wise and good men.

(2.) Having seen this flower flourishing, we are now to see it withering, and the glory of this man fallen away; the black and dark side of that cloud which we have been taking a pleasant prospect of the bright side of. As to himself, this glory is not fallen, is not lost, is not stained, is not touched by death; it is not like worldly honour, laid in the dust, and buried in the grave: no, this flower is transplanted from the garden on earth to the paradise in heaven, where it shall never fade, nor fall away, nor ever so much as close, or hang the head. This that was a star in the right hand of Christ, a star that helped to show the way to Bethlehem, though withdrawn from our orb, shines as the sun in the firmament of the Father; shines to himself, to his Master, and the world of holy angels and glorified saints. This great soul is there filled, its capacities vastly enlarged, and yet replenished; his learning is there completed; his searches after knowledge all crowned, and all his longings satisfied; he who knew but in part, and prophesied but in part, and was lamenting the deficiences of both, has now attained to that which is perfect, and that which is in part is done away, he having no more occasion for it. The candles are put out when the sun rises. His graces are perfected too, and all the remainders of corruption done away. Whatever men say, there are no consummate virtues on this side heaven, nor any finished man. The great good work in this world is in the doing. In the New Jerusalem it will be said, *It is done.*

But it is his usefulness that we want, that is it which we bewail the loss of; as to us and the world we are yet in, this grass is withered, this flower is faded and gone, this star is fallen. The works of good men follow them, but they forsake us, and we are deprived of the benefit of them; and therefore, however in love to them we may see some cause to rejoice, for they are better where they are than where they were, yet as to ourselves, we are losers by it; nor can we say of good ministers what was true of our Master, that it was expedient for us that they should go away. No, their abiding in the flesh would certainly be more profitable for us. Our Saviour considered that, when he said, concerning his disciples, *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world.*

This is the lamentation thereof, and shall be for a lamentation, that we have lost one whose continuance with us would have been a great blessing to our dark world. Over him we may mourn in the ancient forms of mourning, *Ah, my brother! Ah, my lord!* and *Ah, his glory!*[t] The flower we were pleased with the enjoyment of, we are now pained for the withering of; *Ichabod,* where is the glory of it? It is gone, it is fallen away.

[1.] We have lost an eminently good and useful man, and one who was by the liberal hand both of nature and grace, that is, the God of nature and the God of grace, made truly valuable and desirable.

You of this congregation have lost a faithful guide in the things of God, an interpreter, one among a thousand, a master of your assembly, whose words were as goads to quicken, and as nails to fasten. May that fruit of them remain among you now he is gone. One whose profiting appeared unto all men, and who was likely to have been yet more and more serviceable to your faith and holiness, and longer the helper of your joy; who was far from any thing that savoured of faction or party-making, but was entirely governed by principles of catholic charity; in the essentials of religion zealous, in things indifferent, and which are controverted among the wise and good, moderate; in both conscientious.

The loss his pupils have of him I cannot express, nor they neither, so admirably fitted was he with a head and heart to serve them. What a tender concern he had for them and their welfare, was very evident, and how much he laid to heart the death of two of them who were very hopeful a little after he came to this town, and how long the impressions of that affliction stuck by him, those about him observed. They having been so dear to him, I hope his memory will always be precious to them, and they will not only do him honour at his death, by lamenting their loss of him, but do him honour after his death, by a diligent building upon the foundation he laid.

We who are ministers have lost one who was very much our ornament and strength, and likely to be more and more so, and that is come upon us which St. Paul dreaded in the death of Epaphroditus,

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s 1 Pet. iii. 13.

t Jer. xxii. 18.

Sorrow upon sorrow,[u] of this kind, we are *broken with breach upon breach.*

As for his near and dear relations, when I come to put my soul into their stead, I must say, *Their heart knows its own bitterness;* but a stranger cannot pretend to describe it. Call them *Mara,* for the *Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with them.*[v]

[2.] We have lost him in the midst of his days, in the midst of his usefulness, when he had not reached quite half way to that period of human life which Moses long since fixed at seventy. This is a very great aggravation of our loss, and makes the burthen lie very heavy upon us. When God would make the land tremble, and every one mourn, he threatens that he will cause the sun to go down at noon; and so darken the earth in the clear day. This is our case; here is a sun gone down at noon, eclipsed in its meridian lustre; a valuable life, to our great surprise, cut off abruptly, without the previous notice of age, or any chronical distemper. At night the sun knows its going down, and we expect it; we are none of us so ignorant as to count upon an eternal day within the horizon of time; but till night we think ourselves sure of the sun. What a confusion is it to us then if it go down at noon! So uncertain are all our enjoyments, and so little do we know what a few days may bring forth concerning us or them, even the dearest.

We looked that this had been he who should long have been a burning and shining light among us; that he should long have strengthened our hands, and adorned our interest, and that we and ours should have reaped much fruit from his labours; such a workman we hoped might have been an instrument of gathering in a great harvest of souls to Christ, might have been a spiritual father to many children, nay, to many fathers; but our expectations are dashed, and laid in the dust. *We looked for light, but behold obscurity;* we forgot that the life we valued so was a vapour, which, as it proves, appears for a little while, and then vanishes away, and leaves us astonished. We said, Surely this life shall comfort us, concerning our work, and the toil of our hands; but behold his death does so much the more afflict us. We were exceeding glad of the gourd, and said, under its shadow we shall live, but little thought it would so soon have withered! Lord, *what is man at his best estate?*

[3.] That which yet further aggravates our grief, is that we have few such left behind. I know God has the residue of the Spirit, and can out of stones raise up children unto Abraham. But which way to look for such men as these, we do not see. Here is a breach made, and what prospect have we of the repair of it? Our hands are weakened, and who shall strengthen them? A gap is made, and who shall fill it up? Jehovah-jireh—*let the Lord provide* for us; for how to provide for ourselves we know not. We have too much reason to renew the prophet's complaint, *Woe is me, for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits; my soul desired the first ripe fruits;* but alas! *where are the clusters?* It is the Lord's doing, and we must acquiesce in it: if we must be emptied and brought low, his will be done. *Let us now fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercies are great;* but *let us not fall into the hands of man,* 2 Sam. xxiv. 14.

(3.) Let us, in the next place, inquire what is our duty now we are lamenting the fall of such a flower of the grass, that we may sow in these tears.

[1.] Let us be deeply humbled for our sins, which have provoked God thus to contend with us; into this channel let us turn our tears, and then they will turn to a good account. Sorrow for sin is that godly sorrow which is not to be repented of. O that the providence of this day might have this good effect upon us, to open springs of repentance in us, that we may look not only on our dying Master, but on our dead and dying ministers, and mourn. Ministers are sent, by the labours of their lives to be the death of our sins, to bruise the head of those old serpents, as instruments in Christ's hand. Is this work done? Is sin crucified and mortified in you? If not, sin is the death of your ministers, who should have been its death. Your unmortified lusts are the greatest mortification to your ministers; it is sin that silences them; it is sin that slays them; perhaps efficiently, at least to such a tender spirit as this was, people's unprofitableness, and unsuitable walking, saddens their ministers' hearts, and perhaps does more than you are aware of to the shortening of their days. If we improve not the advantages we have by a powerful lively ministry, it is just with God to deprive us of it.

O think the worse of sin for this, and resolve never to be reconciled to it; lay the axe to the root of that mischievous thing, which separates between you and so much good. Is there any of you in an unconverted state? Return to God now in compliance with the call of this providence. Have any of you been hitherto cumbering the ground? Now at length begin to bring forth fruit, lest all the dressers of the vineyard be removed, the rain withheld, and you laid under the curse of barrenness, the just punishment of the sin of barrenness.

[2.] Let us by prayer and universal reformation go forth to meet the Lord in the way of his judgments, and stand in the gap to turn away his wrath, that he may not make a full end. If you have any interest at the throne of grace, improve it now: let your closets and families witness for you, that you

[u] Phil. ii. 27.

[v] Ruth i. 20.

are of those whose hearts tremble for the ark of God: O lift up a prayer for the remnant that is left, that it may yet be left and increased. At such a time as this God wonders if there be no intercessor; which in another place is thus expressed, *He wonders if there be none to uphold;* which implies, that those who intercede on the behalf of the declining interests of God's kingdom, do really uphold them, and help to recover them. O pray that God would pour out a double portion of his Spirit on those who survive; and if the Spirit be but poured out upon us from on high, even the wilderness will soon become a fruitful field for all this.

And if you would have your prayers effectual, you must return to him who smites you. For God's sake, for precious Jesus's sake, for your own souls' sake, for your dear ministers' sakes, if you love them, and would keep them alive, if you would comfort them, and reap the comfort and benefit of their labours, leave your sins; amend what is amiss in your hearts, and lives, and families; be reformed by this.

The death of good ministers is not a judgment upon them, it is their gain, the happy period of their toils and griefs, *They rest from their labours*, and are *entered into the joy of their Lord;* but it is a judgment upon you; it is your loss, and should be your grief. To you therefore, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men: O that you would hear the voice of the Lord's controversy, and answer the intention of it, which is to part between you and your sins.

[3.] Let the withering of this flower be a seasonable conviction to us of the vanity of this world. Let it help to take our hearts off from it, and awaken us to think of leaving it. Let us learn to cease from man, from such men, for even their breath is in their nostrils, and not raise our expectations too high from them. Are such *flowers as these withered*, the choicest flowers that grow on this earth? And shall we expect happiness and satisfaction in any thing under the sun, in any thing that springs out of this earth, or is found in it?

When such a one dies in his full strength; one who was so likely to live, and live to good purpose; why should we count upon many years to come, or think of death as a thing at a distance? If the flowers be thus withered and cut down, let the weeds expect to be plucked up: for if this be done in the green trees, what shall be done in the dry? If the fruitful flourishing trees be removed, let us who cumber the ground, not expect to stand long. The Lord awaken us all, by this and the like providences, to consider our latter end, and to make necessary preparations for it with all diligence.

[4.] Let this providence help to endear heaven to us, and draw up our hearts and affections thither. The glory even of the saints in this world, is as the flower of the grass, withering and fading; but it is not so in that world, where they are crowned with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. They are not there as the flower when it shooteth forth in its weakness, but as the sun when he goes forth in his strength. Converse much with that world, frequently contemplate that glory, till by the Spirit of the Lord you be in some measure changed into the same image, even the image of the heavenly.

I believe your ministers were very dear to you; let them be so still. Though while they were continued to you, they were more yours than they are; yet now they are gone to heaven, they are far more excellent than they were, more wise, and more holy, and every way better. Believe this, and love them, and long to be with them. Think whither they are gone, and let your hearts by faith, hope, love, and holy devotion, follow them to the things which are above, on which as Christians we are to set our affections. To the upper world their nobler part is removed *out of the body*, thither let ours attend them while in the body. Think where they are, and sit with them in heavenly places; keep up a spiritual communion, not only with the innumerable company of angels, but with the spirits of just men made perfect, to whom, as believers, we are already come. Think what they are doing, and join with them, as well as you can, by your humble, thankful praises of *him that sits upon the throne, and the Lamb.* As we pray, so let us endeavour, to do the will of God on earth, as the holy angels and blessed saints above are doing it. Think of the joy they have entered into, and let it make death desirable to you, that if in life you follow them, who through faith and patience are gone to inherit the promises, you shall at death remove to them: let the death of your dear friends and ministers, make you think with desire and pleasure of that removal.

And here I cannot forbear transcribing some expressions of that blessed martyr St. Cyprian, which have sometimes much affected me, and are much to the same purpose with this head I am upon, and therefore I shall not translate them. *Amplectamur diem qui assignat singulos domicilio suo, qui nos isthinc ereptos et laqueis secularibus exutos paradiso restituit et regno cœlesti—Let us embrace the day which assigns each to his habitation, which takes us from these earthly snares, and gives us to paradise and the heavenly kingdom.——Quid non properamus et currimus ut patriam nostram videre, ut parentes salutare, possimus! Magnus illic nos carorum numerus exspectat, frequens nos et copiosa turba desiderat: jam de suâ immortalitate secura, et adhuc de nostrâ incolumitate sollicita. Illic apostolorum gloriosus chorus; illic prophetarum exultantium numerus—What speed we make, when the object is to see our country, or to salute our parents! An immense multitude of dear*

friends await our arrival, secure themselves of their own immortality, and anxious only for our salvation. There is the glorious company of the apostles; there are the exulting prophets.——Ad hos, fratres dilectissimi, avidâ cupiditate properemus, ut cum his cito esse possimus, &c.—To these, beloved brethren, let us hasten with all possible expedition. Serm. 4. De Mortalitate.

II. Though man and glory are fading and withering, yet God and his word are ever-living and everlasting. Ministers die, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. The word of the gospel, that last revelation, after which we are to look for no other, does not change, shall not cease, till the mystery of God shall be finished. The glory of the law was done away, but that of the gospel remains. The glory of ministers falls away, but not the glory of the word they are ministers of. The prophets, indeed, do not live for ever, but the words which God commanded them did, and will take hold, as words quick and powerful. On such a sad occasion as this, it is very seasonable to consider, *that the word of the Lord endures for ever*; that is,

1. There is in the word of the Lord an everlasting rule of faith and practice for us to be ruled by; so that our religion *shall not* die with our ministers, and therefore *should not:* in the word it will still live, and therefore must still live with us.

(1.) It is our comfort, that Christianity shall not die with our ministers, nor that light be buried in their graves. Were the divine truths and laws intrusted with tradition, those invaluable treasures as the world goes, would in time be lost, or wretchedly embezzled. While religion passed in that way of conveyance before Moses, men lived to be very old; yet that did not secure it, but it almost perished: care is taken, therefore, now to preserve it in the written word, and it is its effectual security, so that it can never perish, neither shall any pluck it out of our hands. If we were all in our graves, our religion would be found in our Bibles, pure and complete, and by that sure word of prophecy, a much firmer deed of entail than an uninterrupted succession of pastors, would be transmitted to the last ages of time. Thus upheld, the throne of Christ shall endure for ever, and be as the days of heaven.

(2.) It is our duty not to let our Christianity die with our ministers, but let the word of Christ, contained in the Scriptures, still dwell in us richly, that is still the same: when we have another minister we have not another gospel, nor durst an angel himself bring us any other. You see gospel ministers, like the priests under the law, cannot continue by reason of death, but as Christ's priestly office by his intercession in heaven, so his prophetical office by his word and Spirit on earth, are unchangeable; the word of God lives and abides for ever.

The death of our ministers should therefore make us love our Bibles the better, and be more conversant with them, for in them the Spirit speaks expressly, speaks to us. Your ministers said no other things but what are contained in the Scriptures; blessed Paul himself witnessed no other things but what agreed with Moses and the prophets; Christ himself bid his hearers search the Scriptures; that sacred book you have to be your guide, if your teachers should be removed into corners, into graves. Let me engage you therefore, in God's name, to stick to your Bibles, stick close to them; consult the Scriptures as your oracle, as your touchstone; speak according to this light, walk according to this rule, and let its perpetuity engage you constantly and unmovably to persevere to the end in your adherence to it. Does the word of the Lord endure for ever? Let it be in you a well of living water.

You profess to make the Scripture the commanding rule of your worship, and say, you cannot admit any religious rites but what are there appointed; but you contradict yourselves, and give the lie to your profession, if you do not make the Scripture the commanding rule of your conversation also. Govern your thoughts, words, and actions by the word of God, and not by the will of the flesh, or the course of this world. As our religion may be found in our Bibles, so our Bibles should be found in our hearts and lives. Value and love a ministry that will lead you into the understanding and application of the Scriptures, for these will make the man of God (both the minister and the Christian) perfect, and thoroughly furnished both for every good word and work.

2. There is in the word of the Lord an everlasting fountain of comfort and consolation for us to be refreshed and encouraged by, and to draw water from with joy; and an everlasting foundation, on which to build our hopes. When we find that all flesh is as grass, and even the flower of it withers, there is no comfort like this, that the word of the Lord endures for ever. Hence let me recommend strong and lasting consolation to those who are this day lamenting their withered grass and fallen flower.

(1.) With this, let me comfort the near and dear relations of him that we now have parted with; the flower you delighted in, and promised yourselves so much from, is withered and fallen, and laid in the dust; but the word of the Lord endures for ever, and that will never fail you; the more you expect from it by faith, the more you will find in it to your comfort; it is by the word that God comforts them who are cast down; and because it endures for ever, they are everlasting consolations that are drawn from it.

Let this comfort the aged parents; they have the word of God to be their stay, when this staff of their old age is broken under them; God will be better

to you than ten sons, than ten such sons, a God all-sufficient, a God that is enough.

Let the fatherless children, who are not yet capable of knowing their loss, be left with the everlasting Father, and be sure that the word of the Lord endures for ever; *With thee the fatherless findeth mercy*, and *the generation of the upright shall be blessed.*

Let the widow, the prophet's widow, trust in God, and that word of his which endures for ever, the comfort of that afflicted state. *Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name*, and he has *betrothed thee to him for ever*, by a bond which death itself cannot untie, in loving-kindness and tender mercies. Let this be the comfort of the house of mourning, though it be not so as in months past; though it be a beheaded, broken family, yet the covenant of grace made with the house, and the church in it, is well ordered in all things, and sure; and let that be all the desire, for it is all the salvation, 2 Sam. xiii. 5. and may be so improved in this cloudy and dark day.

(2.) With this, let me encourage the students. The Lord has taken your master from your head to-day. I know you loved him dearly, and doubt not but you truly lament the loss of him, and are ready to say, *My father, my father!* Your counsels are ruffled and your measures broke by this providence; but remember, the word of the Lord endures for ever. Study your Bibles, and you will find them the best tutors; tutors that will never die; in them learn Christ, and you have the best learning; let God's word be your delight and your counsellor, make it familiar to you, and when you go it shall lead you, when you sleep it shall keep you, when you wake it shall talk with you. Take God's statutes as your heritage for ever, and let them be the rejoicing of your hearts. Grow in Scripture knowledge, and in the things of God; speak Scripture language, accustom yourselves to it; that is sound speech which cannot be condemned.

And for your comfort, the seed which serves the Lord, among whom the word of the Lord endures, shall be accounted to him for a generation. The Lord God of the holy will never forget, will never forsake, the sons of the prophets who adhere to him, and are mindful of him. Be ye humble, diligent, and faithful, and you will find God the same to you that he was to him who is gone; and the best are no better than he made them; you will find Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. To him I commend you, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to make you instrumental to build up others in holy faith to the heavenly kingdom.

(3.) Let me, with this, speak comfortably to this poor congregation. These two things are come upon thee, the death of two ministers; two *such* ministers! *Wherewith shall I comfort thee?* What more comfortable than this, That *the word of the Lord endures for ever?* You have not lost that. You may perhaps be tempted to think it is in vain to seek for such helps, such helpers, any more; you have procured some of the best, and God has removed them from you, perhaps for the same reason that he once and again lessened Gideon's army, because it was too numerous for him to work by. God delights to perfect strength in weakness; he will secure to himself a succession, and, I hope, to you too. Bless God for your aged minister who is yet continued to you; value him the more; seek out for another in the room of him that is gone, and God, I trust, will send you one to be a helper of your faith and joy.

Let God's word endure for ever your guide, and it will endure for ever your comfort. Love the Scriptures, make much of them, be daily learning yourselves, and teaching your children, out of them. Christ's scholars never learn above their Bibles, while they are here under tutors and governors; at death they shall take their leave of them, and go thither where there is no occasion for them.

4. Let us all, both ministers and people, comfort ourselves and one another with this word: *All flesh is grass;* but the Eternal Spirit is the life of our souls. The glory of man fades and falls away, but the glory of God-man does not: on his head shall the crown ever flourish. The glory of the gospel is the same; and the crown of glory prepared for the faithful, fadeth not away; in these is continuance. The foundation of God stands sure for all this, and it is an everlasting foundation.

Let not therefore the atheists or profane, those enemies of our holy religion, rejoice against us, though we fall, though our grass withers, and our flowers fall thus; for though we sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto us, an everlasting light, and our God our glory. His word shall endure for ever, though the ministers of it are lights that are but a little while with us, and it is only for a season that we rejoice in their light. That never-failing word is the firm and immovable rock upon which the church is built, and therefore the gates of hell cannot, shall not, prevail against it. While the earth remains, the seed time and the harvest of the world will continue; nay, heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of Christ never shall, not one *iota* or tittle of it. Divine revelation shall ride out the storm of all opposition, and triumph over the powers of darkness; shall not only keep its ground, but gain its point; shall go forth conquering and to conquer, till the mystery of God shall be finished, the mystical body completed, and the kingdom delivered up to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

A CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE OF SAMUEL BENION, M. D.

He was born in a country place in the chapelry of Whicksal, in the parish of Prees, and county of Salop, June 14, 1673. His parents are still living, very religious good people, and of competent estate in the world, and he was their eldest son who lived.

His mother was the daughter of Mr. Richard Sadler, a worthy nonconformist minister, who was turned out from Ludlow by the Uniformity Act, and spent the rest of his days in obscurity at Whicksal. He died in 1675.

He was baptized by his grandfather, and called Samuel, because *asked of God*, and *devoted to him*.

He gave early indications of a happy genius, and a strong inclination both to learning and piety: and *even a child is known by his doings*.

He began his grammar learning, and made considerable progress in it with the schoolmaster at Whicksal: but in 1688, he was removed to the free-school of Wirksworth in Derbyshire, to be under the conduct and tuition of a very learned able master, Mr. Samuel Ogden, with whom he continued almost three years, till he was near eighteen years of age, a much longer time than youths of his proficiency ordinarily continue at the grammar-school; but he found the benefit of it, (as many who outrun their grammar learning too soon find the want of it,) for hereby he laid his foundation large and firm, got great acquaintance with the classic authors, made his after-studies the more easy and pleasant, and arrived to the felicity of speaking and writing Latin with great readiness, fluency, and exactness.

In 1691, he went to live with Mr. Henry at Broad Oak, who employed him in teaching some gentlemen's sons who were tabled with him, and directed and assisted him in his entrance upon his academical studies. Here he discovered an extraordinary skill in the languages, and prudence much above his years in the management of those who were under his charge; and Mr. Henry expressed much satisfaction in his conduct, and a particular kindness for him.

In 1692, he went to London, where he sojourned about half a year with the Reverend Mr. Edward Lawrence, and there had opportunity of hearing the best preachers, and perusing the best books; both which he failed not to improve much to his advantage. When he came down, he prosecuted his studies alone at his father's house with great application. Surely few who have so great a stock of learning have owed it, under God's blessing, so much to their own industry, and so little to the help either of tutors or of fellow-students. He beat it, as we say, out of the cold iron; and when it is so, the excellency of the power is so much the more of God.

In June, 1695, he went into Scotland to the College of Glasgow, with a young gentleman or two, whom he was intrusted with the conduct of. Having furnished himself before with a good treasure, and matter to work upon, the advantages of that place, during the year he spent there, turned to a good account. Here he studied closer than ever, sometimes not less than sixteen hours a-day, having a little food brought him to his study, and slipt not any opportunity of improving himself in useful knowledge.

His regent was Mr. Tran, whom he often spoke of with great respect, and who had a particular affection for him, and while he lived kept up a correspondence with him. The other learned men of that university he also often took occasion to make an honourable mention of. Mr. Jameson, History Professor there, did likewise correspond with him. That miracle of a man, who is quite blind, and has been so from his birth, and yet, as appears by the learned works he has published, a most accomplished scholar, and very ready and exact in his quotations of authors.

In May, 1696, he took his degree of Master of Arts there, and then returned to his father's house, where he would be near to Mr. Henry, under whose ministry he had been trained up, and now

intended for some time to sit down for his further improvement.

But within a few days after he came home, Mr. Henry finished his course, (June 24, 1696,) to his great grief and disappointment.

The beheaded congregation presently cast their eye upon him, as the most likely person to succeed Mr. Henry, being one of themselves, and one who upon all accounts promised well; and they had reason to think he would not be without honour, no not in his own country. Without looking any further, they unanimously made choice of him, and soon found their expectations from him even out-done.

He was then about twenty-three years of age, and had never preached, nor designed it quickly, but wished rather to continue yet for some time a student; so that it was not without great difficulty that he was persuaded to undertake the work itself; pleading with the prophet, (Jer. i. 6.) *Ah, Lord God, behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child*, especially to undertake it there, and come in the room of such a man as Mr. Henry; this he was in a manner compelled to, often saying he even trembled to think of it. And truly, I think I never heard any man express himself with more humility and modesty, self-diffidence, and self-denial, than he did on all occasions.

But he plainly saw the providence of God calling him to this work, and therefore he submitted, and gave himself wholly to it. He lived at his father's house, and preached at Broad Oak; and all his performances were such, that none had any reason to despise his youth.

His great modesty would not suffer him to undertake the sole charge of that congregation, and therefore he was backward to be ordained, and desirous that the senior ministers of the neighbourhood would come and administer the sacraments to them, which they did for some time.

But in Jan. 1698, he was solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry, by the laying on of the hands of presbyters at Broad Oak, *plebe præsente—in the presence of the people.* And the confession of faith which he made at that time is so remarkably concise, that I think it worth inserting at large, and the rather because we have so little of his remaining in our hands. It is this:

"Being obliged to confess my faith, I humbly crave leave to do it in that method which hath been of singular use to me in confirming of it.

First, then, I cannot but be persuaded, that in this earthly tabernacle, my human body I mean, dwells an immortal soul, conscious to itself that it had a beginning, and must needs proceed from a Father of spirits.

I do therefore, in the next place, firmly believe that there is a God, that is, an Almighty, All-wise, All-good Being, all whose works must needs originally be both like him, according to the capacity of their nature, and worthy of him.

But sad experience hath effectually taught me, that I am naturally an unholy, impure, perverse creature; an ignorant, obstinate, selfish being: I cannot but conclude, therefore, that I am degenerated, and no such thing as I was when I came out of my Maker's hands.

I am satisfied, that I cannot restore myself, that no creature can restore me, and that the work of restitution being such as could not be effected, but by infinite power, it must needs be such as could not be contrived but by infinite wisdom; and that I should never have understood the methods of it, if God himself had not revealed them to me.

The necessity, therefore, of divine revelation, in order to eternal life, I am thoroughly persuaded of; and finding a volume in this world, termed by us the Holy Bible, that has in it all the marks of heavenly inspiration that the most inquisitive mind can reasonably imagine or desire, I believe it is the word of God, and with all my soul embrace it as the revelation I need, in order to my everlasting happiness.

According to it therefore, finding that the world by its wisdom knew not God, I form my conceptions of the first cause of all things, and I embrace heartily the doctrine asserting a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead.

I believe, that Infinite Wisdom fore-ordained in eternity whatsoever shall come to pass in time; and that this whole world, according to the particular appointments of its creation, was made exactly in that admirable manner which the sacred history relates to us.

The account which the Scripture sets before us of the fall, wherein it lets us know our first parents, the once perfect representatives of all their posterity, lost their innocence and felicity together, do entirely satisfy me how sin and misery made their entry into this, ever since, unhappy world; and I believe I fell in them, and with them.

I believe the reports of a Mediator engaging in our cause, appeasing divine justice, reconciling men to God. And hereof, I think, I have even a demonstration in the present constitution of this world, and state of men here differing so vastly from that of the fallen angels. I believe, that this Mediator is the Lord Jesus Christ, Immanuel, who was made perfect by his sufferings, that he might bring all those whom purely free grace had chosen to be the sons of God, to eternal glory.

For these I believe, in the highest exaltation, the just reward of his voluntary abasement, he lives to make continual intercession, sending down upon each of them the Spirit, in the most proper seasons and measures, which, by the means of grace, works the faith, hope, and love in them, which qualified them all for justification, to be had only by perfect

righteousness; and glorification, to be had only in his purchased bliss.

These means of grace I apprehend to be chiefly the word and prayer, and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper; for the more effectual application of which, I believe, the great King of the church hath established in it a settled ministry, which he will own and grace to the end of the world.

At the end of the world, I expect a day of universal judgment, in order to which, I certainly look for a resurrection from the dead, and in which I firmly believe an irreversible doom will be pronounced on every man, determining both his soul and his body to the state of felicity or misery the former had assigned it, by a particular judgment, immediately consequent upon his death.

These things past; I believe, the wicked shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power; and that they that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

This was the confession of his faith. His ordination vows, in answer to the questions solemnly put to him, were likewise very serious and devout, and affecting to the hearers, but too long to be inserted here. However, in the course of his ministry, it was evident he remembered them, and transcribed them into his conversation.

Some of his friends about this time, observing his great studiousness, and the mighty progress he made in learning, and some few of his acquaintance, who had been pupils to Mr. Frankland, who died in 1698, being then destitute of a tutor, earnestly pressed him to undertake the tuition of young men, which he was prevailed with to do. In which part of his work, though his beginning was small, his latter end did greatly increase; so that at the time of his death, he had above thirty under his charge, and more coming.

His good mother had used to be serviceable to her poor neighbours, sometimes in the charitable curing of those who were hurt, or sore, which gave him occasions far beyond his intentions to consult medical books, that he might advise and assist therein, which his quick and active genius soon improved by; so that he got a considerable insight into the practical part of physic, the theory of which he who was so great a master in natural philosophy could be no stranger to. With this he was useful among the poor, and gained both experience and reputation, so that he could not avoid a much larger share of business of that kind than he ever either desired or designed. In the year 1703, he took a journey to Glasgow in Scotland, and there he commenced doctor of physic. The learned men of that university showed him a great respect; he was publicly examined by a convocation of all the heads of the college. Dr. Saintclair, Professor of the Mathematics, who had been operator to the honourable Mr. Boyle, with other physicians, assisted at his examination, and expressed themselves highly satisfied in his abilities. Dr. Kennedy, a famed practitioner, assigned him a case (and it was a case he himself had then in hand) to exhibit a thesis upon, which he did with that accuracy and judgment that gained him a general applause.

His *Diploma* for his degrees, subscribed by all the heads of the College, and sealed with the University Seal, bears date 3° Non Oct. 1703, and gives him a very honourable character. The Vice Chancellor, Dean of the Faculties, and others, treated him very handsomely; and a Synod happening at that time to sit at Glasgow, the members of it gave him the right hand of fellowship, and admitted him to be present at their debates, which gave him an opportunity of declaring upon all occasions, with so much the more assurance, his opinion concerning the government of the church of Scotland, that he thought as they managed it, it was as well fitted to all the true intentions of church government, and as likely to answer them, as any ecclesiastical constitution in the Christian world. He observed, to his great satisfaction, that all the while he was at Glasgow, though he lay in a public inn, he never saw any drunk, nor heard one swear. Nay, he observed that in all the inns on the road in Scotland where he lay, (though some of them mean,) they had family worship duly performed morning and evening: from which, and other remarks, he made in that journey, he inferred that practical religion does not depend upon worldly wealth, for where he had seen the marks of poverty, he had seen withal the marks of piety.

Having taken his degrees in Physic, and his abilities for it being approved, he ventured further into that business than he had done before, and as far as would consist with his other employments; and it pleased God to give him great success therein. Some of the most eminent physicians in that country have done him the honour to say, they found him one of the most ingenuous men in their profession they ever were in consultation with.

In December, 1703, he married Mrs. Grace Yates, daughter of Mr. Thomas Yates of Danford near Whitchurch; a relation that was every way agreeable to him. By her he had two sons; now left in their infancy to the care of that God, who has taken it among the titles of his honour, to be a Father of the fatherless.

Ten years he continued labouring in the word and doctrine at Broad Oak; but in the year 1706, upon the death of that excellent man, Mr. James Owen at Shrewsbury, he was called thither to fill up his place. It was with great reluctance that he entertained the thought of leaving the people he had been

so long with, though it was not many miles from them that he was to remove, and where he might still be many ways serviceable to them: but being very much under the influence of the Rev. Mr. Tallents, who had always been as a father to him; and whose years and wisdom he had a great veneration for, by that he was overruled to go, and at Midsummer, 1706, he settled in Shrewsbury; in a fair way to be greatly and long useful, if Providence had seen fit to continue in this world of ours one who was so great a blessing to it.

That we may do some justice to his memory, and some kindness to ourselves who yet survive, we must consider him both as a minister and a tutor.

I. As a minister; and he was an able minister, ready and mighty in the Scriptures, and one who knew how rightly to divide the word of truth.

1. Let us consider his judgment and insight. He adhered close to the pure gospel of the grace of God in Christ. The doctrine of special grace founded in electing love, and of our justification by the righteousness of Christ only, was what he believed, and preached, and understood, and he knew how to explain, as well as most men. He did not, indeed, trouble his ordinary hearers with nice speculations on these heads; but I find his thoughts concerning the divine decrees delivered at large in two lectures to his pupils, at their request, which they wrote from his mouth. In which I am pleased with the account he gives of the divine decrees from Eph. i. 5. where it is called by the apostle, Ευδοκια τυ θεληματος αυτυ—*the good pleasure of his will.* In God's decree there is,

"Ευδοκια, a compound word: Δοκια, is a clear eternal intuition of that which is most agreeable to himself, most worthy of him, and which will afford him, world without end, an infinite satisfaction in the being and accomplishment of it. Ευδοκια, is a perception that it is right: that all seen together at one view, in their place, order, and connexion, are highly consistent with infinite, eternal, and unchangeable being, power, wisdom, and love."

"Θελημα, a determination in consequence of intuition of himself." He was sure God did not decree sin, nor did he see any necessity of asserting a positive decree to permit sin; nor could he by any means admit a decree to damn any man, but upon the foresight of his being a sinner; but he thought the doctrine of particular, personal, absolute election to eternal life, so plainly revealed in Scripture, that he wondered how any who pretend to regulate their faith by the Bible, should make any doubt of it. He was clear, that it fastened upon the persons in their fallen state, and that it depended indeed upon foreknowledge and foresight, but not of any merit in their faith and repentance, but purely upon the victorious efficacy of divine grace.

In these mysteries he thought religion is not so much concerned to explicate, as to adore.

His thoughts concerning justification, he drew up upon a particular occasion in certain aphorisms, (a method of writing he much used,) which I think may not be amiss to insert at large. He prefixes to them those words: *That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.*

"1. I apprehend the term of justification, (as well as that of faith, and some others,) is used in a very large sense in Scripture.

2. That large sense is the concurrence of those acts (δικαιωματος) of judicature, that are necessary to entitle, in the estimate of intellectual creatures, to the highest instances of divine favour.

3. These acts must be concluded to at the least; the removal of that which would preclude such a title, and the position of that which would infallibly found it.

4. That which would preclude it, is the guilt of sin.

5. The guilt of sin, is that on the score of which the Governor of the world is obliged to take the course which, in the judgment of intellectual creatures, is a vindication of his own laws and honour.

6. That course can be no other than exacting what the law requires, on supposition of transgression.

7. That which the law required on that supposition was, that the nature that sinned should make satisfaction.

8. Satisfaction is the endurance of such severe penalties by the sinning nature, as may reflect an honour to him that has a right to inflict them, as great as the violation was a dishonour to him.

9. Such satisfaction is righteousness to the nature that offers it.

10. Righteousness is conformity to rule, that is, to law.

11. Conformity is complying with what is enacted.

12. That which is enacted, is disjunctively either the obedience or the suffering of the nature it is prescribed to; so that the nature becomes as righteous by suffering, to that degree which is satisfaction, as by doing.

13. The nature the law was prescribed to, was the human, for the covenant was made with Adam, not only for himself but for his posterity: therefore, (1.) Every one of human nature, (before a state of confirmation,) including the whole nature, at the time of violation in sinning against it, violates it to all his posterity, and brings unrighteousness on it: so did Adam. (2.) If human nature can provide itself with an individual who is capable of satisfaction that individual (according to law) performs for all the rest, and brings righteousness on them. Therefore,

14. The whole compass of human nature being limited to Adam and Eve, there being no other

individuals at the time of violation, they transgressing, all their progeny were involved, and righteousness is not to be had by the compliance of obedience.

15. Righteousness not being to be had by the compliance of obedience, it is to be had by the compliance of endurance, to that degree that is satisfying.

16. No endurance by human nature, to the degree that is satisfying, that is not infinite.

17. No degree infinite, but either by duration or value.

18. If the degree by duration be resolved on, we perish for ever without righteousness.

19. If therefore we perish not without righteousness, human nature is to furnish out a satisfaction infinite by degree of value.

20. A satisfaction infinite by degree of value, falls not within the compass of human finite nature.

21. Not falling within the compass of it, infinite mercy employs infinite wisdom to contrive the exaltation of that nature, by uniting the second subsistence in the Trinity to an individual of it; and so the Son of God becomes the Son of man.

22. The Son of God, of man, (1 Tim. ii. 5.) is a human person of infinite value.

23. Being so, his sufferings are satisfaction for human nature.

24. Being so, that nature performs the secondary demand of the law.

25. Performing the secondary demand of the law, we are by him conformed to the rule; so that he well deserves to be called, *the Lord our Righteousness.*

26. What he is called, he will be to all who do not renounce him, through an intervening imputation.

27. Imputation, is the admitting the claim of all such to righteousness, because one of the body of beings they belong to has suffered the penalty.

28. This imputation taking place, the governor of the world has sufficient vindication of his own laws and honour, and is not obliged to any thing else in order to the approbation of his government to intellectual creatures, (See Aph. 5.) in what concerns his treatment of man: so the guilt (that would preclude by Aphor. 5.) in the case of those that do not renounce Jesus Christ, is removed.

29. They renounce Christ who peremptorily refuse him the honour of his glorious performance.

30. They peremptorily refuse that honour, who will not submit to the economy God has established in order to his full reward.

31. His full reward, is the exaltation of his person, (Phil. ii. 6—8.) and the salvation of men, Isa. liii. 10, 11.

32. The exaltation of his person, he absolutely expected, John xvii. 5. The salvation of men, only on conditions becoming the government of intellectual creatures.

33. The establishing of such conditions, is the introduction of the evangelical law; the observance of which is the only thing needful in order to the second act of justification. (See Aph. 3.)

34. The excellency of this evangelical law, and the reasonableness of obedience, are to be accounted for in a new set of aphorisms, which may be thus conceived.

(1.) Adam involves all his posterity in guilt, before any of them are born.

(2.) They being so involved, are obnoxious to justice.

(3.) Had justice obtained on them accordingly, it had been *jus—the law,* but it had been *summum jus—the rigour of the law;* and the righteousness of God had been less clear.

(4.) That the righteousness of God might be entirely clear, as it must be when mercy shines with it, it pleased God to place man again into a state of fair trial.

(5.) The contrivance in short was, that Jesus Christ, satisfying, as before, should make a way that God, with the security of his own honour, should propose life and happiness on terms proportioned to the abilities of lapsed creatures.

(6.) These terms are, sincere faith and repentance.

(7.) Faith includes that assent, that is, persuasion, that what the Bible imports, especially concerning Christ, is true; that acceptance, or receiving of Christ for our Prophet, Priest, and King; that is, deriving our notions of our duty and interest from his word, our hopes of pardon from his merit, and our rectitude of practice from his laws; and that affiance, or acquiescence of mind in him, as one able to save to the uttermost, which brings all who are saved to him, as the Being to whom the gathering of the people is to be, and is, consequently, most honourable to him; he so becoming the great Centre on which we all hang, and is most infallibly productive of a holy life; and consequently is, of necessity, preparative for a state of perfect holiness and glory.

(8.) To produce this life, and prepare for this state more certainly, repentance is added to faith, as being a practice most exactly accommodated to the circumstances of imperfect creatures; it bringing the heart daily to God, from whom it is ever starting aside; reducing the warping will to its place; so that though (to use St. Paul's distinction) God has not our flesh, he has our minds; we serve sin with the former, but God with the latter.

(9.) Serving God thus with our minds, we are conformed to the gospel rule, and our service is our evangelical righteousness.

(10.) Being our evangelical righteousness, our

title to the highest instance of divine favour is founded, as well as our precluding guilt removed. See Aph. 2, 3, 20.

(11.) This title being founded, it is tried and admitted at the great day of doom, and sentence passed accordingly.

(12.) The pronouncing of the sentence may be justly reckoned a third act of justification.

(13.) This third act once performed, Christ enjoys for ever the second instance of his reward, Aph. 31.

(14.) Till this be enjoyed, he is satisfied in the sure prospect of it, and in the enjoyment and exercise of the first.

(15.) The exercise of the first secures this glorious issue; it being the administration of the government of both worlds, in consequence of all power both in heaven and earth lodged in his hands.

(16.) One act of the power for which he had special authority, it being a peculiar instance of his reward, and the great proof to this world of his kind reception to the other, was that of the pouring out of the Spirit in extraordinary gifts upon the apostles; in saving ones on all the elect; in common ones, not to say sufficient ones, on all flesh, Acts ii.

(17.) The Spirit, being poured out on all flesh, it is impossible that those who are condemned should bring any imputation on God; they are put on as fair a trial as Adam, had righteousness as much in their reach as he, and perish not for his guilt, but their own."

I must beg my reader's excuse for inserting so long a paper in so short a narrative, but I could not abridge it without spoiling it.

2. Let us consider his management of his ministerial performances.

(1.) He addressed himself to them with great seriousness and gravity, and an humble dependence upon the divine grace. Before the notes of the first sermon he ever preached, he wrote thus: *Tu mihi dux, magne Deus, et manum hanc mentemque dirige, ut salutaria videam, dijudicem, provideam. Nil desperandum Christo duce et auspice Christo.—Great God, be thou my guide, and direct this hand and mind, that I may perceive, distinguish, and provide things which are excellent. Christ being my leader, and Christ my helper, I will despair of nothing.* And that which he wrote as his motto in the beginning of all his sermons, from the very first, which he dated July 6, 1696, to the last, dated February 24, 1707-8, is this, Ουδεν εγω, παντα Χριστος. *I am nothing, Christ is all.* Or sometimes the four first letters, ΟΕΠΧ.

(2.) He had an overflowing fulness of thought and expression in all his performances, and when he spoke off-hand, was never to seek. A florid masculine style was natural to him, which often set him somewhat above the capacity of the more ordinary sort of hearers; but he would frequently explain himself in easier terms, and as he grew in experience, gained a more familiar way of expressing himself.

(3.) He was ready, lively, and fervent both in praying and preaching, and made it appear that he was in good earnest. With what a παθος—*pathos* would he reason with his hearers to persuade them to be religious, and to take pains in religion! Many a time he would say, his heart bled to think how many who profess religion are in danger of being ruined to all eternity by their slothfulness.

(4.) He was very large and full in expounding the Scriptures, and very happy in raising observations from what he expounded; and in his expositions delivered as little of what had been said before, as most men, and yet what was very pertinent.

(5.) In the choice of his subjects he observed a method, which was very profitable to those who constantly sat under his ministry. Soon after he set out in that work, he fell into a method of practical subjects; he showed from several Scriptures what sins are an abomination to God, and what graces and duties are in a special manner pleasing to him. Then he showed how much religion consists in the due discharge of the duties of our particular relations, and went over them very largely. Then he was very particular in showing divers things wherein we must take heed to ourselves, as, [1.] To our design and end of living, from Rom. viii. 13. 1 Cor. x. 31. Ps. iv. 6. Luke x. 42. Ps. lxxiii. 27, 28. [2.] In what concerns our expectation and dependence for strength to attain our end, Isa. xl. 30, 31. [3.] As to our corruptions, Heb. xii. 15. [4.] Our constitution, Matt. v. 29, 30. [5.] Our company, Prov. xiii. 20. [6.] Our calling, Prov. xxiv. 30, &c. 1 Cor. vii. 24. [7.] Our seasons of grace, Luke xix. 42. 2 Cor. ii. 16. [8.] Our sports and delights, Prov. xxi. 17. Ps. xxxvi. 1. [9.] Our tongues, Prov. xviii. 21. Matt. xii. 31, 32. Exod. xx. 7. Isa. lviii. 13, 14. [10.] Our talents, Matt. xxv. 28, 29. [11.] To our possibility of obtaining heaven, 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2. [12.] The necessity of sincerity in seeking it, Job xxvii. 8. Gal. vi. 4.

After he had finished that, he fell into a method of doctrinal subjects, that they might *know the certainty of the words of truth,* (Prov. xxii. 21.) proposing to begin with natural truths, and then proceed to revealed, promising to be plain and distinct; to fetch his thoughts from Scripture and his own experience; to omit controversy, and in points disputed to propose what he thought in his conscience was truth; and in all, to make the work of redemption his great mark.

In this, he aimed to follow the method of his confession of faith at his ordination. From Ps. cxxxix. 14. he showed that we are; that we are made; that we are made by him, all whose works are marvellous. He then proceeded to show, there is a Being who made man, who has all perfections in

himself. What comes from this Being, must needs be good; therefore man was so in his primitive state, (Eccl. vii. 29.) but we see he is otherwise now; yet God has a kindness for man, even to a degree that is saving, 2 Pet. iii. 15. There is a salvation, carrying on in this world (Ps. xcvi. 2.) by the kingdom of God; in which he proposed to show, who is the King; the ever blessed God; and there he largely opened his names, attributes, &c. Then of his kingdom; that of nature; that of grace; that of glory. Of the creation, and the fall, he was exceeding full; and had made some entrance upon the kingdom of restoring grace, when he left Broad Oak, and removed to Shrewsbury, where he preached over the Lord's prayer, and other texts concerning prayer. Then began with the apostles' creed, and was come to the articles of *Jesus Christ our Lord*, when it pleased God to put a period to his life and labours.

(6.) His catechising of the children was very profitable, not only to them but to the whole congregation, and therefore he kept it up constantly every Lord's day in the afternoon. In going over the assembly's Catechism, he taught the children to reduce it into aphorisms; and to begin it thus: "There is a God; this God made man; he made him for some end; his end is to glorify God; (and to glorify God, is to endeavour to do and to obtain that, on the account of which we and other men and angels may know God more, love him more, praise him more, and obey him more, world without end;) he cannot glorify him without a rule; the rule is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament."

(7.) In the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, he was most lively and affectionate; and out of the abundance of the heart, his mouth spoke very much to the purpose. I remember once I was present when he baptized a child, and cannot forget how much he seemed to be himself affected, and with what warm expressions he endeavoured to affect others, with the worth of the soul of that child; that it was an immortal soul, that must live for ever, that must be to eternity either in heaven or hell, and ought accordingly with the utmost seriousness to be dedicated to God through Christ, and to be prayed for by the congregation, and the rather, considering what a theatre of sin and woe this world is, into which it was now born, and in which it was to pass its trials.

(8.) He was observed to be very methodical in his prayers, both in public and in the family. Generally he went over the several parts of prayer in their order, and sometimes said, he could not but look on it as a great mistake, for men to think method and exactness necessary in addresses to men like themselves, and not so in their addresses to the great God. He was also very happy in suiting his prayers to the particular occasions and emergencies as they occurred.

(9.) He came off from his ministerial performances frequently, expressing both the great pleasure he took in the work itself, and the little pleasure he took in his own management of it. As to the former, he has sometimes said, he preferred the delight he enjoyed in praying and preaching, before all the entertainments of sense. "How noble a service," said he, "is it, and how great, to be employed in the publishing of the gospel, and so far to be sent on the same errand with Christ himself!"

As to the latter, so great was his modesty that he could scarce be persuaded ever to think well of any thing he did. He said sometimes, he never came out of the pulpit without trembling to think how poorly he had performed. And when one happened in his hearing to speak well of a sermon of his, he said, "*If you had no better thoughts of my preaching than I, you would never come to hear me.*"

Lastly, We cannot avoid taking some notice of his nonconformity, of which he said little of himself, greater matters filled his head and heart, and therefore we have not much to say of it; only that he had studied the controversy, I believe, as impartially as most men, and without judging others: (*What have I to do to judge another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls:*) and he concluded he could not conform without sin. He had reason enough to do all he could to get over his scruples; for a near relation of his, who knew very well he could make his words good, promised to procure him a presentation to a certain living of the first rate, if he would conform: but his conscience would not suffer him to do it, though by his refusal, he not only lost his preferment, but highly disobliged his friend, who had made him so kind an offer. Nor was that the only considerable offer of that kind that he refused; and, which is more, he not only refused them, but afterwards reflected with much comfort upon his refusal of them; and hesitated not to say sometimes, that he was so well satisfied in the reasons of his nonconformity, that by the grace of God, if he were called to it, he could seal it with his blood.

Yet he was far from bigotry, and heat, and censoriousness in it: he was very free, occasionally, to join in the public service, and had a great deal of charity for those he differed from, as all those will have on both sides, whose thoughts, like his, are free and generous, and taken up with the essentials of religion, and in whom the love of God and their neighbour has the ascendancy.

II. We are next to consider him as a tutor, and here especially lay his excellency; this was that part of his character which we had more particularly in our eye, in attempting to give this representation of him, from the record which divers who had been his pupils were very forward to bear to him, and

the honourable testimonies with which they embalm his memory.

1. Let us consider how well qualified he was for this service, though, when he undertook it, his friends had much ado to convince him that he was in any measure fit for it.

He had a very graceful appearance, a good presence, and a happy mixture both of majesty and mildness, gravity and sweetness, in the air of his countenance, and that which at first view promised something considerable: his voice also was clear and commanding, and very humble; which made him the best precentor either his academy or his congregation could have. And in both psalms were much sung, and admirably well, with great variety and exactness of tunes.

He was richly stocked with all sorts of useful knowledge, and was able with the good householder to bring out of his treasury things new and old; a great deal, both of ancient and modern learning, but especially the products of his own contemplations and reasonings. He was not like an echo, which returns only the sounds it receives, but did himself cultivate and improve what he had learned, made it his own, put it into his own method, dress, and language, and so communicated it to those who were to learn from him. Few tutors dictate more their own thoughts than he did; and though in his performances he showed a great deal of judicious reading, yet they seemed rather the fruit of thinking, deep and close thinking.

In reading lectures he showed himself master of the notions he delivered, and made it appear he had formed an exact scheme of them to himself, which enabled him to lead his pupils into them with such a connexion and chain of thought, and such a powerful conviction, that they have owned themselves strangely surprised with, finding themselves in the light ere they were aware.

He was very happy in a propriety and fluency of expression, as well as in a wonderful acumen and readiness of invention. I believe few men are able to deliver themselves better in set discourses extempore, and off-hand, than he was, either in Latin or English. Divers discourses so delivered, and some of them on the most abstruse points of philosophy and divinity, some of his pupils wrote from his mouth, and they think they have reason to value them as little inferior to studied performances.

Nor did the temper of his mind contribute less to the qualifying of him for this service than his accomplishments in learning. He was of a most tender and affectionate spirit, and was master of the art of obliging. Those who have reason enough to know him, will say of him, that he was familiar, when he pleased, without making himself little; distant, when he saw occasion, without any show of haughtiness; grave without moroseness, and pleasant in its turn without intrenching upon seriousness or manliness, and in his common discourse instructive without pedantry or ostentation. Sure never any man who had the instruction of youth was more affectionately beloved, and yet more truly reverenced, than he was by those under his charge. Such an interest did he gain in their esteem by his prudence and tenderness, that they could easily think every thing he said and did, was well said and well done.

When he had at any time an occasion to show his displeasure, he knew how to do it so as to answer the end, which was to convince and reform; but those who were long with him have said, that they never saw him disturbed with any intemperate heat, nor transported into any indecencies of expression. Prudence, and love, and true merit will command all needful respect and obedience, without the help of passion.

That which highly recommended him to his pupils was, that he was so condescending and easy of access, so respectful to them, and discovered such a tender affection for them, that they say, they know not how to represent it to others to that degree that they ought. He would often propose things to them with a deference even to *their* judgment, and not only allowed, but encouraged, them to offer their objections against the opinions he delivered; and some of them have owned, that in the reflection they have been ashamed to think with what freedom and vehemence they have sometimes disputed against what he had declared to be his opinion, and yet how well he took it.

The pleasure he took in his pupils, showing himself in his element when he was among them, and the tender concern he discovered upon all occasions for their welfare, made him very dear to them. If any of them were sick, how solicitous was he concerning them, and with what affection did he say sometimes, that the life of one of his students was as dear to him as that of his own child; and so he made it appear.

His deadness to this world, and the things of it, added much to his fitness for this service; for that made it easy to him to deny himself in his own ease and interest, and that in very considerable instances, for the satisfaction of his pupils. Under the influence of this principle, he made no difference in his affection to them upon the account of their outward condition: he valued the virtues and good carriage of the poorest, and was displeased at the follies and extravagancies of the greatest; and made both to appear.

2. We are next to consider the method he took with them, and his prudent pious management of them.

(1.) He was much in prayer with them. I put that first, because I look upon it, that the life of re-

ligion lies very much in a constant dependence upon the divine providence and grace, expressed by our acknowledging God, and seeking him in all our studies, all our affairs, and upon all occasions. This he believed, and practised accordingly. Near an hour was spent every morning and every evening in family worship, expounding the Scriptures, singing psalms, and prayer. Immediately after family-worship was concluded in the morning, they went to the lecture room, and he with them; where he again prayed with the students only, giving this reason, that there were many petitions to be put up on their account, which it was not proper for the rest of the family to join in. Then he read a portion of Scripture to them in a peculiar method, (for some time out of Dr. Gastrell's Christian Institutes,) and with great concern and holy fervency committed the students and their studies to God, begging a blessing on the endeavours of that day. If any thing happened to put off this exercise a little from its time, yet he never failed to perform it afterwards, before he began to read his lectures.

When any came first to him, he prayed for them; when any left him, he prayed particularly for them; when he had occasion to give any of them a solemn reproof or admonition, he followed it with prayer.

(2.) He took pains to compose many learned pieces in Latin, for the service of his pupils, to make up what he thought was deficient in the books put into their hands.

One he called Schematismus, being a scheme of the several disciplines in their natural order; Gnostologia first, containing the Prægognita; then Logic, Metaphysics, Physics, Mathematics; and lastly, Ethics; showing the nature and use of each, their dependence upon, and their serviceableness to, one another. In this he presented the young travellers with a general map of the country they were to survey; and there were some of his pupils who had in other places made considerable progress in the disciplines, who owned themselves indebted to that piece, especially as he opened it to them, for their acquaintance with the true use of philosophy, the order of its several parts, and the mutual relation they bore to each other.

He also compiled a large system of Elenctic Logic; in which he showed himself as well acquainted with the depths as with the niceties of that art.

There is another science, which he thought had been least cultivated by the learned, and yet as well deserved their pains as any other, and that is, Pneumatics; he began a large system of this science, which he had a peculiar affection for, his genius leading him to abstract speculations, and made some progress in it a little before he died; as if his close application of mind to the nature of spirits, were a presage of his own removal quickly to the world of spirits, short of which his intense inquiries concerning them could meet with no satisfaction. Had he lived to finish that work, and could he then have been persuaded to publish it, we have reason to think it would have been both acceptable and serviceable to the learned world.

(3.) He took a great deal of pains in reading lectures to his pupils in their several classes every day; which he did with so much clearness and fulness, and, withal, with so much pleasantness and variety, intermixing such entertaining stories with that which seemed jejune or crabbed, that their attendance on them was a constant pleasure, and not a task; and though he was long, he never seemed tedious.

He had a particular concern to have them well grounded in Logic, both didactic and elenctic, and spent more time with them than most tutors do in that part of learning, which teaches us how to direct our thoughts, so that we may find out truth more readily, and express it more pertinently.

And for the improvement of the reasoning faculty, he pressed his pupils very much to the study of pure Mathematics, as that which fixes the mind, and pleases it with those demonstrations which are the result of its searches.

He was a great master in natural philosophy; and though he lived in obscurity, out of the road of books and conversation, yet he found means to acquaint himself with the modern discoveries and improvements in that and the other sciences. Between himself and his pupils, he took care to preserve a freedom of thought; comparing the several schemes and hypotheses together, with a generous indifference to them, and a diligent impartial search after truth, as far as it might be collected from them all.

His pupils observed him to be very curious in his choice of apposite expressions, for the illustrating of what he delivered to them; and that he would sometimes go back to change a word or phrase, if another occurred to his thoughts more expressive. He commonly laid down his instructions in short aphorisms chained together, by which he set both his own and others' notions in a clear light, and oftentimes decided some of the most difficult controversies, by a plain stating of them.

(4.) He formed all his notions in divinity purely by the word of God, the Bible was the system he read, and the genuine expositions of that he thought the most profitable divinity lectures he could read to his pupils; to that only he was devoted, and not to any man's hypothesis. He called no man master upon earth, but proved all things by the law and the testimony; nor would he himself be called *Rabbi*, but proposed all his notions to be impartially examined by the same touchstone.

For the methodising their divinity studies, he made use of the Assembly's Confession of Faith, and Amesius's Medulla, and some other systems. Mr. How was an author he much admired, and his

Living Temple, a book he read to his students, and obliged them to be conversant with; making it his great care to establish them in the first principles of the oracles of God, and to fill their minds with them, which he looked upon as the best expedient to fortify them against the two pernicious extremes, of scepticism on the one hand, and bigotry on the other.

(5.) He maintained a very strict and steady government of his little academy; which he modelled as near as he could to the constitution of the College at Glasgow, which he much admired. *Sic parvis componere magna solebat—Thus was he accustomed to compare great things with small.* He took care they should employ their morning hours well, and take time for their secret devotions, being always jealous lest any other studies should encroach upon them.

He obliged them to great diligence in the hours set apart for study, and restrained them at other times from recreations which he thought any way unbecoming them.

Those that he found not so quick in taking things, as others are, he did not discourage; but took pains to bring them up as they were able.

If he observed any of them to be remiss in their studies, or that took any false steps in their conversation, how faithfully, and yet how tenderly, would he deal with them for their reformation. He had an excellent art in his discourses to them, when they were together, of saying that which obliged them to reprove themselves; and they were sensible of it, and oftentimes he gained his point that way, and saved both himself and them the uneasiness of a particular reproof: but when there was occasion for a close and personal admonition, he gave it with an affecting solemnity, and in such a way as showed not his anger so much as his love, and evidenced that he delighted not to shame, no, not the delinquents; but as his beloved sons, he warned them. He often mingled tears with his reproofs, and expostulated with so much reason and tender affection, as sometimes drew tears also even from those who were not apt in that manner to relent. He commonly followed the reproofs he gave with solemn prayer to God for a blessing upon them: and with some who were under his charge, he saw great success of his endeavours this way, not only to his own satisfaction, but to the admiration of others, and endearing of himself, even to those with whom he thus dealt faithfully.

(6.) He was himself a great example of serious piety, and very solicitous to promote the eternal salvation of the souls of those under his charge. The beauty of holiness was indeed the beauty of his whole management, and the heavenliness of his conversation was the great ornament of it. With what seriousness and affection did he discourse of another world, and how indifferent was he to the little affairs of this. What savoury expressions would drop from him, and how awfully would he speak of the things that are not seen, that are eternal. How would he spiritualize common occurrences; and when he was reading lectures to the students upon the works of nature, how would he take occasion from them, to observe with a pious reverence, the wisdom, power, and goodness of the God of nature.

When he was speaking of the mysteries of redemption, the love of Christ, and the glory of the blessed, he was sometimes carried out even beyond himself, in the admiring contemplation of those heights and depths; and so, as even to forget that he was in the body. These were his beloved topics, and which he took all occasions to enlarge upon with *Juvat usque morari—Here it delights me to dwell.*

He was desirous to kindle, preserve, and inflame the same holy fire in the hearts of his pupils. How pathetically would he press upon them the great concerns of another world, and choose out words to reason with them about the one thing needful, commonly addressing them thus: "My dear charge," (telling them oft,) "if any thing I can do will but promote your spiritual and eternal welfare, how happy shall I think myself. If what I say may abide with any of you to do your souls good, I have my aim."

Two very hopeful young men he buried out of his family after he came to Shrewsbury, who died of the small-pox; and a third, who died of a consumption. This touched him in a very tender part, and lay heavy upon his spirit a great while. How did he humble himself before God, and kiss the rod, and bewail sin, as that which provoked God thus to contend with him. With what pathetical expressions of submission did he resign himself, and all that was dear to him, to the holy will of God. *It is the Lord, let him do what he will.* And how solicitous was he to improve those providences for the spiritual benefit of those who did survive; dealing with them in private (besides his public funeral discourses on those occasions) from Job xiv. 2. *He comes forth like a flower, and is cut down.* And Eccl. xi. 8, 9. *Remember the days of darkness.* Yet how did he comfort himself and others with this, that however it be, yet God is good. *It is well*, 2 Kings iv. 26. However, it shall be well; it shall end well, everlastingly well. Often repeating with much affection:

Ἔσται παντα καλως—*All things shall be done rightly.*

Est bene, non potuit dicere; dixit, Erit—When he could not say, It is well, he said, It shall be well.

Fetching comfort likewise from 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. That God has *made with us an everlasting covenant.* And much affected his young men were with a sermon he preached to them in the family, when they came back from the funeral of one of the young men that was buried a little way off in the country, on Luke xxiv. 52. *And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy.* Encouraging himself and them with this, that in heaven we hope to meet, and never part.

They also remember, when soon after another of his pupils was so ill of a fever, that his life was by all despaired of, and it was expected he would in a few hours breathe his last, the doctor called them all together to join in prayer for him, and with a more than ordinary earnestness wrestled with God for his life; and God gave him an answer of peace immediately; for when they returned to him after prayer, they found such a wonderful change in him, as was the beginning of his recovery; for which abundant thanksgivings were rendered to God. But his joy on that occasion met with a great allay; for the young man's father, Mr. Pike, a worthy minister at Burton upon Trent, who came to be with his son in his illness, when he went away comforted in his recovery, took the infection of the fever with him, of which presently upon his return home he sickened, and died in a few days, to the great loss of that town and country; for he was a very zealous good man, a lively affectionate preacher, and one who laid out himself very much to do good.

(7.) Those of his young men who were designed for the ministry, and were drawing near to that sacred employment, he took pains with to possess them with a very deep sense of the awfulness of that function, and the weight of that work they had before them; often proposing to their consideration, the preciousness of all immortal souls, the imminent danger most are in of perishing eternally, and the great account the minister would have to give concerning them; inferring thence, what an earnest care ministers ought to have in their hearts of them, 2 Cor. viii. 16.

That he might make them ready in the Scriptures, he obliged those who wrote daily expositions, once a week to repeat what they had written; and the divinity class in their turns, once a week, analysed or expounded a portion of Scripture themselves.

That he might train them up in the exercise of the gift of prayer, every night after he had performed family worship, the students were all to retire to the lecture room, and one of them prayed, each in his turn, besides the more retired services of every chamber. Thus were they trained up to pray always, with all prayer.

In all their performances, he much pressed it upon them to be accurate and exact, both in method and language; and had times of employing them in the polite exercises of oratory and poetry.

He likewise set some time apart every week for the regulating and directing of their elocution and pronunciation; about which he was very solicitous. He ordered each to read some paragraphs in authors most noted for good language; after which, by his own example, he showed them wherein they were defective, or had missed the right pause or emphasis; and an excellent faculty he had at exposing and regulating an odd tone or gesture, to the advantage of the student, without giving offence.

(8.) He took care to possess his pupils with the principles of Christian charity and moderation, and to arm them against bigotry. He was no party man himself, nor would he make them such. One who had been a great while his pupil, writes to me to this purpose; that his tutor understood the passions of the mind so well, and had so great an art in managing tempers so as to gain his point, that, if he had designed it, he could easily have sent out flaming bigots; but he was too much a Christian, a gentleman, and a scholar, to be swallowed up in the violences of any party. His aim was, to make them men of sense, and catholic Christians; and if they fell short of being such, it was not his fault. He adds, "How hard it is, that when, on the one side, such noble, beneficial, and heavenly principles of love and moderation, and particularly, a candid temper toward the Church of England, are in the academies of dissenters so studiously infused and encouraged, there should be on the other side such pains taken, and all the arts of misrepresentation used, to render the dissenters contemptible and odious, and men not fit to be tolerated. But let us not be weary of rendering good for evil thus; for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not."

And observing, that the dissenters' academies are by some most maliciously calumniated, as nurseries of rebellion and sedition, and hurtful to kings and provinces; he adds, that what insight the doctor thought fit to give his pupils into politics, tended to beget in them, not only a satisfaction in, but an admiration of, the established constitution of the English government, and he doubted not, but they brought with them, from his instructions, a true value for monarchy, and as thorough an abhorrence of the execrable murder of King Charles I. as they could have brought from Christ Church itself.

As to his practice of physic we have not much to observe, but when he was a youth his genius led him strangely that way; and he loved to learn medicinal receipts, and had them very ready when he met with any occasion for them. When he fell into that business, he soon found it fatigued him much, both in body and mind; and he would gladly have left it off, but thought he could not in conscience refuse to assist those whom he saw in peril, who earnestly begged his advice; and who would not make use of any other, or could not be at the charge of it. To the poor he commonly gave not only his advice, but their physic too, gratis, or money to pay the apothecary. It gave him likewise an opportunity of reproving, counselling, and comforting the sick, and of praying with them.

Luke the evangelist was a physician, a *beloved physician*, and so was he. In all the places where he lived, and the relations wherein he stood, he was

beloved. When he was at school at Wirksworth, he was the darling both of the school and of the town, for the sweetness of his temper, his piety and ingenuity, and his obliging readiness to be serviceable according to his capacity to every body; and when he had finished his time there, and was sent for home, his schoolmaster, Mr. Ogden, wept to part with him, and said, he knew not what would become of his school when he was gone.

When he was a student at Glasgow, he was universally respected there for his great learning, diligence, and seriousness; and when he took his Master's degree, the senate of the academy did him the honour to make him president of all who were laureated that year; an honour seldom or never done to any but one of their own nation. He acquitted himself so well in that place, that when he was to take his leave, the regents courted his stay, and promised him preferment there; but he longed after his father's house, for there he was a great example of filial affection and respect; his parents were no less dear to him than he was to them, and there was nothing he studied more than in every thing to have them easy.

When he went to school in Derbyshire at fifteen years of age, he left a paper which was found after he was gone, expressing his great thankfulness to his parents for the care they had taken of his education, begging their prayers for him, and that they would not be inordinate in their affection to him, and if sickness and death should betide him, not to mourn for him as having no hope, for he knew it would be well with him living and dying. His letters to his parents, both from Wirksworth and Glasgow, as they evidence much of the power of the grace of God upon his spirit, a constant regard to God, and dependence upon him, and an earnest desire to serve the will of God in his generation, so they express a very great tenderness of them, and of their comfort and satisfaction.

He was as a father to his brothers and sisters, and very beneficial to all round about him; so much did holiness and love shine in his conversation, and so diffusive were the influences of both, that the good people of the neighbourhood would sometimes call his house the "suburbs of heaven." He gave Bibles and other good books to many, with a charge to read them diligently, and allowed yearly money to a poor man in the neighbourhood to teach so many poor children to read; with a strict obligation that none should know who did it. He was always careful not to give offence to any, very moderate in his opinions, and charitable in his thoughts and expressions concerning those he differed from, which gained him great respect from all sorts of people; and justly was he the more honoured by others, because he had always mean thoughts of himself, and was seldom satisfied with any performance of his own; still saying, "It might have been better done by myself, but much better done by another."

Well, all this had a pleasing aspect; to see so much of the light and love of the upper world shining in this lower region; and to see it in a man of strength and vigour, in the midst of his days, gave us a pleasing prospect, both of his further advances in proportion to his continued progress; and his long usefulness in his generation; but, alas! we must take the treasure of divine light as it is given us, in earthen vessels, in china dishes, which do not wear out gradually, but often break of a sudden, without any previous decay: so it was here.

The Doctor's constitution seemed firm enough, but I believe he had done himself a prejudice by studying in the night, and sitting up very late, often a great while after midnight. A great scholar once said, he would willingly lose the learning he had got, upon condition he could recover the health he had lost by night studies. After he began to practise physic, that obliged him often to read late, which I believe did him no good.

But notwithstanding the strength of his constitution, he had himself an apprehension that he should not be long-lived. When it was urged by some of his friends to spare himself, he used to answer, that he believed he had but a very little time to live, and he was willing to spend it to the best purpose. When he was pleasing himself with the comfortable circumstances he was in, and particularly the great agreeableness of his dear yoke-fellow; he would say, "Well, this is not likely to continue long, we must expect a change." This apprehension grew upon him, and he frequently spoke of it; it was but a little time before he sickened, that he solemnly declared to some of his friends, that he looked upon death to be very near; adding, that he saw impiety come to such a height in this nation, that he feared some sore judgment would shortly come upon it, which God in mercy prevent.

He met with a French book which gave an account of the last hours of a young lady, a protestant, of sixteen years of age, not named, who died in France, with high expressions of holy joy and triumph: the book is entitled, "Edifying Death." He was so pleased with it upon the reading of it, that he translated it out of French into English, and just finished it a day or two before he sickened; it is since his death printed at Shrewsbury, in three or four sheets.

After he came to Shrewsbury, he had not his health so well as he had in the country; was frequently indisposed with cold, but never under any threatening symptoms.

On Monday, February, 23, 1707-8, he complained a little of a pain in his head and back; however, he sat down to dinner with his students, as usual, after he had done his morning work, but he ate very little; for it happened just before he sat down, that

one of the young men showed him a paper then newly published, of reflections upon the grand jury's presentment of the book called, "The Rights of the Christian Church," from which he took occasion all dinner time, and a good while after, to inveigh against that book, and to warn his pupils against the pernicious principles of it, with a more than ordinary warmth.

Though he continued not well, yet on Tuesday he studied and preached publicly the week-day lecture, on Matt. iv. 10. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;* he apprehended his distemper to be a slight intermitting fever, which would soon wear off, especially with the use of bark.

On Wednesday he gave a lecture to one class, but excused himself from the rest because of his indisposition, and walked out a little that afternoon; but it was with difficulty that he got home.

On Thursday and Friday he did not seem to be much worse, but prayed with his family even on Friday night, and was observed to be very particular, and asserting in his requests to God, that they might all be prepared for death and judgment.

On Saturday he confined himself to his chamber, yet did not seem to apprehend himself in any danger, nor did those about him.

On Monday some very good advice was had, and means used. His distemper was apprehended to be a nervous fever, and malignant; but seemed not to come to any extremity.

On Tuesday evening he sat up till almost bed-time, and having slept a little in his chair, when he waked, he said he had heard extraordinary music, far beyond what he had ever heard in his life. That was the first thing which gave those about him an alarm of his danger, for then it seemed that his distemper began to affect his head: next morning he became extremely delirious, so that he knew not those about him. A piteous case, that a soul of such great capacities and attainments, and now just ready to take wing to the world of perfect and everlasting light, should merely by a bodily distemper be put into such confusion as his was; and disabled to discover itself, as otherwise it certainly would have done, to the glory of God, and the edification of others. May his living words be duly remembered and improved, for we have none of his dying words to keep account of.

Notwithstanding his delirium he slept much, and so sweetly on Thursday evening, that it was hoped it would do him good, but between ten and eleven o'clock that evening, (March 4,) he waked in an agony, and breathed his last within a few minutes; his aspiring soul hastening as it were out of a body, which not only, as always, detained him from the vision of God in the other world, (for *while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord,*) but now disabled him from the service of God here; and what soul like his could bear to be any longer so fettered?

What a house of mourning was his made that dismal night; what deep impressions this sudden stroke made upon his dear charge (as he used to call them) I cannot express, and I hope they will not forget. Sure he lived as much desired, and died as much lamented, as most men.

His remains were attended to the grave on Monday following, March 8, with universal lamentation. He was buried in St. Chad's church in Shrewsbury, close by the grave in which the worthy Mr. James Owen was buried not two years before. Immediately after the body was interred, a funeral sermon was preached in his own meeting-place to a numerous congregation of true mourners.

I must conclude this sad account, as Mr. Fox does the history of the death of the Lady Jane Grey:

Tu, quibus, ista legas incertum est, Lector! ocellis;
Ipse quidem, siccis, scribere non potui.

I know not, reader, whether thou canst read this without a tear; I can assure thee that it was not written without many *tears.*

Inscription on his Tombstone.

SAMUEL BENION, V. D. M. & M. D.
Whicksoliæ in Agro Salopiensi Natus, Collegii Glasguensis olim Alumnus, Quando Corpus suum huc demisit. Animam puram, piam, et modestam, Terrenis defæcatam, et Cœlestibus plenam, Omnigenâ Literaturâ alte imbutam.
Gloriæ Dei.
In Concionando Evangelium,
Erudiendo Juventutem Studiosam,
Et Curando Ægrotos,
Integre dicatum;
Non tantum suis, sed et omnibus charum;
In Christi Manus placide commisit.
Mar. 4. $170\frac{7}{8}$
Ætat. Suæ 35.

SAMUEL BENION, V. D. M. and M. D.*
Born at Whicksol in Shropshire, educated in the University of Glasgow, died in this town. He was pious, modest, and profoundly learned, abstracted from the world; his mind was pure and heavenly. Wholly devoted to the preaching of the gospel, the instructing of studious youth, and the healing of the sick; doing all to the glory of God. Dear to his friends, and to all besides. He committed himself with devout tranquillity into the hands of Christ, March 4, $170\frac{7}{8}$, in the 35th year of his age.

* Minister of the Word of God, and Doctor of Physic.

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

FUNERAL OF THE REV. MR. FRANCIS TALLENTS,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL IN SHREWSBURY.

WITH A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND DEATH.

JUDE 21.

Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

HAD I been left at liberty to choose my subject on this sad and solemn occasion, I should certainly have pitched upon some text or other that would have led me to show what a great man (I might say, a prince and a great man, for such men as he, who have wrestled and prevailed in prayer, are Israel's *princes with* God) is fallen this day in our tribe, and what a great loss we have of him; some text that would have been proper to affect us with sorrow for the breach made upon us, which cannot but touch us the more sensibly, because we have been so lately wounded again and again in the same tender part. Though we have a great deal of reason with thankfulness to acknowledge the benignity of Providence, in continuing such a great blessing as his life was so long to us, yet his capacity for further usefulness being also wonderfully prolonged, we ought to look upon his removal as a further token of God's displeasure against us, and to lament it with a holy fear. Jacob's family so greatly lamented the death of Rebekah's nurse, who could not but be very old, that the place where they buried her was called *Allon-bachuth—The Oak of weeping*, Gen. xxxv. 8. What a large debt of grateful and honourable tears is owing then to one who has been so long a spiritual father and nurse in Christ's family! The longer we enjoy good men, the more we should love and honour what we see of Christ in them, and the greater loss we should account their removal from us. I should certainly raise up your mourning, could I but be instrumental to stir up your graces; your love to God and his image, your zeal for Christ and his kingdom: these would engage your mourning for the death of one who bore so much of God's image, and did so much good service to the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom among men in his day.

The notice God took of the death of Moses, *Moses my servant is dead*, Josh. i. 2. might probably have been my subject; and the rather, because, like Moses, in his advanced years, his eyes scarce waxed dim; and at length, like him, he died at the mouth of the Lord, Deut. xxxiv. 5. Or, Elisha's lamentation for Elijah's departure, which, for my own part, I have reason to take up, *My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.* Or Christ's character of John Baptist might well have suited the occasion, *He was a burning and a shining light.* Nay, age being a crown of glory; the old age of such a one, who continued in his usefulness to the last, being a diadem of beauty to all his friends, one whose days spoke so well, and the multitude of whose years taught so much wisdom; it had been no solecism, to have applied to ourselves the lamenting prophet's words, *The crown is fallen from our heads; woe unto us, for we have sinned.*

But our reverend father, seeking your edification, and not his own honour, has appointed the text now read to you to be the subject of my thoughts and yours at this time. He mentioned it to me a year or two ago, as that which he desired might be preached upon at his funeral, laying the emphasis upon the word *mercy: Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.* For (said he) all my hopes of eternal life are built purely upon the mercy of my Lord Jesus Christ. I have nothing else to trust to. So that by this text, he being dead, yet speaketh. Hear, and your soul shall live.

Many and many a good word he has spoken to you in God's name, as feelingly and affectionately,

as much from the heart, and discovering as much of a natural care for your estate, as most men I ever heard; now take this as his dying word; and dying words should make living and lasting impressions: take it as his last farewell; his legacy (I may call it) to this congregation, and a valuable legacy it is. After he had been 56 or 57 years labouring among you in the word and doctrine, as opportunity favoured, with this word he breathes his last; this text he lives and dies by, it is his *Consummatum est*, and finishing his course, with it he finishes his testimony. Would you have the conclusion of the whole matter, and whatever you forget, will you be sure to remember that it is this, *Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus to eternal life.* O that you and I might hear attentively the instructions of it, might hear them from the grave, though it be a land of silence; might hear them from heaven, not as the word of dying men, but of the living God, who has directed us not only what we must do, but what we may expect. Let the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ be always before our eyes, and let the believing expectation of it fill our souls, be inlaid there: let these words be written on the tables of our hearts, as with a pen of iron, and with a point of a diamond, *Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

I took it for granted that our deceased father, in the choice of this text, designed these two things;

I. To express the workings of his own heart, his own sentiments and devout affections, and to let you know that he for his part was a believing expectant of eternal life, and a believing dependant on Christ and his mercy for it, and continued so to the last, and had not changed his mind.

II. To impress the like on your hearts, and to engage and encourage you with the same things with which he found himself encouraged and engaged: he would have you also stirred up to seek for eternal life in Christ's mercy, and to seek till you find. He seemed desirous with the last blaze of his expiring lamp, if it might be, by the grace of God, (that blessed heavenly fire,) to kindle the same pious affections in you that his own heart was inflamed with. O that I had more of his spirit! then I could the better lay before you his thoughts that took rise from these words. I have looked upon it as none of the least of the blessings of my life, that ever since I was capable of it, I have been more or less at times made happy with his conversation, and many an hour have spent, abundantly to my satisfaction, in fellowship with him; and as it was his condescension, so it was my advantage, that he was very communicative of his observations and experiences, in all his discourses full of Christ, and another world; so that I never parted from him, but I might have been the wiser and better for my being with him, and as much from him as perhaps from any friend I ever had, might have learned both discretion and devotion, that is, how to converse both with God and man. But if the countenance has for a while been sharpened by such a friend, as iron is with iron, alas, it grows dull again, and we want that liveliness when we have occasion for it. O that the blessed Spirit of God would bring this word home to my heart and yours, would open our understandings, and make our hearts to burn within us, so that from this precious line of sacred writ we may gather now, and lay up for a time of need, that honey which I believe this blessed servant of God did in his own meditations suck from it, and may experience the same relish and power of it which we have reason to think he had the pleasure of. The Scripture is a full fountain, out of which we may draw as much water, and with as much joy, as others who have gone before us, who have recommended it to us to be our guide and stay, as it has been theirs. Streams from this rock followed them through this wilderness to Canaan, where the water will be turned into wine; and they will not fail us, nor be to us as the brooks in summer, if we be not wanting to ourselves.

I. then, Let us consider this text, as recommended to us with the design, to express this good man's believing hope and expectation of eternal life, through the *mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Having lived in faith, thus he died in faith, seeing the promised land affar off, but embracing the promise of it as faithful, and worthy of all acceptation, very sure, and very precious; dying with the promise in his arms, and the life promised in his eye. This reason, this account he gives of the hope that was in him, with meekness and fear; that he hoped *for* eternal life, and hoped *in* the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring him to it; and that this hope was to him as an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast, entering before into that within the vail, whither he himself is now entered.

It is the privilege and happiness of dying Christians, that they can look with ease and satisfaction on the other side death and the grave; can see firm land, and a good land, beyond that rough and stormy sea, and this enables them to look death in the face, and to look down into the chambers of darkness, without change of countenance. They know not only whence death's commission comes, from their Father's hand, but whither it will bring them, to their Father's house, where they long to be. Dying is not to them as it is to atheists and infidels, "a great leap in the dark." No marvel, if from one who knows not, or receives not, divine revelation, we hear sad complaints of uncertainty, and how much the departing soul is at a loss: *Dubius vixi, anxius morior, quo vadam nescio—I have lived in doubt, I die in anxiety, whither I am going I know not*, said one; *Animula vagula blandula, quæ nunc abibis in loca*

—*O my poor soul, whither art thou now going*, said another. And we have been lately told, that Mr. Hobbes, (that Leviathan, that crooked serpent,) when, notwithstanding the vain hopes he had flattered himself with, that though old he should yet live a while, he was told, that he could not continue long, wished, " O that I could now find a hole at which to creep out of this world!"* But they who by faith build on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and are united to Christ, the chief cornerstone, have a holy humble confidence towards God in a dying hour, and having put themselves under a divine conduct, can easily leave the land of their nativity, in prospect of the better country, that is, the heavenly; and though, like their father Abraham, they go out not knowing whither they go, yet, like him, they go out with cheerfulness, knowing whom they follow, and being assured that he will show them the path of life. And though they cannot particularly describe the future bliss, which is a glory to be revealed, yet they are sure that it is enough to make them perfectly and eternally happy. And knowing whom they have trusted with all the concerns of their felicity, even the same whom the Father has trusted with all the concerns of his glory, they know very well *he is able to keep what they have committed to him unto that day*, when it shall be called for; and be ready to receive that spirit, which they then resign to him, and trust him with. In the assurance of this, they can walk with a holy security through the valley of the shadow of death, fearing no evil after death, and therefore fearing none in death.

Let this be observed to the honour of the Christian religion, and the everlasting gospel, on which it is founded, that thence are fetched such substantial powerful antidotes against the fear of death, as the best of the heathen moralists could never offer. The Platonists sometimes called their philosophy *Meditatio mortis—Meditation on death*, and taught their disciples to think of death; but they could not teach them to triumph over it, as our religion teaches us, *O death, where is thy sting?* Let it also be observed for our encouragement to diligence and constancy in the work of God, that so we shall have not only an entrance, but an *abundant entrance, into the everlasting kingdom.* What is there in death to be dreaded, when it is only our passage to that eternal life, which through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ we are looking and longing for.

And as it is the happiness of dying Christians, that they have the hope of eternal life to stay themselves upon in that darksome valley, so it will be for the glory of God, and the edification of others, if they tell what God has done for their souls, and leave behind them a testimony to the sufficiency of the divine promise and grace from their own experience. Some, perhaps, may be invited into the ways of religion, many, however, will be encouraged therein, when they see and hear with what ease and cheerfulness those who have been long walking in these good ways leave the world in expectation of the blessed hope. Some have thought it no less than a debt which at least the old disciples of Christ owe to those about them, to communicate to them the comforts wherewith they are comforted of God, in the believing prospects of the glory to be revealed. *I believed, therefore have I spoken.* Our deceased father has thus encouraged us to go on in the way of God, by intimating to us, that he found abundant comfort and support under the apprehensions of death approaching, in depending upon the mercy of Christ, and looking for eternal life through him.

When he intimated his mind that I should preach his funeral sermon, he added, that he would not have me to praise him; but,

I hope it will be no violation of that part of his charge, to take notice even of that prohibition to his honour, his great honour; the very mention of it (and I am obliged to mention it, because otherwise it might justly be expected, that I should have spoken largely concerning his character) turns to his praise; and my silence so restrained speaks aloud, that he was one of those humble in spirit whom honour will uphold; one who sought not his own glory, nor cared to have a trumpet sounded after him, any more than before him, *Digito monstrari, et dicier hic est—pointing him out with the finger, and saying, This is the man*; but would rather do what was praiseworthy than be praised for it. By this it appeared, that he endeavoured to approve himself to God, and was therefore dead to, and looked with contempt upon, the applause and commendation of men; and that he lived a life of sincere repentance and self-judging, as the best Christians do; and was far from being like Saul, who, even when he owned his guilt to Samuel, saying, *I have sinned*, added in the next breath, *yet honour me now before the elders of my people*, 1 Sam. xv. 30. And that he was one of those Christians inwardly, whose praise is not of men, not courted or desired of men, but of God, and who make sure a witness in heaven, and a record on high, and then reckons it a very small thing to be judged of man's judgment. Herein let us be followers of him, as he was of Christ: let us not search our own glory, for it is vain glory, nay, it is not glory, it is glory that will be turned into shame; but let us with a single eye aim at God's glory, and then that will reflect true glory upon us, and everlasting.

He who does but act a part in religion, may conclude as that heathen emperor did, with *Valete et plaudite—Prosper and applaud*, the language of the

* Dr. Kennet's account of the D. of Devon's family.

stage; but he whose heart is upright with God, though he reckons a good name better than precious ointment, especially that at the day of one's death, yet he is so intent upon his acceptance with God, that the other is as nothing to him; well knowing, that true honour after death arises not from men's eulogiums, but from Christ's *Euge—commendation:* if our Master say, *Well done*, the matter is not great what our fellow-servants say.

Nor will it (I hope) be any violation of his charge to leave it to his own works to praise him in the gates; they do it, they will do it, further and longer than any thing I can say will. Generations to come will mention him with honour, for his View of Universal History, that copious comprehensive work, which takes in all the generals, and in a manner touches most of the particulars, that have swelled the numerous volumes of historians; sure never was so much learning, so much reading, crowded into so little a compass; never was one page in two columns so well filled: it is a work confessedly exact and elaborate, and of general and of lasting use. Let that vast performance praise him for his knowledge, judgment, and great industry.

Let his Sure and Large Foundations, his History of Schism, and the Defence of it, praise him for his catholic charity and moderation, and that healing temper which, as far as it prevails and has the ascendency, will extinguish heats, accommodate differences among Christians, and bring and keep good people together in love; conformable to the design of our blessed Redeemer, who died that he might gather together in one the children of God, who under several denominations were scattered abroad.

But besides these works of his, I hope the good success of his ministry in this place will praise him, and the remaining fruit of it will be his honour, as well as your comfort and advantage. Recollect what you have heard from him, and live it over. You have fully known his doctrine, manner of life, faith, charity, patience; continue therefore in those things which you have learned, and have been assured of, knowing that you have learned them of one who well understood them himself, and with a very tender concern for your souls pressed them upon you. Abound therefore in the fruits of righteousness, and so commend your keeping; make it appear you have been well fed with the bread of life, and nourished up with the words of faith and good doctrine, by your holy heavenly conversations, your sobriety, justice, charity, meekness, humility, and exemplary walking in every thing, which will be an ornament to your profession, and the standing praise of your ministers who are gone; whose good preaching will best survive them, and be best attested, in your good living. If at any time you are tempted to do an ill thing, remember you have not so learned Christ, but have been better taught the truth as it is in Jesus. If I may not praise him who is gone, thus you may, and others, who thus see your light shine before men, will glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Though I may not praise him, yet I hope I may put you upon praising God for him. Men, the greatest and best of men, are but what the grace of God makes them; all their light they borrow from the Father of lights, all their oil from the good olive. They are ready to own it themselves, *By the grace of God, I am what I am; I live, yet not I; I laboured, yet not I:* now, if we give the glory of that grace to him from whom it is derived, and to whom the praise of it belongs, whatever honour that reflects at second-hand on the chosen instruments of that grace, we do but our duty. St. Paul never flattered his friends, yet we often find him thanking God for their faith and hope, their love and patience, nor did he court their applauses of him, he was far from it; yet he desired that thanks might be given by many in his behalf, for what God enabled him to do and suffer in his cause. That just praise of men turns to a good account, which makes God its centre, and runs up all the streams to the fountain. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.*

You of this congregation have reason to bless God for your ministers, for their gifts, and graces, and serviceableness to you. *Glorify the God of Israel*, who has given such power unto men, and gave men of such power to you. When you reflect with a melancholy thought, upon those dark providences which have of late removed from your head two faithful ministers in the midst of their days, and great usefulness, take occasion thence to bless God for that kind and gracious providence which continued one among you to a good old age, and continued him in his usefulness to the last. Thus God has tried you with a variety of instruments; you have at the same time been blessed with the gravity and authority of a Paul, *the aged*, and with the vigour and liveliness of a Timothy, who, *as a son with the father, served with him in the gospel.* Each age has its advantage; if both have been advantageous to you, you have a great deal to be thankful for; if neither, you have a great deal to answer for. But whether they who piped unto you, or they who mourned, have gained their point, or no, *Wisdom will be justified of her children.*

The sons of the prophets have reason to bless God, that ever they had such a father, such a guide, such a counsellor, such an example: I am sure I have, who am less than the least of them. May the mantle of this Elijah clothe those who are left behind, that we may walk in the same spirit, walk in the same steps; and that we may show forth the thankfulness of our hearts by the conformity of our

lives to that holy religion, wherein we have been instructed by those who were the guides of our youth, and by our steady and constant adherence to the gospel of the grace, the free grace, of God, which they lived and died by.

I am sure, it is no transgression of his charge, (for it must be what he chiefly intended in the choice of this text,) to observe the testimony which, I think, he bore to some of the most precious and peculiar principles of our holy religion, in making these words his own; for this will be for your edifying, if it be not your own fault.

Christ and heaven are the peculiarities of the gospel; there, and there only, do we find the doctrine of a Mediator between God and man, and of eternal life; it is by that light only, that these great things are discovered, which were hid from ages and generations; it is on the truth of that word, that our belief of these does entirely depend. Much of God, and his glorious attributes and perfections, may be learned by the light of nature; and many excellent truths concerning him may easily be spelled out of the book of the creatures; many who learnt no higher than that book, said great things concerning the Creator. Much, likewise, of the present pleasure and advantages of virtue, may be learned from the dictates of natural conscience, and the universal experience of mankind: but it is only by the glorious gospel of the blessed God, that crown and centre of all divine revelation, that life and immortality are brought to light; by it only we come to be acquainted with Christ and heaven, heaven as our end, and Christ as our way. The knowledge of these is that true wisdom, of which the *depth saith, It is not in me; the sea saith, It is not in me;* and *which the topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal.* These are the things of the Spirit of God which the mere animal man receiveth not. It is only by the New Testament, that blessed character of divine grace, that we come to be interested in Christ, and entitled through him to eternal life, which makes the Christian merchandise better than the merchandise of silver.

These are the two things which the faith of a Christian in a special manner fastens upon, the great Saviour, and the great salvation wrought out by him; these the eye of faith looks upon; these the hand of faith lays hold on. What is the faith we live by, but the faith of the Son of God, and that faith *is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* What else is true Christianity but a believing dependence upon the mediation of Christ, with a devotedness to his conduct and government in every thing; and a believing expectation of the glory to be revealed, with a careful and diligent preparation of ourselves for that glory.

O what a holy fire of love to Christ and desire toward heaven, was kindled by this faith in the breast of this good man; how did he himself feel it glow; how did those who conversed with him see it flame; how did he breathe Christ, and breathe toward heaven, even to the last breath. Let us submit to the power of the same faith, and we shall experience the fruits of it. There was another Scripture which his heart was much upon, when he saw the day approaching; and that included Christ and heaven too, it was that close of the apostle's triumph over death and the grave, *Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory* (that is, brings us to heaven, for till we come thither, we have not quite overcome) *through our Lord Jesus Christ:* but in this he chose to express to you the faith in which he died, *looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

Give me leave to improve the dying testimony of this great scholar and Christian, for the honour of pure Christianity, and the first principles of it. In many causes one aged witness is worth twenty young ones. We have here an aged witness to produce on religion's side, who has affirmed it upon his death, *that the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life is* what may be looked for with the greatest assurance and desire by all the faithful servants of Jesus Christ. *Ask thy father then, and he will show thee, thine elders, and they will tell thee,* that they have found, and so wilt thou, no righteousness and strength to be depended upon but in Christ; no happiness and life, but in heaven. Those who plead religion's cause have antiquity on their side, and the wisdom and experience of the ancients, and may boast as Eliphaz does, *With us are the grey-headed, and very aged men.* The longer men live in the world, the more experience they have of its vanity, and insufficiency to make them happy, and that drives them to set their hearts more on heaven; and the more experience they have of their own weakness and inability to help themselves, and that drives them to rest more upon Jesus Christ, and his mercy and grace. Let this recommend religion to us, that those speak well of it who have had a long acquaintance with it. Polycarp, that blessed martyr, who in the first ages of the church sealed the truth with his blood at Smyrna, being vehemently urged by the proconsul to renounce his religion, and as an evidence of it to speak ill of Christ, replied to this purpose: "Fourscore and six years I have served Christ, and have always found him a good Master, how then can I speak ill of him now?" Here was one who somewhat longer, even to his 89th year, had been drawing in Christ's yoke, and witnessed from his own experience that it was an easy yoke; and that in the service of Christ he was borne up and comforted, living and dying with the expectation of his mercy, even to eternal life.

There are six great truths contained in this text, at least by implication, which he did in effect bear his testimony to in the choice of it, and they are not

matters of nice and curious speculation, which exercise the wits of the learned, nor matters of doubtful disputation, or strifes of words, which too often engage the passions of the litigious; no, he was none of those who troubled the minds of the disciples with such things, but was himself filled, and desired to fill others, with the great things of God, the weighty matters of the law and gospel, which are all our salvation, and therefore should be all our desire; nor did he spend his zeal upon any thing but what all good Christians are agreed in, whatever different sentiments they may have, and govern themselves by, in lesser things. *Call therefore, if there be any that will answer you, and to which of the saints will you turn?* Turn to which you will, of whatever denomination, (for, far be it, far be it from us to think, that those of our own are the only ones,) and you will find they all agree in these principles of the oracles of God, which I gather from this text, which he who is gone bore his dying testimony to, and which, if we that survive were but more governed by, we should be every way better both in heart and life, and more loving and charitable to those we differ from in lesser matters, since the things wherein we differ are so few and small in comparison with the many and great things wherein we are agreed.

1. That there is another life after this. This is plainly implied in the mention which the text makes of eternal life. For we are sure that this present life is not eternal; it is short, and transient, and hastening away; and they who say, they look for eternal life, declare plainly that they believe there is another country to which they must remove, and in which they must reside, besides this through which they are now passing. And I the rather lay this down first, because our deceased father particularly appointed, that the motto engraven in the rings to be given at his funeral, should be this, "There is a life after this." God by his Spirit engrave it in all our hearts. With this word he comforted himself while he lived, and designed to instruct and admonish us, who for a little while are left behind. The plainest truths are the most precious, and carrying with them the most convincing evidence, should be the most powerful, and have the most commanding influence upon us; such a one as this, worthy indeed to be written in gold, and to be to us as the signet on our right hand, ever with us, and continually before us.

And do we indeed believe, that there is a future state, a life after this? that besides this world of sense we are conversant with, there is a world of spirits we are allied to, and must have our everlasting abode in? that when we have passed through this world of work and probation, we must certainly go to another world of recompence and retribution, and must receive *according to the things done in the body?* We say, we believe the life of the world to come; but we think of it so seldom, so slightly, though sure, though near, though just at the door, we consider it so little, and are so little influenced by it in the management of ourselves, that it may well be asked, do we indeed believe it? *Show me thy faith by thy works.*

Do we believe there is another world, that we must all be shortly lodged in for eternity? What! and yet so fond of this world, as if we were to be here always? and so mindless of that, as if we had nothing to do in preparation for it? What! and yet do so much every day to unfit us for that life, and so little to acquaint ourselves with the employments and enjoyments of it? What! and yet think so little of death, which will very certainly, and may very suddenly, remove us to that world? O that we were all more confirmed in our belief of another world! and were so wise as to consider our *latter end;* or, as it may be read, our *future state.* Then should we pass more safely and comfortably through this world, and at length out of it.

It is sad to see many, even when they are under the sensible symptoms of their approaching change, and already taken in the custody of death's messengers, still full of this life, solicitous about it, in love with it, and very loth to think of parting with it, or to hear talk of another. Our deceased father has set us a better example, and by his weanedness from this life, showed how much his eye and heart were upon another. Often has he charged his friends, those at a distance by letter, and those about him by word of mouth, not to pray for the continuance of his life; though it was as far as any man's of his age, from being made either uneasy to himself or unprofitable to others: by which it appears he was *satur dierum—full of days;* according to that promise made to them, who set their love on God, with long life was he satisfied. And what was the language of Job's corruptions concerning his present state, was the language of his graces; *I loathe it, I would not live always* in this world, *having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.*

2. That in the other life, there is a state of perfect and perpetual bliss, prepared for and secured to all good Christians, who live and die in the fear of God, and in the faith of Christ. The eternal life the text speaks of, is not only an immortal being; the damned in hell shall have that for the perpetuating of their misery, their worm dies not, therefore they die not; but an immortal blessedness, adequate to the enlarged capacities, and commensurate to the never-failing duration, of that immortal being.

We may firmly believe, upon the credit of eternal truth, which all the saints in all ages have set their seals to, and ventured their souls upon, that all those who, *by a patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality,* shall *obtain eternal life.* There is an everlasting perfection of joy and satisfaction, which all those that are duly

prepared for it in this world, shall certainly be put in the possession of in the other world; consisting in the immediate vision, and complete fruition, of God, as their God; a crown of immortal glory that will never wither; a kingdom that cannot be moved; an inheritance such as never was on earth, no, not in Canaan, no, not in *Eden* itself; *incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*, reserved in heaven for all obedient believers; the prospect of which is now a sufficient balance, and the enjoyment of which will then be an abundant recompence, of all their services, sufferings, and self-denials; all their toils, all their griefs, all their losses, heaven will make amends for all.

And do we indeed believe this? Why then are we so careless to make sure our title to this happiness? Why do we take so little pains to work out our salvation? Why do we so eagerly pursue the good things of this world, as if they were the best things, and rest in them as if they were our portion and our heritage for ever? Have we any good hope, through grace, of his happiness, why then do we go mourning from day to day under the burthen of worldly crosses, as if the glory to be revealed had not enough in it to countervail the sufferings of this present time? Let the experiences of the saints, who have not only been kept from fainting, by believing that they shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, but in the prospect of it, have been enabled to rejoice in tribulation, direct and encourage us to build our hope on the same foundation, and draw our joy from the same fountain.

3. That our present state is a state of expectation; even the greatest and best saints in this world are still looking for something yet to come, which will make them greater and better. It is certainly true, we are not yet entered into rest, we are not at home. How well soever it is with us in this world, and how easy soever, and well pleased, we are in our present state, there is still something we are to look for, and wait for; something above this world, something beyond it: the best are not so holy as they would be, nor reckon themselves to have attained, or to be already perfect; but they are still pressing forward toward the mark: the most comforted are not so happy as they would be, and expect to be, when that which is perfect is come. They who deal with God, deal upon trust, for something out of sight and in reversion, after one life; and must wait till the harvest for the return of their seed, and till the evening for the reward of their work, not of *debt* but of *free grace*.

With what a generous contempt should we look down upon the body and the world, if this truth were duly considered? What have we here, and whom have we here, that we should call this our rest? Though the human soul is conscious to itself of an innate inclination to its body, yet the sanctified soul, being touched with the loadstone of divine love, is conscious to itself of a predominant inclination to its God, and its kindred in the upper world; and therefore, even in the body, when it acts like itself, and agreeable to the principles of its new nature, it complains it is not in its centre, in its element; it is not what it would be, nor where it would be. Instead of reposing itself and being pleased, it groans, being burthened, longing to be absent from the body, as well as it loves it, that it may be present with the Lord. The delights of sense, and all the amusements and entertainments this earth can afford, are the despised crowds through which the soul, thus big with expectation, presses forward in pursuit of everlasting joys. Even holy ordinances, though a day in them is better than a thousand elsewhere on earth, yet they are but the highways through which we pass along to this eternal life, and go from strength to strength, till we appear before God in the heavenly Jerusalem: they are but means in order to a further end, in the use of which we are still looking, still waiting for the consolation of Israel.

This faithful servant of God was much in this expecting frame. That text on which he preached at my father's funeral almost twelve years ago, he seemed to have much upon his heart, and often repeated it, *We which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption.* And the last sermon he preached, the day before he sickened, and not twenty days before his death, was to the same purpose, on those words of the lamenting prophet, *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.* I perceive by the notes of it, it was newly meditated. He intimates towards the close, that he had been upheld many years by that hoping, and quiet waiting for divine salvation, and had found peace and holy security in that way; and his notes conclude with Hab. ii. 3, 4. *The vision is for an appointed time, and at the end it shall speak, and shall not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* Thus did he encourage his own faith and patience to hold out yet a little while; and his last breath here concurred with that of the dying patriarch, when he was blessing his sons, *I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord*, Gen. xlix. 18.

4. That we have all need of divine mercy, are for ever undone without it, and must depend upon that for all the good we hope for, here or hereafter. We must never expect life, much less eternal life, but through mercy, infinite mercy. We all lie at God's mercy; he has all the advantages both of law and strength against us; our destruction would be no wrong or injustice to us, no difficulty or loss to him. We are sinners, miserable sinners; are charged with guilt, and cannot deny the charge, cannot confess and

justify, cannot give security to answer the law; nor have we any arts to evade either its cognizance or its sentence; we have no plea to put in that will stand us in any stead. Though we thought ourselves righteous, yet durst we not answer; for God knows that ill by us which we know not by ourselves, and therefore we must make supplication to our Judge,[a] and cast ourselves entirely upon his mercy; which we need not be afraid to do, for he has proclaimed his name *Gracious and Merciful*, and is particularly pleased with those who hope in his mercy,[b] and in obedience to his will humbly refer themselves to it.

All our comfort and happiness we must look for from the mercy of God, that mercy which is so often said to endure for ever, because the fruits of it are everlasting. The chosen vessels are said to be *vessels of mercy*;[c] and the people who are taken into covenant with God, are said to *obtain mercy*.[d] It is *according to his mercy* that he hath saved us,[e] and hath *begotten us again to a lively hope*.[f] Blessed Paul himself attributes both his fidelity and his constancy to divine mercy; *I obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful*;[g] and *as we have received mercy we faint not*.[h] Thus even the New Testament, which brings in the everlasting righteousness, yet teaches us still to have an eye to everlasting *mercy*, for pardon and peace, for grace and glory. The poor publican's prayer, *God be merciful to me a sinner*,[i] is what the best saints have set their heartiest Amen to, and have blessed God, that we find it upon record in the gospels as an answered prayer; and that he who prayed it with a humble, broken, penitent, and obedient heart, *went to his house justified*.

Thus this good man finished his course, under a deep sense of his need of the mercy of God. I shall not forget with what solemnity he said to me, when I was with him a few days before he died, and he was so weak, that he could say but little; "Here I lie, endeavouring to renew my repentance for all my sins, from my beginning to this day, and I would not think, that my weakness and illness should excuse me from the exercise of repentance." And when I was praying by him, that God would support and strengthen him, he softly put me in mind to pray, that his sins might be forgiven him. It is related both of St. Austin and of Archbishop Usher, those two great men in their day, that on their death-beds they lamented their sins of omission. Those who thus humble themselves shall be exalted.

5. That it is only from Christ, and through Christ, and in Christ, that we poor sinners can hope to find mercy. The mercy we must be saved by, if we be saved, is the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ; it is that we must have an eye to, it is that we must depend upon for eternal life: mercy put into the hand of a Mediator, procured by him for us, conferred by him upon us; he received the gifts of mercy for men, he gave the gifts of mercy to men,[k] even the rebellious. The Father has set him at his right hand; for by him he reaches forth his mercy to the children of men, and he is so entirely intrusted with the disposal, that it is called his mercy.

The mercy of Christ appears very illustrious in his whole undertaking, from first to last; it was in his love, and in his pity, that he redeemed us, that he took this ruin under his hand. He assumed our nature, that he might be touched with a compassionate feeling of our infirmities. All his miracles were acts of mercy as well as acts of power, and instances of his kindness and good-will toward men. All the invitations he gave to poor sinners to come to him, and the promises he has made for their encouragement, are the breathings of his mercy. In all his offices his mercy shines. Is he a prophet? He can have compassion on the ignorant;[l] and they who learn of him, will find him meek and lowly. Is he a priest? He is a merciful as well as faithful High Priest.[m] Is he a king? He comes to us meek, and having salvation.[n] It is the mercy of the Redeemer that runs through the whole work of redemption, and is the support and joy of the redeemed. The apostle speaks of the meekness and gentleness of Christ,[o] as one of the most precious and powerful considerations with all good Christians, by which they ought to be influenced as much as by any thing.

The great design of the gospel is to exalt Christ, by showing, that all the favours we are now to expect from God pass through his hands, and we are beholden to him for them. It is through his blood that we receive forgiveness of sins; he is our peace, and from his fulness we receive grace for grace. The Father has committed not only *all judgment*, but *all mercy*, to the Son, that all men might honour the Son, by applying themselves to him, and resting on him; to whom the Father has given power over all flesh, on purpose that he might give eternal life, and all the preparatives for it, and earnests of it, to as many as were given him. Would we receive mercy, we must go to Christ for it; for he is *all in all*. All our springs are in him, and we must acknowledge our obligations, not only to his merit, but to his mercy, and that great love wherewith he loved us; for it is owing to his rich mercy that we have interest in his merit, and benefit by it; and this we ought to be made more and more sensible of, that we may find ourselves for ever engaged to love him, and live to him, and to cast all our crowns at his feet. Thus is boasting effectually excluded, and all flesh forbidden to glory in his presence. *It is of the Lord's mercies*, the Lord Christ's mercies, *that we are not consumed*, that we are not fire brands in hell; and it is *because his compassions fail not*, and are

a Job ix. 15. b Ps. iii. 18. c Rom. ix. 23. d 1 Pet. ii. 10. e Tit. iii. 5. f 1 Pet. i. 3. g 1 Cor. vii. 25.

h 2 Cor. iv. 1. i Luke xviii. 13. k Ps. lxviii. 18. l Heb. v. 2. m Heb. ii. 17. n Zech. ix. 9. o 2 Cor. x. 1.

new every morning. that we continue hitherto, that we are supported under our burthens, comforted in our sorrows, have our daily infirmities pardoned, and the willingness of the spirit accepted, notwithstanding the weakness of the flesh: and if ever we get to heaven, that must be called the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, which will eternally remind the glorified saints how miserable they had been if Christ had not stood their friend. The best man in the world, when he comes to have his everlasting state determined, will certainly be undone if Christ be not merciful to him. And therefore St. Paul prays for Onesiphorus, who by his charity had lent to the Lord, not that he might have justice done him, but that he might find mercy of the Lord in that day.[p] If the merciful be blessed, it is not because they are men of merit, but because they obtain mercy[q] with the Lord Jesus. *Son of David, have mercy on us; Jesus, Master, have mercy on us;* must be the breathings of our souls, even to the last; living, dying, and in the judgment.

This was it that our deceased father was full of. To him to live was Christ; the mercy of Christ, and the merit of Christ. It was but a few weeks before he died, that he gave this thesis to a candidate for the ministry, to be maintained at his trial for his ordination, *Justitia qua coram Deo sistimus est justitia Christi Mediatoris—That we cannot appear before God in any righteousness of our own, but Christ's merit is our only righteousness*, and for that we are ever indebted to his mercy. "None but Christ, none but Christ."

6. That the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ is as necessary to the finishing of the work of our salvation, as it was to the beginning of it. We not only receive the mercy of Christ in our justification, sanctification, and present comforts, but we look for it still, even unto eternal life; we depend upon that to bring us to heaven, to preserve us to that kingdom, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

Christ's mercy may be looked for even to eternal life; for whom he loves, he loves to the end, loves them into heaven, that world of everlasting love; for his gifts and callings are without repentance. The vessels of mercy shall be vessels of honour; and though they commit iniquity, they shall be brought to repentance, so that mercy shall not depart from them. Grace in the soul is the work of God's own hands, which he will not forsake, because his mercy endures for ever, and he will perfect that which concerns us. As for God his work is perfect; it began in mere mercy, rescuing a malefactor from death; but that mercy will proceed till it crowns a friend and favourite with endless glory. *This day thou shalt be with me in paradise.*

Let this mercy, therefore, be depended upon to the last, and let us have our eye ever towards it; let not the strongest and most experienced Christians think their own hands sufficient for them, or imagine that if Christ's mercy will but help them *so far*, they can then shift for themselves; no, if that mercy be not drawn out to eternal life, we are undone. If the same who is the author be not the finisher of our faith and hope, they will never be perfected in vision and fruition. If goodness and mercy do not follow us *all* our days, even to the last, we shall never reach to dwell in the house of the Lord. To it, therefore, let us commit the great trust against that day, and depend upon the same kind and mighty hand that laid the foundation of this great work, and fastened the corner-stone of it, at length to bring forth the top-stone with shoutings, and eternity itself will be short enough to be spent in crying, *Grace, grace* to it.

And thus I have briefly touched upon those great truths, to which it should seem this faithful witness designed to bear his dying testimony in choosing this text; and we know that his witness is true, and I hope we believe, not for his saying only, but that we have heard them ourselves, tasted the sweetness, and felt the power of them in our own hearts; which is the most convincing evidence to us of the truth of them.

But if indeed we receive these truths in the light and love of them,

(1.) Let us bless God that they are so clearly revealed to us in the Scripture. Blessed are our eyes, for they see the joyful light, our ears, for they hear the joyful sound, of Christ and heaven; things not only hid from the wise and prudent, who despised them, but from prophets and kings, that *desired* to see them, and might not. Bless God that we see eternal life set before us, and not set out of our reach, while we see Christ undertaking for us, able to save to the uttermost, and as willing as he is able.

Let us, therefore, give diligence to get the knowledge of these great things, and grow in our acquaintance with them; let us more firmly believe the gospel doctrines concerning Christ and heaven, for they are faithful sayings, and more familiarly converse with them, for they are worthy of all acceptation. Let men of learning learn Christ; let men of business understand this business; for without this, the most learned men at their end will be fools, and the richest men at their end will be beggars—beggars in vain. The gospel of Christ is the same to the wise and the unwise, to the Greek and the barbarian. The greatest wits and statesmen are not above the knowledge of Christ and heaven, and that knowledge is not above the capacity of the meanest who seek it faithfully. Set your hearts therefore unto all the words which *are* testified among you this day, Deut. xxxii. 46. for believe it, they are matters of life and death.

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[p] 2 Tim. i. 18.

[q] Matt. v. 7.

(2.) Let us bless God that they are so well attested by the experiences of wise and good men. Though our faith stands not upon any human testimony, yet it is an encouragement to us to venture our souls upon the same foundation that so many have, to their unspeakable satisfaction, ventured theirs.—Some who have traversed the vast region of human learning, have owned with Solomon, that the increase of it has been but the increase of sorrow, and they have found no true joy but in the doctrine of Christ. Mr. Selden was confessedly one of the greatest scholars of his age, and on his death-bed expressed himself to this purpose to archbishop Usher—That he had in his time taken a great deal of pains in searching after knowledge, had surveyed most parts of the learning of the sons of men; but in all the books and manuscripts he was master of, he found nothing wherein he could rest his soul, save the Holy Scripture, and that passage was especially comfortable to him, *The grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope*, Tit. ii. 11—13. We have now parted with one who was as well acquainted with books and men, and had improved as much by that acquaintance, as perhaps any man I ever knew; yet he counts all but loss, that he may know Christ, and win Christ, and be found in him; and that which you see gave him the greatest satisfaction in his dying moments, was an expectation of the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Look upon it as the testimony of a minister, who has often in Christ's name called upon you to lay hold on eternal life, and to make that sure. Now you see he urged you to nothing else but what he did himself; he directed you to Christ and his mercy, and there he reposed himself. Therefore the ministry is committed to men like ourselves, because they having souls to save as well as we, we may hope they will deal for our souls as for their own, and direct us to build upon no other foundation than what they themselves build upon, and will speak what they themselves have seen, and testify what they have themselves known. Your ministers who are gone, embarked for another world in the same vessel which they have often persuaded you to embark in, and have thereby showed they were in earnest with you.

But if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; men may be deceived, but God cannot: by faith receive his testimony, and so set to your seal that he is true: *and this is the record*, it is the sum total which all I have said amounts to, *that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

II. I come now to consider this text as recommended to us, with design not only to express the workings of his heart towards Christ and heaven, but to impress the like workings on our hearts. And so the words come in here as an exhortation to this duty of looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. The former is in order to this. They who have themselves tasted of the mercy and grace of Christ, cannot but desire that others also may taste of it. True grace hates monopolies, and desires not to eat its morsels alone. Sinners entice you to cast in your lot among them, and tell you, you shall find all precious substance, and fill your houses with spoil; but they lay wait for their own blood, and their end will certainly be bitter as wormwood; hearken to the invitations of the sons and heirs of heaven, and be persuaded to cast in your lot among them, for *yet there is room;* in Christ and eternal life, there is enough for all, enough for each, enough for you, and you will all be welcome. Your deceased pastor was himself so fully convinced of the reality and certainty of unseen things, that he earnestly desired you also might be convinced of them, and that none of you might perish in ignorance and unbelief concerning them. He had such pleasure in looking for this eternal life, and such satisfaction in relying on Christ for it, that he wished you the same pleasure, the same satisfaction. It yielded him solid substantial comfort on his death-bed, which renewed the inward man, even then when the outward man was decaying. Then he said with thankfulness, that through the grace of God, he had abundance of peace; and that his heart was as full of joy as it could hold. Let this encourage you to follow him and others, who are now through faith and patience inheriting the promises. He had hope in his death, and you have reason to think he is now happy; be you holy, and you shall be happy too. Heaven is not intended only for good ministers, but for all good Christians who now have their conversation in heaven. The crown of righteousness shall be given, not only to such great men as St. Paul was, but to all those who love Christ's appearing; who love his first appearing, and are thankful for it; his second appearing, and long for it. Christ has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers, and excluded none who do not exclude themselves; put in for it therefore, and resolve not to take up short of it. Would you die the death of the righteous? live their life. Would you have your last end like theirs? let your present way be like theirs. Follow their faith, who made Christ the end of their conversation, who, what he was to them yesterday, will be the same to us to-day, and to them and us for ever. Whatever you heard or saw in your aged minister that was instructive and exemplary, transcribe it into your own hearts and lives, and thus let him still live among you; and then death, which has parted him from you a while, to make you amends, will shortly fetch you to him.

When he ordered that this text should be preached upon at his funeral, he withal gave direction, that I should take some notice of the foregoing words, and observe something from them for your instruction. And, I think, this will be the most proper place to do it, in order to your attaining a well-grounded hope of eternal life. The context is this, (v. 20, 21.) *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God;* and then *continue looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.* From all which I shall now in the close, give you some directions, and I beseech you, suffer the word of exhortation, and submit to it. Now though Providence has prepared the ground, (and those hearts are hard indeed, that will not be softened by the death of two such ministers so near together,) I would hope, the seed of the word might take root, and bring forth fruit.

1. Lay a good foundation in holy faith, and the love of God. This is supposed in those exhortations to *build up ourselves on our most holy faith*, and to *keep ourselves in the love of God.* See that you be well principled, that the root of the matter be found in you, else you cannot be fruitful in the fruits of righteousness. Let our holy faith in Christ lead us to the love of God, as reconciled to us through him.

Firmly believe the doctrine of Christ, embrace it, rely upon it, be delivered into it as into a mould, receive the impressions of it, and submit to the commanding constraining power of it. Let your faith particularly receive Christ, and rest upon him, as your Prophet, Priest, and King, and resign yourselves to him to be ruled, and taught, and saved by him. Let it be a faith unfeigned, and not a bare profession, a faith that purifies the heart, then it is a holy faith. The doctrine we believe is holy, let us be sanctified by it. It is faith that overcomes the world, quenches the fiery darts of Satan, realizes unseen things, establishes the heart, and keeps us from fainting; neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision, but this holy faith is all in all. We have no benefit by divine revelation, that great blessing of the world, without faith, no more than we have by the light of the sun without eyes. The word preached will not profit, if it be not mixed with faith.

Let this faith work by love, such a reigning love of God in your hearts, as will eat out all sinful self-love, and the love of the world, and will kindle in you a holy fire of devotion to God, and zeal for his honour in every thing; such a love as will make the keeping of all his commandments easy to you, and particularly that of brotherly love; get this love shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost, and do all you do in religion from that principle.

2. Build upon this foundation, else in vain was the foundation laid. Ye beloved, who have escaped the snares of the scorners, he is speaking of in the verses before, and are contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, Jude 3. think it not enough that you have and hold the true religion, but be still building up yourselves on your most holy faith.

Proceed upon the good principles that through grace are laid, and act in conformity to them, as those who in all you say and do are governed by conscience, and the fear and love of God. Proceed in the good practices you have begun, and never grow weary of well doing. You have still need of helps for your souls, bless God there are such to be had, who will build, and will help you to build up yourselves, upon the good foundations of faith and love, which your ministers who are gone have laid among you.

Go forth, therefore, and go on in the strength of Christ, in the work and warfare of your Christianity. Be daily improving in knowledge, in wisdom, in every grace, and reckon not yourselves to have apprehended. You have daily lessons to learn, be getting forward in your learning; daily work to do, be still doing it, and rid ground in your journey heaven-wards. Have you begun well? Let nothing hinder you. Have you gone on well hitherto? Lose not the things which you have wrought, the things which you have gained. We are clogged with so many corruptions, and surrounded with so many temptations, that if we do not get ground, we certainly lose ground; like a boat on the river, if it be not rowed up the stream, it will of itself go down the stream. *Non progredi est regredi,—Not to advance is to retreat.* Aim high therefore, and press forward, having such a prize set before you. Run with patience the race set before you. Hold fast Christ as the foundation, which will stand the storm, and then carry your building as high as heaven above the storm. Let your motto be *Plus ultra—Onward.*

3. Be constant and inward with God in prayer. Would you build yourselves on your most holy faith pray much, and pray in the Holy Ghost, for except the Lord build the spiritual house, they labour in vain who build it. We can do nothing for ourselves of ourselves, but all our sufficiency is of God; to him therefore we must continually apply ourselves he has promised grace to help in every time of need but he will for this be inquired of by the house of Israel. Ask, and it shall be given you, not otherwise: ask in faith, ask in earnest, ask and seek by endeavour, ask and knock with constancy and importunity, as become Jacob's seed, and Jacob's God will not let it be in vain. By prayer give glory to God, and then you may expect to receive grace from him, and would be every way better did you pray more, and more to the purpose. Let all your comforts draw you, and all your crosses drive you to your knees, and especially let your deficiencies in faith engage you to pray for the increase of it and the fulfilling of the work of faith with power

You would profit more by the word of faith, if you did pray more for a blessing upon it. You will not sit down to meat, why then will you sit down to a sermon, the food of your souls, without craving a blessing. Praying contributes no less to our edification in faith than hearing does, indeed it does more, for it engages God on our side.

And whenever you pray, see that it be in the Holy Ghost; pray under the Spirit's influence and operation, who makes intercession in us, and helps our praying infirmities. Let your spirits be employed in the duty, and in order thereunto see it necessary to depend upon God's Spirit. It is not his inspiration, as a Spirit of prophecy, that we are to expect, but his conduct and strength, his light and heat, as a Spirit of adoption, a Spirit of grace and supplication.

4. Take heed of every thing that tends to quench the fire of holy love, and would cast you out of God's favour. This is intended in that branch of exhortation, *Keep yourselves in the love of God.* We must not only pray, but watch, and make it our constant care and endeavour to preserve both the good work of God in us, and the good will of God toward us.

Let us keep ourselves in love to God, as the most beautiful Being, and the most bountiful Benefactor. Take heed of every thing that would hinder the operations of his love. Let not the pleasures of a prosperous condition draw off your love from God, nor divert it to lying vanities; nor let the sorrows of an afflicted condition cool your love towards God, nor occasion you to entertain any hard thoughts of him. The love of God is that fire on the altar, with which all our sacrifices must be kindled; let it not go out for want of being blown, and stirred up, by pious and devout meditations on the grace of God, which are the fuel of pious and devout affections.

Let us keep our interest in the love of God, and beware of saying or doing any thing to forfeit it. Has God graciously condescended to take you into covenant and communion with himself, be sure you keep his commandments, that you may abide in his love; and may not lose or lessen your interest in him. Carefully avoid sin, all appearances of it, and approaches to it, for fear of offending God, and incurring his displeasure. You are upon your good behaviour, see that you behave yourselves well, that no man take your crown. If you throw yourselves out of God's love, to whom will you betake yourselves? You have lost your best friend, have made him your enemy, and who then can befriend you? Be solicitous therefore to please God, and let it be the top of your ambition to be accepted of him. Keep in the way of your duty; keep close to holy ordinances, and live in brotherly love, then you keep yourselves in the love of God.

Keep ἑαυτους—*one another* in the love of God; so it may be read; watch over one another; edify one another; do all you can to prevent others from falling into sin, and to recover them from it; to provoke one another to love and to good works, and not to provoke one another's passions; let hand join in hand to promote every thing that is good, that you may strengthen and encourage one another in all the instances of holy love, and so may keep one another in the love of God. It was Cain who said, *Am I my brother's keeper.*

5. Lay hold on eternal life; it is set before you not only as the visible heavens, to be looked upon, but as a prize, to be run for, and fought for: it is offered to you; it may be yours upon very easy terms, it will be yours unless you put it away from you. Many a time you have had the offers of it made you, and now once more: give not sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eye-lids, till you have, through grace, made sure your title to it. Believe the reality of it; prefer it before all the delights of sense and time; consent to the conditions upon which it is offered; be willing to part with all for it; set your hearts upon it, and keep it always in your eye.

It is life, my brethren, it is the life of your souls, it is eternal life, that you are urged to lay hold on. A life on the other side death, but a life that has no death on the other side it. Your present lives are dying lives, and so are the lives of all your friends; the lives of your ministers, you see, are so: we cannot take any fast hold of this life, or of any of the enjoyments of it; place your happiness therefore in eternal life, seek and secure it there. Your ministers, who preached to you the words of that life, are one after another gone before you to the enjoyment of it: let their death do that which their life has not done, to draw your hearts upward, upward toward God; forward, forward toward heaven.

6. Let Jesus Christ be all in all to you. In every thing wherein you have to do with God, depend upon the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ; and in all things let him have the pre-eminence with you. Remember, you are Christians; but in vain are you called so, if you rest in mere natural religion, and relish not the truth, as it is in Jesus. If Christ be of no account with you, Christ will be of no effect to you; and then you are undone. If you leave Christ out of your religion, who is indeed the *Alpha* and the *Omega* of it, what comfort can you find in it? what benefit can you expect from it here or hereafter? If you look for that in yourselves, that righteousness, and that strength, which is to be had in Christ only, you must thank yourselves when the disappointment proves fatal. He who is sinking, if he embrace himself, perishes, but if he lays hold on the hand reached out to him, he may be helped. You are disciples of Christ, devoted to Christ, dependents on Christ; as, therefore, you have received him, so walk in him:

you have need of him daily, make daily use of him. He is the true Christian, in whom Christ is formed, and he the growing Christian, who grows up into Christ in all things.

Your ministers were of St. Paul's spirit, to them to live was Christ, to preach Christ; nor did they desire to know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Let the same mind, therefore, be in you, and whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Live upon the mercy of Christ, see yourselves lost without it, and cast yourselves upon it: let that be your stay, and stay yourselves upon it; let that be your comfort, and comfort yourselves with it. Be ready to own your dependence on Christ, and your obligations to him; Christ is a Christian's all, and therefore, blessed be God for Jesus Christ. Let that be the burthen of every song.

Lastly, Live in the believing hopes and expectations of eternal life through the mercy of Christ. If, by the grace of God, you have taken some care, some pains, to make it sure, (I hope I speak to many who have done it,) take the comfort of it. Be still looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life, and with patience wait for it. Let actual thoughts and expectations of eternal life be the daily entertainment of your souls. Look upon it as real, as near, as yours; and please yourselves with the prospect of it. How often do our foolish, idle fancies build us castles in the air, and please us with the imagination of things uncertain, unlikely, impossible! When at the same time, if we would set our faith on work, that would entertain us with the delightful contemplation of real bliss, which we shall very shortly be in the possession of; and which will so far exceed our present conceptions of it, that we need not fear, lest (as it is with the things of this world) the raised expectation of them should be a drawback upon the enjoyment of them, and lessen the pleasure of it. But on the contrary, the more we converse with it in faith and hope, the better prepared we shall be for it, and the more will the capacities of the sanctified soul be enlarged to take in those joys. What! sirs, do we hope to be in heaven quickly, to be there eternally, and yet think so seldom of it, and please ourselves so little with the foresight of its glories, and the foretaste of its pleasures. Let us raise our expectations, for the things are neither doubtful, nor distant, nor despicable, but sure, and great, and very near; and the hope of them, if built on Christ, will not make us ashamed.

Let our hopes and expectations of eternal life wean us from this world, and take our affections off from it. What an inconsiderable point is this earth, to one who has his conversation in heaven! How trifling are the things that are seen, that are temporal and transitory, to one who keeps his eye and heart on the things that are not seen, that are eternal. Let this hope purify us from all the pollutions of sin, and pacify all the tumults of our spirits, that we may be found of Christ in peace. Let it engage and quicken us to the utmost diligence in the service of God: it is sure worth while, to take pains in that work, which no less than eternal life will be the recompence of. Do we hope for the mercy of Christ? Let us then put on, as the elect of God, bowels of compassion, and upon all occasions show mercy, as those who hope to find mercy. And since temporal death must be our passage to this eternal life, let our expectations of it not only take off the terror of death, but make it welcome to us. Why should we make any difficulty of putting off the earthly house of this tabernacle, in order to our removal to the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens? Rather let us hasten to meet with cheerfulness that messenger which will fetch us to life, though it come under the name of death; and all the days of our appointed time continue waiting till it come; with reference to the burthens and troubles of this life, waiting with a holy patience; and yet, with reference to the joy set before us, (if I may so speak,) with a holy impatience: *Why are his chariot-wheels so long a coming?* Let us have our eye to this eternal life when we pray daily, *Father in heaven, hallowed be thy name: thy kingdom come.*

A CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE OF THE REV. MR. FRANCIS TALLENTS.

If my information be right, his grandfather was a Frenchman, and was brought over into England by Sir Francis Leak, (whose descendants were Lords Deincourt, afterwards Earls of Scarsdale) who did honourably for him, because in France, upon some occasion or other, he had been instrumental to save his life.

Our Mr. Tallents was born in Nov. 1619, at a little

town called Pelsley, not far off Chesterfield, in Derbyshire.

There is this remarkable concerning his family; that his parents, who were religious good people, both died when their children were very young; he, who was the eldest of six, was then but fourteen years of age; but of all those six children, not one died for above seventy years after: but (be it observed to the glory of God, as the orphans' God, whose providence takes up, when father and mother forsake) they all lived in reputation and comfort, were eminently religious, and considering what was left among them, wonderfully prospered in the world.

His father's eldest brother, whose name he bore, was a clergyman, and was a wise and tender father to these orphans; he was, first, chaplain to my Lord Deincourt, and tutor to his sons, and was afterwards presented by him to a good living: this nephew of his, and another, he bred scholars. The other was Mr. Philip Tallents, a very worthy conformist in Lincolnshire, who died not long since, and an entire and close affection there was between the two brothers, notwithstanding the difference of their sentiments in some things.

His uncle sent him first to the free-school at Mansfield, afterwards to that of Newark, where he made such great progress in learning, that one of his masters sent his uncle word, "He was not a silver but a golden talent."

He spoke sometimes of a sermon he heard, when he was very young, on these words, (Ps. cxix. 113.) *I hate vain thoughts;* which much affected him, and gave him occasion to ask a good grandmother he had, "Whether the devil could know our thoughts?" And he was much satisfied when she told him, "*No, God only knoweth our thoughts.*"

When he was about sixteen years of age, he was sent to Cambridge by his uncle, and was entered first in Peter-House; but after some time he was removed thence, whilst he was under-graduate, to Magdalen College, to be sub-tutor to two or three sons of the Earl of Suffolk, who we think were successively Earls of Suffolk, and the third, the present Earl.

Soon after he came to Magdalen College, it pleased God to call him by his grace, and to reveal his Son in him. I find not any account of the work of God upon his heart, under his own hand, which were to be wished, nor can I recollect the steps of it, as he has sometimes related them to me. He sometimes said pleasantly to his friends, "When I began to be serious, I soon became a notorious puritan; for which I bless God's holy name."

I have heard him speak of the strong temptations to infidelity with which he was assaulted, and which for some time he grappled with; but by divine grace he got over them. It was an easy thing, he would say, to believe the being of God, and his providence, and the principles of natural religion; but to believe that Jesus Christ, who was crucified at Jerusalem, is the Son of God, and my Redeemer and Saviour, and to rest upon him alone for righteousness and life, this is a hard thing. But this was it which he was all his days abundantly filled with, and more and more confirmed in, that *Christ is all in all.* There was nothing which he more frequently, nor more earnestly, pressed in all his preaching, than this, as having himself experienced not only the comfort of it, but the power and efficacy of it to promote sanctification and a holy life. Christ is the life of our souls, and the foundation of all true religion: and yet if we look into the world, and much more into our own hearts, we shall find that we are least acquainted with him, and are easily drawn from him. We are apt to rest upon our own works, to trust in our own strength and righteousness. Nature in some sort teaches us to do many good things; and when we do amiss, to be sorry for it; and to ask pardon of God, because he is good and merciful; and thus we hope to be accepted of God, though we lay aside Christ, if not in words, yet in the actings of our souls and spirits: whereas we are made accepted only in the Beloved, and no pardon and salvation is to be had, but by Jesus Christ the Son of God. To cleave to Christ alone, and live by him, is both honourable, and pleasing to God, and makes us have high thoughts of forgiveness of sins, and acceptance with God; and without this, we are even fit to turn Quakers. He called it a golden saying of St. Austin, *In causâ duorum hominum per quorum unum sub peccato venditi sumus, per alterum liberamur, tota consistit Christiana religio,—The transaction of two men is the sum of the Christian religion, by one of whom we are sold under sin, by the other we are redeemed.* And quoted Damasus's creed for it, *In hujus morte et sanguine credimus emundatos nos, &c.—In whose death and blood we believe that we are cleansed.*

But to return. About the year 1642, he went to travel in France, and other foreign parts, as tutor to the Earl of Suffolk's sons, and I think was abroad with them above two years; and there he improved himself very much with the conversation of the learned men he met with, and was always very communicative of the observations he made. I have often heard him say, that what he saw abroad with his own eyes of the popish religion, and what conferences he had with its advocates, added much to his conviction of the falsehood and wickedness of it, and confirmed him in the protestant religion.

Upon his return from his travels, he was made Fellow of Magdalen College, by the interest of the Earl of Suffolk. Dr. Fuller, in his History of the University of Cambridge, says, That the mastership of that College is neither in the gift of the crown, nor the choice of the College, but at the disposal of the Earls of Suffolk, hereditary patrons of that foun-

dation. He afterwards became Senior Fellow, and President, or Vice-Master of the College. Having entered upon his Fellowship, he became an eminent tutor in the College; among many others, very many, Sir Robert Sawyer, afterwards Attorney-General, was his pupil, and Dr. Burton.

In the latter end of the year 1645, he began to preach in Cambridge. His first sermon (as I take it) was on Rom. viii. 31. *What shall we then say to these things?* in which he endeavoured to encourage others with the doctrine of Christ's mediation, which had been so great a support and comfort to him; over that sermon, as one who aimed to be an experimental preacher, he wrote those words of the Psalmist, when he had obtained the joy of God's salvation, *Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.* He preached often in the College Chapel, and at St. Mary's.

He was solemnly ordained to the ministry at London, Nov. 29, 1648, in the parish church of St. Mary Wolnoth, by the third classical presbytery in the province of London, being called (so the letters of his ordination run) to the work of the ministry in the University of Cambridge, as Fellow of Magdalen College there; he is therefore solemnly set apart to the office of a preaching presbyter, and work of the ministry, with fasting, prayer, and imposition of hands.

The University of Cambridge being authorized by Queen Elizabeth to choose every year twelve Doctors or Graduates, who should have power to preach in all parts of England or Ireland, without licence from the Ordinaries, Mr. Tallents was chosen one of them, and was so empowered by an instrument under the University seal, bearing date Oct. 6, 1649.

In the year 1652, he left the University, and came to Shrewsbury to be minister of St. Mary's church. Being to come into the country, he refused to take his degree of Bachelor of Divinity, (though I think he performed his exercises for it,) because that might have been an occasion of his being forced to take place of many in the country, who were his seniors in the ministry.

Now he applied himself entirely to the work of the ministry, and laid out himself to do good to the souls of those who were committed to his charge. And though he had been near twenty years an academic, and intimately conversant with all sorts of learning, yet he preached as one who would seem to know nothing, but Jesus Christ and him crucified, studiously accommodating himself to the capacities of his hearers, and delivering to them the great things of God, not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit.

He was much honoured and respected by all the ministers of those parts, and his judgment and advice sought and valued by many. The character Mr. Baxter gives of him in his memoirs is, "That he was a good scholar, a godly blameless divine, and that he was most eminent for extraordinary prudence, and moderation and peaceableness toward all;" and we know that this record is true; and that he was that just and righteous man whom Solomon describes, (Prov. x. 31, 32.) *Whose mouth bringeth forth wisdom*, and whose *lips know what is acceptable*,—what is apposite.

Soon after he came to Shrewsbury, he married the daughter of ——— Clive of Walford, Esq. by whom he had one son, bred a scholar at Cambridge, but did not prove a comfort to him. Grace does not always run in the blood. Here there was no reason to fear it did not: but his days were not long in the land.

In the year 1656, there was a public dispute in the parish church of Ellesmere in Shropshire, between Mr. Porter (that eminent divine) minister of Whitchurch, and one Mr. Haggar, an anabaptist, concerning infant baptism, occasioned by a sermon Mr. Porter had preached on that subject at the lecture of Ellesmere: in which dispute, Mr. Tallents was pitched upon to be moderator. An account of that dispute was then printed, in which it appears, that as Mr. Porter abundantly confirmed the doctrine he had preached to the satisfaction of all indifferent persons, and plainly made out the right which the infant seed of believers have to baptism, and so did his part as a disputant, so Mr. Tallents did his as moderator, beginning and ending with prayer, and directing the progress of the dispute (which continued five hours) with prudence and candour, that is, like himself.

In the year 1658, his dear wife died, after she had lived with him but four or five years; thus is our mountain shaken many times, when we think it stands strong, and shall not be moved. He buried her in the same grave in which he himself was buried fifty years after.

When the king was restored in the year 1660, he not only showed an entire satisfaction in that resettlement of the government, after its foundations had been long out of course, and a sincere affection to the king, as the presbyterians throughout the kingdom did, but intimated likewise his readiness to conform, as far as he could with a good conscience, to the changes that were then made in the church. He therefore read (as I think I have been told) some parts of the liturgy at that time.

But when the Act of Uniformity took place on Bartholomew day, 1662, his conscience being dissatisfied with the terms of conformity thereby insisted on, he was necessitated to quit his place, which was his livelihood, and (which was more grievous to him, and many others) his work and usefulness, which were his life. He has sometimes observed, that before the wars the puritans generally made a shift to conform and come into the church, notwithstanding the hard usage they foresaw (by the trouble frequently given to those of that character) they were

likely to meet with in it. To prevent which, for the future, two new barriers or fortifications were erected by the Act of Uniformity to keep them out; one was the declaration, "that it is unlawful upon any pretence whatsoever, to take up arms against the king:" and this fort they who erected it, about twenty-six years after, were obliged to quit, as not tenable; for when they had broken through it, by joining with those who took up arms against King James, and setting the Prince of Orange upon the throne, they silently took away that declaration, both out of the Uniformity Act, and that of corporations, by an act in the first of King William and Queen Mary; trusting to the other as sufficient to answer their intention, which was the declaration of an unfeigned assent and consent to all and every thing contained in the book entitled "The book of Common Prayer," &c. (and the Act of Uniformity itself is the first article in the contents of the book so entitled, and must therefore be unfeignedly consented to;) which declaration still remains to many tender consciences such an objection against conformity as they cannot get over.

Mr. Tallents, as long as he lived, generally observed Bartholomew day every year, as a day of humiliation and prayer, either publicly, or in private, especially toward his latter end. "A day to bring to remembrance," so he used to call it. On this occasion, he sometimes called people wisely to consider the work of God; to consider the condition of those ministers who were then silenced, how they were hated, despised, and imprisoned, and what great hardships they and their families were reduced to; how sad it was with the people, who were deprived of those helps for their souls which they had greatly valued, and been edified by, and how they sat down at first as men astonished. "Consider," (said he) "that though men were the instruments of it, it was the work of God. *Who gave Jacob to the spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord? It is the Lord that hath covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud.* It was our Father, it was our dear Lord and Master, who made this breach upon us. He did it righteously for our sins; the sins of us his ministers. It was not for our sins that men put us out, but it was for our sins that God put us out: who of us have not acknowledged this? It was for the sins of the good people who loved us, who did not profit as they might have done. It was for the sins of those who hated us, and were set against us, who desired to be rid of such preaching and praying, and said, *Prophesy not; therefore they shall not prophesy.* Yet we hope many of us got good by our sufferings, were purified by them, and our hearts made better by our sadness. God would show us, that he can carry on his work another way, and multiply his people, even when they are in affliction; and make even the sufferings of his ministers to turn to the furtherance of the gospel of Christ."

He sometimes observed with thankfulness the care God took of his ejected ones, how wonderfully he provided for them, so as to keep them alive; as the disciples, who were sent out without purse or scrip, and yet when they were asked, *Lacked you any thing?* answered, *Nothing, Lord!* Especially, that they obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

One remark more I shall take notice of which he made upon the silencing of the ministers; "Lord," (said he,) "what poor weak creatures are we; when some applaud this as an excellent deed, and yet others look upon it as a great sin."

But as he was truly conscientious in his nonconformity, and entirely satisfied in the reasons of it, so he was eminently moderate in it, and let his moderation be known unto all men: he loved all good people of every denomination, and took all occasions to witness against bigotry on all sides.

For the most part, he attended the public ministry and the liturgy both morning and afternoon, and preached only in the evening, and on the week days, as he had opportunity, and fell not into any constant stated work for some years (as I think) after he was silenced, waiting to see what God would do with him.

In the year 1670, he went to travel in France a second time, as tutor to two young gentlemen, Mr. Boscawen and Mr. Hambden, with whom he spent about two years and a half in making the complete tour of that kingdom and the parts adjacent. We find among his papers a very exact journal of all his motions and observations, from the day he set out from London to the day he returned. There we find him at Diep, Roan, Caen, Alenson, Angiers, Nantes, Saumur, Tours, Orleans, Thoulouse, Monpellier, Nismes, Marseilles, Thoulon, Lyons, Geneva, Bern, Basil, Zurich, Strasburg, and at length at Paris. Of these, and abundance of other places, he gives a very particular account, describing the rarities both of nature and art; their civil government, the churches, and religious houses; and especially an account of the protestants and their churches; the learned men in every place, and his conferences with them, and the informations he received from them; in recording which, there appears a great deal of care. Had he put his last hand to this journal, and published it then, I doubt not but it would have been both an acceptable entertainment to the world, and a considerable reputation to him: but his great modesty concealed it, not only from the world, but from his intimate friends, for I know not of any to whom he communicated it; so far was he from the ostentation of a traveller, so little did he value himself upon these accomplishments, which many would have been proud of, and so much was he taken up with the better country, the heavenly. Yet when there was occasion, he failed not to inform and entertain his friends with his observations he made when he was abroad. Mr. Boscawen, one of

the gentlemen that he travelled with, died at Strasburg of the small pox, to his great grief.

While he was at Paris, where he continued some months, he wrote a pretty large treatise, giving a particular description of the Roman catholic religion, by comparing their books, which he carefully read, and their practice, which he carefully observed, with each other. He gives an account, 1. Of their doctrine and opinions, chiefly from the Council of Trent, which he gives an abstract of; also from the canon law, and the writings of their doctors. 2. Of their worship and ceremonies: which he gives an account of by their books, put out by order of their popes, &c. of which the pontifical, ritual, breviary, and missal are the chief: also by their ordinary practice in public and private; their extraordinary devotions in processions, jubilees, confrairies, &c. and by their religious orders of men and women. 3. Of the means they use to support it, to confirm their own, win upon others, and overcome those who will not be won upon by them: and lastly, of the several sorts of religions, or religious orders, among them. Of all which, he says, *Vidisse est confutâsse—The appearance itself is a sufficient confutation.* He adds some of his thoughts on that question, Whether those who are devout in the Romish religion may be saved? and concludes their case highly dangerous, because they are idolaters; but expresses himself with great tenderness and compassion, bearing them record that many of them have a zeal for God, though not according to knowledge. He shows in the close the folly and wickedness of those protestants who make light of popery, and think there is no great hurt in it.

This treatise is dedicated to the Reverend Mr. Samuel Hildersham, (son of Mr. Arthur Hildersham,) to whom he was nephew by marriage.

At his return from his travels in the year 1673, he found the dissenters in England blessed with some breathing time from the extreme persecutions with which for so many years they had been harassed, and their assemblies tolerated. This soon brought him back to Shrewsbury; for no employment, no entertainment, was in his account comparable to that of preaching the gospel, for the honour of Christ, and the salvation of precious souls; when, therefore, a door of opportunity was opened for that, among the people he had formerly stood in the relation of a pastor to, he presently embraced it, though it was no way to his secular advantage, and though it broke him off very much from his conversation with scholars and great men. Herein he was a follower of the faith of Moses, who though he was learned in all the learning of the Egyptians, visited his brethren the children of Israel, and was content to take his lot with them.

Mr. John Bryan (the son of Dr. Bryan of Coventry) was turned out from St. Chad's church, Shrewsbury, and under his ministry the presbyterian dissenters there sat down; a pious man, and a good preacher. With him Mr. Tallents joined, and they divided the work between them: the congregation meeting in the house of that eminent Christian, Mrs. Hunt, relict of Col. Hunt, member of parliament. Much good was now done in that place by the ministry of these two worthy men.

Mr. Tallents had formerly, for the use of his pupils, drawn up a scheme of general chronology, which he had found of great use to them in reading history. This, having leisure for close study, now he was again settled in Shrewsbury, he set himself to enlarge, which he did to that degree of fulness and exactness, that it very well deserves the title under which it is known to the world: *A View of Universal History.* It cost him abundance of pains, more than can be imagined, to bring it to perfection, and to put it into that curious form in which it now appears: he was very exact in comparing his authors, and careful to avoid mistakes; every line there was the product of more study than perhaps some pages of another nature would be. He was very intent upon it, and applied himself to it with great industry. If any came to speak with him in his studying hours, he would desire them to despatch their business in as few words as they could, that he might return to his business, which was his great delight, next to the immediate service of God, and the work of his ministry, which he always preferred. I remember with what affection he would bless God with his family, on a Lord's-day morning, that on that day we were to lay aside our studies and our books, and give ourselves to communion with God in holy joy and praise.

Those chronological tables which give that view of universal history, were finely engraven on sixteen copper plates in his own house, and published about the year 1684, made up either in books or maps. How well they were received, and how much they are and will be valued by the learned world, I need not say. Some of his friends were very urgent with him to publish them in Latin, for the benefit of foreigners, but he said he intended them chiefly for the benefit of the nobility and gentry of our own nation, that they might have things which lay dispersed set before them in a clear and short view. It is certain there is nothing in them of partiality, or that looked designed to serve any party, but plain truth as far as it can be discovered.

I find among his papers many chronological disquisitions, and historical remarks; some seem to be drawn up in preparation for those tables, others for the illustration of them, but a vast deal of learning there is in them. That which encouraged him to take pains herein was the exceeding great use and benefit of history; that it shows us God's ways and dealings with his church and people, and the nations of

the world; it helps us to understand the prophecies of Scripture; and it raises us above that narrowness of spirit which most are subject to, and keeps us from thinking that there is no religion but in our own way; besides, that it gives great light to all kinds of knowledge and learning. If he would have been prevailed with to publish annotations upon his tables, and such historical dissertations, as I find he had furnished himself with materials for, I doubt not but they would have been both very acceptable and very useful.

About the year 1683, the meetings in Shrewsbury were suppressed, and he was then forced again into obscurity; and durst not be seen there, for fear of the Five-mile Act, which Mr. Bryan was brought into trouble upon. But in the year 1685, his dear wife going to Shrewsbury on some occasion, and dying suddenly there, he ventured thither to the last office of respect to her, which opportunity his enemies laid hold of, and it being just at the time of the Duke of Monmouth's attempt in the west, under pretence of that he was taken up, and sent prisoner to Chester castle, but upon the defeat of that attempt he was enlarged, and retired to London, where he lived very privately. Solomon speaks of a time when a *man is hid*, such a man.

But at the coming out of the liberty for dissenters in 1687, he returned to Shrewsbury, and joined with Mr. Bryan in the ministry there: and burning and shining lights they were in that place. And now they confined not themselves to the evening of the sabbath, as formerly; but some time after this revival of their liberty, they began to keep their meetings at the same time with the public worship, both parts of the day.

Upon occasion of that indulgence, he wrote for his own satisfaction a pretty large tract, which we find among his papers, concerning compelling people to the Christian religion, and punishing those who err in it. All agree, that those may be restrained and punished, who go against the light and law of nature, and disturb the civil government. But he undertakes to prove, that the magistrate is not to force Jews and heathens to embrace Christ's truth; nor those who err in matters of faith and worship, to own the right; nor to punish or destroy them if they will not: but that the same weapons are now to be used for the preserving and reforming of the church, which the apostles used for the planting of it; which were not carnal but spiritual; and yet mighty through God to pull down strong holds. He largely examines, not only the arguments, but the authorities, on both sides, and concludes, that Christ builds his church by faith and love, not by craft, violence, and persecution.

When King William and Queen Mary were happily settled on the throne, and each side seemed to come to a good temper, to promote it, he published a small tract of two or three sheets, which he called "Sure and Large Foundations." The design of which was to promote catholic Christianity and catholic charity, as the only healing methods.

Some overtures being made in that reign towards a comprehension, some worthy gentlemen who greatly valued his judgment, sent for him up to London, to discourse with him concerning it; particularly concerning the re-ordaining of those who were ordained by presbyters. Upon mature deliberation, he declared, he could not for his part submit to it; and drew up his reasons at large, which we find among his papers.

He not only pleaded for, but earnestly pressed, occasional conformity, as a token of the charity we have for those with whom we cannot statedly join, long before such a noise was made about it, with reference to offices; and it was his opinion, that as the dissenters, to show their charity, ought occasionally to hear the church ministers, and join with them in their worship, so the church ministers ought occasionally to hear the dissenters, and join with them in their worship; supposing that if they understood one another better, they would love one another better, and be brought nearer together.

In October, 1690, good Mrs. Hunt died, a great example in her place of serious piety, and all Christian virtues; lively and unwearied in the exercises of devotion, abounding in every thing that was good, free and charitable, and very active to promote religion, and the power of godliness, without any regard to parties. Upon her death, the meeting removed to Mr. Tallents's house about one year, while they were building and fitting up a very decent place for the purpose, which they entered upon, Oct. 25, 1691, Mr. Tallents preaching the first sermon on Isa. lvii. 15. *I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.* He caused it to be written upon the walls of the meeting-place, that it was built, "not for a faction or a party; but for promoting repentance and faith, in communion with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Adding that Scripture with which the French churches usually begin their public worship, *Our help stands in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.* He sometimes told his hearers, "If you come to be a people only differing from others in some opinions, but grow proud and carnal, and worldly and sensual, God will pull your place down; and let him pull it down."

He took all occasions to declare how much he hated from his heart the limiting of Christ's church to a particular opinion or party. We are far from thinking, said he, ourselves the only preachers, and condemning all others; as some do in effect, *Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me, to speak unto thee?* (1 Kings xxii. 24.) No, we rejoice that Christ is preached by many others: but we cannot think there

are so many good preachers, as that there is no need of us, or that we should be laid aside or forbidden; and therefore we say, as Elihu, without reflecting on others, *We also will speak;* we will throw in our mite; for we are called to the work, and therefore will lay out what God has given us, since the ministration of the Spirit is given to every one to profit withal. He made it his great business to preach Christ, and faith in Christ, as the great principle of holiness, which he said, he feared many spoke of very dimly and very coldly.

I cannot avoid taking notice here of a most impudent and malicious calumny, which the enemies of this good man cast upon him, "That he was a popish priest:" but if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, much more them of his household. When he was at London in the year 1686, it happened that a desk he had left at Shrewsbury was opened by mistake, in which, among other things, was a piece of an old white damask bed scolloped, and a plain pair of slippers, and a book, in which was entered the names of his pupils in Magdalen College; a malicious fellow that was there reported, that "he saw in a desk of Mr. Tallents's such vestments as priests say mass in, full of crosses and images, and I know not what, and a book in which were the names of such as were admitted into the order of Jesuits." When Mr. Tallents came down, and found this base slander industriously spread to his prejudice, he had the fellow before the mayor, produced the things that were found in the desk, and so convicted him of falsehood and malice; but because he was a poor man, gave him no other trouble but that of a check from the mayor: yet there were those who would do all they could to support the slander; and one at length who happened to say it in the company of divers, again and again, "Tallents is a Jesuit, and he has read mass at St. Omer's, and I will prove it." There being full evidence of this man's speaking these words, Mr. Tallents was advised to bring an action against him; which he did, and it was tried at Shrewsbury assizes in 1693, and the man was cast; but he being poor, the jury brought in but fifty shillings damages.

In the year 1701, he buried his fourth wife, with whom he had lived about fourteen years in much comfort; upon which he left off house-keeping, and went to be a tabler; but still having care of the poor families of many, when he had none of his own.

In the year 1704 he wrote his excellent History of Schism, for the promoting of Christian moderation, and the communion of saints. He was in the eighty-fifth year of his age when he wrote that book, and as it is the product of a great deal of learning, so it is the result of a great deal of thought, of a mind deeply tinctured with Christian piety and charity, that found itself much aggrieved to hear many, who may justly be thought to fear God, and work righteousness, anathematized, and condemned to the pit of hell, for some mistakes (to say the worst) concerning church government and ceremonies. All the point that book aimed at the gaining of was, "It is possible a dissenter may be saved." A very modest postulatum, one would think, and easily granted to heathens and papists. But it seems, it might not be granted to the dissenters, at least not without reluctance; for the book was answered by one *S. G.* with a great deal of passion and indignation, upon Mr. Dodwell's principles. Mr. Tallents, like a Christian, a scholar, and a gentleman, answered it with fair reasoning and abundance of candour and meekness. *S. G.* replied with more falsehood and bitterness than before, with the most base misrepresentations, and most scurrilous reflections that could be. Some of Mr. Tallents's friends offered to expose and banter him, but he would by no means suffer it; and would himself have been at the pains mildly to show him his mistakes, but that some of his friends reminded him of the old observation—"He that fights with a dunghill, though he be a conqueror, is sure to come off dirtied;" and one worthy gentleman, who upon inquiry found out now who this *S. G.* was, sent Mr. Tallents an account of his character; adding, that it was one of the greatest honours ever done him, that he had once thought him worthy of his notice, and treated him with so much civility and respect, but that he would by no means have him trouble himself with him a second time. Answer not such a writer according to his writing.

Let us now observe something concerning him, and his character and conversation, which may be of use to us.

1. In all his address and conversation, he was a great example of giving honour to whom honour was due, and love to whom love. To persons of rank and figure, he was in the highest degree respectful and complaisant, nor have I ever known any more observant of the rules of decency, nor with a better grace, which was a great ornament to his learning and piety. To his intimate friends he was most affectionate and endearing; with what expressions of love he used to embrace them, and lay them in his bosom, how dear they were to him as his own soul, how he would be pleased and revived with the sight of them, and how naturally he cared for their state, must never be forgotten by those who were blessed with his friendship. To his inferiors he was remarkably condescending, would hear their complaints with great patience and tenderness, and with great freedom and familiarity discourse with those who desired his advice in their affairs, relating to this world or the other.

2. In his old age, he retained the learning both of the school and of the academy to admiration; and would readily repeat verbatim observable passages

of a great length out of the classic authors, as there was occasion, for the entertainment of his friends. Those who would be thus rich when they are old, must take pains when they are young. He had something to communicate to those who conversed with him concerning all sorts of learning, but history was his masterpiece, and in that no man more ready. He sometimes advised young students to trace learning to its fountains, and though they read new books, yet to keep the old ones by them, and dwell most upon them.

3. He abounded very much in pious ejaculations, as one who had learned to *pray always, to pray without ceasing*, and to intermix prayer and praise not only with the slumbers of the night, (which I have reason to think he did,) but with the conversation of the day. When he was in serious talk with his friends, how often would he send his heart to heaven, and direct theirs also that way, in such devout and holy breathings as these, "God look on us!" "God pity us!" When he heard that his friends he inquired after were in health and prosperity, with what seriousness and solemnity would he lift up his eyes and hands, and say, "God be praised!" If he heard of the afflictions of any of them, "God relieve them, refresh them, comfort them!" If of the falls of any, "God give them repentance!" If of the deaths of any, "*God fit us to die!*" When he sent his service unto his friends, he would usually add an ejaculatory prayer for them, "God do them good!" "The Lord refresh their souls with his love!" adding sometimes, "and my poor dry soul too!" As the slightly careless use of the expressions of prayer, as by-words, is an evidence of a vain mind, not possessed with a due reverence of God and his great name, and is really a profaning of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow to the Lord their God; so the serious and devout use of them, with the indications of a due attention and affection, is an evidence of the dominion of grace and holiness in the heart: and it is pity when the former is so much in use among the profane, his enemies, who take his name in vain, the latter should be so little in use among professors, his friends, who desire to give unto him the glory due unto his name. Of this instance of devotion Mr. Tallents was a great example.

4. He was very happy in counselling and advising his friends who applied themselves to him, according as their case and condition was, their temper, or their distemper. He knew how to speak a word in season to the weak, to the weary, to the wilful, to comfort with all tenderness, and yet to rebuke with all authority and faithfulness; and how to express at the same time a just indication against a sin, and yet a due compassion for sinners.

He sometimes expressed his fear concerning many weak, melancholy Christians, that they had tired themselves in the exercises of devotion; and would advise such to compose and quiet themselves, and keep their minds as calm and sedate as may be, and not aim to put them always upon the stretch. He would sometimes pleasantly say, "The quietest are the best Christians." And certainly we must take heed of placing religion too much in the passions and pangs even of holy love, for we truly honour and enjoy God not only in the elevations of the soul toward him, but the repose of the soul in him. *Return to thy rest, O my soul*, and be *at home*, be *at ease*, in God.

And as to the external performances of religion, he sometimes said, "Let the work of God be done, and done well, but with as little noise as may be:" *The kingdom of God comes not with observation.*

5. He was eminent for his charity; was charitable in his judgment and censures of others, and made the best of every body; charitable in forgiving injuries, and passing by affronts; and charitable to the poor, ready, very ready to every good work; not only exciting the charity of others, but exerting his own, to his power, yea, and beyond his power; sparing from himself to supply others: he was as dead to the wealth of this world as most men I ever knew, knowing no good in it, but doing good with it. The little he left behind him (much of which too he left to the poor, having no children) is an evidence for him, (as it was for Calvin at Geneva,) that he had no way of laying up what he had but by laying it out in works of charity, which is the surest way of laying up Θεμελιον καλον—*a good security*, pawn or pledge, (so some understand it, 1 Tim. vi. 19.) *for the time to come*, and so *lay hold on eternal life.* He was particularly kind and charitable to strangers in distress, whom we must not be forgetful to entertain, (yet with prudence and caution,) because though some thereby have entertained devils incarnate, yet others thereby have entertained angels unawares, Heb. xiii. 2.

6. His preaching was very plain and familiar, but very affectionate, and that which manifestly came from the heart, and therefore was most likely to reach to the heart. He studied not words but things, remembering that of Minucius Felix, *Quo imperitior sermo, eo illustrior ratio est—The discourse would be lucid in proportion to its simplicity;* and that oftentimes there is most power and demonstration of the Spirit there where is least of the enticing words of man's wisdom. His explications were clear; his reasonings strong and convincing; and his quotations of Scripture very pertinent, and sometimes surprising.

I find a sermon on Jer. iii. 4. *Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father?* which he begins thus, "My brethren, what shall I speak to you this day from the Lord, for your spiritual encouragement, and strengthening in the ways of the Lord? We

meet together for this end, and we have gracious promises, that he will be with us to teach and strengthen us: I have it in my heart at this time to tell you, that you are to look upon God as your Father, and to hold that fast in your hearts."

Another thus; "I would fain speak a good word to-day concerning Jesus Christ, for the good of you here present, and of my own soul."

Another thus; "What I have now to say, is that which has somewhat affected me in my own private thoughts, and I hope may affect and work upon you for good, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."

He would often in his preaching speak with application to himself; "This word is to me, O that it may reach my heart." He frequently intermixed pious ejaculations with his preaching, and sometimes recommended it to others, as that which was both proper to affect the hearers, and the way to fetch in divine grace for the making of what he said effectual.

In times of distress, and fear, and expectation, he comforted himself and his friends, not only with the doctrine of God's universal providence, (many of the heathen encouraged themselves with that,) but he fetched his support chiefly from those principles which are purely Christian, as most proper for us, and most powerful, *That we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour*, (Heb. ii. 9.) and *that he nourisheth and cherisheth his church;* and not only protects, but *guards, it*, Eph. v. 29.

He was very frequent and earnest in pressing the necessity of brotherly love among Christians in the several instances of it, and reproving what is contrary to and destructive of it; love was the air he breathed in.

I remember once, when I came to visit him not long ago, he told me he had been preaching the day before concerning the Holy Ghost, and had observed, among other things, that he thought it was a defect among us, that we only prayed for the Holy Spirit, (as we are directed, Luke xi. 13.) and did not pray, so much as we should, to the Holy Spirit, for his gifts, and graces, and comforts, which we ought to do; for he is God, and therefore to be prayed to: and he mentioned the Litany for an example, *O God, the Holy Ghost, have mercy upon us.*

He earnestly pressed young ministers to preach Christ much, and the mystery of the gospel, wherein (says he) if I may judge of others by myself, we are generally so ignorant, and live so little by it; that enlightens, softens, humbles, sweetens the heart, and makes it truly fruitful and thankful.

He was much upon it in several sermons not long before he died, to show, that Christ our Lord merited for us, not only in his death, though chiefly then, but also in the obedience of his life: both his life and his death were exemplary to us, and meritorious for us.

7. I must observe, that he was in his judgment much for extolling free grace, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us for our justification, and the operation of the Spirit in us for our sanctification. A little before his death, he said that Scripture, Isa. lv. 1. *Without money and without price*, had often been his comfort and support; "For" (said he) "I have nothing put a poor naked soul to bring to Christ." He also said sometimes, that we must take heed of resting too much upon our covenanting with God; for it is by his promises to us that we partake of a divine nature, not by ours to him.

It was not long before his death that he wrote thus to me: I insert it both as a specimen of his letters to his friends, and an intimation of his sentiments in these things: "I send this by one that is a poor, melancholy, afflicted, grieved, but, I think, a holy woman; I hope I got good by my discourse with her. Alas, we are generally secure and dull, and any that are awakened indeed, and under temptations, are useful to such. Lately reading Luther's life in Melchior Adamus, besides other things, I find an excellent passage concerning justification by faith, which sets the matter most lively before us. *Nemo pro nostris peccatis mortuus est nisi solus Jesus Christus Filius Dei; iterum iterumque dico solus et unus Jesus Dei Filius a peccatis nos redemit; et impossibile est ut Christum aliter quam solâ fide amplectar, &c.—No one has died for our sins but Jesus Christ the Son of God; I repeat it, only Jesus Christ the Son of God has redeemed us from our sins; and I cannot receive Christ any other way than by reposing all confidence in him.* And shall we join our sufferings or obedience to his? Yet he died to purchase a holy people to himself, requires holiness in his, works it in them by the ways he appoints, and through holiness, which he makes necessary to salvation, will bring them to it. Farewell, dear sir, our God I trust will carry us on through faith to salvation. Let us pray for it in faith. Go on, rejoice in the Lord, abound in his work; and pray for poor old dull me, that I may not be altogether useless, but may finish my course with joy."

Take his sense of this with application to himself, as it is found in a paper written with his own hand. "I prayed much for the pardon of my sins, so great and many even to this day; for great mercies and forgivenesses, that righteousness may be imputed to me, Rom. iv. 11, 23. That I may be justified as holy Abraham was, by a righteousness imputed; as holy David was, having my sins covered, that is, by Christ's atonement; as all the saints have been, not by their own works and righteousness, (which is but rags,) but by the righteousness of Christ wrought for us, the righteousness which is of God by faith, and be found in that. Let me live by that, and have peace with God by it; if others despise it, let me highly praise it; if others cast it away, let me

live by that; if others speak against it, let me make my boast of it; let it be my joy, my crown, my life, my peace, my glorying, my all. Let his Spirit be imparted to me, to sanctify, to rule me; his righteousness be imputed to me; this is all my hope, that I may be found in the crowd, among the many thousands of God's people, (Numb. x. 36.) whom he cares for and loves, though but among the least of them, a little member of that great body." Such as these were the constant breathings of his pious soul.

Let me add one thing upon this, that though he differed much from Mr. Baxter, concerning justification and other things, yet he highly valued that great man for his learning and piety, and the service he had done the church by his practical writings, and often spoke of him with great respect and affection.

He took occasion sometimes to speak the hopes he had of the flourishing of the Christian church in the latter days; that the Jews should be converted, the papal antichristian kingdom destroyed, and religion, in the power of it, should prevail. He grounded his hopes on the prophecies of the New Testament; "And," said he, "when God shall repair the breaches of his church, and build it up greatly, the subtilties of the schools, and many canons of councils, and customs of old, will be laid aside, and a great simplicity in things of faith and worship shall be owned and practised; no more conditions shall be made for communion of churches, than Christ makes for communion with him, and uniformity in smaller matters shall not be made necessary to unity."

We have now nothing to do, but to give some account of the end of this good man's conversation. It pleased that God, in whose hand our times are, to lengthen or shorten as he pleases, to continue him long a burning and a shining light in his church; purely to his good providence it must be attributed, and not to any thing that appeared extraordinary either in his constitution or management of himself. Moses observed, that in his time, if men lived to be fourscore years, even their strength was then commonly labour and sorrow; but here was one who went almost nine years beyond that, and yet his strength did not seem to be labour and sorrow, but he continued both cheerful and useful to the last, even in those evil days, of which men commonly say they have no pleasure in them; he had the pleasure of looking backward upon the grace of God bestowed upon him, and forward upon the glory of God prepared for him, and little of bodily pain and distemper to be an allay to his pleasure. Thus in his advanced years he continued to walk humbly with God in holy security and serenity of mind, and a believing expectation of the glory to be revealed.

In the year 1699, Mr. Bryan, who had long been his fellow-labourer in Shrewsbury, finished his course with joy: thereupon Mr. James Owen of Oswestry was chosen to join with him in the work of the ministry there; but it pleased God to put an end to his most useful life and labours in April, 1706. Upon his death they chose Dr. Benion, then minister at Broad Oak, who came and settled among them that year, and was every way agreeable both to Mr. Tallents and to the people, but *Te tantum terris ostendunt Fata nec ultra esse sinunt*, he had soon finished his testimony, and was remanded (March 4, 1707-8) when he had been but a year and three quarters at Shrewsbury. He was very dear to Mr. Tallents, and as a son with the father, so did he serve with him in the gospel; and his death did accordingly go very near him, he scarce looked up with any cheerfulness after.

He had had a very little sickness; but as he grew into years, complained sometimes of faintness, and feebleness, and shortness of breathing, which obliged him to favour himself a little in his work; and if he had spent himself but in discourse with his friends, he found it requisite to retire and repose himself a little.

On Wednesday, March 24, about a fortnight after the doctor was buried, as he was washing him, and for ought appeared as well as he used to be, he fainted away of a sudden, and had fallen to the ground, if those about him had not been immediately aware of it and helped him. In a little time he came to himself, and the next day wrote a letter in his bed, made some alterations in his will, gave directions about his funeral, and then addressed himself to his dying work, with the holy cheerfulness that became so good a Christian, as one who had nothing else to do but to die. Sometimes he intimated, that if it were the will of God, he could desire to live a little while to see the congregation well settled under another minister, and there was sometimes hope of his recovery, and that he might yet have been instrumental therein; but the wise God, whose judgments are a great deep, ordered otherwise, that he should leave them just at a time when they most needed him. Many a time after Dr. Benion's death, he prayed earnestly to God to provide good ministers for that congregation, which lay so near his heart. And since his death, we have seen his prayers answered: but God will show that he can do his own work without the agency even of those instruments that we think necessary, and depend most upon. He uses the service of many, but needs the service of none.

And though to abide in the flesh might well be thought, especially at that juncture, more profitable for them, yet he soon got over that difficulty, and left the care of the sheep to the great Shepherd, who when he has work to do will never want fit instruments to do it with. He therefore prayed, that

if his work were done, he might be, by the grace of God, not only willing, but desirous, to depart, and to be with Christ, which he knew to be far better.

He charged all about him, that they should not pray for his life, but that he might be enabled patiently to wait for his change.

When he came to himself, by God's blessing on the use of means, from that fainting fit, with which his illness began, he said to those about him, "Why did you not let a poor old man go away quietly?" He often expressed his repentance for sin, and his reliance on Christ alone; and some days before he died, he blessed God that he was more full of inward comfort and joy than he was able to express.

He complained very little either of pain or sickness, but gradually decayed, and burnt lower and lower, like a candle in the socket. He often prayed to God for a blessing on those about him, and said, "Here I lie waiting, waiting." After some time he began to think it long that he had not his release, and to cry, *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly;* but he knew God's time is the best, and therefore would wait with patience for it; for the vision is for an appointed time, and at the end it shall speak, and not lie.

On Lord's day, April 11, 1708, he said he would have those about him go to worship God in the solemn assembly, and would have only one to stay with him. That day he took more refreshment, and seemed to be more revived, than he had been of some time before. Divers savoury words dropped from him; and he continued very sensible, calling upon God, till about nine or ten o'clock that evening, when he sweetly slept in Jesus, and on that day of rest, entered into his everlasting rest. Praised be that God by whose grace he was enabled to finish well.

On Thursday following, (April 15,) the dear remains were solemnly deposited in St. Mary's church, and a sermon preached at his own meeting-place the same evening on that sad occasion, and many, very many, did him honour at his death, as they did to Jehoiada, (who died in a good old age,) *because he had done good in Israel.*

A paper was found after his death, appointing what epitaph should be inscribed on his grave-stone, and expressing the year of his life then current; intimating, that he did not expect to out-live that year.

Reliquiæ D. Francisci Tallents, Olim Col. Magd. Cant. Sen. Socij, Postea Concionatoris Publici in hac Ecclesiâ ab Ann. 1652. *ad Aug.* 24, 1662. *Qui post varios Labores, expectans misericordiam Domini nostri Jesu Christi in vitam æternam tandem decessit, Anno Ætatis suæ* 89. *Mense die—*

The remains of D. F. Tallents, formerly Fellow of Maydalen College, Cambridge, afterwards preacher in this church from 1652, *to Aug.* 24, 1662: *who, after various labours, expecting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, died in the* 89*th year of his age.*

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

FUNERAL OF MR. SAMUEL LAWRENCE,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT NANTWICH IN CHESHIRE.

WITH A CONCISE ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.

PHILIPPIANS ii. 27.

Lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

O THAT the occasion of our meeting here to-day had been such, that this whole verse had been applicable to it! If when our dear brother (whose remains we have just now laid in the silent grave) was sick, nigh unto death, God had heard our prayers, had seen our tears, had ordered the sun of life to go back, or rather the shadow of it, (for it is but a shadow,) and had added to his days, as to Hezekiah's, and we had been met here to return thanks for his recovery, with what pleasure should I have applied this whole verse to such a joyful occasion; *For indeed he was sick, nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him, and* spared him, and *not on him only, but on me also,* and on you likewise, and on many others, *lest we should have sorrow upon sorrow.*

But alas, this is not our case; it is not a song of praise that is this day put into our mouths, but a song of lamentation; nor is the case any longer within the reach of prayer. While our friend was yet alive, we wept and made supplication, for we said, *Who can tell but God will yet be gracious to us, and he shall live.* We pleaded, *Shall Jonathan die,* (1 Sam. xiv. 45.) who has been instrumental of so much good to the souls of many, who is such a blessing to Israel, and likely to be more so, likely in a course of nature to be long so? But now he is dead, though we desire patiently to submit to the holy will of God, and to reconcile ourselves to this dark dispensation, acknowledging that God is just in this which he has brought upon us, yet we think we may have liberty to bemoan ourselves under so sore a breach made upon our comforts; nay, we think it is our duty, when we sow such precious seed, sow it in corruption and dishonour, though we believe it shall be raised again in glory and incorruption, yet to bear it forth weeping, and to sow it in tears. If Jonathan be fallen we cannot but say, *We are distressed for him,* for *very pleasant has he been unto us,* and therefore very painful must it needs be to have him thus suddenly rent from us, in the midst of his great usefulness.

We have occasion then, at present, to make use only of the last words of the verse, *Sorrow upon sorrow.* That which Paul dreaded, but it was by the mercy of God prevented, in the case of Epaphroditus, we feel we have, I am sure I feel I have, *sorrow upon sorrow,* a complication, an addition, of sorrows, which ought to be no surprise to us in this vale of tears, this lower region, where the clouds return after the rain, in a world where we are bid to expect tribulation, and to count upon it.

Our observation from the text, with application to the present sad occasion, though it be only implied, yet rises easily and naturally. If Epaphroditus had died, Paul, who was now already in great distress, by reason of his removal and distance from his friends at Philippi, would have had sorrow upon sorrow; the sorrow of burying one friend, upon the sorrow of being separated from many more: and therefore when such a one as Epaphroditus was, is removed from us by death, we have sorrow upon sorrow; that is, we have *great sorrow,* many sorrows included in this one. And sometimes Providence so orders the circumstances of this affliction, that it is, to those who are nearly interested in the case, (as Paul was in that of Epaphroditus,) one sorrow added to another, like Job's messengers; as the waves of the sea, *deep calling unto deep.* Broken with breach upon breach.

To accommodate this to our present purpose, we

must consider who this Epaphroditus was, whose death would have been so great a grief to St. Paul. He was an evangelist; not only in the larger signification of the word, a *preacher of the gospel*, a *bringer of good tidings*, but in its more peculiar sense, he was an assistant to the apostles in founding and planting churches. Such was Timothy, Titus, Silas, and others, who were sometimes the apostles' companions and associates in their itinerant work, sometimes their substitutes and agents; whom they sent where they could not come, or left where they could not stay, to set in order the things that were wanting; to settle the churches which the apostles had planted under the conduct of their ordinary pastors and teachers, and then to leave them. This Epaphroditus is the same with that Epaphras, Col. i. 7. who first preached the gospel at Colosse, and planted a church there; afterwards was for some time at Philippi, and watered the church there; and was now at Rome, sent thither by the Philippians on an errand to St. Paul, and sent back by St. Paul to them with this epistle.

Now we may look upon this good man,

1. As a dear friend of Paul's, and one whom he had a great love and value for. He calls him here, (*v.* 25.) his brother and companion in labour, and his fellow-soldier; and, (Col. i. 7.) his dear fellow-servant. St. Paul was the chief of the apostles, excelled them all in gifts, and graces, and usefulness, was a prime minister of state in Christ's kingdom, yet see his humility; he accepts the help of Epaphroditus, who was every way his inferior, makes use of it, rejoices in it, and is afraid of being deprived of it. Much more reason have we to acknowledge the need we have of our brethren's help, and to be thankful for it, to see the advantage we have by it for the strengthening of our hands, and the carrying on of our work, and to see what losers we are by their removal; nay, we are ignorant of ourselves, if we esteem not others better than ourselves, and reckon not that we could be better spared.

Paul calls Epaphroditus his brother, for all we are brethren; all true Christians, all faithful ministers, are so, for they have all one and the same Father, and all belong to one and the same family. He calls him his *companion in labour*, for he was engaged in the same work; and his *fellow-soldier*, for he was engaged in the same warfare; and the share he had with him in services and sufferings increased Paul's affection to him. If he be his fellow-servant, and be such a one as he should be, he is a *dear fellow-servant*, Paul's heart is upon him, and he loves him as his own soul. It becomes the servants of Jesus Christ, not only to love their Master, but to love their fellow-servants, to call them their *dear fellow-servants*, not jealous of their rivalship, or envious at their success, but taking pleasure in them and their prosperity. Fellow-soldiers who have ventured their lives together, should thereby have their hearts knit together. Epaphroditus was upon this account dear to Paul, who, therefore, could scarce bear the thoughts of parting with him.

2. As a faithful servant to the churches, whose care was not confined to one church, but was extended to many. He laid out himself to promote every thing that was good among Christians; he is your messenger, one that you have employed, and put a confidence in, one that you have made your representative, that manages the affairs of your church so wisely, so well. Epaphroditus, as it should seem, was now sent by the Philippians to Rome to attend Paul, to see what he wanted, and to bring him some supplies which they had collected for him.

This was he who was *sick, nigh unto death*, and if he had died it would have been an occasion of great sorrow to Paul, for though Paul was a man who had the command of his passions, yet he was not a stock or a stone, or a stoic, void of passion; our Lord Jesus himself was not; because he loved Lazarus, he wept over his grave, John xi. 35, 36. and has warranted us to do so; and here we have occasion for it. Though we pretend not to compare our friends and fellow-servants *with*, yet we hope we may compare them *to*, St. Paul's friends and fellow-servants; they walk (though not *passibus æquis—with equal steps*) in the same spirit, and in the same steps, and therefore we ought to be in like manner affected with their removal.

Doct. The death of faithful ministers is just cause for sorrow, and sometimes, especially, it is so circumstanced that it becomes sorrow upon sorrow.

I. The death of faithful ministers is just cause for sorrow; parting with them is a very mournful thing, yea, though they have continued long in their usefulness, and some may think it is time they should go off to make room for others, yet in that case their death is to be lamented, as Elisha's was by the king of Israel, 2 Kings xiii. 14. though he was then very old, and we had heard nothing of him a great while; and we must thus show that we have esteemed them highly in love for their work's sake. Yea, though they should die martyrs, and should themselves rejoice to be offered up, yet in that case, as in Stephen's, *devout men* will *make great lamentation for* them;[a] much more is it to be lamented when there is not that gain to the church by their deaths, and might long have been in all probability great gain to the church by their lives. It is justly reckoned an argument of great stupidity, if, when such men are taken away, we do not consider it, and lay it to heart. Observe,

1. Ministers, faithful ministers, are subject to the

[a] Acts viii. 2.

stroke of death as well as others. They know themselves, and we know, that they must certainly and shortly put off this their tabernacle; *Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?* We see they do not.

They are not exempted from death, for the treasure is put into earthen vessels; they also are formed out of the clay, though they are to us in God's stead, and they must return to their dust. They are indeed called the angels of the churches, such is the dignity of their office, but alas we find them mortal dying men; and when they are subject to like passions as others, it is not strange they are subject to like strokes as others. The law made men priests, and the gospel makes men ministers, who had infirmity, and therefore could not continue, could not continue long, by reason of death, which must be and will be where sin is.

Nay, they are exposed more than others; death is working in them, when life in you; their work wastes them, their sorrows wear them, and they gladly spend, and cannot but be spent, for you. A wicked world is ready to say, Away with them, they are not worthy to live;[b] a gracious God says, Away with them, the ungrateful world is not worthy of them;[c] so that the point seems to be agreed, that good men must not live long in this world.

2. Death is the occasion of grief; ordinarily it is so; when man goes to his long home the mourners go about the streets. The house where death is, is called the house of mourning; it is so unless either those who are removed were, or those who are left behind are, void of natural affection. There was a great cry throughout Egypt, when there was not a house in which there was not one dead.[d] It is death reigning in this world as it does, that makes it a vale of tears; in heaven, and there only, where there is no more *death*, all tears are wiped away from men's eyes.

3. The death of good ministers ought to be in a special manner mourned for; this is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, as much as any death. Moses, and Aaron, and Samuel, were men that all Israel went into real mourning for. The death of ministers makes God's house a house of mourning, and sensibly affects those who are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, to whom the reproach of it is a burthen. Then the ways of Zion mourn, when the guides and overseers in those ways are removed; then her elders put on sackcloth, when those who were the ornaments of the elders' seat are removed.

(1.) It is matter of sorrow to the people. They were the messengers of the churches, God's messengers to them by the word; messengers of good tidings, whose feet upon that account were beautiful; they were their messengers to God by prayer, who many a time went to the throne of grace on their errands, spread their case before the Lord, and made intercession for them, and were helpers of their joy; they were interpreters. Now the removal of such ought to be sadly lamented, because it breaks in upon the intercourse we have with heaven, the keeping up of which is so much our business and so much our bliss in our present state.

When these messengers are called away by death, you ought to be afflicted, and mourn, and weep.

[1.] Because of the love which we hope you bare to them, that you may testify and express it. They loved you, and *travailed in birth again for you*, till they saw some good evidence of Christ's being formed in you. You know how they exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his children; how near their hearts your spiritual welfare lay, what a grief it was to them when any of you walked disorderly, and how much your well-doing was their joy. You have perceived what a tender concern they have had for you, *Who is weak, and I am not weak?* what a fear they have been in concerning you, lest you should come short, lest you should seem to come short. Many have been the proofs of their love to you, and it may be, your own hearts tell you, that while they were with you, you gave them not the proofs you should have given them of your love to them: you were wanting in your duty; you did not attend on their ministry so constantly, nor attend to it so carefully, as you should have done; your profiting did not appear, but the contrary, and this grieved the hearts of those who should have had joy of you. Will you testify your love to them now they are gone, by bewailing the removal of them? Thus at length show the value you had for them, and make up what has been wanting in the instances of your love to them. Let their deaths be lamented, to show that their lives were desired.

[2.] Because of the loss which you know you have of them, and not you only, but others also; for their usefulness is extensive, and their lives a blessing to many. The loss of a faithful minister is a public loss; we are to reckon those our best friends who are our *soul's friends*, and therefore the loss of such friends, the greatest loss of that kind.

You here have lost one who long approved himself a skilful faithful friend to your souls; one who was excellently well qualified for the service of your faith, and the help and furtherance of your holiness and joy. He was one who knew how to divide the word of truth aright, and to give each of you your portion of meat in due season. He was one who, to my knowledge, in his youth laid in

b Acts xxii. 22. c Heb. xi. 38.

d Exod. xii. 30.

a good stock of useful learning, and which is more, knew how to make use of it. He was a scribe well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, and could bring out of his treasury things new and old, for the improvement of the most grown Christians, and yet, both in his preaching and in his conversation, knew how to condescend and accommodate himself to the capacity of the meanest, to feed the babes with milk, and the grown men with strong meat. He preached to you in a method, that you might see the truths you are to believe, and the duties you are to do in their order, and their reference to each other, which will render the one more intelligible and the other more practicable. He preached to you in his conversation, which was of a piece with his doctrine; he was an example to the believers in every thing that is praise-worthy, and was both a burning and a shining light. That which he aimed at was your profit, as one who naturally cared for your state.

O that you would sorrow after a godly sort, would sorrow according to God, and with an eye to him, for the death of one who was so much your helper in the things of God; that you would sorrow for the loss your poor children sustain by his death, the lambs of your flock, whom he fed with food convenient for them, in his public catechising. I trust there are many of you to whom he was, through grace, a spiritual father, who by his ministry were brought savingly to Christ; such have reason to lament the taking away of one quite out of their reach, with whom they might have consulted concerning their progress in the way to heaven, but whom they can now not only not hear, but not hear from. But especially, O that you would sorrow for your sins, your carelessness and unfruitfulness under his ministry, which has separated between you and your minister, and has provoked God to deprive you of such a privilege. All our tears should be turned into this channel.

(2.) It is matter of sorrow to us who are ministers; for they were our companions, our fellow-servants, who laboured with us in the same work; our fellow-soldiers, who exposed themselves with us in the same warfare. Though St. Paul had as little need of help as any minister ever had, though the Holy Ghost was given by his hands, so that if one was removed, he knew which way to expect the raising up of another, yet the death of a faithful minister was very much his sorrow; and much more reason there is why it should be ours.

[1.] We have cause for it. Our hands are this day weak through our own infirmities, and they are weakened by such providences, so that the work is either not done, or not so well done; we are disheartened and discouraged, and drive heavily when thus our chariot-wheels are taken off. We need help, we need such help, and at every turn shall find the want of it, and reflect with sorrow upon the withering of such a hand, as was so much our right hand.

Much is required to make an able minister of the New Testament, abundance of gifts and graces, study and experience, a good head and a good heart. It is long ere a minister grows up to maturity; the choicest fruits ripen slowly. Many hopeful buds and blossoms are blasted, and those that promised fair disappoint us, and never bring forth fruit to perfection. Many are plucked off by death, while they are yet in the blossom, they come forth like a flower, and are cut down in the beginning of their usefulness, and therefore, to be deprived of such a one as we have now lost, who was beginning, and but beginning, to be an elder in age, as well as an elder in office; who was grown by observation and experience fit to be a father to the sons of the prophets, and a very wise and tender one he was, and thereby to strengthen the hands of his brethren; who was a great example of humility, consideration, and conscientiousness; *this is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation*, especially when (according to the reason there given) among all the branches of our vine there are so few that are *strong rods* for *sceptres to rule*.

Let the priests the Lord's ministers mourn between the temple and the altar, for there, in the courts of the Lord's house, they will find a loss of him who was so good a helper with them in the service of the tabernacle. We have lost one who laboured in the word and doctrine, and ought therefore to be accounted worthy of double honour; of honour while he lived, the honour of being beloved; and of honour at his death, the honour of being lamented.

[2.] It will do us good. It will be for our spiritual benefit, not only to admit but to enforce the impressions of sorrow upon this occasion. By the sadness arising from this stroke of divine providence, our hearts and our lives may be made better, and we may have reason to say, *It was good for us to go to such a house of mourning*, though it is bad for us that such houses of mourning are made among us. That which makes so much against us, if we be duly affected with it, may by the grace of God be made to work for us; *out of the eater may come forth meat, and out of the strong sweetness*. We whose business it is to teach others to improve such providences, are ourselves inexcusable, if we do not lay them to heart, as the living are concerned to do.

If we sorrow aright for the death of our brethren, it will help to fix upon our minds that seriousness which is so necessary to every Christian, and, especially, to a minister, and to mortify that lightness and airiness which very much unfits for the employments and enjoyments of the spiritual and divine life. This sadness will help to compose our vain minds, and dispose them for serious work, and to

preserve that decorum upon our whole behaviour which becomes our profession, and will contribute so much to the great ends of it. That really does us good which helps to make us grave and sober-minded, and our spirits are wretchedly dissipated, if this will not do it.

It will stir us up to double our diligence in our Master's work. Do we grieve for the loss of them who are removed? Let us endeavour in some measure to make up the loss, by laying out ourselves so much the more in the service of Christ and the souls of men; let us pray better, and preach better, and live better, that we may each of us do something toward filling up the gap. In two scriptures we find the consideration of this, that death is a period to the usefulness of good men in this world, urged as an argument with the survivors to abound so much the more in honouring God: one is Ps. cxv. 17, 18. *The dead praise not the Lord*, as they did while they were alive; *neither any that go down into silence*; praying, praising, preaching lips are closed in the grave; but we will bless the Lord, because they cannot do it, we will do it the more fervently, the more constantly, and will endeavour that it may be done by a seed, by a succession of saints, when we also are gone, from this time forth and for evermore. The other is in Hezekiah's writing, Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19. *The grave cannot praise thee*, as the pulpit does, *death cannot celebrate thee*, nor the congregation of the dead, as the assembly of God's Israel does; and therefore *the living, the living, they shall praise thee*, with so much the more life and liveliness; and that the work may not sink and die in our hands, *the fathers to the children shall make known thy truth*, that they may be praising God on earth, when we are praising him in heaven.

It will put us in mind of our latter end, of the period that will then be put to our work, and the account that must then be given up of it. They are gone, and we are going, and we know not whose turn it will be to go next; probably ours who were nearest in age, who, therefore, are the more concerned to take the alarm. When our fathers are removed in a full age, we are perhaps tempted to think it will be many years before it comes to our turn to be gathered to them, and so to think of death as a thing at a distance; but when our brethren are removed, those who were brought up with us, and are of the same standing, we are bid to think of dying, not only as certain, but as very near; *Behold, the judge standeth before the door.* This forbids us to say in our hearts, *Our Lord delays his coming*, and speaks aloud in our ears, *The Lord is at hand.* Moses and Aaron are much of an age, there is but three years between them, and therefore when Aaron is dead, God puts Moses in mind of following him quickly: *Thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered*, Numb. xxvii. 13. You commonly say to those who are but a very little younger than you, "When I die for age, you must quake for fear;" yet if you have made sure your interest in Christ, you will see cause not to quake for fear, but to sing for joy; but when those of the same age with us die, though not for age, it is a call to us to think of dying,—of dying shortly. Why may not our strength be weakened in the way, and our days shortened, as theirs were, and the number of our months be cut off in the midst? O that this consideration might be so impressed upon us who are ministers, that we might by it be quickened and engaged to apply ourselves more closely and vigorously to our great business, that we may finish comfortably and well. Our blessed Lord stirred up himself with this consideration, *I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, for the night cometh, when no man can work.* The nearer our time draws to an end, the more concerned we are to fill it up with duty, and with that which will turn to a good account, that we may give up our account with joy. And if thus we sow in these tears, the harvest hereafter will be pleasant; if the good lessons which these providences teach us be taken out and well learned, we shall have reason to say, that *sorrow is better than laughter*; and that our loss is not only their gain, but our gain too. Our dear brother *being dead, yet speaketh*, thus speaketh, "*Therefore be ye also ready*, and in order to that, be ye also busy, be always abounding in the Lord." We ha e no time to lose who have so much work to go through, and have lost so much time already. Let us not, under colour of prolonging our lives, indulge our ease, lest by so saving our lives we lose them; the more uncertain life is, the more need we have to spend it well, for that is the way to end it well; and *blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he comes shall find so doing.*

II. Sometimes the death of faithful ministers is so circumstanced, that it is sorrow upon sorrow; that was the thing St. Paul dreaded in the death of Epaphroditus, and it is what we feel at this time. God renews his witnesses against us, and multiplies our wounds.

1. When many breaches of this kind are made upon us about the same time, then we have sorrow upon sorrow. Death is always reigning in every place, and every week brings in its bills of mortality, but we reckon it a sore and signal judgment, if an epidemical distemper makes the numbers of the dead in a little time more than usual; it is true the prophets do not live for ever, the labourers must be called out of the vineyard, when they shall have accomplished as a hireling their day. But when many are removed in a little time in the same country, and those most of them in the midst of their days and usefulness, we must be very stupid if we hear not the voice of God in it. I can name about

seventeen* dissenting ministers here within our neighbourhood, and acquaintance, who have been removed in little more than seven years; many of them I have done this mournful office for, that I am now doing for this dear brother of mine, and of them all, only two that (as I think) were above 55 years old, and those two were considerably above 80, Mr. Tallents and Mr. Cope; six or seven I take to have been about 50, and the rest under 40. And is not this sorrow upon sorrow? Have not the deaths of our brethren in the ministry been brought us by Job's messengers? *While one is yet speaking, comes in another.*

And what shall we say to these things? What is this that God has done unto us? What is it that God would have us to do? What is it that he says to us by these repeated strokes of the same rod? what is the meaning of it? and what the mind of him who has appointed it?

(1.) God does hereby plainly reprove for our former stupidity and senselessness, under the breaches of this kind that were made upon us; good men, good ministers, have been taken from us, and we have not considered it, and laid it to heart as we ought to have done; and therefore God has proceeded in this controversy with us, for when he judges he will overcome, will humble the unhumbled. If the work be not done and the point gained by one affliction, another may reasonably be expected. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, but they shall see.* When one good minister has been taken away, perhaps we have been tempted to think, the matter is not great, there is *more than enough;* but God will make us know that we have none to spare, and that if we depend upon our numbers he can soon lessen them.

We have not been duly affected with the losses of this kind which other congregations have sustained, as if we were not concerned in them, nor were in danger of the like; as if our mountain stood so strong that it could not be moved, and we have thereby provoked God to come nearer us, and to make us feel the smart of that rod upon our own back, which we have not heard the voice of upon the back of others. It is a method God takes in other afflictions, those must be made to suffer who will not be made to sympathize; for sooner or later, one way or other, God will be heard, he will be heeded.

(2.) God does hereby plainly warn us of judgments coming. We are to look upon it as a sad token of his displeasure against us; nay, if we make not a right improvement of it, it is well if it prove not a bad omen of his departure from us. The removal of so many candles out of their places, is a step towards, and a threatening of, the removal of the candlestick itself out of its place; which we have deserved, because we have *left our first love*, and have not *repented and done our first works.* God designs by these providences to awaken us out of our security, that we may not flatter ourselves with a conceit, that to-morrow will be as this day; and to stir us up to our duty, which is to prepare to meet our God; to stand in the gap which is hereby made, and make good the breach against the judgments which threaten by it to pour in upon us.

Hear ye the Lord's controversy, which he has with his people, and which *he will plead; Hear ye the Lord's voice*, crying to the city, to the country, and *see his name in it.* Why? How does it appear that God is contending with us? The prophet gives you an instance of it soon after, *The good man is perished out of the earth*, and I *am as when they have gathered the summer fruits*—stript of my glory. What is to be said at such a time? We must not only say, as the prophet there, *Woe is me*, but as the Psalmist on the like occasion, *Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, the faithful fail.* When we are bemoaning our losses, we must apply ourselves to him, who is alone able to make them up; when godly, faithful people cease and fail, it is high time to cry, *Help, Lord.*

Let the good impressions of such providences as these abide with us, and let them not wear off; we are apt to be affected with them for the present, but we soon forget them, and *settle upon our lees* again, as those, who having been at ease from our youth, are desirous still to be so; which makes it necessary, that God in his providence should be still emptying us from vessel to vessel, shifting hands with us, for otherwise *our taste remaineth in us, and our scent is not changed*, Jer. xlviii. 11. Let us take heed lest, by returning to our former security, we provoke God to proceed in his controversy; but by daily prayers to God, let us endeavour to turn away his wrath, and by a continual good improvement of the many breaches of this kind that have been made upon us, let us stand between the living ministers and the dead, that this plague may be staid. *O lift up a prayer for the remnant that is left*, an earnest prayer that God would not make a full end, but would spare his people, and spare his ministers to them, according to the multitude of his mercies.

2. When we have this sorrow mingled with other sorrows; when grief for the death of our ministers is added to other grievances, so that there is a complication of griefs, then we have sorrow upon sorrow. This would have been Paul's case if Epaphroditus had died; he was now in sorrow, not so much for his own sufferings, he knew how to glory and rejoice in them, but because he was absent from the Philip-

* Mr. Cope of Haslington, in 1704. Mr. Chorlton of Manchester, 1705. Mr. Latham of Wem, and Mr. Owen of Salop, Mr. Holland of Lostock, Mr. Long of Wrexam, in 1706. Mr. Tallents and Dr. Benion, both of Salop, and Mr. Jonathan Harvey of Chester, 1708. Mr. Low of Knutsford, and Mr. Evans of Oswestry, in 1709. Mr. Nailor of St. Ellens, 1710. Mr. Peyton of Stafford, Mr. Brian of Newcastle, Mr. Jenkin Thomas of Wrexam, and Mr. Eaton of Manchester, in 1711. And now Mr. Lawrence, in 1712.

pians, and others of his friends who were dear to him, and wanted to know their state; and especially because he saw a general decay of serious godliness among ministers and Christians; *Some preach Christ of envy and strife, and all seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's:* this was Paul's sorrow, and if now he had lost Epaphroditus, one who *preached Christ out of love* to him, and who *naturally cared for the state* of souls, it would have been sorrow upon sorrow; and this also is our case.

How far my own present grief, which lies heavy upon me beyond what I could have thought, directed my thoughts upon this sad occasion to this melancholy theme of sorrow upon sorrow, I shall not say, the heart best knows its own bitterness, and feels most from its own burthen; but upon many accounts of common concern, we may truly call this sorrow upon sorrow.

(1.) The abounding of atheism and infidelity, vice and profaneness, in our land is our sorrow; we behold the transgressors and are grieved; I am sure we ought to be so, to see them so numerous, so impudent; and rivers of tears should run down our eyes, because there are so few that keep God's law, and so many who break it. The general corruption of men's principles and manners, the abounding of impiety and immorality, and the inefficacy of the endeavours used for reformation, are matter of sorrow to all good people; righteous souls are vexed from day to day, as Lot's was, with the filthy conversation of the unrighteous; and we hope there is a remnant who mourn in secret, and cover their faces, for that wickedness which is committed openly, and goes barefaced, that sigh and cry for the abominations of the land, that blush before God for that wickedness for which they that are guilty of it will not blush before men. It is sad to see and to hear how God's name is profaned, his law broken, his word vilified, his sabbath polluted, his creatures abused, how men wrong and abuse, how they *bite and devour, one another.*

And if this be a sorrow, as certainly it is, the taking away of those from the midst of us, who were, in their places, God's witnesses against the wickedness of the wicked, who helped to put vice out of countenance, and to make iniquity stop her mouth; who, by the Spirit of the Lord, lifted up a standard against this enemy who comes in like a flood; the silencing of the faithful watchmen, who warned the wicked in God's name to turn from his wicked way, must needs be sorrow upon sorrow. Men of probity and sincerity could never be worse spared than now, when men speak vanity every one to his neighbour, and there are so few who can be confided in.

(2.) The decay of serious piety, among those who make a profession of it, is our sorrow. It may justly grieve us to see not only how iniquity abounds, but how the love of many waxes cold; love to their God, to their Bibles, to their brethren; devout affections ebb and abate; the *kindness of our youth* is forgotten, and that of *our espousals.* It is our sorrow, to see so little of the power of godliness among those who retain the form of it; to see family worship neglected, sabbath time trifled away, Bibles and good books seldom looked into, religious conference forgotten and quite laid aside, solemn assemblies indifferently attended, and the word preached carelessly heard. It is sad to see how little there is among us of the pious zeal and strictness of the good old puritans; how the things that remain are ready to die, and our works are not found filled up before God; but what a woful deficiency there is of what should be, and a woful degeneracy from what has been, among professors.

And if this be a sorrow, surely it may well be reckoned sorrow upon sorrow, when those are taken away by death, in whom so much of serious piety was kept up, and by whose means we might hope to see it, through the grace of God, in some measure revived. It adds to our grief, to see a family beheaded, and by that means broken up and scattered, in which God's name was so constantly called upon, his word read and opened, and his praises sung, now, when in so many houses the altar of the Lord is broken down, or gone to decay. When we have been bewailing the defection and backsliding of many who began in the Spirit, then to follow those to their graves, who not only still held fast their integrity themselves, but we hoped might have been instrumental to reduce and recover those that were gone astray; this may well be called, sorrow upon sorrow.

(3.) The contempt cast upon the religious assemblies which we adhere to, and in which we think we have met with God, is our sorrow. It is made the character of those whom God has distinguishing favours in reserve for, that they are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, to whom the reproach of it is a burthen; and a great many solemn assemblies there are among us, on which we have reason to say, God has put honour, that yet are loaded with reproach, and exceedingly filled with the scorning of those who are at ease. The assemblies of those who we know to be united by holy faith and love to Christ, and through him to his church, are reproached as by schism cut off from the church, and therefore from Christ and the covenant, and the hope of salvation, for no other reason but because their ministers were ordained as Timothy was, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, and not by a diocesan bishop. The assemblies of those who we know to be peaceable and quiet in the land, are reproached without any colour of reason, like the assemblies of the primitive Christians, as factious, and seditious, and hurtful to kings and provinces. The masters of those assemblies, though we know them to be ready and mighty in the Scriptures, skilful in the word of

righteousness, yet are reproached by many as unlearned and ignorant men. Many such as these are the reproaches of the solemn assemblies, which are our sorrow, because when thus, like Nazareth, they are put into an ill name, unthinking people are prejudiced against them, and are easily persuaded that no good thing can come out of them. There is a late reproach put upon our assemblies by the law, which makes it highly penal for one in any place of trust or power to be seen in them: and this reproach adds to our brethren; *Hear, O our God, for we are* suspected, *we are despised*, and both without cause; and this is our sorrow; we quarrel not with those who give us this hard treatment, we pray God to forgive them, but *as a sword in our bones* are these reproaches.

And now to have those taken away who were so much the glory of our assemblies, and helped to answer them who reproached us, and to put to silence their ignorance; to be stript of our ornaments now, of those whose good report of all men made them a credit to us, even our enemies themselves being judges, this is sorrow upon sorrow: for we know not what to say when we are asked, What will ye do now? where is your glory? but that, *our God* is still *our glory*, our *everlasting glory*.

(4.) The judgments of God that threaten our land, and the difficult trembling posture of the affairs of the protestant churches abroad, are our sorrow; it grieves us to see the desolations of the sanctuary, to hear the groans of God's Israel in Egypt; by whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small, and his interests neglected? The enemies of the reformed churches are many and mighty, and violent against them; their friends few and feeble, and cool toward them. It is our sorrow that there are such heats and ferments among ourselves. We have reason to fear the desolations which a kingdom divided against itself is threatened with: we are biting and devouring one another, widening matters in difference, and exasperating one another's spirits; *firebrands, arrows, and death* are thrown about, and discord, among other tares, sown in God's field; all who wish well to the honour of Christ, and the interests of his kingdom among men, grieve to see it.

And is it not then sorrow upon sorrow, at this time to have one removed from us who was and would have been a peace-maker with God by his prayers, who stood in the gap as an intercessor, to turn away his wrath, who had an interest in heaven, and improved it for a sinful people, who was and would have been a peace-maker with men too, by his Christian temper and moderation, who studied the things which make for peace, who placed his religion in the essentials of it, and there spent his zeal? Now the dividing spirit so much prevails, it is sad to lose one who was of such a healing spirit. Now so many are bringing oil to our flames, which is our sorrow, it is sorrow upon sorrow to see the hand withered that was bringing water to them, and the earthen vessel broken that held that water. It is ill with the patient, if, when his disease is at the height, those physicians are removed who best understood his case, and the method of his cure.

Let us now make some application of this:

1. See what this world is; it is a *vale of tears*, it is a *Bochim*, a place of *weepers*, and we must expect no other but a sorrowful passage through it. It is well if in Christ we have peace and joy; in the world we must have trouble and grief. In the upper world there is a perfect and perpetual serenity, it is all clear and calm there; but in these lower regions the clouds are still returning after the rain, and we must expect sorrow upon sorrow. Look which way we will, and we see the tears of the oppressed, some upon one account, and some upon another, and many times they have no comforter. We see families in tears, congregations in tears, churches, nations in tears. How melancholy is the state of human life! What a constant series of griefs are we attended with through this wilderness! The end of one trouble is commonly the beginning of another, *Deep calls unto deep.* Nay, troubles often come in company, and the beginning of one is the preface to another; and we are not to think it strange, it is what others have had experience of, and we have had notice of.

The larger our acquaintance is, and the more friends we have, the more happy we think ourselves, and we have cause to do so; what greater pleasure or comfort is there on earth, than an agreeable friendship? And yet the more we have of this comfort, the more sorrow we are exposed to; the more dear friends we have, the more we have to sympathize with, and the more we have to part with; if it adds something to our pleasure that we rejoice with those we love when they rejoice, it adds more to our pain, that by the same rule we weep with them when they weep; but considering how many more men's griefs are than their joys in this world, and that in both we must be partakers with our friends, we must conclude that by the increase of our friendships, our joys rise not in proportion to our griefs, unless that we conceive a secret pleasure in contributing something toward the comfort of our afflicted friends and their families, by our sincere and affectionate sympathy with them.

And is this world so full of sorrows, *sorrows upon sorrows?* We see it is. What is there in it then that should court either our love to it or our stay in it? Why should our affections be set upon good things beneath, when we see them liable to so many sorrowful changes? Why should they not be set upon good things above, which though they may perhaps admit of an endless increase, yet know no change, nor are in any danger of being lost? Why should we be fond of a continuance here, where the longer we stay the more sorrows we shall have to share in, and not

rather covet to remove to that world, whence sorrow is for ever banished, where all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes, and joy upon joy shall draw out the bliss parallel to the line of eternity itself.

2. Let one sorrow help to make another sorrow that comes with it the more tolerable, and to prepare and fit us for another that may come after it. As the more we do for God, the more we may do, one duty will fit us for another; so the more we bear from God, the more we may bear, and the better we may bear it, for *tribulation works patience.* Those who have not known sorrow, find it hard to be reconciled to it, and are apt to fret at it, and to double it by struggling with it; but those who have experienced sorrow upon sorrow, like their Master, who was a *man of sorrows, and acquainted* with grief, can converse familiarly with their afflictions, whereby not only the terror of them is taken off, but abundance of advantage is gained by them.

Let the frequent returns of our sorrows keep us from security, and keep up in us a lively expectation of trouble, that, let it come ever so suddenly, it may be no surprise to us. We must never say, surely this trouble will excuse us from another, or that now we have had our share; no, it is still less than what we deserve, and perhaps less than what we need. We should rather argue, Have I had this sorrow? what good use shall I make of it, that by it I may be the better prepared for the next? If our sorrows wean us from the world, and loosen our hearts from it; if they make us serious and thoughtful of another world; if they endear Christ to us, and make him more precious, by giving us an experimental acquaintance with the powers and pleasures of his grace; then when sorrow comes upon sorrow we may bear them cheerfully. *Patience works experience,* and *experience* a *hope* that *makes not ashamed.*

And if we thus improve our sorrows, though as to the troubles themselves of this present time, we must remember that we are but girding on the harness, and must not boast as though the warfare were accomplished, and we had put it off; yet as to any real hurt or injury that the troubles can do us, we may boast as though we had put off the harness, for in all these things, not only we shall be, but we are already, more than conquerors through him who loved us and died for us.

3. When God pursues one sorrow with another, let us follow the sorrow for affliction with a godly sorrow for sin, and that is a sorrow upon sorrow which will be an evidence for us that the affliction comes from love, is designed for our good, and does us the good that is designed us; and will prepare us for such a deliverance out of our affliction, as will be a mercy indeed to us.

When we sorrow for the death of our friends, particularly of our ministers, we should at the same time sorrow for our sins, by which we have provoked God thus to contend with us. We are therefore deprived of the comfort of our relations, because we have not done the duty of them; when, therefore, we lament the effect, we should lament the cause.

4. When we have sorrow upon sorrow upon the account of affliction, let us not by our own folly add any more sorrow to it; nor by the productions of the root of bitterness in our hearts, make the bitter cup to be more bitter to us than really it is. If, in any distress, we trespass yet more against the Lord, as that king Ahaz did, 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. we make the distress more than double. *Sin upon sorrow* will be worse than *sorrow upon sorrow,* and will be wormwood and gall in the affliction and misery.

Now you here have sorrow for the death of your minister. If you should grow cool to holy ordinances, as if your religion were buried with your minister, or as if no other minister could teach you, and show you the way to Christ and heaven now he is gone; if this should be made use of as a pretence for your carelessness and lukewarmness in the service of God, that you have not the minister you have been used to, and so your hearts be hardened by the providence that should soften them, then it will indeed be sorrow upon sorrow. But I hope better things of you, my brethren, and that we shall yet have joy concerning you; that as those who have been so well taught, and so long under the inspection of such an overseer, you will continue your zeal in religion, and your love and unity among yourselves, and we may *hear of your affairs,* that *your conversation is as becomes the gospel,* and that *ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.*

5. Let us study to answer God's end in visiting us thus with sorrow upon sorrow, and accommodate ourselves to the intentions of these providences. By the sadness of our countenances on such occasions as these let our hearts be made better, every way better. Every rod has a voice, which we are concerned to hear, and understand the meaning of; every affliction is sent upon an errand, and he who sends the errand expects to have an answer. What answer will you return this day to this messenger? or rather, to God's call by it.

This sorrow is appointed us, this sorrow upon sorrow, to put us upon considering the uncertainty of the continuance of our opportunities; *Yet a little while is the light with you;* places have their time for enjoying the gospel, which will come to an end, and then other places have their turn. Ministers are burning and shining lights, but it is only for a season that we rejoice in their light; which is a good reason why we should walk and work while we have the light, while it is yet called to-day, because the night comes, and before the night comes, wherein no man can work.

It is designed to bring us off from looking at men, and instruments, as though by their own power they could do us service, or had done it; no, they are only the earthen vessels in which the treasure was deposited, and they are broke and thrown aside, to give us a sensible conviction, that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of them. We are thus taught to cease from man, from wise and good and useful men, whose breath at their best state is in their nostrils, and will not be there long. Let our dependence therefore be not on them, but on Christ, who makes them that to us that they are; let us sit down with delight under the shadow, not of these gourds, that come up in a night, and perish in a night, but of that Rock of Ages that abides for ever. Let us not bind up our religion, and the comfort of it, in our ministers; for God therefore shows us the end of their conversation among us, that we may cleave so much the closer to Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and will be the same to the successors in the ministry, that he was to their predecessors, and make them the same to us, if it be not our own fault.

6. Let us be earnest with God in prayer that he would not proceed in his controversy with us, and that we may not have any more sorrow upon sorrow of this kind. Go forth to meet the Lord in the way of his judgments, and humble yourselves under his mighty hand, and pray and seek his face. He expects his praying people should now appear in the breach, to turn away his wrath, and justly *wonders* if at such a time there be *no intercessor;* and shall not each of us then be intercessors, as the prophet Ezekiel was when he fell upon his face, and cried with a loud voice, as one in earnest, *Ah, Lord God, wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?* And as the prophet Amos was, when he prayed, *O Lord God, cease, I beseech thee; by whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small.*

O that by this providence we might be stirred up to pray more, and pray better, to pray more earnestly, as Christ himself did when he was in his agony. When we have lost a praying friend, we are concerned the more to pray for ourselves. Pray that the light of God's countenance may shine upon us through these dark dispensations, and that whatever friends and helpers he takes away from us, he would not himself turn away from us, nor take away his mercy and his truth.

7. Even when we have sorrow upon sorrow, yet let us not sorrow as those who have no hope; but take hold of the comforts and encouragements which God hath provided for his own people, in their multiplied and most aggravated sorrows, that they may not be unmixed sorrows, and unallayed. As the righteous have hope in their death, so have their friends also who are left behind in tears.

(1.) We have hope concerning him whom we have lost, that he is removed unspeakably to his own advantage, for to those to whom to live is Christ, to die is not only no loss, but great gain. This country has a mighty loss of him, but he has no loss of it, who is gone to the better country, that is, the heavenly, to better work, and better pleasures, and better friends. Those are safely and honourably lodged who are received into the mansions in our Father's house, those everlasting habitations; those have a good repose, and sleep sweetly, who sleep in Jesus. What honours here are comparable to theirs, to whom our Lord Jesus says, *Well done, good and faithful servant;* or what pleasure comparable to theirs who *enter into the joy of their Lord.* Let this yield us pleasing thoughts when we are afflicting ourselves for the loss of one we loved. We sorrow for the body, that that is lodged in a land of darkness and silence; but the soul is the man, and that is gone thither where its eyes are opened to an everlasting light, and its lips opened in songs of everlasting praise; and therefore if we loved him we would rejoice. He who so often complained of knowing but in part, and prophesying but in part, is now made perfect, and sees face to face.

(2.) We have hopes that God will do our souls good by this providence, that he will sanctify it to us, and make it a means of our sanctification; and that the impressions of it will not be soon lost, will never be quite lost. You of this place and neighbourhood will, I hope, be quickened hereby to consider your latter end, and with the utmost diligence to prepare for it. You see, that in the midst of life we are in death, and that we are often obliged to remove hence upon very short warning. When you saw your minister last in the pulpit, and heard him discourse so excellently of the intercession of Christ, you little thought it was the last sermon you should hear him preach, and that within a few days you should see him laid in the dust; but so it proves; and God by it calls aloud to you, *Therefore be ye also ready,* be ye always ready, for you see that *at such an hour as you think not, the Son of man comes.*

And as this providence will I hope, through grace, do you good, by quickening you to prepare for death, so I hope it may be of use to you, to help you above the fear of death: those who are ready to die should be willing to die, and they have the more reason to be so, when they see their friends go cheerfully before them down into the darksome valley of the shadow of death, and even then fear no evil. Your ministers who, while they lived, showed you the way to heaven through the paths of life, when they die show you the way thither through the regions of death, and go before you through that Jordan, as the priests did before Israel bearing the ark of the covenant. Be ye, therefore, followers of them, who are now *through faith and patience inheriting the promises.*

(3.) We have hope, that God will take care of the beheaded family, that is most sensibly touched by this breach. He was one who blessed his household, that was every way a blessing to it, and therefore his death is killing to it, we sorrow with them, and grieve for their loss; but we depend upon the word of God, that he will be a Husband to the widow, and a Father to the fatherless children; *Jehovah-jireh—The Lord will provide;* and *in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen*, Gen. xxii. 14.; the orphans who are left with him, shall not be left by him, nor left comfortless, but he will come unto them, and take care of them; and let the widow trust in him, and she shall not be made ashamed of her hope. To the aged mother likewise, who has lived to see sorrow upon sorrow, God will be better than ten sons, than ten such sons.

(4.) We have hope, that God will provide well for the congregation, and that that shall not be destitute and dispersed, as sheep having no shepherd, but they and theirs shall still be led into the green pastures, and fed beside the still waters. You have been loving and respectful to your minister, and many of you have been his comfort and hope, and I trust will be his crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord; and you have reason to expect that God will send you another faithful guide in the good ways of the Lord. I have reason to think he has a blessing in reserve for you, by which he will carry on his good work among you. St. Paul, when he was in prison, comforted himself with this, that though he was bound, the word of the Lord was not bound, and when faithful ministers are laid in their graves, this may be our comfort, though they are buried the word of the Lord is not buried. When you change your minister, you do not change your Master; you shall have another preacher, but thanks be to God, not another Bible, or another gospel.

(5.) We have hope, that though we have parted with a dear friend in sorrow, with many such in sorrow upon sorrow, yet the day is coming when we shall meet again, shall meet with them all again in joy, in everlasting joy. The hope of this gives the strongest allay to our griefs. *If in this life only we had hope in Christ*, and were to fetch our reliefs in such cases as these, from within the confines of time, *we were of all men the most miserable;* but we have hope in Christ, that those who now sleep in him, he will shortly bring with him; and will bring us to meet them; we who remain and are left behind for a while, shall be brought to be companions with them in the kingdom, as we have been in the patience and tribulation, of Jesus Christ. We *look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come*, and in the believing expectation thereof we comfort ourselves and one another.

Now God calls to weeping and mourning, it is a comfort to us to see so many sad countenances and wet eyes in this solemn assembly, for thus we answer God's calls; but when God calls us to joy, into his joy, what a pleasant sight will it be to see the *general assembly and church of the first-born*, and ourselves in it, and not one weeping eye, or dejected countenance, or sorrowful spirit, among all the holy myriads. There shall be no sorrow, nor any occasion for it; nay, there shall be everlasting joy, and everlasting cause for it; the streams ever running, because their springs ever full and overflowing.

Our assembly is now breaking up and scattering, and it is not likely that we should ever be all together again in this world; but this is our comfort, if we be found the faithful followers of the Lord Jesus, we shall shortly be gathered together unto him, with all the saints, and none but saints, and saints made perfect: and that assembly shall never be broken up or scattered; we shall meet and part no more. The best we can here hope for is, to go in and out with the sheep of Christ, and to find pasture; but if we can but get to heaven, we shall be pillars in the temple of our God, and shall go no more out. The Lord bring us all safe thither in due time; and in the mean time the Lord watch over us, *The Lord watch between us, when we are absent the one from the other*, Gen. xxxi. 42.

A CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE OF MR. SAMUEL LAWRENCE.

He was born in *Wem*, a little market-town in Shropshire, and, as appears by the register, was baptized Nov. 5, 1661. He was the only son of Mr. William Lawrence, and Sarah his wife. His good mother is still living. His father was a very eminent Christian, and much respected and valued by all good people who knew him. My father preached his funeral sermon at Wem, Feb. 26, 1694-5, on Luke xxiii. 28.

Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. Whence he showed, that when a good man dies, there is no reason we should weep for him, but there is reason we should weep for ourselves. Certainly (said he) this was a good man, and is manifest in the consciences of you all, and of all who knew him, that he was so; *Weep not for him* therefore, for his death is an outlet to all the evils of this world, and an inlet to all the happiness of the other world.

Looking over my father's notes of that sermon upon this occasion, it has so affected me, that I must beg the reader's pardon, if I insert the heads of it, the subject being so near a-kin (though I little thought of it) to mine at the son's funeral.

"It is said of Abel, that *being dead he yet speaketh.* If our deceased friend and brother who is dead could be heard speaking, this is what he would say, My dear wife and children, my dear brothers and sisters, and other relations, my dear neighbours and friends, *weep not for me*, for you have something else to do with your tears, bestow them where they will turn to a better account, weep for yourselves. But why not for thee, dear husband, father, brother, friend? why not for thee? Did we not love thee? You did, and for that very reason, *weep not for me.*

"I. For, consider the evils I am freed from. I had a sickly crazy body, especially toward my latter end, wearisome days and nights were appointed to me; what would I have given many a time for an hour's rest; but now all this is at an end; I shall be no more sick, no more pained, my head shall now ache no more. And are you sorry for this?

"I had my share also of losses and crosses in my worldly affairs; I had one house burned over my head, and almost all that was in it, in a few minutes, and have had the care and trouble of building and furnishing another; but now farewell all such cares. And are you sorry for this?

"You know, that as long as I was able, I was laborious in my particular calling, I never ate the bread of idleness, but of honest diligence; but now all that toil is over, I am got to bed, where I rest from my labours, from all my labours of that kind, never to return to them again. And will you grieve for this?

"A great deal of pains I have taken in travelling and attending upon holy ordinances, on sabbath days, on week days, sometimes above and beyond strength; but I am now where I have communion with God at the spring-head, without the conduit-pipes of ordinances. And will you grieve for this?

"You, all of you have, and I doubt not but some of you feel, a body of death; I am sure I did, and many a time it made me cry out, *O wretched man that I am!* You know what I mean, the corrupt nature, the carnal mind, the sin that dwells in us, a proneness to evil, a backwardness to good; but death has eased me of that burthen, when the breath went out of the body, that indwelling sin went out of the soul; when the house was pulled down, there was an end of the leprosy that was in the walls; what all the praying and hearing, the sabbaths and sacraments, the care and watchfulness, of forty years would not do, death has done at one blow. *Weep not for me* then.

"I had daily grief in my heart for my own sins, for the sins of others, and for the afflictions of my friends, and for the troubles of the church of God, but now all tears, even those of godly sorrow, are wiped away from mine eyes; therefore let none be in yours upon my account.

"And lastly, the bitterness of death is past with me; I have shot the gulf, that last enemy, that son of Anak, is vanquished, and I am triumphing. *O Death, where is thy sting!* And therefore, *weep not for me.*

"II. But this is not all; if you consider the happiness I am entered into, that fair palace in which death was but a dark entry, you would not weep for me, but rejoice rather.

"Would you know where I am? I am at home in my Father's house, in the mansion prepared for me there. I am where I would be, where I have long and often desired to be; no longer on a stormy sea, but in a safe and quiet harbour. My working time is done, and I am resting; my sowing time is done, and I am reaping; my joy is as the joy of harvest.

"Would you know how it is with me? I am made perfect in holiness; grace is swallowed up in glory; the top-stone of the building is brought forth.

"Would you know what I am doing? I see God, I see him as he is, not as through a glass darkly, but face to face; and the sight is transforming, it makes me like him. I am in the sweet enjoyment of my blessed Redeemer, my Head and Husband, whom my soul loved, and for whose sake I was willing to part with all; I am here bathing myself at the spring-head of heavenly pleasures and joys unutterable, and therefore weep not for me. I am here keeping a perpetual sabbath; what that is, judge by your short sabbaths; I am here singing Hallelujahs incessantly to him who sits upon the throne, and rest not day or night from praising him.

"Would you know what company I have? Blessed company, better than the best on earth; here are holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; I am set down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God, with blessed Paul, and Peter, and James, and John, and all the saints; and here I meet with many of my old acquaintance, that I fasted and prayed with, who got before me hither.

"And, lastly, will you consider how long this is to continue; it is a garland that never withers; a

crown of glory that fades not away; after millions of millions of ages, it will be as fresh as it is now; and therefore weep not for me.

"It is true, the body must turn to rottenness and putrefaction, the worms must feed sweetly upon it; but that also sleeps in Jesus, it still remains united to him, and shall shortly be raised again incorruptible, like the glorious body of Jesus Christ, more glorious than the noon-day sun.

"But though you have no reason to weep for him who is gone, you have abundant reason to weep for yourselves and for your children.

Weep for your sins, the cause of this and all your other griefs; that is the right channel for your tears to run in. O that I knew what to say, to make sin bitter to you this day! Shall I tell you it kills your friends; it killed your Saviour; it threatens to kill your souls.

"Weep for your loss, the loss of a godly neighbour; a good member of your society, a praying member, and a profitable one; every way useful among you. I cannot say, he loved your nation, and built you a synagogue; but he found you one when you needed one; his house was your synagogue, his doors, his heart, were open to you.

"Weep for your children who are coming into a tempting troublesome world, and going abroad into it; weep for yourselves, who are yet in the midst of it, cumbered, tempted, absent from the Lord.

"Weep for the evil to come upon yourselves and your children, which the taking away of such men is a threatening omen of.

"But is there not something else to be done besides weeping? There is: we must acknowledge the hand of God in the removal of such men; must be thankful to God that we had them so long; must search, and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord; weep and pray for ourselves and our children; weep and prepare to follow; weep and hope; and if thus we sow in tears, we shall shortly reap in joy, everlasting joy."

These were the heads of what my father enlarged upon in that sermon; and the reading of it affected me the more, because it was but the year after that it became applicable to himself; and Mr. Tallents, when he preached my father's funeral sermon, made mention of Mr. William Lawrence's death, and spoke very respectfully of him.

But to return to our subject, from which we too soon digressed; his father's elder brother was Mr. Edward Lawrence, an eminent minister in Shropshire first, and afterwards in London. A man of great integrity, and a substantial judicious preacher; who, to keep the peace of his conscience, left a good living, and threw himself, and his numerous family, upon divine Providence.

His book called *Christ's power over bodily diseases*, has been and will be of great use to many for their comfort in sickness, and their improvement of it. This nephew of his in many things resembled him much, and the comfort he had in him was the more valued by him, because of the great grief he had in some of his own children, which he let the world know something of in a book he published, called *Parents' Groans over Wicked Children*. He died in November, 1695.

Having given this account of his family and relations, we come next to give some account of his childhood and youth, as we have it from those who then knew him. He was betimes inclined to learning, and was very mindless of the sports and toys that children usually are addicted to. When he was very little, his parents sent him to school, more to be out of the way of danger, than in expectation he would learn any thing; but before they were aware he had learned his letters, and by the year's end could read very well in his Bible. So intent was he upon his book, that his parents would hire him to play for a while, but he would presently return to his book.

Much sooner than most children do, he entered upon his learning of the Latin tongue, at the Free School in Wem, under Mr. Roderick and his two ushers, at a time when that school flourished much. There he made such proficiency when he was very young, and advanced so fast, that his masters loved him, and others admired him. The time that most of his school-fellows spent in play, he spent in reading; and was so earnest in pursuing learning, and so careful to perform the exercises of the school, that he would scarce allow time to dress himself.

His master, Mr. Roderick, removing, and another coming in his place, who did not take so much pains, our young scholar complained to his parents, that he was not forwarded in learning as he had been, and therefore desired he might be removed to Newport, where there was at that time a flourishing school under Mr. Edwards; and he was so, and there improved very much in his learning.

His inclinations to piety were as early as his inclinations to learning; and he was not only free from the common follies and vanities of childhood and youth, but was forward to the exercises of devotion. He began betimes to pray in secret, and would be up early to redeem time for it. So much seriousness and conscientiousness appeared in him in his childhood, that some who knew him then would say, they thought he was sanctified from the womb.

After he had got what learning was to be got at Newport school, he spent some time under the inspection of my father at Broad Oak, and some with Mr. Tallents at Shrewsbury; and a considerable time he spent with some other hopeful young men under Mr. Malden at Alkinton near Whitchurch, where he improved himself very much in Greek and

Hebrew. He continued there till Mr. Malden's death, in June, 1681.

Soon after that he was sent up to London, where, after some little time spent with his uncle, he was put under the tuition of that famous instructor of youth, Mr. Charles Moreton, whose private academy at Newington Green flourished very much at that time, and was a nursery of many who have since done worthily, and been famous in their generation. There he went through a course of university learning, and carried himself so as to gain the respects of all who observed him.

There he staid till the iniquity of the times forced Mr. Moreton to break up his academy, and to remove himself for safety and liberty to New England, as many such men were necessitated to do in the last age.

When he left Mr. Moreton, he was recommended to Mr. Singleton, to be assistant to him in teaching a grammar school in Clerkenwell Close, and was very acceptable both to him, and to the relations of the young gentlemen who were his scholars.

After he had spent two or three years there, he was recommended to the Lady Irby, relict of Sir Anthony Irby, who lived in Dean's Yard in Westminster, to be her domestic chaplain. When she first saw him, he was so young, and looked so much younger than he was, that she asked, "What! have they sent me a child for my chaplain?" But upon trial she soon found he was no child in understanding. A great deal of love and respect he gained by his prudent and pious carriage in that family. Upon his first coming thither, when some of his friends spoke with concern for him, how he would have courage, being young and modest, to go through his work, and were afraid he would be dashed, when, as often, there were persons of quality present at their family worship; he said it did not at all affect him, for "I have a greater presence to mind than theirs."

While he was at my Lady Irby's, the liberty for dissenters commenced in 1687, and a door of opportunity was opened to them just twenty-five years after it was shut by the Act of Uniformity; and soon after the opening of it was legally confirmed upon the revolution. And it has been kept open twenty-five years, and blessed be God, no man has been able to shut it. Upon the setting up of the meetings publicly then, Mr. Lawrence began to preach, and frequently assisted Mr. Alsop, on sacrament days, and upon other occasions, his meeting lying very near to my Lady's; and his first performances in that work were very acceptable.

One thing I must here take notice of to his honour; (and it is the more so, that notwithstanding my great intimacy with him at London at that time, I do not remember ever to have known it till now, that I am acquainted with it by his surviving relations;) his father had his house and goods burnt in that dreadful fire which consumed the whole town of Wem, in March 1676-7. The rebuilding and refurnishing of it was a great expense to him; notwithstanding which he brought up his son to learning, which the son had such a grateful sense of, that as soon as ever he came into a capacity of maintaining himself, and with a frugal management of sparing something, all he could spare before he married, he sent to his father, amounting at times to a very considerable sum. He was one who had learned, according to the apostle's rule, *to show piety at home*, and to *requite his parents*. Those who knew him well, have said they wanted words to express his respect to his parents and love to his relations.

In the year 1688 he came down into the country to see his relations, and a society of dissenters in and about Nantwich in Cheshire being then in quest of a minister, after several motions made to them had miscarried, desired Mr. Lawrence to come and spend a Lord's day with them, which he did to their great and universal satisfaction; so that they unanimously chose him to be their minister; and after some time taken to consider of it, and consult his friends, he accepted it; but went first to London to take leave of his friends there. The Lady Irby was extremely loth to part with her chaplain, and was very angry with Mr. Baxter and my father for persuading him to go to Nantwich. But thither he came in September that year. In the beginning of November following he was publicly ordained to the ministry by a class of Lancashire ministers at Warrington; six more were ordained at the same time. Mr. Crompton preached, and Mr. Risely gave the exhortation. I remember the time by a good token, for when we were at Warrington, we received the news of the Prince of Orange's landing.

He is now settled at Nantwich, and some there will remember what manner of entering in he had among them; with what wisdom, industry, and zeal, he applied himself to his work, and how many precious souls he was instrumental of good to; what a free course the word of the Lord had there, and how it was glorified. His greatest encouragement there was at first; but he continued there to his death. Though if he had had bodily strength, and a voice proportionable to his other ministerial abilities, his friends would have removed him into a larger sphere of usefulness.

He preached constantly twice every Lord's day, winter and summer, and read and expounded the Scriptures in order both parts of the day, the Old Testament in the morning, and the New in the afternoon; and catechised the children every Lord's day, winter and summer, except sacrament days.

He constantly administered the Lord's supper once a month with great solemnity and seriousness. The young people who were admitted to

that ordinance, did, before the congregation, renew their baptismal covenant in that form which my father drew up, which is in his Life, "I take God the Father to be my chief good and highest end; I take God the Son to be my Prince and Saviour; God the Holy Ghost to be my sanctifier, teacher, guide, and comforter. I take the word of God to be my rule in all my actions; and the people of God to be my people in all conditions. I do also give, devote, and dedicate my whole to God, all I am, all I have, and all I can do. And this I do deliberately, sincerely, freely, and for ever." And some he afterwards advised to write it over, and subscribe their names to it; which he said he would keep as a witness against them if they proved false to it. He lived to admit many to the Lord's Supper, whom he had himself baptized in their infancy.

He preached every Saturday about noon; it is the market-day; and so he gave an opportunity to the country people of spending an hour for their souls in the midst of their worldly business.

In baptizing children, he generally received the child from the parent's own hand, and returned it to him again, with a solemn charge to bring it up in the fear of God, and the faith of Christ; and frequently took occasion to declare, that he did not baptize into a party, but into the church of Christ.

He spent some time with the communicants on the Friday before every sacrament, to assist them in their preparation for that solemn ordinance; and was very ready to visit the sick and afflicted, and to assist the families of his friends in accommodating themselves to the providences of God that were concerning them.

He was a very solid, serious, judicious preacher; his discourses were generally short, but pithy and substantial, and well studied. His doctrine dropped as the dew, and distilled as the small rain; and he preached as one who truly aimed at the edification of those who heard him, and was in care to make them wiser and better.

When he began his ministry at Nantwich, that he might preach the more profitably, he resolved to preach in a method, that his hearers might see divine truths in their order and connexion with each other; he therefore entered upon a body of divinity, and preached it over largely, which took him up many years; when he had finished that, he preached over most, if not all, of our Saviour's parables; after that, went over many practical subjects, as the mortification of sin, living by faith, &c. And toward the latter end of his time, when most of those were dead who were his hearers when he first came, and many young ones were grown up, he began to preach over a body of divinity a second time; but studied every sermon anew; nay, not so much as looking on his old notes, saying, he would not have his Master find him idle. He was in great care not to flag and grow remiss in his public performances; and would desire some of his hearers who were judicious, to tell him if they observed any alteration for the worse in them.

He was one who loved his work, and his heart was in it. He was forward to embrace all opportunity of doing good. He frequently preached lectures on week days in the country about; and funeral sermons many times gratis. He often preached when he laboured under bodily indispositions, which made the work very difficult, but would have served many a one for an excuse from it. When some advised him to consider his strength, and forbear preaching, he said, "I will use what strength I have in my Master's work, and do not desire to live a day longer than I may do him some service." It is not remembered that of all the time of his being at Nantwich, which was near twenty-four years, he was ever taken off from his work till the last sabbath of his life, by the sickness of which he died; and then, when he was so weak that he could scarce be helped out of his bed, he said he hoped, through the goodness of God, he should be able to do his work the next sabbath, for, said he, "it is my delight;" but before that sabbath came, he was removed to better work.

Though he was thus diligent in all the parts of his work, yet he was so far from glorying in it, that he sometimes expressed himself thus: "O what reason have I to be humbled, that so much of my time runs waste, which I can give but little account of; and that I do no more in the service of God; but it is a comfort to me, that I do any thing."

Once being much fatigued with his work upon a Lord's day, he lamentably said to those about him, "O how poorly do we serve and praise God, but it is a pleasure to think that we shall shortly do it better in heaven."

He was much concerned for the success of his ministry; and sometimes was dejected and cast down, because he saw not people so much affected with it, and wrought upon by it, as he thought they had been formerly, though it was observed, that toward the latter end of his ministry he grew rather more lively and affectionate in his performances.

The irregular walking of any of his hearers was a great grief to him, and went near his heart, and he would often sadly lament it in public, that the lives of many who are called Christians, are such a reproach to that worthy name by which they are called, and that the professors of this day came so far short of the strictness and seriousness of those he had formerly known.

He was faithful to those under his charge in giving private admonitions as there was occasion. He had an excellent faculty of giving reproof with authority and gravity, and yet with meekness and humility. He flattered none in any thing that was amiss, but where he thought it proper, freely told people of their faults,

but therein governed himself according to the rule of that scripture, which I remember he preached an excellent sermon upon above twenty years ago, at a meeting of the Cheshire ministers, (2 Tim. ii. 24.) *The servants of the Lord must not strive.*

The tendency of his preaching was to bring people to Christ and heaven; to heaven as their end, and to Christ as their way. He said to one of the lambs of his flock, "Well, I hope you learn Christ; I preach Christ as plainly and well as I can." He used this argument to persuade people to lay up their treasure in heaven, "If our treasure be on earth we are going from it, if it be in heaven we are going to it."

He discharged his duty as the master of a family conscientiously and well; where he had a tent, God had an altar, on which the morning and evening lamb were duly offered; and with the burning of the incense in prayer and praise, the lamps were lighted in the reading and expounding of the Scriptures; he was also constant in singing psalms with his family. The sermons he preached in public were repeated in his family, and a great deal of pains he took to teach his children and his household the way of the Lord, and to make religion and the service of God pleasant to them.

His whole conversation in the world was blameless, and harmless, and without rebuke, and like Demetrius, he had a *good report of all men, and of the truth itself.* He was of a peaceable spirit, bearing and forgiving; and if sometimes a provocation ruffled him a little, he soon recovered himself with such a thought as this, "What have we grace for, but to enable us to practise those duties which are most cross to flesh and blood."

He was a very good scholar, and very communicative of his knowledge, and delighted even from his youth in that communication which was good, and to the use of edifying. He was one of those wise men, who not only lay up knowledge, but use it aright, and whose lips feed many. He had a peculiar dexterity, which I have often admired in him, and been ready to envy him, in drawing on discourse with young scholars, that he might have opportunity of giving them instruction, which was always pertinent, and without affectation.

The year before he died he was providentially drawn in, as I may say, (partly by having a son of his own at home with him, after he had been some time at Glasgow, and partly to gratify two or three other very hopeful young men, who came and tabled near him in the town, for the benefit of his conversation,) to read university learning, both philology and philosophy, and he not only took great delight in it, but made it to appear, as did the proficiency of those he read to, that he was well qualified for it, as I always thought him to be. And this made his death to be sorrow upon sorrow, that we lost one who was not only an excellent minister himself, but was just then beginning to be useful in training up ministers; and what he did he did gratis.

He constantly attended the meetings of the Cheshire ministers twice a year, and was much beloved and respected by them; was often chosen moderator, and his advice in any matter hearkened to as much as any one's.

In his non-conformity, he was considerate and conscientious; he was so far from being determined to it by custom and education, and from being prejudiced in its favour, that if he could have been satisfied with the lawfulness of conformity, he would gladly have conformed; and he was tempted to it by some good preferment offered him in the church, which would have been more than double or treble to his temporal advantage. He studied the point with the greatest impartiality imaginable, but he could not conform without wronging his conscience, and therefore chose rather to suffer than to sin. But in his nonconformity he always expressed himself with great moderation, and a truly Christian temper, and was very careful to preserve his hearers from heat and bigotry, and to possess them with principles of catholic charity.

He was much confirmed in his nonconformity by the late act against occasional conformity; and though he did not use to meddle with such things in the pulpit, yet upon occasion of that act, preaching then in course of Christ's kingly office, he said, "That was it which the dissenters were bearing their testimony to." And so it is; for they believe, that though the church has a judicial power to see that the institutions of Christ be observed, and kept pure and entire, like the power of the judges and justices in the state, yet a legislative power to decree rites and ceremonies, like that of the sovereign and parliament in the state, is the prerogative of our Lord Jesus; and that no man, or company of men, in the world has any such power.

It was but the day before he fell ill of his last sickness, that he happened in discourse to fall upon the question of nonconformity, and he expressed his admiration and lamentation, (as the learned Dr. Whitby does in his Protestant Reconciler, which he referred to,) that the peace of the church should be broken by the imposition of that which the imposers themselves acknowledge not to be necessary, nor required by Christ or his apostles; and that the imposition should be continued with an inflexible resolution not to part with those indifferent things, which they cannot but own they might lawfully do, when it would put an end to that which they call a damnable schism, and so (in their judgment) prevent the everlasting ruin of thousands; "surely," says he, "never were precious souls so undervalued."

Thus he stood fast in the Christian liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and witnessed against

impositions in the things of God, though his constancy herein was much to the prejudice of his secular interest, and he would sometimes say, " If our cause be not just and good, surely we are the greatest fools in the world." But yet, in the things that are Cæsar's, no man pressed more the duty of subjects to the powers that God has set over them. He usually observed the 8th of March, the day of the Queen's accession to the crown, and took that occasion to preach of the mercy of government, and particularly of the government we are under, and to press people under it to live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.

The afflictions he met with he was careful to get good by; they are sent (so he wrote to a friend on occasion of a pressing trouble he was under) to soften a hard heart, to humble for sin, the procuring cause of them, to quicken us in our duty, to show us the vanity of the world, to remind us of our own death, and quicken us to prepare for it; if sanctified they are wholesome to us. O that these ends may be attained; that our griefs may have this kindly work upon us; that one affliction may fit us for another.

He lived in a lively apprehension of death approaching; and kept up such a constant expectation of it, that sudden death was no surprise or terror to him. Nay, he sometimes pleased himself with this thought, that at death he should go to see and enjoy God, and to admire him in all his works of creation, providence, and especially redemption, which, said he, " I shall then see in the light of eternity."

Many other things worthy of notice might be said of him, but I shall here add nothing more, only that he finished well. Though he had no strong constitution at all, yet he enjoyed a good state of health for the most part. On the Lord's day, (April 13,) he preached on that branch of Christ's priestly office, *Seeing he ever lives making intercession;* and exerted himself with more than ordinary vigour and liveliness, so that some of his hearers took notice of it, and asked him, when he had done, how he bore that day's work, little thinking it was his last.

The Wednesday following he sickened of a fever, which at first did not seem at all threatening; on the Lord's day he said he hoped he should be able to preach by the next Lord's day. He had very good advice and assistance, but that night the distemper seized his head, and he was sometimes delirious; but when he spoke what was foreign and incoherent, yet it showed that his heart was in heaven, for in his deliriums he would pray, and sometimes in Latin.

When he had his understanding, he said he had good hope through grace that he should go to heaven. And some of the last words he was heard to say were, " I do not fear, I do not fear." He died the 9th day of his fever, on Thursday, April 24, 1712, about ten at night, in the 51st year of his age. He was buried in the chancel of Nantwich church the Monday following, and was followed to his grave by a great many true mourners.

He left behind him a sorrowful widow, and three sons by his first wife, and two daughters by his second, and a dear and tender mother, in the 80th year of her age. And many good friends he left behind in a vale of tears, but is himself gone to a world of everlasting joy.

A SERMON

PREACHED AT HABERDASHERS' HALL, JULY 13, 1712,

ON OCCASION OF THE

DEATH OF THE REV. RICHARD STRETTON, M. A.

WITH A CONCISE ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.

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2 CORINTHIANS viii. 16.

But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

A THANKSGIVING text may seem very improper for a funeral sermon; especially for one who was so useful in his generation; who lived justly respected, and dies justly lamented. I confess it would have been very seasonable upon this occasion to call you, for God by this and other the like providences calls us all, calls us aloud, (whether we will hear, or whether we will forbear,) to weeping and to mourning; not for those who are gone to the regions of bliss and joy above, weep not for them, but for ourselves and for our children, that are left behind in these lower regions of sin and woe. Even when our Saviour said, with an air of triumph, *Now I am no more in the world*, he said with an air of tenderness, *But these are in the world*; to teach us, though not to envy those who have got the victory, yet to pity ourselves, and one another, who are yet in the conflict. And such an instance of stupidity it is, that God is justly and highly displeased at it, if when righteous and merciful men perish, and are taken away from our world, we do not consider it, and lay it to heart; for though it is a good to come in the other world that they remove to, a promised good, it is an evil to come in this world that they remove from, a threatened evil, in the apprehension of which it becomes us to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. The removal of good men may be looked upon as an ill omen; when they are commanded off who stood in the gap, we have reason to fear the breaking in of a deluge of judgments upon us; and God hereby gives fair warning to a careless world, to prepare accordingly. We know what followed the calling of Lot out of Sodom, and of Noah into the ark.

But is it our duty in every thing to give thanks; whatever the will of God's providence is, this is the will of his precept in Christ Jesus concerning us; and it is such a duty as will well consist with all the instances of holy gracious mourning—even when we sorrow for sin, our own and others', yet we must rejoice in God, and have our heart disposed to his praises. That mourning is either not from a right principle, or exceeds due bounds, and is the sorrow of the world, that puts us out of tune for thanksgiving. When we are ever so much burthened with the sense of guilt, we ought to say, *But thanks be to God*, there is rest in Christ; when we mourn for our afflictions, we may say, *But thanks be to God*, we are out of hell; nay, and *thanks be to God* these afflictions are designed to further us in our way to heaven. The truth is, we never want matter for praise, if we did not want a heart; and our comfort in God would be more abundant, if we did abound more in thanksgiving to God. And, therefore, I hope you will not think this text at all unsuitable to this solemn occasion. Holy Job in his griefs blessed the name of the Lord, who had graciously given that which he had now taken away, Job i. 21. and who, even in taking away, he was sure neither did him any wrong, nor meant him any hurt. And our blessed Saviour, when he wept over the grave of Lazarus whom he loved, lifted up even his weeping eyes to heaven, and said, *Father, I thank thee*, John xi. 35, 41.

Upon such an occasion as this, the removal of good men and good ministers by death, such as while they lived were blessings to the world, and instru-

ments of good to us, we may find matter for praise and thanksgiving, upon the account both of their present happiness and their past usefulness.

1. We may look up, and give thanks to God for what they are. For those who sleep in Jesus, we have reason to sorrow not only not as those who have no hope, but as those who have much comfort and satisfaction, to be a balance and allay to the sorrow. We have lost a useful good man, you here have lost a faithful minister, I and many others have lost a faithful friend; but, thanks be to God, our loss is his gain, for so death is to them to whom to live is Christ, it is great gain, quick gain, everlasting gain; it is his blessedness, for so death is to them who die in the Lord. He rests from his labours, from the toil both of services and sufferings; with the body all its burthens are put off, and the soul has obtained its discharge from that work-house, from that prison-house, is set at liberty, is at peace, is at rest, and its business is no longer, as it was here, its labour. The best employments of the best souls, while they are here in the body, are their labours, like Adam's tilling the ground, after he had sinned, in the sweat of his face; but the employments of holy souls in their separate state, are, like Adam's dressing the garden in his innocent estate, which he did without labour, and with complete and constant pleasure. But that is not all; thanks be to God, he not only rests from his labours, but his works follow him; now he is freed from the toil of them, he receives the reward of them. They who work in the Lord's vineyard, and there bear the burthen and heat of the day, when the evening comes, not only retire to their repose, but receive their penny. Poor Job puts both together when he speaks of the servant's earnest desire, both of the shadow and of the reward of his work, Job vii. 2.

Look up therefore, and see with an eye of faith that joy of our Lord, that fulness of joy into which this good and faithful servant is now entered, that glory, that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, with which he is now crowned; and then you will see reason to rejoice with him, and to glory with him, and to say, *Thanks be to God*, who has given him the victory. If we loved him we would rejoice, and bless God for the happy exchange he has made, because he is gone to the Father; and as Christ said, *My Father is greater than I*, that is, my state with my Father will far excel my present state in glory, so we may say of him and others who have fought the good fight, and finished their course, it is better with them where they are than where they were.

It is more a matter of thanksgiving when the lives of good men, though still great blessings to others, yet are become, through the decays and infirmities of age, burthens to themselves, and their souls begin to grow weary of them; which was the case here. Though old age carries with it both dignity and opportunity, though the hoary head be a crown of glory, yet, even when it is found in the way of righteousness, the days are called *evil days*, and the years such as a man has little *pleasure in*. When the *light is darkened*, the *clouds return after the rain*, the *keepers of the house tremble*, and the *strong men bow themselves*; then to *put off the earthly house of this tabernacle*, when it is thus gone out of repair, and remove to the *building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, is a blessed exchange: thanks be to God, that one we loved so well has made that exchange. You lately heard him groaning being burthened, but now he is triumphing in his release, now he is singing Hallelujahs to him who sits on the throne. You lately saw him even dragging the chain of life, compassed about with infirmities, and full of pains; but now he is eased, now he is comforted, now he is full of delights, and is made to drink of the river of divine pleasures. You lately saw him weak, and scarce able to set one foot before another, but now he is among those who mount up with wings like eagles, who run and are not weary, who walk and are not faint.

This is the more to be rejoiced in, because it is a satisfaction to the longings of a gracious soul; it is what it has often wished for, what it has been long waiting for; and the longer it has continued in the body, the more welcome will the release, the exchange, be. It has often looked through the lattice, and cried, *Why are his chariot wheels so long a coming?* How then does it triumph now, as that good man did, "He is come, he is come!" Canaan was a pleasant land indeed to those who had been forty years wandering in a wilderness. Though hope deferred, hope of heaven deferred, maketh the heart sick, yet when at length the desire comes, it is so much the more a tree of life. Now, thanks be to God, for the happy removal of our Christian friends from darkness to light, from sorrow to joy, from the remainders of sin to the perfection of holiness, from the toilsome and hazardous services of Christ's camp on earth, to the pleasant and glorious services of his court in heaven. And, especially, thanks be to God for the good hope we any of us have through grace that we shall be with them shortly, shall be for ever with them. And if we have this hope in us, let us purify ourselves as they are pure.

2. We may look back, and give thanks to God for what they were. And that is the matter of thanksgiving which the text leads us to, and which therefore I must enlarge upon.

When those who have been in their day and place useful to us, to others, to many, and serviceable to the glory of God, are removed, and we see the end of their conversation, one of the great duties required of us is to give thanks to God that ever we had such friends, that by his grace they were made blessings

to us, and that they were continued to us so long. This is a duty we are apt to forget, when God in his providence has made breaches upon our comforts, and to think that our sorrow for the death of our dear relations will be our excuse for the omission; whereas, if at such a time we would intermix thanksgivings for former mercies with our complaints of present losses, it would redound very much both to God's glory and to our own comfort.

We have now parted with one who faithfully served his generation according to the will of God, that in the sphere wherein divine providence had placed him was long a burning and shining light; of whom it might be said, as of Jehoiada, (who for this reason had honour done him at his death,) *that he had done good in Israel*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 16. Now, thanks be to God for him, and for all that good which God wrought in and by him.

But there is something more particular which I had an eye to in the choice of the text on this occasion: all who knew good Mr. Stretton, know this of him, that he was a very zealous active man to promote works of charity; that he was very liberal himself, and industrious to excite and engage the liberality of others; he was one who devised liberal things, and laid out himself in them, who had cases of compassion much at heart, relating both to the souls and bodies of men, and with pleasure took pains to get suitable relief for them. This was the grace, this the service, in which he was eminent, in which he excelled, and which made him a very great blessing to many. Now this is that for which Titus is here praised, that he was an active man among the Corinthians to press and promote a charitable collection and contribution, that now was going round among the churches of the Gentiles, for the relief of the poor saints in Judea; who were at this time great sufferers, both by the iniquity and in the calamity of their country: or rather, God is here praised, who made Titus instrumental in that good work among the Corinthians; as others were in other places.

I. It is here mentioned to the praise of Titus, that he had in his heart an earnest care for the Corinthians, and for their well-doing.

II. It is mentioned to the praise of God, that he put into his heart an earnest care for them; and so made him a blessing to them.

Now these two will very much consist together, the praising of Titus, and the praising of God for Titus. There is a debt of honour owing to those whom God makes use of as the instruments of his providence or grace in kindness to us or others; *Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.* St. Paul was far from giving flattering titles to any, and yet in this chapter he calls the brethren who were employed in this service, *The messengers*, the apostles, *of the churches, and the glory of Christ.* And often in his epistles he takes occasion to give a good character, and a good report, of those who had done well. If the good report Demetrius has, be founded in truth, St. John also is ready to bear record, and to attest it. But this must not intrench upon the honour due to God only; the praise must pass through the instruments to God, and in him all must centre, as the apostle here takes care it should; *Thanks be to God, which put this earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.*

I. It is mentioned to the praise of Titus, that he had in his heart an earnest care for the Corinthians.

Observe, what service he did, was from a principle within, from something in his heart; there is the treasure, there is the fountain, whence the words and actions are fetched, or rather, flow; if that be well fixed, and well furnished, all is well done. What is said of the servants of men, is true of all the servants of Christ, when they do the will of God acceptably, when they do it from the heart, for then with good will they do service. It was St. Paul's comfort that he served God *with his spirit in the gospel of his Son.* Nor is any work of piety or charity properly a good work, unless it be a heart work; if I *give all my goods to feed the poor*, and have not *love* seated in my *heart*, it profits nothing.

It was a principle of care that actuated him in this service. The word Σπουδη signifies *a close application* and intention of mind to the business he was employed in, a concern to have it done well, fear lest there should be any mistake or miscarriage in it, diligence, industry, and expedition, in the prosecution of it. What Titus found to do for the glory of God, and the good of the souls of men, he did it with all his might, and made a business of it. We translate it an *earnest care*, his heart was upon, and he left no stone unturned to bring it to a good issue.

It was the same earnest care; some copies read it Τοσαυτην—*such an earnest care*, so great, so active, so constant; such a care as you were witnesses of the fruit of. But most copies read Την αυτην σπουδην—*the same earnest care*; he had the same care for them that he had for other churches to whom he was nearer related, and with whom he was better acquainted; or he had the same care that St. Paul himself had, who therefore calls him his partner, *v.* 23.

Now in the care, the earnest care, that Titus had for the churches, we are to consider him both in general, as a minister of the gospel, and in particular, as an agent in the work of charity.

1. Let us consider him as an evangelist, for so Timothy, and he, and many others were. He was an assistant to the apostles, both in planting churches and in watering those that were planted, in forming them, and setting in order the things that were wanting in them; not fixed to one place, for then we should not find him employed in the same work in so many places as we do; but like Paul, like Christ

himself, he went about doing good, and he gave himself wholly to it; he did it with an earnest care both to do much good, and to do it well, and to do it effectually, and to good purpose. Paul commends Timothy, another evangelist, for this, that he did *naturally care for the state of souls*;[a] for the state of the churches; and Epaphroditus, another evangelist, for this, that he *longed after them all*,[b] and had *a great zeal for them*.[c] They were men who had their heart in their work, and laid the success of it near their hearts.

That which Titus is here commended for, is the *earnest care* he had for those of the church of Corinth, and for their spiritual welfare. And concerning this we may observe,

(1.) Though Titus was not under any particular obligation to the Corinthians, as their settled pastor, yet he had an earnest care for them, and they were very much influenced by his care, and were very observant of what he said to them. He did not ask, What are they to me? nor was he asked, what he had to do to concern himself about them. For our Saviour has taught us in the parable of the good Samaritan, that we must look upon him as our neighbour, whom we have opportunity of showing kindness to, or receiving kindness from, without distinction of nations in the world, or congregations in the church, further than prudential considerations, and the rules of good order, may direct. God is no respecter of persons in his bounty, nor must we be so in ours. Titus has an earnest care in his heart to make himself a blessing wherever he comes, and such should we have; we must study to serve some good purpose in every place where providence casts our lot; which is the meaning of Solomon's similitude, *If the tree fall towards the south, or towards the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it shall be*, and be of some use or other. The more extensive our usefulness is, the more it resembles his goodness whose tender mercies are over all his works. Wherever we see a human face, we may conclude there is a human soul, and if we can do any thing, we must have compassion upon it, and help it, remembering who it was that said, *Am I my brother's keeper?* Did we duly consider the worth of precious souls, we would have an earnest care for them. We should look upon those about us, though they be all of them strangers to us, as our fellow-creatures, and partakers of the same nature with us, as our fellow-christians, and partakers of the same grace with us; they are or may be so, and then remember that our rule is, *As we have opportunity, to do good to all men, but especially to them that are of the household of faith.*

(2.) Though Titus had many to take care of, many churches that he visited and interested himself in the affairs of, yet his care for each of them was an earnest care. The stream of his pious concern run broad, and yet it run deep; he loved many, and yet he loved much; and herein he walked as he had blessed Paul for an example, who took upon him daily the care of all the churches, and yet had such a tender affection for particular believers, that if any one were weak, it weakened him, if any one were offended, it made him burn. The extensiveness of his care abated nothing of the earnestness of it. When Paul said, that he would gladly spend and be spent for the Corinthians, he immediately adds concerning Titus, that he *walked in the same spirit, walked in the same steps.*

Some are made remiss and careless by the greatness of their undertaking, they grasp at too much, and then think that will excuse them in their neglects; but the more Titus had to do, the more closely and vigorously he applied himself to it; that though he could not be in two places at once, yet he might do two days' work in one by a double diligence. What a great deal of good work may a good man do in his place, if he go on in it with an earnest care, like that of Titus here; a care to time things aright, to improve opportunities, to do the work of God with as little noise as may be, and to avoid every thing that is foreign to our business, or diverting from it. We should have an earnest care to husband well the thoughts of our heart, and the minutes of our time, that neither of them be idled away, and suffered to run waste, and then what a great deal of good might we bring about. Though a wise man would not thrust himself into a hurry of business, nor have more irons in the fire than he can look after, yet a good man would covet a fulness of business, according as his capacity is, that whenever his Master comes he may be found doing.

(3.) Though there were others who had the care of the Corinthians, and whose business it was to direct, exhort, and quicken them, yet Titus showed the same care for them that they did; not that he would intrude into other men's office, or take their work out of their hands, but he would strengthen their hands, and carry on their work, would second what they said, and add thereto many like words. He saw there was need of all the help that might be for the furtherance of the gospel there, and all little enough, and therefore was willing to lend a hand: and he did it with so much humility and love, as made it a great encouragement, and no disparagement, to those who were statedly employed in the service of their souls. It becomes ministers thus to be fellow-helpers in the work of God, to carry it on with united force, joining hands and hearts in it: and the industry of others should not supersede but quicken ours; their activity should not be an excuse

[a] Phil. ii. 20. [b] Phil. ii. 26. [c] Col. iv. 13.

for our sloth, but rather a spur to our diligence. Others are busy, let not us be idle; though we have but two talents, though we have but one to trade with, if we be diligent and faithful, we shall have as sure a reward as those who are intrusted with five.

You here have lost a minister who had a care, an earnest care, for souls, and for their welfare in both worlds.

[1.] His care began at the right end, for it was in the first place about his own soul, and the prosperity and salvation of that. This charity must begin at home. Paul's charge to Timothy is, *Take heed to thyself* first, that thou mayst *save thyself*, 1 Tim. iv. 16. and those are not likely to do any thing to purpose for the souls of others, who are regardless of their own, to show others the way to heaven, who walk not in it themselves. In vain were we made keepers of the vineyards, if our own vineyards we have not kept. You are witnesses for him who is gone, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably he walked among you; that his conversation in the world was in simplicity and godly sincerity, with plainness and integrity, and, as became an Israelite indeed, without guile; not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, as one whose earnest care it was, and the top of his ambition, to approve himself to God, and to be accepted of him. Of him his praise was, and not of men.

His concern for his own spiritual and eternal welfare expressed itself very much when he saw the day approaching, in his earnest desire to make sure work for another world: after serious inquiries into the state of his own soul, he said with a pleasing earnestness, to one who found him musing, and it seemed to be the result of many thoughts, "Well, if we stand in a covenant relation to God as ours, all is safe and well." He often expressed the admiring sense he had of the free grace of God in Christ to his soul; ascribed all the glory of his comforts and hopes to that grace, and in a dependance upon that, enjoyed a holy security and serenity of mind. Though he still maintained a godly jealousy of himself, and a humble fear lest he should seem to come short, yet he finished joyfully with this word, and it was one of the last words he was heard to say, *I know, the Lord is my rock, and my God.* The assurance of this was it that enabled him to bid death welcome, and even in that darksome valley to fear no evil. Those cannot sink who have the Lord for their rock, to stay themselves upon; those cannot but be happy, eternally happy, who have him for their God. And can you say, my brethren, can you say upon good grounds, that the Lord is your rock, and your God? Have you covenanted with him, and devoted yourselves to him, and do you make it your constant care and business to please him? Your ministers have souls to save as well as you, and upon the same terms; and they call you to build upon no other foundation, but what they build upon themselves; to venture in no other vessel, but what they themselves venture in, into another world. O that the comfort which those have found in their dying moments, who have by faith made the Lord their rock, their God, might engage you all this day to avouch him for yours, and now to commit your spirits into his hand, to be sanctified and ruled by the word and Spirit of his grace, and then you may cheerfully at death commit your spirits into his hand to be received into everlasting habitations, may do it with a triumphant confidence, knowing whom you have believed, even one who is able to keep what you have committed to him against that day; if the Lord be your rock, and your God, he will be so to death, through death, and beyond death, and you may glory in him.

[2.] He had an earnest care for that particular congregation which was under his charge; you here can witness for him that he had a concern for your souls, and greatly longed after you all, even *travailed in birth again to see Christ formed in you.* He had indeed *curam animarum—the cure of souls*, and did not make his charge a sinecure. You know how constant he was with you, how rarely he was absent from you, scarce one Lord's day in a year; how he was in his element when he was in your service, and how solicitous to do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying. You know how he laboured among you, even when he laboured under the burthens of old age, and how lively he was in praying and preaching, even when in other things his natural force was so much abated. He had sometimes observed to his friends, that his work and his strength kept pace together; when he went into the pulpit he seemed to have fresh supplies of strength and vigour, and to forget his weakness, but when he had done his work he became as at other times; which, as it was an evidence that his heart was in his work, so it was an instance of the fulfilling of the promises, *As the day, so shall the strength be;* and *They who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; shall still bring forth fruit in old age*, even when the *youths faint and are weary, to show that the Lord is upright.* What other proofs he gave of his earnest care for your souls, in visiting you, conversing with you, and watching over you, you would do well to recollect, that now you have lost him, you may still be gainers by his labours of love among you.

[3.] He had an earnest care for other congregations, and for the progress and success of the work of God in them. He had an earnest care for many congregations in this city, for their supply, their order, and the preservation of peace and love in them. One instance that I must not omit is, the earnest care he took about the morning-lecture, every day,

kept up a fortnight at a place, and then removing to another: he has been long (as I have heard) the principal person who has concerned himself about it, and been active in it, to put it into a method, and to direct the removals of it; wherein he has done good service to the interests of religion in your city; for I hope wherever it comes it brings a blessing along with it, and many souls have had cause to bless God for it. And I trust, now he is gone, God will put the same earnest care into the heart of some or other for the keeping up of that good work, that it may not suffer damage by his removal. Nor did his care confine itself to this city, and the congregations here, but he had an earnest care for many places in the country, at a great distance, to see them well provided for, and ministers conveniently settled. And though, being indisposed to travel, he seldom went in person into the country, yet by letter and applications here in this centre, he showed what *a conflict he had*, as Paul speaks, for many who never *saw his face in the flesh, that their hearts might be comforted, and knit together in love.* He was always ready to advise young ministers, and assist them with his interest, many of whom, therefore, with good reason called him Father, and will bless God who put such a care into his heart for them. Thus he did good at a distance, thus he did lasting good, the fruit whereof remains; and such good, large souls will covet to do. Those who have opportunity of helping young people into the world, of helping them into business, and do it, do good service not only to their own, but to the next, generation; much more do they so, who forward the best employment, wherein the honour of Christ, and the welfare of the souls of men, is so nearly interested, and so help to preserve the best entail.

Let us now see what improvement we may make of this part of Titus's care as a minister, thus in some measure copied out.

1. It sets a good example before ministers, whose hearts should in like manner be full of earnest care about the work they have to do, and the great trust committed to them; and happy were it for the church, if they were all thus. The ministry requires an earnest care, so great and important is the undertaking, and so many the difficulties that are to be grappled with, and got over: nothing will be brought to pass in it by a loose, careless, desultory mind, that has a habit of trifling.

Let those who enter upon the work of the ministry seriously examine themselves, whether they can and will take care, and take pains, for if not, they will have reason to fear lest the work suffer by falling into their hands. The Hebrew phrase for being consecrated is, having *the hand filled:* those who are employed to minister in holy things, Exod. xxviii. 41. have their hands full of work, and therefore need to have their heads and hearts full of care. Let those who are engaged in this work, make a business of it, or they make nothing of it. Mr. Perkins took it for his motto, *Minister verbi es, hoc age—Remember this, thou art a minister of the word.* We must take heed to the ministry we have received, that we fulfil it; must be in care to pray well, and preach well, and live well, in care to find out profitable matter, and acceptable words, words upon the wheels; in care to find out the truth, to understand it ourselves, to deliver it aright, and accommodate it to the capacities of those we speak to, must be in care to give good instructions, to set good examples, and at all times speak and act with circumspection. There is need of an earnest care in watching over ourselves, and over the flock, that we may approve ourselves to our Master, may guard against the tempter, that none of the souls committed to our charge may perish, or if they do, that their blood may not be required at our hand. The charge we have received, the necessities and worth of souls, the shortness and uncertainty of our opportunities of service, the many eyes that are upon us, especially his who is all eye, and above all, the account we must shortly give to the chief Shepherd, forbid us to trifle, and oblige us to go on in our work with an earnest care.

2. It lays an engagement upon people, who have been or are under the care, the earnest care, of faithful ministers. You here have long been well taken care of, and well provided for, the dresser of your vineyard has, through grace, done his part, and now he is removed, suffer the word of exhortation.

(1.) Examine yourselves how you have improved under his care, his earnest care, for you, and whether your profiting has appeared in any proportion to the opportunities you have enjoyed; whether your growth in knowledge and grace has been answerable to the care that has been taken of you, and the pains that has been taken with you. What are you the better for all the good sermons you have heard here, all the sacraments you have received, and all the helps you have had for your souls, in season and out of season? You have had among you an aged witness for Christ, and his truths and ways; to you *days have spoken*, and the *multitude of years* has been *teaching you wisdom*, wherein you have had advantages above most of your neighbours; and it may justly be expected, that you should be above others a solid, serious, judicious people: and is it so? Many times *three years* God has come among you *seeking fruit*, and what has he found? Seeking fruit in your closets and families, in your callings and converse, the fruits of righteousness, and have you not frustrated his expectations? With some, perhaps, when he *looked for grapes, behold wild grapes.* Consider now with yourselves, whether you were the joy of your minister that is gone, or his grief. Whether by your fruitfulness you recompensed his care of you, or by your loose and careless walking you ill

requited him for it. Are any of you yet barren in this vineyard, yet cumbering the ground? O that you would be alarmed by the death of your minister! You are all strangers to me, but you are known to God. And O that his word, which is quick and powerful, might take hold of your consciences! While your minister was with you he interceded for you, as well as laboured with you, *Lord, let the* barren fig-tree *alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it:* and is it yet barren? Know then, that the death of your minister is a call to you to bring forth fruit at length, and then all shall be well; but if his life and labours having been in vain, his death be so too, you will have the more to answer for when the day comes that you will be cut down. He is now gone to give up his account; let each of you think, what account can he give of me? If he give up his account with grief, that will be, as the apostle speaks, *unprofitable for you.* But I hope there are those, there are many among you, in whom he saw the fruit of his labour, and his earnest care, whom he thanked God for, as they for him, and who will be his crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord. And what a joyful meeting will there be between him and them in that day.

(2.) If ministers have and should have such an earnest care for your souls, should not you much more have an earnest, a more earnest, care for your own souls? You are nearest to yourselves, and this is one talent you are each of you intrusted with; you have a precious soul to take care of: and what care do you take of it? What provision do you make for it? for its present cure and comfort, and for its future bliss? What care do you take to secure it from the enemies and evils to which it is exposed, and to supply its necessities? This is the charge given to every one of you, *Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently.* —Keep thy heart above all keepings. Be in care to get necessary food and clothing for your souls, rest and refuge for them, and a portion for them that will last as long as they must last. Commit the keeping of them to Jesus Christ, as those who are in care to have that done for them which none but he can do. The care your ministers have taken, and do take, for your souls, though they are accepted of God in it, if they be sincere, yet it will be no advantage to you, if you take not care for your own souls, nay, it will come into the account against you, as an aggravation of your carelessness.

(3.) If ministers must have this earnest care for the souls of those under their charge, surely parents and masters of families ought to have some care, to have an earnest care, for the spiritual welfare of those under their charge, their children, their servants, to restrain them from that which would be to the prejudice and ruin of their souls, and to provide that for them which is necessary to their well-being. You are in care for their bodies, to provide what is fit for them, you would think yourselves worse than infidels if you did not; and are not their souls more precious, and is not provision for them more necessary? Nature has put into your hearts an earnest care for their temporal lives, O that grace might in like manner principle you with a concern for their spiritual lives! Be in care to teach them the knowledge of God, that they may not perish through ignorance, in care by the most proper methods to drive out the foolishness that is bound up in their hearts; in care to make good your undertaking for them when you presented them to baptism, which was to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; in care that they may not perish through any default of yours. There are many who are forward to condemn ministers for their neglects, who therein do but condemn themselves; who are non-residents in their own houses, or are blind and dumb there in the things of God, and are in no care that they and their houses should serve the Lord. But you, I hope, are of those who look well to the ways of their household, as those who must give an account of that stewardship.

2. We now come to consider Titus as an active instrument at this time in a work of charity that was on foot: and though ordinarily it was not fit that they who gave themselves to the word and prayer should serve tables, and therefore the collection and distribution of the church's alms was committed to the deacons, who, to speak in the language of the Old Testament, had care of *the outward business of the house of God;* yet in an extraordinary case the apostles themselves were employed in service of that kind. We read of relief sent to the brethren who were in Judea, sent to the elders or ministers of the respective congregations, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul, Acts xi. 29, 30. and of a contribution made by them of Macedonia and Achaia, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, Rom. xv. 26. It was in the promoting and carrying on of this good work that Titus discovered this earnest care for the Corinthians.

(1.) It is easy to apprehend, that herein he showed an earnest care for the poor saints at Jerusalem, for whose use this collection was made, and a great concern for them, that they should be speedily and plentifully relieved in their present distress; and they would have reason to say, *Thanks be to God, that put into the heart of Titus this care* for us, and our families, for otherwise we might have perished. Titus heard what straits they were reduced to, and as one who put his soul into their souls' stead, laid out himself to get supply for them. Though Titus was a Greek, and was never circumcised, as Timothy was, and upon that account the saints at Jerusalem (many of whom retained too great an affection for the ceremonial law) were perhaps cool towards him, yet he was active to do them service, as Paul also

was, though he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and saw some reason to doubt whether the service he had for Jerusalem would be accepted of the saints there; for as our love, so our liberality, must not be confined to those who are just of our own sentiment and way, but in this instance, as well as others, we must be governed by a catholic charity, and as we have opportunity, must do good to all men, but must in a particular manner distribute to the necessities of saints. We may suppose, that this relief being sent to the elders, was intended chiefly for their support, because the people were poor, and persecuted, and in many places but few, and could not maintain them; so that it seems to have been not only an act of charity to the poor, but an act of piety towards God, being intended for the support of the gospel, and the recompence of those who had suffered loss for Christ's sake; for they were the believing Hebrews who had taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods, Heb. x. 34. This was the good work that Titus had this earnest care to help forward.

And it was good work of this kind that our deceased friend and father did abound in, did abide in to the last. He was himself ready to every good work, and willing to communicate to his power, yea, and beyond his power; what he did himself in charity he concealed, as much as possible, from those about him, and was so far from boasting of it, that, according to our Saviour's rule, his left hand knew not what his right hand did: and he was not only liberal, but he devised liberal things, and had projects for doing good; his head was still working that way, as one who looked not on his own things only, or chiefly, but on the things of others; of others' souls, of others' bodies. I have been told that it was very much by his influence and management, that the fund which is kept up by many of the well-disposed congregations in this city, for the assistance and encouragement of ministers in the country, whose congregations are poor, was first set on foot: and there are many in all parts of the kingdom whose loins, nay, whose souls, bless him, and the many others, both ministers and people, who promote and supply it, and bless God for him and them. If a cup of cold water given to prophets, to disciples, in the name of disciples and prophets, shall in no wise lose its reward, what a full reward shall be given from the Lord our God to those by whose generous liberality families of prophets are helped with food for the body, and congregations of disciples with food for the soul. And I have had opportunity of observing (and I think it was praise-worthy, and very exemplary) his diligent and constant attendance, not only upon the meetings for the prudent and regular distribution of that charity, but upon the week-day lecture, where he could have opportunity of meeting with ministers, to whom, or by whom, he might be serviceable; which showed how much his heart was upon it to do good. He was very active, as I am informed, in furnishing poor ministers, and candidates for the ministry, with useful books: a great deal of money, and time, and pains, he bestowed this way; and herein his earnest care reached as far as the north of Scotland, large sums being procured by him for the erecting of libraries there: and an excellent method it was, both for the diffusing of knowledge to distant places, and the preserving of it to future ages. In his labours for carrying on that and other pious designs, he was indefatigable to the last, and his diligence kept pace with his earnest care. He had had an acquaintance with divers parts of the kingdom; was born in Leicestershire; the first fruits of his ministry were at Petworth in Sussex; from that place he was thrown out (from a curacy there) at the Restoration. But upon that, Providence cast his lot in Yorkshire, where he continued about seventeen years, and then removed to this city. And what a blessing he was to that county, by his extensive beneficence, and care for them, after his removal hither, I am told, there are many who will witness, who never saw his face.

(2.) It is as true, though not so easily apprehended, that Titus showed as earnest a care for the Corinthians, whom he persuaded to do good, as for the saints at Jerusalem, whom he desired that this good might be done to. He appeared in this matter no less solicitous for those whom he applied himself to, than for those whose cause he pleaded. The churches of Macedonia had been very forward in bringing in their quota to this contribution, even their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality; and this is called the *grace of God bestowed upon the churches of Macedonia.* The good work they did for God, was the effect of a good work he wrought in them, and that was an evidence of his good will towards them, and therefore is called *his grace bestowed on them;* for it is certain, instead of making God our debtor by any service we do to him, the more we do for him the more we are indebted to him for putting us into a capacity, and giving us an opportunity, to honour him, and especially for inclining our hearts to do it, and accepting of us in the doing of it.

Now Titus had an earnest care for the Corinthians, that they who came not behind in any gift, might not come behind in this gift;[d] he was in care that they should not be slow in their contributions, because Paul had boasted of them, that *Achaia was ready a year ago;*[e] and in care that they should not be illiberal in them, but that what was gathered should be considerable: he was in care that they should give like themselves.

d 1 Cor. i. 7.

e 2 Cor. ix. 2.

The Corinthians were generally a rich people, and lived great; whence it became a proverb, *Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum—Every man cannot pretend to live at Corinth.* Now Titus was jealous of them, lest they should pinch their charity to feed their luxury, and therefore laid out himself among them, to persuade them to give handsomely upon this occasion, that it might not be said they had much, but they spent it upon themselves; they were rich in wealth, but poor in good works. He was in care they should give like other churches, and so preserve their reputation, and keep up the figure they made among the churches. The particular kindness he had for this church of Corinth, did not put him upon contriving how he might excuse them from this good work, or make it easy to them, that it might be the more kind to him; but on the contrary, because he loved them, he was very earnest with them to do more than otherwise they would have done.

And thus this good man whom we have parted with, besides the good works he did at his own expense, laid out himself to provoke others to love and to good works, to persuade them to it, and to bring about great designs of good by the assistance of many, which could not be compassed by one. He had an acquaintance with many considerable families, both in city and country, and an interest in them; which he improved not for himself, but for the public good. All who knew him valued him for his tried integrity, and that great plainness and sincerity which was remarkable in him; whatever he did, like Gaius, he did it faithfully, both to the brethren and to strangers; and, therefore, what was put into his hands for the carrying on of any good work, was deposited with an entire satisfaction. He used to say, that he kept up his acquaintance with persons of estate and figure as long as he could improve it for the doing of good, and when it would no longer be made to serve that purpose, he let it drop; "for," said he, "I'll never adore a gilded post."

Now my text leads me to observe, that herein appeared his earnest care for those whose assistance he procured in works of charity; as much for their *doing well*, as for the *well doing* of those whom he procured assistance for. All agree that those he begged for have lost a friend, but I must tell you, that those he begged of have a great loss of him too; they have lost one who, even in that, was a true friend, and one who had an earnest care for them. I doubt it will be hard to convince people of this. I fear there are many to whom their friends and ministers are scarce welcome, when they come to recommend objects of charity to them, and press them to give liberally where the case is urgent; they are glad to see them, but not when they come on that errand. If they come to visit them when they are sick, to advise them when they are in distress, or to be any ways helpful to them, they take it as an instance of their earnest care for them; but if they come to them as Titus did to the Corinthians, to beg money of them for the poor saints, they are so far from looking upon it as an instance of their care for them, that they receive them with a stiffness and shyness, as if they came to impose upon them, and to pick their pockets; and if they do give, it is not with that cheerfulness that God delights in.

I would endeavour therefore, for the amending of this matter, to make it out that those are to be accounted your friends, who, with prudence and discretion, propose to you proper objects of charity, and press you to give liberally to them, or for the encouragement of any work of piety; you are to take it kindly, and to reckon it an instance of their earnest care for you. Consider, it is not for themselves that they are thus solicitous, nor in hopes to make any advantage of it to themselves or their own families; nay, on the contrary, it may be a loss and damage to themselves; for with some, at least, the more they implore their interest for others, the less they have to implore upon their own account. They do not herein seek their own things, but as the apostle here did, they studiously avoid that which might give occasion to any to blame them, in this abundance which is administered by them: they hope indeed to obtain an interest in God's blessing, and the saints' prayers, in both which they desire you may come in for a share. It is no pleasure to them to be troublesome to you, and those for whose supply they do solicit you, many times they are no more obliged to than you are, nor more concerned for than you ought to be, so that you have no reason to take unkindly the application they make to you. Nay, it is really for you, that they have this earnest care. Do they propose to you a pressing opportunity to do good? Do they follow it with a pressing importunity? You ought to take it as a kindness to yourselves, and to thank God that he has put that earnest care in their hearts for you. For,

[1.] They would have you to do that which is your duty, a plain, necessary, and great duty, which God requires of all those whom he has intrusted with this world's goods. To love mercy is the good you are as much obliged to as to do justly. To relieve and succour the widows and fatherless in their affliction, is an essential branch of pure religion and undefiled. It is a necessary proof of the love both of God, and of your neighbour, dwelling in you. You are God's tenants, and this is the rent you have to pay, a quit-rent, not a rack-rent, and you are to account it a kindness to have your rent called for, for you will get nothing by going behind-hand. You are stewards of the manifold grace of God, and you must lay out your Lord's goods among your Lord's servants, and as he directs, and whoever assists you

in doing so, is your friend, and has a care for you. It is your duty to honour the Lord with your substance, and thus you are put into the way of doing it.

Ministers must charge them that are rich in this world, who have more than just a necessary subsistence for themselves and their families, with what they have to spare to do good, and to communicate. You ought to give alms of such things as you have, and to be ready to every good work. Put us not to prove that it is your duty to give just so much, and to such a person, when it is plain it is your duty as you have opportunity to do good to all men, and to give God his dues out of what he has given you; of which under the law he appointed the priests and the poor to be his receivers. Now those who devise liberal things for you, are in care for you, that you may not omit your duty, or be found in the neglect of it; because omissions are sins, and must come into judgment, and particularly the omission of this duty; for you know very well, those who in the great day are bid to depart with a curse, have this charged upon them, *I was hungry, and you gave me no meat, I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink.* And are not they kind to you, who do all they can to prevent your falling under that charge, and perishing under that doom? Say not, if they did not trouble you with their representations, you should not know it, and that would serve for an excuse; for if you do not know who are objects of charity, because you would not, but discountenanced those that recommended them to you, it is all one as if you did know it, and would not relieve them; *If thou sayest, Behold, we know it not, doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it, and he that keepeth thy soul, doth he not know it?*

The duty of giving to works of piety and charity, is what we are naturally backward to; we would willingly keep what we have, and our corrupt hearts can easily find out excuses to shift it off; and therefore we have the more need to be called to it, and to have even pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance, and provoked by the zeal of others, and their forwardness. Those who have themselves an earnest care to do their duty, will reckon those their best friends who have an earnest care to quicken them to it, and to help them to overlook those winds and clouds by which they are in danger of being driven off from sowing and reaping. It is a care for your precious souls, that they may not lie under guilt and wrath; a care like that of Paul's, *lest by some means the tempter have tempted you*, and a spirit of worldliness prevail over you, and so the labour of your ministers among you should be in vain. We have reason to be as thankful to God for their advice who excite us to duty, as David was for Abigail's, when she was instrumental to prevent his sin.

[2.] They would have you do that which will be your honour, and which will put a reputation upon you, and therefore it must be looked upon as an instance of their earnest care for your preferment. In acts of bounty and beneficence you resemble God, who *is good* and *doeth good*, and therefore does good, because he is good. None come nearer being perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect, than those who are merciful as our Father in heaven is merciful. Hereby you become blessings to your generation, and ornaments to the profession you make of religion; you give occasion to your ministers and friends to boast of you, as Paul did of these Corinthians, and to give thanks (2 Cor. ix. 2, 11.) to God for you: this is a virtue that is as much a praise as any other. It seems to have been a common saying of our Saviour's, *It is more blessed to give than to receive;* it is more honourable, and more comfortable; and therefore you are to reckon those your friends who would have you put in for a share in that blessedness.

You think you do yourselves honour with your abundance, when you lay it up in rich clothes, furniture, and equipage, or in splendid entertainments; with these you think you gain and keep up a reputation; but you would do yourselves much more honour with your abundance, if you spared something from those things, and laid it out in works of piety and charity, if you thus honoured God with it, and did good to others. I appeal to yourselves, which is the more honourable and desirable character, to have it said concerning you, "Such a one is a fashionable man, and lives great;" or, "Such a one is a charitable man, and does good." You reckon those have a real care of you who help to support and advance your credit in the way of trade and business, though it may put you to some expense; and is it not the fruit of a much more earnest care for you, to help to maintain your credit in this best and most gainful way of merchandise? If you forfeit the character of being ready to do good, you lose the opportunity of enriching yourselves with the true and most durable treasures.

[3.] They would have you do that which you will have comfort in, and advantage by, in this world, and therefore you are to reckon them your friends, who have a care for you. When you review your expenses, surely there is nothing you reflect upon with more pleasure and satisfaction, than that which you laid out in works of piety and charity; you may look upon it, not as upon that which you spend in housekeeping, it is gone, and you will hear no more of it, but as upon that which you have put into the best fund, ventured in the securest vessel, and set out to the best interest upon the best security, as *bread cast upon the waters*, which you shall *find* again after *many days*. Read Mr. Gouge's book, which he calls, "The surest and safest way of thriving," and you will look upon those as your truest well-wishers who forward you in any work of piety

or charity, as you do upon those who contribute any thing towards your outward prosperity.

Your liberally contributing to any good work will, perhaps, increase what you have in the world, will double it; what is so given is lent to the Lord, and he has given his promise that he will pay it again; and if he expects at his coming to receive his own with usury, no doubt he will so return us our own. However, it will make what we have *clean to us*, it will make it comfortable. Job mentions it as one of the brightest instances of his prosperity, that the *blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him*, and he *caused the widow's heart to sing for joy*. Many a prayer will be put up for you, by those who have an interest at the throne of grace, which you will have the benefit of, and yours, perhaps, when you are gone. It is used as an argument with the people to be kind to the priest, *that he may cause the blessing to rest on thine house*,[f] may do it by his prayers with and for thy family. Those therefore have an earnest care for you, who would not have you, for the saving of a little money, to forfeit that blessing, or come short of it.

4. They would have you do that which will be fruit abounding to your account in the day of recompence. If works of piety and charity be done from a pious, charitable principle, in faith, and in dependence upon Christ for the acceptance of them, though they cannot merit any thing at God's hand, for of his own we give him, yet he has graciously assured us, that they shall be rewarded in the resurrection of the just, for God is not unrighteous to forget them. You know when, and upon what account, it will be said, *I was hungry and you gave me meat, I was thirsty and you gave me drink*. If it be not repaid in this world, there is the more behind; the heavenly inheritance will make amends for all. Those who press you to good works are in care that you may not miss of this recompence, may not lose this good bargain, which will be so much to your advantage. They would have you to use your estates, so that with them you may make to yourselves friends, that when ye fail, ye may be received into everlasting habitations.

This was St. Paul's care for the Philippians; they were well-disposed to be kind to him, but they *lacked opportunity*, they wanted some friend to do that for them which Titus here did for the Corinthians, to make a collection among them for Paul's assistance, and to convey it carefully to him. Now Paul shows himself well pleased that at length Epaphroditus had done it; but he professes it was not so much upon his own account, that he might hereby be enabled to live the more comfortably in prison, *Not that I desire a gift*, I could live very contentedly without it; but chiefly upon their account, that they might have the comfort and reward of it, in that day when all we now say and do will be called over again. *I desire fruit that may abound to your account*, that may be reckoned among the fruits of your righteousness, which shall be repeated in life eternal; when not a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple, to a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall be left out of the account.

Now lay all this together, and then tell me whether those are not indeed your friends, and have not an earnest care for you, who call upon you to do good and to communicate. Look upon them then as your friends, and look pleasantly upon them when they come upon this errand; thank them that they will take the trouble of a good work so much upon themselves, and yet bring you in for sharers in the honour, comfort, and reward of it. Those who would so manage for you, in some advantageous undertaking for the world, so that you might have nothing to do but to pay in your money, and receive it again with great increase, you would reckon yourselves exceedingly obliged to. Nor think it enough to be courteous and civil to your almoners, and to give them a good look when they come a begging to you, but be free and generous in your almsgiving, and in what you contribute to every good work, that you may encourage those who have this earnest care of you to come to you again. God gives liberally and upbraids not; and so should we, that we may be like him. Remember, it is seed sown, and observe the husbandman's rule in sowing his ground, "Give it seed enough; for if you sow sparingly, you will reap accordingly." And now you have lost one who used to recommend objects of charity to you, be the more inquisitive after them yourselves; that you may in no wise lose your reward.

II. It is mentioned to the praise of God, that he *put* this earnest care into the heart of Titus for them; and thanks are given to him for it. Now thanks be to God, who by his providence brought Titus to Corinth, and by his grace excited and enabled him to do this good office there.

See how solicitous blessed Paul is upon all occasions to ascribe the glory of all the good that was done, whether by others or by himself, to the grace of God, and to own in it the influences and operations of that grace; *I laboured*, others laboured, *yet not I*, yet not they, *but the grace of God which was with me*, and was with them; for *by the grace of God I am what I am*, and they are what they are. The doctrine of free grace, which is pure gospel, he not only inculcates in his preaching and writing, but applies it, and speaks as one who did himself believe it, and was full of it; for he takes care to cast every crown at the feet of free grace, in that he boasts all

[f] Ezek. xliv. 30.

the day long, so as to exclude all other boasting; in that he is made always to triumph; *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory.* Now observe here,

1. That God can *put* things into men's hearts, beyond what was expected. He is the Sovereign of the heart, not only to enjoin it what he pleases by his law, but to influence it, and to infuse into it by his providence and grace as he pleases. He has access to men's hearts, knows what is in them, what would be in them, and can expunge and insert according to his own will, and they themselves not be aware of it. He can extinguish the sparks of wrath he finds there, and restrain them, can blow up the sparks of love he finds there into a flame. They are all in his hand, as the clay in the hand of the potter, and he fashioned them so as to serve his own purposes by them. The way of man is not in himself, he cannot think what he will, but the wise God can overrule him. If the hearts of kings are in the hand of the Lord, to be turned as the rivers of water which way soever he pleases, though their hearts, of all men's, are most absolute, and arbitrary, and unsearchable, much more the hearts of inferior persons. Let no man boast of his free thought, when whatever devices are in men's hearts, it is not their counsel, but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. See in this how God governs the world, by the hold he has of the consciences of men, and his power to put things into their hearts, so that they shall accomplish his designs, as *his hand*, though *they mean not so, neither do their heart think so.*

2. That whatever good is in the heart of any, it is God that puts it there. If Titus have in his heart an earnest care for the spiritual welfare of the Corinthians, though he is a very good man, and one whom much good may be expected from, yet even this is not of himself, it is not to be called a natural affection, it is a gracious one, for the grace of God wrought it there, that grace which worketh in good men both to will and to do that which is good. Perhaps Titus was steering his course another way, when God put it into his heart to come to Corinth; or, when he came thither on this errand, perhaps he did not design to press the thing with any importunity, but only to propose it, and leave it to them to do as they would: but, quite beyond his own intention, God put it into his heart to be urgent in the matter, which had a wonderful good effect; put zeal into his heart for the carrying on of this good work, and then put words into his mouth wherewith to press it.

If we have an earnest care for our own souls, and for their spiritual and eternal welfare, it is God that puts it into our hearts, that gives it to us, so the word here used signifies, it is he that plants it in us; if we have an earnest care for the souls of others, particularly of theirs who are under our charge, we have it from God, for we are not sufficient of ourselves so much as to think a good thought, much less fix a good principle, or form a good project, but all our sufficiency is of *God.* Whatever evil there is in our hearts, it is of ourselves, it is, like weeds in the garden, the spontaneous product of the corrupt soil; this God sees there, he foresees it, and can tell the sinner long before, *At such a time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought;* but it is not of his putting there; no, it is the good that is found there, all that, and only that, that God puts there. He will own that, and we must own him in it.

3. That Christ's ministers are in a particular manner all that, and that only, to his churches that he makes them to be. They are stars that shine with a borrowed light, and shed no other benign influences, but what are derived from the Sun of Righteousness. If they have a care, an earnest care, a natural care, for the souls committed to their charge, it is God who has put it into their hearts, it is his grace in them that makes them blessings to the places where they are, whether statedly or occasionally; if they bring a seasonable word that reaches the conscience, and does good, it is God that puts it into their mouths, and gives them what they shall speak. Paul, that master-workman, says nothing of what he has wrought, but of what Christ has wrought by him. Wherefore look we then at Peter and John, and Paul and Apollos, Acts iii. 12. as though by their own power they did what they do? No, they are no more, no better, than what the free grace of God makes them. The most able, the most active, ministers, and the most famed for industry and success, if they were left to themselves, and to their own wisdom and strength, would be the unprofitable burthens of the earth; would be like Samson when his hair was cut, and the spirit of the Lord was departed from him, weak as other men, nay, and worse than other men, like salt which has lost its savour. We must therefore look up to God, by prayer, for that grace which is necessary to make the stewards of the mysteries of God both skilful and faithful; and lament the case of those careless ministers, who, like the ostrich, are hardened against the souls under their charge, as though they were not theirs, for it is a sign that God has deprived them of wisdom, and has not imparted to them understanding.

4. That the grace of God is particularly to be seen and owned in the progress and success of any work of charity, as this here, which Titus was active in among the Corinthians. In this we may be tempted to think there needs no more, but that common concurrence of the divine Providence which is necessary to the negociating of every other affair; but it seems by this we have as much need of the working of the Spirit and grace of God, to enable us to give

alms well, as to enable us to pray and preach well. What is necessary to an act of beneficence, must be put into our hearts from on high, as well as what is necessary to an act of devotion. It is God who puts it into the heart of all the parties concerned to do their part in it: he puts an earnest care into the hearts of those who manage a work of charity, and a generous, liberal disposition into the hearts of those who contribute to it. And therefore the apostle concludes his account here of the liberality of the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, with praises to God, not only for giving them estates wherewithal to do good, but much more for giving them hearts to do good with them; *Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.* Grace to use what we have in the world to the glory of God, is an unspeakable gift, for which we ought to be very thankful. And we are taught the same by the example of David, who, when he found the princes and people generous in their subscriptions for the building of the temple, blessed God for it, as an admirable instance of his favour and grace, by which he put a great deal of honour upon them: but, *Who am I*, says he, *and what is my people, that we should be able* to overcome that selfishness and narrow-spiritedness which is in our corrupt natures, and *should offer* so much, and so *willingly*, and *cheerfully, after this sort; for all things come of thee.* Those therefore who have any good project upon the wheel, should look up to God for his grace to carry it on, otherwise it will be abortive. Those we persuade to do good, we should pray for, that God would incline their hearts to it, and then only our persuasions will prevail.

Let us now close all, with some inferences from these observations.

1. If this be so, then those who do good have nothing to glory in; for whatever good they do, it was God that put it into their hearts to do it, and therefore he must have all the glory. Boasting is hereby for ever excluded, for in the Lord alone we have not only righteousness for the remission of our sins, but strength and sufficiency for the performance of our duties. How absurd, how unjust, is it for us to be proud of any good we do, when without Christ we can do nothing; we cannot so much as be content with such things as we have, but through Christ strengthening us, much less do good with them.

This forbids us to trust to our own good works, as if by them we could merit any thing at the hand of God; we must not entertain such a thought, not only because none of our goodness extends to God, but because all our goodness is derived from him; and the more good we do, the more we are indebted to him for that grace by which we are enabled to do it, and the honour he puts upon us in employing us for him. We never speak a good word, or do a good work, but it comes from that good which God first put into our hearts, so that all being from him, all must be to him; he *planted*, he *watered*, and he *gave the increase*, and therefore his must all the fruit be, and to his honour it must be devoted.

This obliges us, when we have done all, to say, *We are unprofitable servants*, not only because we have done no more than what was our duty to do, but because we have done no more than God enabled us to do. It obliges us also to say, that God is a good master, who works in us what he requires of us, and then graciously accepts and rewards his own work, as if it had been ours, so far is he from being that hard man who reaps where he had not sown. And then our services turn most to our honour, when we take care to transmit the honour of them to God. Nehemiah could not have put a greater reputation upon his undertaking to build up the walls of Jerusalem, than he did, when he said, it was what God had *put in his heart to do at Jerusalem*, Neh. ii. 12. and it magnifies Cyrus's proclamation of liberty to the captive Jews, more than the policy or the generosity of it, that *the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus to issue out that proclamation*, Ezra i. 1.

This holy, good man we are now speaking of, whose works praise him in the gates, took care that the praise should not terminate in himself, but be transmitted to God, the Father of lights, and giver of every good gift. When a friend of his who visited him in his sickness, mentioned to him his great usefulness, and what comfort he might now have in reflection upon it, he humbly replied, "Alas, I have done but little service for God in my generation; I wish I had done more: but God is good and gracious." Whence I observe, that the comforts and hopes of dying Christians are founded upon God's goodness, not upon their own. Thus, when Nehemiah had done abundance of good service to the house of God, and the offices thereof, his prayer is, not *Reward* me according to the greatness of my merit, but *Spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.* "I was but a pen in God's hand," (said good Mr. Baxter,) "and what praise is due to a pen?" Thus as God gives grace to the most humble, so he gives humility to the most gracious.

2. If this be so, then those who have any good done them, either for soul or body, must give thanks to God for it, who raised up those who were the instruments of it, and put it into their hearts to do it, and perhaps to do it with an earnest care. We ought indeed to acknowledge their kindness, and to be grateful to them, but that must be in token of our gratitude to God, who, in making them his agents, made them his receivers. But we must look above and beyond them, and give God thanks for them, and for all the kindnesses they have done us. Ezra has no sooner registered and enrolled the ample commission which Artaxerxes gave him in favour of the Jews, but immediately he adds, *Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, who has put such a thing as*

this into the king's heart. Which teaches us, to see and own all the bounty and benefit, all the service and supply, that comes to us by the hands of our friends, flowing originally from the hand of God. And it is the more to be observed, if it come by the hand of those who were unlikely, and unthought of, and that we least expected it from. If Elijah be entertained by a poor widow who has but a handful of meal for herself and her son; if the wounded man, who is looked upon but overlooked by a priest and Levite, from whom charity and compassion might have been expected, and was commonly had, be at length taken care of by an honest Samaritan, it must be said, *This is the Lord's doing*, God put it into their hearts; and therefore let us give God thanks for our benefactors, and all their benefactions.

When those are removed from us, who have long been upon any account blessings to us, good parents, good ministers, good friends, instead of murmuring and quarrelling with God, as if he had done us wrong, we ought to be very thankful to him that ever we had them, that they were so many ways useful to us, and were continued to us so long, though we were unworthy of the benefit and comfort we enjoyed by them, and had a thousand times forfeited it. And by these thanksgivings for their lives, let us balance and alleviate our sorrow for their deaths. Thanks be to God, who fitted them for service, and inclined them to it, and put into their hearts an earnest care for us, though perhaps there was nothing in us either deserving or promising, to recommend us to their care. God, who himself does good to the unworthy, puts it into the hearts of good men to do so too; to him therefore we must give thanks.

And these thanksgivings should sometimes look far back; and we should bless God for those who were in the days of old, either by their lasting writings, or by their lasting charities, blessings to posterity; they may not be prayed for, as our living benefactors may, and must be; they are not to be prayed to, as our ever-living Benefactor may, and must be; but the benefit we and others receive by the grace given to them, we may and must give thanks to God for, who put into their hearts an earnest care for those who should come after them. If *what is written*, if what is done, *be for the generation to come*, it fitly follows, *the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord.*

3. If this be so, let us hereby be engaged and quickened to do all the good we can in our places; to do the good the Corinthians did, that is, to contribute largely and freely for the support and encouragement of poor saints and poor ministers, according to the ability God has given us; to do the good Titus did, that is, to solicit the cause both of the necessitous, and of the deserving, and to procure assistance for them; to recommend works of piety and objects of charity, as factors in that blessed merchandise; to bring the rich and poor to meet together: according as our capacity is, let us lay out ourselves to do good.

Hereby we shall evidence that God, by his grace, has put some good into our hearts, which the good we do is the fruit and product of, and by which the tree is known. If we be truly charitable, from a good principle, and for a good end, it will turn to us for a testimony, that the Spirit of God has been at work with our hearts, making us acceptable to our father in heaven, and making us meet for our home in heaven: and how can what we have be made to turn to a better or more comfortable account.

Hereby likewise we shall give occasion to many to praise God for us, and for the good which by his grace we are inclined and enabled to do. And how can we better serve the glory of God, and the comfort of his people, than by furnishing our friends with abundant matter for thanksgiving, (that sweet duty,) in which when we are employed, we have, if any where, a heaven upon earth. This was one thing for which Paul reflected with comfort upon his own conversion, that those who heard that a persecutor was become a preacher, glorified God in him. And therefore we must let our light shine before men, that others may see our good works, and glorify our Father who is in heaven. If it be an encouragement to charity, to think that we shall have the prayers of the poor, much more is it so to think that God shall have their praises. And so the blessing of him that was ready to perish shall not only come upon us, but shall return, as it ought, to him who is the fountain of all blessing; and when the widow's heart is made *to sing for joy*, it shall *sing to the praise and glory of God.*

4. This may be matter of comfort and support to us, when useful instruments are removed from us. That which made them useful was, that spirit of wisdom, holiness, and love that God gave them, and we are sure that he has the residue of the Spirit, the *excellency* of the Spirit, (so the word is,) with himself, and he can raise up men with the same spirit, with the same excellences of spirit, that shall do him as much service, if he pleases, and do it as well in their day, as those who are gone did in theirs. If God make the spirit of Elijah to rest upon Elisha, he shall be as much the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof, as ever Elijah himself was. And therefore let us not say, *The glory is departed from Israel*, though the hoary heads, who were so much a crown of glory to our tribe, be now in a manner all departed; no, while Zion's God is her everlasting glory, he will take care that Zion's sons shall some or other of them be in their turn a glory to her; *Instead of the fathers shall be the children.* When God has work to do, we are sure he will never want fit instruments to do it with.

It is certain, our fathers, the best and greatest of

them, were no more, no better, than what the grace of God made them, they took all occasions to own it themselves; and it is as certain, there is the same overflowing fulness of grace in Christ that ever there was, *grace for grace*, and the same way of deriving from it; as the *olive-tree is not withered*, so the *golden pipes* (Zech. iv. 12.) are not stopped up. We have therefore reason to hope, that the same God who put an earnest care into their hearts, will put the same into the hearts of those who are entered into their labours; and that grace which was sufficient for them, to carry them through the services and sufferings of their generation, will be sufficient for us too, who have the same work to do, and the same temptations and difficulties to grapple with; and will enable us at length to finish our course, as they did, with joy.

It was a petition which (as I am told) Mr. Stretton frequently put up to God in his prayers with his family, "Lord, grant that we may be useful while we are here, and that we may not be wanted when we are gone." God did make him useful while he was here, many ways useful, useful to the last; and continued long in his usefulness. A great gap is made in our hedge by his death; but may we hope that so many others shall be spirited to do the same work, with the same earnest care, that in a little time we may be able to say, that in answer to the other part of his petition, *he is not wanted?* If God has mercy in store for your city, for the land of our nativity, he will raise up such men of serious piety, and catholic charity, who shall lay out themselves to do good in the world: I trust he has raised up some such; and that the mystical gloss which one of the rabbins puts upon those words, (1 Sam. iii. 3, 4.) *Ere the lamp of God went out, the Lord called Samuel*, has its accomplishment; "That is," says he, "ere God makes the lamp of one prophet to set he kindles another." God grant it may be so at this day in our land, and it would be a token of good to us, that God would not depart from us. Nay, if it be true, as certainly it is, that while the earth remains Christ will have a church in it, we may be sure that as one generation of such passes away, another generation, somewhere or other, shall come, to support the interests of pure and undefiled religion, that thus the name of Christ may endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.

A CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE OF THE REV. MR. RICHARD STRETTON.

He was the son of Mr. William Stretton, of great Cleybrook, near Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, where he was born; but was descended from the Strettons of Stretton, in that county.

He was born about the year 1632, but the exact time of his birth could not be recovered for this reason; his father being a puritan, and the minister of his parish such a one as he could not with satisfaction bring his child to be baptized by, he procured one Mr. Moor to baptize him, who was a puritan minister in the neighbourhood; and so he was not registered in the church book.

He often spoke of it as an instance of God's goodness to him, that he enabled his father, though he had many children, to bring him up a scholar.

He had his academical education at New College in Oxford, and was chaplain of the college, as the noted Bishop Gunning had been some time before.

He commenced Master of Arts, July 9, 1658, *(præstitis exercitiis per statuta requisitis—having performed the requisite exercises,)* as appears by a testimonial under the hand of the university register.

In the beginning of that year, having passed through not only his time, but his studies, in the university, he went to be assistant to Dr. Cheynel, at Petworth in Sussex, a great living.

Soon after his settlement there he was publicly and solemnly ordained, and "set apart to the office of a preaching presbyter," (so the testimonial of his ordination runs) "and the work of the ministry, with fasting, prayer, and the imposition of the hands of six presbyters, in the parish church of Arundel, Oct. 26, 1658. He having given sufficient testimony of his competent age, of his unblamable life and conversation, of his diligence and proficiency in his studies, and of his fair and direct calling to the fore-mentioned place; and they upon examination finding him to be duly qualified and gifted for that holy office and employment."

He continued at Petworth till Michaelmas, 1660, when Dr. Cheynel was put out to make room for Dr. King, Bishop of Chichester. Mr. Stretton however staid and preached there till November, (as Dr. Calamy's account is,) having two friends, viz.

Captain Taylor and Mr. Bernard, who were very great with the Bishop, and prevented his sending down any other. The Bishop by them offered Mr. Stretton an hundred pounds per annum, and the choice of any prebend he had that was vacant, if he would be his curate at Petworth; but Mr. Stretton not being satisfied to conform, declined it; and upon the Bishop's sending another down to the place, he quitted it.

Coming to London, quite at a loss how to dispose of himself, Mr. James Nalton providentially met him in the street; and having been spoken to by the Lord Fairfax to recommend a chaplain to him, he presently brought Mr. Stretton to him; and upon his recommendation, my Lord accepted of him, and took him down with him to his seat in Yorkshire, and soon found himself and his family very happy in having such a skilful faithful helper in the things of God.

While he was chaplain to my Lord Fairfax, he married Deborah, daughter of Mr. Robert Moreton, that excellent, pious, useful man, who was some time minister at Church Lawford, near Coventry and sister to Dr. Richard Moreton, who was turned out at Kinver in Staffordshire, and afterwards was a very eminent physician in London, and one of the college. By her he had a child or two born while he was in my Lord's family; and great respect was shown him by the whole family.

He continued there till my Lord Fairfax died, and preached his funeral sermon, which is in manuscript in many hands; as is also a sermon preached while he was there, on occasion of the marriage of a relation of my Lord's.

My Lord was so wonderfully pleased with his great piety and prudence, and excellent behaviour in his family, that at his marriage he settled a very considerable annuity upon him for his and his wife's life; which was a great support to him all his days. Thus God raised up friends for those who in the way of their duty cast themselves upon his providence.

The respect which was put upon him while he was in my Lord Fairfax's family, gave him an opportunity of being acquainted with most of the considerable families in those parts. Judge Rokeby, who was made one of the blessings and ornaments of the bench at the revolution, was his intimate friend.

Many eminent divines of the church of England he had likewise an intimacy with; particularly Dr. Tillotson, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, who was born in Yorkshire. Mr. Stretton, while he was chaplain to my Lord Fairfax, being called upon some business to London, Dr. Tillotson would have no denial, but he must preach for him at St. Lawrence's church, as a country minister; but it coming out some how or other that he was a nonconformist, the Doctor had a private reprimand for it from the Bishop of London. It appears by divers letters to him, found among his papers, that he had many invitations of that kind in the country; and a very friendly correspondence he kept up with many conforming divines, who reposed a great confidence in him, and testified great respect toward him.

Upon the death of the Lord Fairfax, he removed to Leeds, and settled there with a congregation of dissenters, to whom his ministry was highly acceptable; and there he continued six or seven years.

While he was there he buried three sons in a little time; two of them of the small-pox, and in a few days one of another. It was an affliction that went very near him; and so strong was his natural affection, that it was exercise for all the wisdom and grace he had, to bear up under it. There is found among his papers a letter of condolence and consolation written to him upon that occasion by the Earl of Clare, father to the late Duke of Newcastle, who was then abroad in his travels, dated at Paris, June 16, 1677. There appears in it much of serious piety, and a particular friendship that noble Lord had for Mr. Stretton.

In the year 1677, he removed to London, and several dissenters who were at that time either deprived of their ministers, or otherwise unsettled, sat down under his ministry, and he continued with them to his death.

In 1679, he published a paper called, "The Protestant Conformist," or, "A Plea for Moderation," contained in a letter from one conforming minister to another, and his answer to it. It had no name to it, but it met with great acceptance. It was occasioned by a letter from his dear friend Mr. John Thoresby of Leeds, which was likewise printed with it; so I am informed, as likewise of many other things concerning Mr. Stretton, by his son Mr Ralph Thoresby, now of Leeds, that learned antiquary, and Fellow of the Royal Society; who has already obliged the world with the additions to Cambden's Britannia for Yorkshire, and from whom is expected the Antiquities of Leeds; who was a true lover of Mr. Stretton, and was much respected by him.

At the time when the persecution was hot against dissenters, (in 1683,) he was the first of ten ministers who were taken up as living in a corporation, and had the Oxford oath tendered them; "That it is unlawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take up arms against the King; which was first contradicted and broken through, and then repealed at the revolution. He had not been at his own house for ten weeks, but the very next morning after his return to it, (so very vigilant were their spies and informers,) by five of the clock in the morning he was seized by the then city-marshal, who secured his papers, and would not suffer him to seal up what he made choice of out of them; and immediately carried him and

them before the king and council. Some present would have his papers looked over, to see if they could find any treason in them, but the king did not encourage it, saying, he believed there was no treason there. As at another time, when a sorry fellow, one Fox, offered to swear that Mr. Stretton, with my Lord Clare, was in the plot then charged upon the dissenters, the king laughed at the information, as altogether improbable and inconsistent with itself.

But though he was dismissed from the council-board, he was proceeded against upon the Five-mile Act. That night the marshal took his word for his appearance next morning, when according to his promise he surrendered himself, and was brought before the Lord Mayor, who carried it with great respect and civility to him, importunately desiring him once and again to withdraw for a little time, and consider whether he could not take the enjoined oaths, which he hoped he might, and so escape the penalty of the law. Mr. Stretton told his Lordship, that he would not give the court the trouble of waiting for his answer, for he could not expect to get satisfaction in that case, in so short a time as a regard to that court would only suffer him to take, when he had been many years seeking after it, and could not obtain it. However, my Lord Mayor persisted in his advice, and in compliance with his Lordship's kind desire, he withdrew for some time; but when he returned, told his Lordship he could not do it; which his Lordship said he was sorry for, for then there was no remedy, but he must follow the direction of the law; and sent him to Newgate, where he continued a prisoner six full months. In which time he had a son died, who, in his sickness, earnestly desired to see his father, as the father no doubt did to see the child, but all the interest he could make would not procure him that liberty. During his stay in Newgate, Mr. Smith the ordinary showed him great respect, and called him up more than once into the chapel to assist him in preparing the condemned criminals for their death.

After the expiration of his six months imprisonment he continued still in the city, and preached privately in one place or other among those of his congregation; and never missed any Lord's day, unless now and then it happened that he met with disappointment in the place he was to preach at. And he repeated in his family largely at night, which he sometimes admitted two or three of his friends to the benefit of.

When king James granted liberty by proclamation to protestant dissenters, he made use of it; but he never did or would join in any address of thanks for it, lest he should seem to give countenance to the king assuming a power above the law, and was instrumental to prevent several addresses.

After the glorious revolution, when the dissenters enjoyed their liberties and opportunities again, he applied himself with fresh vigour to his work, and with an abundant satisfaction in the clearness of his call to it, as appears by a single sheet which he then published in the year 1689, which he called, "The Case of the Protestant Dissenters, represented and argued:" which he told a near relation of his, not long before he died, that he was the author of. The whole paper is of such weight, that Dr. Calamy thought fit to insert it at large in his abridgment of Mr. Baxter's Life, page 638 to page 648.

And as he was industrious to justify the dissenters in their practice, so he was to promote every thing that was good among them. It is observed, before, in the sermon, that he took care to direct the removals of the morning-lecture, so as might answer the intention of it: a very useful exercise, which has been kept up for the most part near seventy years, and is now, wherever it comes, for ought I see, well attended.

He was likewise active in accommodating some unhappy differences of opinion that were among them, so as to prevent the mischievous consequences of them. The prudent and pious endeavours which he and others used for that good end, then had, and thanks be to God, still have, a happy effect.

He laid out himself very much to promote works of charity; it was his meat and drink in that way to be doing good. He spared no pains in going about in the city, and writing letters into the country, to promote good works. He was a principal man in setting up and keeping up a fund for the help of poor ministers and congregations in the country, who had not many like-minded, (though blessed be God some there are,) who naturally cared for their state. He made it his business to find out the hands who were able to give, and fit to receive, and to bring them together. Those who were intrusted with the distribution of charities, applied themselves very much to him to recommend to them proper objects of charity, which he did with great prudence and fidelity; and then no wonder if those who needed help applied themselves to him likewise.

He was active to introduce useful books into the world, and to encourage the publishing of them, as Dr. Manton's Works, to the fifth volume, to which he prefixed a preface, and a very ingenious, handsome one it is. And also took a deal of pains to furnish libraries in Scotland, and in the private academies in England, with old books; and to supply young students, who were poor, with such books as were proper for them: a great deal of money he laid out himself, out of the little he had, and a great deal more he procured from others, for this good purpose. He knew what books were useful, and how to buy them at the best hand, and by his activity herein, many valuable pieces that otherwise would still have lain buried in dust and cobwebs, have been

sent into hands that are daily making good use of them.

His pious zeal herein extended itself beyond the seas, as appears by the abstract of a letter which is found among his papers, from that great and good man, Monsieur Frank, Professor at Hall in Saxony, wherein he acknowledges to have received the Polyglot Bible from Mr. Stretton, as a present to their library there, and returns his most hearty thanks to so good a benefactor.

He was very forward to encourage youths that he saw or heard to be ingenious and well disposed, and to assist them in their education for the ministry: he kept up a correspondence for this purpose with the universities of Scotland, and was instrumental in sending many thither, and procuring assistance there for some who needed it.

He buried his dear wife in the year 1695, and by her he had left only one son living, who has been many years useful in the ministry.

About the year 1707, the infirmities of age grew upon him, occasioned by a bad fall he had as he was returning to his house, after preaching on a public fast-day, in which exercise he had exceeded his strength; yet he continued doing good to the last, and the spirit was as willing as ever, even when the flesh was weak, and not only weak, but much pained. When he could scarce set one foot before another, yet he would attend the lecture at Salters Hall, and the meeting for charitable contributions, very sedulously, though at a great distance from his house; and but a little before he died, when he was so weak and ill that he could scarce mind any thing else, yet he stirred up himself to give advice and direction in an affair of charity, wherein his assistance had been much depended upon.

He kept up his public work, though he struggled with much difficulty in it, till within ten weeks of his death; and often took notice of it with thankfulness to God, that though for some time before he was confined to his house all the week, yet till May 4, 1712, he had strength on the Lord's day to go to his meeting-place and preach once, and administer the Lord's supper every month.

In his last illness, he expressed a cheerful resignation of himself to the will of God, an entire dependence upon the grace of Christ, and a believing, comfortable expectation of the glory to be revealed.

Some of his sayings in his weakness have been mentioned in the foregoing sermon, and need not to be repeated.

He finished his course, and fell asleep in the Lord, on Thursday, July 3, 1712, and was buried the Monday following in the burying-place in Bunhill-fields. *There the weary are at rest.*

A SERMON

PREACHED UPON OCCASION OF

THE DEATH OF THE REV. DANIEL BURGESS,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

WITH A CONCISE ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.

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2 Corinthians iv. 7.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Divine Providence has in the mournful occasion of this solemnity given us a sensible proof of the truth contained in the former part of my text, that *we have the heavenly treasure in earthen vessels;* for here is one of those vessels broken and laid by, by which it appears to have been, though a strong one, yet an earthen one. And now, O that divine grace would, by its sanctifying quickening influences upon all our hearts, verify the latter part of the text, and give us a proof, that notwithstanding this, there is an *excellency of power* going along with the gospel of Christ, which depends not upon dying men, but upon a living God; and is mighty through him to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin, and the setting up of stronger for Christ, that he may divide the spoil, and possess the throne in the soul! And if we have experience of this, that though faithful ministers are removed one after another, yet the Spirit of the Lord is not departed from us, it will be our best support and comfort under all afflictions of this kind; for though our ministers have their strength weakened in the way, and their days shortened, yet Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the same to his church. They are wearied and worn out, and are gone where the weary are at rest; but the *everlasting God, even the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary;* so that, thanks be to God, still we have the treasure, and if it be not our own fault, may make it ours, though still we have it in earthen vessels.

1. By the treasure here spoken of, it is plain we are to understand the gospel of Christ, the glorious gospel of the blessed God, in which is set before us, and offered to us, the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is this treasure, which the apostle's heart was so much upon, and so full of: this, which in the verse before he had called *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.* That is the treasure which we Christians have, and glory in. And a noble description it is of the everlasting gospel which is preached to us, and professed by us.

It is light: it is such a light as in the dawning of the day of the creation shone out of darkness, when the Almighty said, *Let there be light*, and was the first-born of this visible world: it is such a light as every morning shines out of the darkness of the night, that, as the gospel did, it may take hold of the ends of the earth, which is turned to it as clay to the seal, Job xxxviii. 13, 14. What is more bright and glorious than the light? what more pure? what more self-evident? and what more welcome to them who sit in darkness? Light is indeed a treasure, and we have it from the Father of lights.

It recommends itself to those who would improve their natural reason; for it gives knowledge, sound knowledge, useful knowledge, the knowledge of duty, the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins; a knowledge infinitely preferable to that which the inquisitive part of mankind amused and perplexed themselves with in the Gentile philosophy, which did but darken counsel by words without knowledge. The light of joy, which the gospel brings, results from the light of knowledge, and that is no Christian devotion which has ignorance for the mother of it.

It recommends itself likewise to those who would improve their natural religion; for it gives the knowledge of the glory of God, the founder and

centre of all religion; it sets that glory before us, as the object both of all our adorations, and of all our aims. The heavens indeed declare the glory of God, but they show us not how and which way we may glorify him, much less be glorified with him: here, therefore, where natural reason and religion both leave us at a loss, the gospel of Christ takes us up, and leads us on, shows us the glory of God shining in the face of Christ, where it shines clearer, and stronger, and brighter, and with more satisfaction, than it does in the face of the whole creation; for it declares the glory of God reconcilable to us, and accessible by us, nay, and in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and taking a remnant of the children of men into covenant and communion with himself through a mediator; in it life and immortality are brought to light, are brought to hand. Such a knowledge as this well deserves to be called a *treasure*, and it is this treasure here spoken of.

2. By the earthen vessels here, it is plain we are to understand the apostles and the ministers of the gospel, here in their present state, while they are in the body. We have this treasure lodged with us for the use of others, whose bodies are as earthen vessels. These were the gifts Christ gave unto men when he ascended up on high; (and valuable gifts indeed, if we consider the treasure lodged in them;) not only prophets and apostles, but pastors and teachers, whose office and business it is, to preach the glad tidings of redemption, by the Redeemer's offering himself to be a sacrifice for us, and a Saviour to us.

The very same gospel that was preached by the apostles and evangelists then, is preached by the pastors and teachers still; only the business of the first preachers of the gospel was to propagate it to distant nations, to carry it from place to place, that Christ might be known as salvation to the ends of the earth. The business of the pastors and teachers since has been, rather to propagate it to succeeding generations, to carry it from age to age, that *the name of* Christ *might endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.* The former was intimated in the command, *Go, disciple all nations;* the latter in the promise, *Lo, I am with you always,* with you and your successors, *even to the end of the world,* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

Now those who are employed in this work are here said to be *earthen vessels*; we have it *εν οστρακινοις σκευεσι—in vessels made of shells of fishes,* so the learned Dr. Hammond thinks it might be read; the shells of oysters, (which have their name from the word here used,) and other the like, resemble our bodies, in which our souls dwell as a fish in the shell, and are fastened to them; and he observes from Grotius, that the Platonists making two bodies of a man; one more inward, which the soul was immediately lodged in, which they called Ὀχημα ψυχης—*the chariot or vehicle of the soul,* an aerial body; the other, which is terrestrial, more gross and carnal, which we see and touch, they call Οστρακινον, the word here used, the *shell* of the soul. But he owns that the word signifies likewise an earthen vessel which has passed the fire, and is therefore brittle, and soon broke, such as that earthen bottle which the prophet broke for a sign before the ancients of the people, Jer. xix. 10.

3. The force of the reason why God has been pleased to put such a treasure in earthen vessels, is also plain, *that the excellency of the power may be,* that is, may appear to be, *of God,* and not *of us.* "We carry bodies about us" (so Dr. Hammond paraphrases it) "subject to all manner of oppositions, pressures, and afflictions; and this on purpose designed by God also, that all the good success we have in our apostleship may be imputed to Christ, and not to us, as it would be if we came with any secular power or grandeur to plant the gospel." And a very considerable proof it was of the divine original of the gospel, that though the preachers were not only destitute of all worldly advantages, but laboured under all imaginable disadvantages, yet it made its way, gained its point, and did wonders, which was an evidence that there was an excellency of power above that of any creature going along with it.

Three doctrines we may observe hence:

I. That the gospel of Christ is a treasure indeed, and it is our unspeakable privilege that we have that treasure.

II. Ministers are earthen vessels, in which this treasure is put.

III. That God has put the treasure into earthen vessels, that all who are enriched by it may give him the glory of it.

I. In having the gospel of Christ known and owned among us, we have a treasure truly valuable, nay, invaluable. It is our happiness as Christians, that we have the gospel written to us in the Scriptures, which are of divine inspiration, preached to us by a ministry of divine institution, under the direction of a divine warrant, and the influence of a divine promise, and professed in the world by a church called out of the world, and incorporated by a divine charter.

We live in an age of infidelity, when, under colour of opposing bigotry and enthusiasm, (two very detestable things,) the gospel of Christ is ridiculed and run down, and set upon a level with the pagan theology: *It is time for thee, Lord, to work, when men thus make void thy gospel;* and it is time for us in our places to appear in defence of that which is the foundation of all our hopes, and the fountain of all our joys, when it is thus virulently, thus violently, attacked. It is *pro aris et focis—for our God and our country,* that we contend, when we contend for *the faith once delivered to the saints,* and for the common

salvation, and therefore we ought to contend earnestly. Upright men are astonished to see such sacred truths and laws treated with such contempt, and the innocent cannot but stir up himself against the hypocrite. When they speak slightly of the gospel who hate its laws, and despise its comforts, we ought to speak honourably of it; and how can we speak more honourably of it than to call it, as the text does, our *treasure?* We know it, and believe it to be so, and that, in comparison of it, all the learning and policy of this world is but trash and trifle.

The gospel of Christ is indeed a treasure. For,

1. There is in it an abundance of that which is of inestimable value. If the things themselves be truly precious, and there be plenty of them, then we call them treasure; and such things there are, and such a fulness of them, in the gospel of Christ. As the merchandise and trade of this wisdom, so its stores and treasures, are better than that of silver, or of fine gold, or precious stones. *The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal them, the onyx, or the sapphire,* Job xxviii. 19.

There are treasures of wisdom and knowledge in the truths which the gospel discovers to us, about which the understanding finds the best employment, the best entertainment. There are treasures of comfort and joy in the offers which the gospel makes us, and the blessings it assures to all believers, in which not only the necessities of the soul are well provided for, but its desires abundantly satisfied, and its true and lasting happiness inviolably secured. There is a treasure of merit and righteousness in Christ, and in his mediation, his sacrifice and intercession for us; a treasure of grace and strength in the Spirit, and his operations on us; a *fulness of grace, grace for grace,* grace for all gracious exercises, which it pleased the Father should dwell in Jesus Christ, that thence we might receive.

These are things of value to the soul of man, and which every soul puts a high value upon, that truly desires to know and love its God, to serve him, enjoy him, and be for ever happy in them: things which angels themselves put such a value upon, that they desire to look into them; and which Christ himself put such a value upon, that he thought it worth while to pour out his soul unto death to purchase them for us, since they could not be obtained for gold, nor could silver be weighed for the price of them.

And there is an abundance of them, infinitely exceeding that of light in the sun, or water in the sea. In Christ there is enough of that, of all that, which our souls need; enough for all, enough for each, enough for you and me; enough for as many as will come and take of these waters of life. *Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.* When God entered into covenant with Abraham, (and it was the covenant of grace that he made with him,) he engaged to be to him *El-shaddai,* a God *All-sufficient,* Gen. xvii. 1. a God that is enough. Justly therefore is that gospel which proclaims this covenant called a treasure, for in the most valuable, durable riches it infinitely exceeds the peculiar treasures of kings and provinces. It is an inexhaustible fountain of life and living waters; it is a bottomless treasure; not a treasure in a chest, but a treasure in a mine, continually searched into, but never wasted.

2. This is safely laid up for a perpetuity, and therefore it is a treasure. It is deposited in good hands, whence we may draw from it, but cannot be deprived of it; it is *hid treasure;* not hid *from us,* but hid *for us:* it is a treasure under lock and key, and it is in the hand of Christ that this key of David is. The riches of Christ, which fill those treasures, are unsearchable riches; are such as *eye hath not seen,* nor *ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive.*

It is hid in God, in his wisdom and counsel, and that eternal purpose which he has purposed in himself, which can never be altered: it is hid in his glorious perfections, which are all made over to true believers for the constituting and ensuring of their happiness by that all-comprehending article of the New Covenant, *I will be to them a God;* which is treasure enough.

It is hid in Christ, and in his undertaking for us; which contain all that we need as sinners, as God's being to us a God, contain all we need as reasonable creatures. He is the treasurer of this treasure, is intrusted, as Joseph was in Egypt, to dispose of it, as he was to lay it up; and in him it is safe. All the promises of God, which are real treasures, and the best securities, are in him *yea and amen.*

It is hid in the Scripture: there it may be found; thence it may be fetched by faith acting on divine revelation, assenting to it with application and resignation. It is in the parable a treasure *hid in a field,* where it must be digged for; and the Scripture is that field, which we must make ours, and make use of, and then the treasure is ours. The word is nigh us, and Christ in the word.[a] It is hid from the wise and prudent;[b] the worldly wise, who look with contempt upon the field of the Scripture, as Naaman upon the waters of Jordan, preferring before them Abana and Pharpar, *rivers of Damascus;*[c] leaving God's fields for a rock, and for the snow of Lebanon,[d] as the prophet speaks. But it is hid for the humble and holy, the willing and obedient; they have an incontestable, indefeasible title to it: in it they have a portion that is safe, which

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a Rom. x. 8. b Luke x. 21. c 2 Kings v. 12. d Jer. xviii. 14.

neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal;[e] a good part, which shall never be taken away from them.[f]

It is a treasure; for it is laid up for hereafter. The bulk of these riches is that which is reserved in heaven for us;[g] a glory that is to be revealed in due time. It is a treasure, that will not only suit the present exigences of the soul, but will last as long as it lasts, and run parallel with its never-failing duration. It is an everlasting gospel that is preached to us,[h] that word of the Lord which endures for ever, when all the glory of man is withered as the grass:[i] it is a treasure, which glorified saints will be living plentifully and pleasantly upon to eternity.

3. It is of universal use to us; and therefore it is a treasure. It is not only valuable in itself, but every way suitable and serviceable to us. He who has a treasure has that which answers all things;[k] and that the gospel does: it is accommodated to the case of our souls in all respects; and the riches of God's glory in Christ Jesus, will, as the apostle speaks, *supply all our need.*[l]

In our contemplations, in our devotions, and in our whole conversation in the world, the gospel of Christ is of constant use to us, does that for us which we need, and which nothing else could do for us. We could have no acquaintance or communion with God, but under the conduct and direction of the gospel; no comfortable enjoyment of ourselves, nor peace in our own consciences, but upon gospel grounds; nor any sure rule of speaking and acting, but that which the gospel furnishes us with in the law of Christ; nor any powerful principle of well-doing, but what is wrought by the Spirit of Christ.

It is a treasure of food for all those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. It is *manna*, bread from heaven; not a pot of manna, but a cloud of manna. The bread which the Son of man shall give, is that which endures to eternal life, is the pledge of it, and nourishes believing souls to it. It is a treasure of physic for diseased souls, that apply themselves to Christ as their physician; and there is in it a salve for every sore, a remedy for every malady. And the universal cures which Christ wrought when he was here upon earth, were an indication of that inexhaustible fulness of healing virtue that there is in the gospel of Christ; as his feeding thousands with a little food, was of the abundant nourishment that there is in it to them who by faith live upon it, to whom his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed.

It is a treasure of arms and ammunition for our spiritual warfare; a divine magazine, whence the good soldiers of Jesus Christ may be furnished with answers to every temptation, and with the whole armour of God, with which they may not only secure themselves, but resist and vanquish their spiritual enemies, and become more than conquerors.

It is a treasure in the world; it puts honour upon it, and puts good into it. God's love to the world, in sending his only-begotten Son, that through him righteousness and life might be brought in where sin and death had reigned, is the best treasure that ever was in it, far exceeding the riches of the sea, or the treasures hid in the sand. The enlarging of the borders of the church, by the spreading of the gospel, is called the *riches of the world*, the *riches of the Gentiles;* and those parts of the world that have the gospel, have no reason to envy those who have the gold, nor should wish to change with them.

It is a treasure to any nation or people. Those are truly rich among whom the word of Christ's gospel has free course, and is glorified; who have it in its purity, power, and plenty; and Christ in that chariot going forth, and going on, conquering and to conquer. As wisdom and knowledge are the stability of our times, so the fear of the Lord is our treasure. Bibles and ministers are the wealth of a nation; the growth of Scripture knowledge, the increase of the gifts and graces of ministers, their zeal for Christ, and love to the souls of men, may be reckoned the growth of a kingdom's wealth, of its honour, and of its strength.

Let us bless God, that we of this nation, that you of this city, have this treasure, and have it in such abundance; that the gospel of Christ is read, and preached, and professed among us; O that it were more practised and lived up to! The kingdom of God among us is the treasure of our kingdom; let us see that we bring forth the fruits of it, that we receive not the grace of God therein in vain, lest we provoke him to take it from us, and give it to another nation (for some where or other he will find a place for it) that will make a better use of it. Dread the loss of wisdom's merchandise, more than of any trade; of the liberty of the gospel, more than our civil liberties; and deprecate the threatening inundations of atheism and popery, either of which will rob us of this treasure.

It is a treasure in the heart of every true believer who receives it, embraces it, and is delivered into it, as into a mould. If the gospel of Christ has, as it ought to have, the innermost and uppermost place in our souls, if it command us, if it constrain us, and so if we become interested in its promises and privileges, we are rich, and increased with goods, we are truly rich, rich toward God, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. And out of this good treasure in the heart, a good man upon all occasions brings forth good things, for his own use, and for the service of others: as the good householder, so

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e Matt. vi. 20. f Luke x. 42. g 1 Pet i. 4. h Rev. xiv. 6. i 1 Pet. i. 25. k Eccl. x. 19. l Phil. iv. 19.

the good scribe, who is well instructed concerning the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, from that treasury produces things *new and old*, to the glory of God's grace and truth.

Let us therefore get our hearts enriched with this treasure, by a true and lively faith in Christ and his gospel: we are wretchedly and miserably poor till we do this; and then, and not till then, we begin to be wise for ourselves. There are many who, through grace, can call God theirs in covenant, Christ theirs, all the benefits of the New Testament theirs. Come, O come, and cast in your lot among them; receive Christ Jesus the Lord, and give up yourselves to him, to be ruled, and taught, and saved by him; and as you have received him, and resigned yourselves to him, so walk in him; and you have a treasure which will be your heritage for ever, and in the mean time may be the rejoicing of your heart.

II. Ministers are earthen vessels in whom this treasure is put. What is laid up in order to its being used hereafter is laid up in some vessel or other, where it may be ready when there is occasion for it, or to which those who have occasion may have recourse. Now the treasure of the gospel is committed to the preachers of it, as proclamations to the messengers of the government, to be dispersed; and this is like putting a treasure into earthen vessels.

They are said to have this treasure, not only because they ought to have it, in their hearts themselves, firmly to believe it, and to abide under the impressions and influences of it; for how can they expect to be instrumental in bringing others to the belief and obedience of that which they do not themselves believe and obey? but because they have the exhibiting and dispensing of it to others. They have (as the Levites under the law) the *charge of the holy things*, because if there were not some to whom this charge were committed, that which is every body's work would soon be nobody's work. The ministers of Christ are said to be *stewards of the mysteries of God*, and have the keys of the stores committed to them, that they may give to each of the household their portion of meat in due season; it is a dispensation, not a dominion, that is committed to them. The gospel is said to be *committed to their trust*, to the use and behoof of the church of God, and all the members of it; yet, blessed be God, not excluding themselves: their concern, therefore, is to pursue the trust, and to be faithful to it.

The preaching of the gospel is put into their mouths, and they are like John Baptist, the *voice of one crying in the wilderness*, crying as to travellers in a wilderness who have lost their way, and if not called to, will wander endlessly; and they are but the voice, God is the speaker. The applying of the seals is put into their hands, the admitting seal, the confirming seal; by which those are sacramentally invested in the privileges of the gospel, who, by the working of the Spirit on their hearts, are become entitled to them: and thus they have the treasure.

1. They are but *vessels*, that afford no more, no other, than what is put into them, nor can give but just as they have received. God is the fountain of light and life, and living waters, and all our springs are in him: they are as all other creatures are, (angels themselves not excepted,) that, and all that, and that only, that God makes them to be. It is Christ who is the *fountain of gardens*, Cant. iv. 15. they are but *cisterns*: it is the commandment that is the lamp, and the law is light; they are but as candlesticks in which this light is set up, and by which it is held forth.

Ministers must remember this, and religiously adhere to their instructions; and as they must dare to declare the whole counsel of God, so they must not dare to declare any thing else under the name and shadow of that; but must be able to say, *we have received from the Lord that which we have delivered unto you*; for a man can receive nothing which he can depend upon himself, or recommend to others with any assurance, unless it be given him from above. You like not the liquor that tastes of the vessel; nor will a gracious soul relish the doctrine that is of man, and by man. It is the *pure river of water of life, clear as crystal*, which *proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb*,[m] that waters the New Jerusalem, and makes it glad.

People must remember this, and not expect any more from their ministers than from vessels: we have a gospel to *preach*, not a gospel to *make*: we can but *declare* the grace of God, we cannot *bestow* that grace; and therefore why look ye at us, as if we could speak to the heart? What is Paul, or what is Apollos?[n] They are but ministers, not masters; they can but prophesy upon dry bones, but to no purpose, unless a spirit of life from God enters into them; they are but like Gehazi with Elisha's staff, or Elisha with Elijah's mantle; it is the Lord God of both who must do the work.

2. They are but *earthen vessels*. It was agreeable enough to the external glory of the Old-Testament dispensation, that the lights of the sanctuary should be put into golden candlesticks, of pure gold; but the glory of the New Testament being spiritual, the exhibiting of the light of that is in earthen lamps, like Epictetus's. Some think here is an allusion to Gideon's soldiers, who, advancing to battle in the night, took lamps in their earthen pitchers, with the glaring light of which, upon breaking the pitchers, the enemy was terrified, and so discomfited.[o] By such unlikely methods is Christ's cause carried on, and yet is victorious.

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m Rev. xxii. 1. n 1 Cor. iii. 5.

o Judg. vii. 16.

Let us see why the ministers of the gospel are here compared to earthen vessels.

(1.) They are made of the same mould with other people. All the children of men are earthen vessels: the body is the vessel of the soul, and it is of the earth, earthy; and ministers are partakers of flesh and blood, as other men are, hewn out of the same rock, and digged out of the same hole of the pit.

God has not sent us his gospel by those messengers of his who are spirits, and a flame of fire, but by such as have bodies, and are *clods of clay*, and *worms of the earth*, as those are to whom they are sent: they are to you in God's stead indeed, and their embassy is high and honourable; but, as Elihu speaks, they also are formed out of the clay; and God, in compassion to us, chooses to speak to us by men like ourselves, because their terrors shall not make us afraid, as those of angels would, if God should send his errands to us by them; nor shall *their hand be heavy upon us*.

St. Paul has an earthly house, which he expects the dissolution of, and finds already in the dissolving; and St. Peter a tabernacle, which he knows he must shortly put off, though they were both great apostles, and one of them had been in the *third heavens*, and the other in the *holy mount*. And it is not only an honour put upon the human nature, that God is pleased to commit the ministry of reconciliation to those of that nature, but an encouraging token of God's favour and good-will to us, and an evidence to us that he is in earnest in the embassy of peace; for if the Lord had been pleased to kill us, he would not have showed us such things as these, much less would he have showed them us by those who are our bone and our flesh, who belong to that world which he has justly a quarrel with.

We are not only children of men, as you are, but we are by nature (blessed Paul puts himself into the number) children of wrath, even as others, guilty and corrupt, and as certainly ruined and undone, without a Saviour, as any of you. We are making the same complaints that you are, and groaning under the same burthens. We have the same need of the merit of Christ for our justification, and of his Spirit for our sanctification, that you have. We will never lay any other yoke upon your necks, but what we desire to submit our own to; nor wish you to embark for another world in any other vessel, but what we desire to venture ourselves and our own salvation in. We would deal for your souls as for our own; for your case is ours; and therefore the priests were taken from among men, that they might deal tenderly with men, Heb. v. 1, 2.

(2.) They are oftentimes, in respect of their outward condition, mean and low, and of small account, as earthen vessels are; not only *men*, but *men of low degree*, *sons of earth*, as the Hebrew phrase is. Their family, perhaps, like Gideon's, poor in Manasseh, and they the least in their father's house,[p] who have nothing distinguishing in their extraction or parentage, their birth or education; they have reason to rejoice (as Christ tells his disciples) that *their names are written in heaven*, but they must never expect to have a name like the names of the great ones of the earth.

The first preachers of the gospel were poor fishermen, earthen vessels indeed, bred up to the sea, and before they were intrusted with this treasure, were unlearned and ignorant men.[q] Christ's kingdom not being of this world, he did not make use of the princes of this world, not men of honours and estates, not their learning or politics; but as the poor received the gospel, so the poor preached it.

And still they are not many mighty, not many noble, who are called to this work; it is honourable enough itself, and needs not borrow any additional lustre from the glory of this world, which God would thus put contempt upon, and give more abundant honour to that part which lacked, as the apostle speaks with reference to the dispensing of spiritual gifts. The poor in the world are often made rich in faith, rich in the gospel treasure.

(3.) They are subject to many infirmities, to like passions as other men, and upon that account they are earthen vessels; they have their faults, their flaws, their blemishes, as earthen vessels have. John Baptist takes notice of it, that it is Christ only, who cometh from heaven, and is above all, who is perfectly pure and spotless; but he *that is of the earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth:* the treasure is wisdom from above, it is all heavenly and divine; but the vessel in which it is put, has too much in it of the wisdom from beneath, for it is earthen, and savours of its original.

God has chosen not only the weak, but the foolish, things of the world, by them to carry on his cause, and by them to carry it at last. *The law made men priests who had infirmity*, and so does the gospel too. Jonah was a prophet of the Lord, and yet peevish and passionate, and often out of temper: Elijah himself was so. St. Peter at Antioch was to be blamed, when he went in with Barnabas into a piece of dissimulation;[r] and I doubt St. Paul at Antioch was not altogether to be justified, when he fell out with Barnabas in a heat of contention.[s] There were those who preached Christ, even of envy and strife; and many who sought their own things more than the things of Christ;[t] and yet, as long as they preached Christ, and held forth the gospel treasure, St. Paul rejoiced[v] in it. He was a great apostle, who put himself in, when he said, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.*

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p Judg. vi. 15. q Acts iv. 13. r Gal. ii. 11, 13.

s Acts xv. 39. t Phil. ii. 21. v Phil. i. 15, 18.

Ministers are men, and therefore it cannot be thought they do what they do by their own power; they are sinful men, and therefore cannot be thought to do it by their own holiness. They are pressing toward perfection, but they have not yet attained; they own they have not, they own it to you, and desire you will not think the worse of the treasure that is put into their hands, for any mistake or defect of theirs in other things: you may see a divine excellency in it, though you see much human infirmity in the vessel that keeps it. Bear with them then, and be not severe in judging them, whom you have so often heard going before you in judging themselves.

4. They are made of different sorts of earth, as earthen vessels are; all of the same nature, but not all of the same natural constitution. The bodies of some are of a stronger make, and more cut out for labour, while others are feeble, and soon foiled. *Quies meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan—Some have souls that seem to be made of finer mould than others;* the capacities of their minds more elevated and enlarged; while others, who yet have their hearts upright with God, in comparison with them, are but babes in understanding.

But those of the finest mould, even the china vessels, are but earthen ones; the head and the eye in it are made of the same earth with the rest of the body; and those who are of a coarser mould, yet may as effectually answer the end in keeping the treasure, as those of the finest composition. The living creature in Ezekiel's vision, that had the face of an ox, did as good service in his place, as that which had the face of an eagle.[w] Therefore let not those of eminent gifts be puffed up, they are but earthen vessels; nor let those of meaner abilities be cast down or discouraged, God can make them who seem poor, yet to enrich many.

A great deal of difference there is likewise between some and others of those earthen vessels, in respect of natural temper: some are more bold, others more timorous: some more warm and eager, others more soft and gentle. I remember Gregory, in his book *de pastorali curâ—on pastoral care*, observes, that St. Paul, writing to Timothy, bids him *not strive, but be gentle to all men*, and to reprove *with all long-suffering;* but, writing to Titus, he bids him rebuke sharply, and reprove with all authority; for which he gives this reason: "Titus was a man of a mild disposition, and needed a spur; Timothy more sanguine, and needed a bridle." Some are of a sorrowful spirit, reserved, and inclined to melancholy; and that is turned to their reproach, as it was to David's, when he wept and chastened his soul with fasting, Ps. lxix. 10. and to John Baptist's, who, because he came neither eating nor drinking, not conversing so familiarly with the world as others did, they said, *He has a devil*, he is a crazed, distracted man. Others are of a cheerful spirit, and jocular sometimes, and that shall be made a blemish in their character; as, because Christ came eating and drinking, they called him a *gluttonous man*, and a *wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.*

So likewise, as to the manner of exhibiting and dispensing the treasure, there is a great variety of gifts: Apollos is an eloquent man; but Paul's speech is contemptible, (2 Cor. x. 10.) yet his letters are powerful. Even among the inspired writers there is a great variety of phrase and diction, much more among the other earthen vessels, that are left more to themselves. And all these, as far as they have an aptitude to edify some or other, either the learned or the unlearned, are wrought by one and the self-same spirit; and yet by men of corrupt minds, both the one and the other are exposed to contempt. He who delivers his message, as St. Paul did, in tears, is ridiculed as a whining preacher: he who delivers it now and then with a pleasing, surprising turn, is ridiculed as a facetious one; as Isaiah was bantered for saying, *Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line,*[x] which in the original is a jingle of words, *Tsaf betsaf, kaf bekaf;* and this made a song of, v. 13. *The word of the Lord was unto them, precept upon precept.* Jeremiah is jeered for saying, *The burthen of the word of the Lord;* and they said of Ezekiel, *Doth he not speak parables?* and yet, after all, laid to their charge a thousand things which they knew not: but wisdom is, and will be, *justified* of all *her children.*

(5.) They are of different shapes and sizes, as earthen vessels, and vessels of shells, used to be; notwithstanding which they may all receive and keep safe, and minister the treasure, according to their different capacities. While they hold the foundation, Christ, and him crucified, and the truth as it is in Jesus, yet in matters of lesser moment, that do not so immediately affect the treasure, there may be a great variety of sentiments, and of practice accordingly.

It was so in the apostle's times: *One believes he may eat all things, another, who is weak, eats herbs; one esteems one day above another, another esteems every day alike.*[y] Both cannot be in the right: yet the apostle interposes not his apostolic authority in the matter to determine it either one way or other; but rather chooses to give a rule, which would be of lasting use to the church, in all differences of that kind, when apostolic authority should cease; and that is, each to practise according to their sentiment, with true devotion to God, giving him thanks, and with true charity toward their brethren; not imposing upon them their own sentiments, no, nor so

w Ezek. i. 10. x Isa. xxviii. 10. *Per illusoriam μιμησιν verba prophetarum subsannant.* Grot.

y Rom. xiv. 2, 5.

much as judging and censuring theirs, or judging and despising them for practising according to them; that both sides may reserve their zeal for the weightier matters of the law and gospel, faith in Christ, and holiness of heart and life.

(6.) They are all what God, the great potter, makes them; for if they are earthen vessels, they are in his hand, as the clay in the hand of the potter, who has a sovereign power over them; and it is not to be asked, *Why hath he made them thus?* The wise God knows what he designs men for, and what use he will make of them, and fashions their hearts accordingly: *Before I formed thee in the belly*, says God to the prophet, *I knew thee*, and knew what service I would employ thee in, and formed thee accordingly, fitted thee to be a *weeping* prophet in calamitous times.[z] As God intrusts talents with his servants according to the ability[a] he has given them, so he gives them ability according to the talents he designs to intrust them with.

Therefore we ought not to envy the gifts of those who excel and eclipse us; for may not God do what he will with his own? Nor should we be discouraged, though our capacity be small, our faculties weak, and the sphere of our activity low and narrow; if we be faithful in the little we are intrusted with, and diligent to improve it, it may be our comfort, that it is the place which God has seen fit to put us in; and where he has given but one talent, he expects the improvement but of one, for he is not a hard Master.

(7.) They are all vessels of use and service in the family, though they are but earthen ones. The apostle observes, that in a great house, there are not only vessels of gold and silver, (the angels who are God's ministers in the upper world, and employed in this, are vessels of gold and silver, vessels of honour,) but there are also vessels of wood and earth, which are comparatively vessels of dishonour:[b] but it does not therefore follow, that they are no part of the furniture of God's house: *If the feet shall say, Because I am not the hand, or the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?*[c] God knows how to make use even of earthen vessels, how to make them truly beautiful and valuable, by putting a treasure into them, which may be and must be received from them, and use made of it.

(8.) They are oftentimes despised and trampled upon by men, notwithstanding the honour God has put upon them, and are thrown by as despised broken vessels, and vessels in which is no pleasure. So this similitude of the earthen vessels is explained here, in the following verses; where the apostle shows, that he called himself and his fellow-apostles earthen vessels, because they were *troubled on every side, perplexed, persecuted, and cast down;*[d] and because they past by so much *dishonour and evil report as deceivers*, and *unknown*, though they were true and well known.[e]

It has often been the lot of some of the most faithful, useful ministers of Christ, to be loaded with reproach and calumny, to be exceedingly filled with the scorning of them who are at ease, and the contempt of the proud, and to have all manner of evil said against them falsely. Thus the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, and every way preferable, have been esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter.[f] Our Lord Jesus himself was one whom men despised, whom the nation abhorred,[g] *and the disciple is not better than his Lord;* and Satan finds his account in it, for by casting dirt upon the earthen vessels, he prejudices the minds of people against the treasure that is put into them. "But" (as I remember Archbishop Tillotson somewhere expresses it) "it is no disparagement to be laughed at, but to deserve to be so; nor ought we to think the worse of the food at Christ's table, because it is not served up in plate, but in earthen vessels."

(9.) They are frail, and mortal, and dying, and upon that account they are earthen vessels. Thus the apostle explains it here, *We which live are always delivered unto death.* They are dying daily, and yet this is so far from being any allay to the rejoicing which they have in Christ Jesus our Lord, that the apostle protests the truth of it by that rejoicing, as a thing of unshaken certainty. These earthen vessels are soon broke, and return to their earth; they must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; but, blessed be God, the treasure in them is not so: the word of the Lord abides, but the prophets do not live for ever.[h]

They are worn out with their labours; and as they spend, they are spent, in the service of Christ and souls. They are subject to the same decays of nature, the same distempers of body and mind, the same accidents, and the same infirmities of age, as others: they are cisterns at the best, and will shortly be broken cisterns; flowers at the best, and will shortly be withered flowers. *I have said ye are gods*, but *ye shall die like men*, for ye are earthen vessels.

Ministers are workmen, and they shall accomplish as a hireling their day; and having patiently borne the burthen and heat of it, shall be called in by the shadows of the evening to receive their penny, and enter into their rest: they are watchmen, and when they have staid their time shall be relieved; they are soldiers, and their warfare will shortly be accomplished; witnesses, and their testimony will be finished; they are Christ's ambassadors, and will be

z Jer. i. 5. a Matt. xxv. 15. b 2 Tim. ii. 20.
c 1 Cor. xii. 15, 16. d 1 Cor. xii. 8–10.
e 1 Cor. vi. 8, 9. f Lam. iv. 2.
g Isa. xlix. 7. h Zech. i. 5.

recalled, and an exchange made. This is not the world that ministers and people are to be together in. O that the one in preaching, the other in hearing, and both in praying, would look upon themselves and one another as dying! that what their hands find to do therein, they may do with all their might!

III. God has put the treasure of the gospel into earthen vessels, that the divine power which goes along with the gospel may be so much the more glorified. The great design of the everlasting gospel, is to bring men to fear God, and give glory to him; and that he may be the more glorified, those are employed in propagating it, who were least likely for such a purpose, that his strength may be manifested in the weakness of the instruments. He ordains strength out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, that thereby he may perfect praise; as if this were the perfection of the divine praise, not only to help the weak, but to employ the weak. And he chooses to make use of such, to confound the wisdom of this world, and that he who glories, may glory in the Lord, and give glory to him.

There was an excellency of power going along with the apostles, which appeared to be of God, and not of themselves.

1. To strengthen them for the work they were employed in; to preach down Judaism and paganism, and to preach up the kingdom of a crucified Jesus, was a service that required a far greater strength, both of judgment and resolution, than the apostles had of themselves; so that if they had not been full of power by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts, they could never have spoken, as they did, with that wisdom, which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist; could never have made such vigorous attacks upon the devil's kingdom, nor have gathered in such a large harvest of souls to Jesus Christ. They were in labours more abundant, and yet, like their Master, did not fail nor were discouraged; for though they knew and owned that they were not sufficient of themselves for such a service, yet they found their sufficiency was of God, and they could do all things through Christ strengthening them.

2. To support them under the hardships that were put upon them. Therefore God chose the service of such men as were despised, that he might magnify his own power in keeping the spirit he had made, and made fit for his own use, from failing before him. One would wonder how the apostles kept up their spirits; it was not by any power of their own, but underneath them were the everlasting arms; and when they were *pressed out of measure*, above strength, so that they despaired of life, yet they did not faint, being born up by the power of a God who raises the dead. Then it was, that Christ's strength was made perfect in St. Paul's weakness, when he was enabled not only to bear reproaches, and persecutions, and afflictions for Christ, and to say, *None of these things move me*, but to rejoice that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ; to glory in these tribulations, and even to take pleasure in them. Let it never be said, it was by any power of their own, that the apostles were enabled to bear the shame so boldly, and sorrow so cheerfully, and to die daily, and yet live pleasantly; no, it was according to Christ's glorious power, and by his might, that they were thus strengthened unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.[j]

3. To give them success in that great work to which they were called. The world was to be enlightened with the lamps, and enriched with the treasure, that was lodged in these earthen vessels. By their agency the kingdom of the Redeemer was to be set up upon the ruins of the devil's kingdom, the stream of the world was to be turned, the sea must be made to fly, and Jordan must be driven back: this work must be done; and therefore such earthen vessels shall be made use of in the doing of it, that it may appear, that the victorious power that does it, is not that of the apostles, but that it is a divine power; it is not what they have wrought, but what God has wrought by them to make the Gentiles obedient;[k] it is mighty through God, to the casting down of imaginations,[l] and the captivating of high thoughts. The gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation,[m] and in that, as in his chariot, the exalted Redeemer goes forth conquering, and to conquer.[n]

O the wonderful achievements of the gospel! the trophies of its victory over the powers of darkness! the numerous instances of its convincing, converting, sanctifying power! How many sinful hearts have by it been made to tremble, and how many gracious souls to triumph! Had the preachers of it been princes or politicians, had they been philosophers or orators, this success would have been attributed to them; but when they are such despicable men, and so despised, men who, like their Master, were of no reputation, it must be owned, that therefore so many are brought to believe their report, because the arm of the Lord is revealed to them.

Now, for the application of this,

1. Let us see how this Scripture is this day fulfilled, in the removal of the master of this assembly from its head. The gospel treasure was faithfully dispensed here; but hereby it appears to have been put into an earthen vessel, that the vessel is broke, and is returned to the earth out of which it was taken. We are here bewailing the death of a minister of Christ, who was intrusted with the gospel treasure, was enriched with spiritual gifts, and has been

j Col. i. 11. k Rom. xv. 18. l 2 Cor. x. 4. 5.

m Rom. i. 16. n Rev. vi. 2.

n his day instrumental, through the grace of God, o make many rich. But he has finished his course.

My personal acquaintance with him was small, nd therefore I wished, and laboured, that this ser- ice had been put into the hands of some other per- on, every way better able to do him justice; but ince it is thrust into my hands, I think I need not tudy to do any other honour to his memory, than to ake notice of the honour God has done to his minis- ry, in blessing it to the conversion and edification f many precious souls; which I find there are mul- itudes ready to bear their testimony to; who, though ney have had many instructors in Christ, have call- d him their spiritual father; for under his preach- ng, the grace of God has turned them from darkness o light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and ose who have been effectually called, he has been any ways instrumental to build up in their most oly faith. And this I know, there were many very dicious Christians, and who had spiritual senses xercised to discern things that differ, to whom his raying and preaching were both very acceptable nd very serviceable, and who sat down under his hadow with delight; yet none more mindful than e, that he was an earthen vessel. An instance of hich comes to my thoughts; I once saw a letter om him, to which, instead of his name, he sub- cribed himself "dust and ashes." Now if those who ave obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful, are o be esteemed very highly in love for their work's ake, much more are they to be so esteemed, who ave obtained this further mercy, to be successful or the sake of the fruit of their labours.

Two things he was an eminent example of:

(1.) Great industry and courage in his work, while is health and strength were continued to him. It a great blessing to any man to have a good consti- tion of body, and especially to a minister, and is great talent, that must be accounted for. Such a e he had, and made a good use of it; for he la- oured more abundantly, on Lord's days, on week ays, *in season, and out of season*, and was in his ele- ent when he was in his work. He took pains in pre- aring what he preached, and then took pains in de- vering it, and did not think that either one would xcuse the other; either that if a sermon was well udied, it was no matter how dully and carelessly it as preached; or that if it were preached with livelі- ss, it was no matter how slight and superficial the reparation was: no, he knew, that they who are ade fishers of men, have need to mind their busi- ss, both when they are fishing, and when they are ending their nets.

You who knew fully his doctrine and manner of life, member with what unwearied vigour he went on in s work for many years; how he went from strength to strength, and his bow was renewed in his hand; with what courage and holy contempt he looked upon the reproach of men, and their revilings, and like the prophet, *set his face as a flint*, for the advancing of serious godliness. And he found that in waiting on the Lord he renewed his strength, and therefore would not hearken to those who suggested, *Master, spare thyself*. Those who are enabled to do thus have reason to be thankful; while those who are not may yet be very useful, and ought not to be discou- raged, since God requires, and will accept and bless, according to what a man has, and not accord- ing to what he has not. So much was his heart upon his work, that he complained of being too much hin- dered in needed and desired ministrations, in which he would willingly give his pains, as that which was a great grief and burthen to him. I have reason to think, that which at length sunk his spirits, and broke his strength, was not so much his working as his not working.

(2.) Great cheerfulness and holy confidence, when he saw the day of death approaching. Many who are very gay and pleasant while they are well, and in health, when they come to be sick, when painful threatening distempers grow upon them, when they find death working in them, and that they are already taken into the custody of its messengers, how are they cast down, and how is their countenance fallen! But it was not so with him: the cheerfulness of his spirit being founded on a good basis, continued to the last, and he walked through the valley of the sha- dow of death, as one who even there feared no evil.[o]

He looked back with comfort upon all the way in which the Lord his God had led him in this wilder- ness,[p] and encouraged his family to trust in God and his providence, from the experience which he had had of God's goodness to him, and particularly in the abundant kindnesses he received from his friends, now in his last illness, which he had a very grateful sense of, and for which he gave thanks to God.

He looked forward with comfort upon a blessed state on the other side death. When he found na- ture sensibly decaying, he said to some of his friends, "Well, if God has any more work for me to do, he can repair these decays, and will do it; and if not, blessed be God, I have a good home to go to, and this is a good time to go home."

A little before he died, he said to those about him, he had four props, which he staid himself upon, and that he found them firm, and they did not sink under him when he leaned on them: 1. "The incarnation of Christ, and his taking our nature upon him." 2. "His oblation of himself a sacrifice for our sins." 3. "His resurrection from the dead for our justifica- tion." And, 4. "The intercession which he ever lives

o Ps. xxiii. 4.

p Deut. viii. 2.

to make for all that come to God by him." These he resolved to rest upon. Thus to him to live was Christ, and to die gain. Christ was all in all to him. Thus, thus he ventured into the invisible world, thus embarked for eternity in the never-failing vessel of Christ's mediation, as a poor sinner in the arms of an all-sufficient Saviour: and it is the excellency of our holy religion, that it furnishes us with living comforts in dying moments, and enables us to triumph over death and the grave, as those who through Christ are more than conquerors.

2. Let us see what improvement we may make of the truth contained in this text, and confirmed by this providence, that we have the gospel treasure in earthen vessels.

(1.) It may be many ways instructive to us who are ministers, and may remind us of our duty.

[1.] Are we earthen vessels? Then we have reason to be very humble, and low in our own eyes, and to take great care that we never think of ourselves above what is meet, but always think soberly. Let us watch over our own spirits, that we harbour not any conceit of ourselves, or confidence in ourselves, or contempt of our brethren, remembering what we are. We are but vessels, and have nothing that is valuable but what we have received, and are intrusted with; and if we have received it, and received it but in trust, why then do we boast?[q] or what have we to boast of? We are no more, no better, that what the free grace of God makes us every day.

We are of the earth, and therefore it becomes us to abase ourselves before God, and to put our mouth in the dust, and acknowledge ourselves unworthy to speak to, or speak from, the Lord of glory.[r] We are of the same mould with others, and therefore ought to condescend to the meanest of the flock of Christ for their good; and to be so far from *lording it over God's heritage*, as to make ourselves the servants of all, as being less than the least of all saints, and the meanest creatures that ever called God Father.

[2.] Are we earthen vessels? Then let us not be indulgent of our bodies, nor of their ease, or appetites. What needs so much ado about an earthen vessel, when after all our care and pains about it we cannot alter the property of it, but brittle it is still, and must inevitably be broken after a while. Let not this earthen vessel be enshrined, and made an idol of, nor the belly made a god of; but let it know its place, let it be kept under, and brought into subjection,[s] and kept employed as a servant to the soul in the service of God: our principal care must be about the treasure, duly to dispense that, and about the vessel, only in order thereunto. We then, indeed, make much of our bodies, it is the most we can make of them, when we make use of them as instruments of righteousness to God's honour.

[3.] Are we earthen vessels? Then let us not be empty vessels. A vessel of gold or silver is of considerable value, though it be empty; but an earthen vessel, if empty, is good for little, but is thrown among the lumber. Let us get our hearts replenished with the gospel-treasure, with sanctifying grace for our own benefit, and with spiritual gifts for the benefit of others. Let us be filled with the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, filled with the Scriptures, filled with devout affections and holy dispositions, that we may be thoroughly furnished for every good word and work; and, in order hereunto, let us give attendance to reading, to meditation; and, as long as we live, be still improving and adding to our stock, that we may bring forth things new as well as old; and it may appear, though we are still spending, we have still, by the blessing of God on our studies, fresh supplies.

[4.] Are we earthen vessels? Then let us be clean vessels. It is enough, that as earthen we are mean by nature, we cannot help that, but let us not make ourselves vile by sin. Let us possess these earthen vessels in sanctification and honour,[t] as temples of the Holy Ghost, which it is sacrilege to pollute: the bodies of all Christians are so, much more the bodies of ministers, with whom the gospel treasure is lodged, who are therefore concerned to keep themselves unspotted from the world and the flesh, lest if, like Eli's sons, they make themselves vile, they make even the sacrifices of the Lord to be abhorred,[u] as good food is in a dirty vessel. If they must be clean who bear the vessels of the Lord,[v] much more must they be so who are themselves his vessels. Let our conversation be with all purity,[w] nor let any blot of any kind cleave to our hands: let us carefully avoid filthy lucre, and every filthy lust, every thing that looks like it, and leads to it. And since it is our business to compass God's altar,[x] let us, with the priests under the law, frequently wash in the gospel laver. Lord, *not my feet only, but also my hands, and my head*,[y] and my heart.

[5.] Are we earthen vessels? Then let us take heed of dashing one against another; for nothing can be of more fatal consequence than that to earthen vessels, no, nor to the treasure that is deposited in them. It is not only the duty of ministers, in conformity to the design of their ministry, to be at peace among themselves, but it is their interest; for if they clash with one another, both sides are in danger of being broken: no better can come of it, when the *potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth*.[z] They who think, because they are stronger vessels they can crush the weaker, should remember they are still

q 1 Cor iv. 7. r Gen. xviii. 27. s 1 Cor. ix. 27.
t 1 Thess. iv. 4. u 1 Sam. ii. 17.
v Isa lii. 11. w 1 Tim. v 2. x Ps. xxvi. 6.
y John xiii. 9. z Isa. xlv. 9.

but earthen ones, and it may prove a crush to themselves.

What if some, according to the light God has given them, stand up for a Christian liberty, in those things wherein others, according to the light God has given them, yield a Christian obedience, since there are those on both sides who do it unto the Lord, and give God thanks,[a] why should they judge or set at nought each other? They are both earthen vessels, that have their infirmities, and seeing through a glass darkly, may be mistaken;[b] why should they not bear with one another, strengthen the hands of one another, since they both are intrusted with that treasure which *consists not in meats and drinks, but in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*[c]

Let us therefore study the things which make for peace, and unite our zeal against popery, that common enemy; for if God, for our sins, should suffer that to prevail against us, it will be a rod of iron to break in pieces all these potter's vessels: and we cannot do it better service, than to quarrel among ourselves; for if we bite and devour one another, we shall soon be consumed one of another,[d] at least so far as to become an easy prey to that great devourer.

[6.] Are we earthen vessels? Then let us bear contempt and reproach with patience, and not think it strange, or fret at it. It would contribute very much to the quiet and repose of our own minds, if we could but learn *spernere se sperni,—to despise being despised,* and not to be disturbed or moved by it. Now those who overvalue themselves, cannot easily bear to be undervalued by others; let us therefore, not only by keeping a good conscience, have this to say, to those who think and speak ill of us, that it is false and unjust, and our hearts condemn us not; but by keeping the grace of humility in its strength and exercise, have this to say, to those who think and speak slightly of us, that they cannot have a meaner opinion of us than we have of ourselves, nor lay us lower before men, than we lay ourselves every day before God. What else can earthen vessels expect, but to be despised and thrown under foot? Let us make sure the honour that comes from God, and then reckon it a very small thing to be judged of man's judgment.[e]

[7.] Are we earthen vessels? Then let us often think of being broken and laid aside, and prepare accordingly. We are in use for a while, and it is our honour and delight to be employed in the service of Christ and souls. But what is our strength, that we should hope to be long thus employed? *And what is our end, that we should* expect to *prolong our life? Is our strength the strength of stones? or is our flesh of brass?*[f] No, we are earthen vessels, and are hastening to the dust; let us therefore work the works of him that sent us while it is day;[g] let us fill up our time with that which will turn to some good account or other, and improve all our opportunities of doing good, though it be in the lowest sphere of usefulness, as those who know and consider the day of our service is hastening off, and the day of our account is hastening on. Let us follow our work with vigour and resolution, that at length we may finish our course with joy and honour; in a believing expectation, that these earthen vessels, though sown, as you have seen, in weakness, dishonour, and corruption, shall shortly be raised in power, and glory, and incorruption; these *vile bodies,* made like *Christ's glorious one, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue al things to himself,* that in glory, as well as grace, the excellency of the power may be of him.

(2.) This doctrine may be of use to you all. Are your ministers earthen vessels?

[1.] Thank God for the gospel treasure, though it be put into earthen vessels; nay, thank God that it is in such vessels, that it may be the nearer to you, and the more within your reach; and give all diligence to make sure your interest in this treasure. What will it avail us, that we have the gospel in our land, if we have it not in our hearts, that we have the sound of it about us, if we have not the savour of it within us? that we have Bibles in abundance in our houses, and in our hands, if we have not a Bible religion reigning in our souls?

You are laying up treasures of this world's wealth, it may be; O that you would be so wise for your souls and eternity, as to lay up for yourselves that treasure, which will make you rich towards God! which will send you rich out of this world, when death will have stripped you of all your possessions and enjoyments here.

[2.] Esteem the earthen vessels for the treasure's sake that is put into them; esteem them highly in love, as ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God;[h] and as such make use of them, and show respect to them. The greatest honour and pleasure you can do them, is to draw from the treasure that is put into them, in your profiting by their ministrations, and making your profiting to appear. As far as you find they deliver Christ's errand, receive it and them for his sake.

And since they are earthen vessels, do all you can to strengthen their hands in their work, to forward it, and to further the success of it; and take heed of doing any thing to discourage them. Throw not those vessels to the ground hastily, because in something or other they do not please you; for remember, they are earthen vessels, and they are your own. They who by their loose and irregular walking, or by their unruliness or peevish strifes, sadden the hearts

[a] Rom. xiv. 6. [b] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. [c] Rom. xiv. 17. [d] Gal. v. 15. [e] 1 Cor. iv. 3. [f] Job vi. 11, 12. [g] John ix. 4. [h] 1 Cor. iv. 1.

of faithful ministers, do more than they think of toward the hindering of their work, and the shortening of their days, and perhaps will have a great deal to answer for shortly.

[3.] Bless God that the breaking of the earthen vessel is not the loss of the heavenly treasure. Ministers die, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever; and a seed of ministers shall be raised up to preach it, and a seed of Christians to profess it, both which shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation.[i] Ministers hold forth this light, but it shall not die in their hands; they hold this treasure, but it shall not be buried in their graves; for though we see the end of the conversation of those who have spoken to us the word of God, have seen their exit, and shall see them no more, yet we are sure that *Jesus Christ* is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*[k]

And therefore, since Christ has provided that there should be a succession of these earthen vessels, why should not you look out accordingly? Apply yourselves to him who has the residue of the Spirit, and who holds the stars in his right hand, and attend his conduct.

[4.] Let the glory of all the benefits you have, or may have, by the ministry of the gospel, be given to God, to him only, to him entirely; for from him the *excellency of the power is.* No praise is due to us, we have a great deal in ourselves to be ashamed of, and nothing to boast of, nothing to trust to; the more we do for God, the more we are indebted to him for employing us in his service, and enabling us for it; and therefore let every crown be cast at the feet of free grace, and every song sung to the humble strain, (Ps. cxv. 1.) *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.*

[5.] Let the consideration of the frailty and mortality of your ministers quicken you to make a diligent improvement of their labours, while they are continued with you. You have the treasure in earthen vessels, therefore delay not to make it yours, lest the vessels that are most likely to convey it to you, should break, and others such should not be raised up, and so you come short of it. *Behold, now is the accepted time*, therefore put not off the great work you were sent into the world about to a further time, but *to-day, while it is called to-day*, hear the voice of Christ, and heed it. *Yet a little while is the light with you*, therefore walk and work while you have the light.[l] He who will not send to you by a messenger from heaven, will not send to you by a messenger from the grave: if you believe not Moses and the prophets, your ministers, when once laid in the dust, shall be no more reprovers to you; nor Samuel be raised from the dead to advise Saul, who would not be advised by him while he was with him. By these, therefore, be admonished now, at length in this your day, to know and understand the things that belong to your peace, lest you despair at the last when they are hid from your eyes.[m]

i Ps. xxii. 30. k Heb. xiii. 7, 8. l John xii. 36. m Luke xix. 42.

A CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE OF THE REV. DANIEL BURGESS.

He was born about the year 1645, at Staines in Middlesex, where his father, Mr. Daniel Burgess, was at that time minister, but afterwards removed to Sutton, in Wiltshire, and then to Collinburn Dueis, in the same county, a very considerable living, I am told, of about 400*l.* per annum; and thence he was turned out by the *Act of Uniformity*, choosing rather to quit it on the fatal *Bartholomew Day*, 1662, than to wrong his conscience; and with what little he had of his own, by the blessing of God, made a shift to maintain and educate a numerous family.

This son of his being looked upon to be a child of extraordinary ability, he sent him, at nine years old, to Winchester school; and, after some time, he was chosen on the foundation, where, as is supposed, he continued till he removed to the university. He was entered Commoner of Magdalen-Hall in Oxford, in *Mich.* term, 1660, when we take him to be but about fifteen years of age; so great was his proficiency. That house then flourished much under Dr. Henry Wilkinson, who was then principal of it, but was turned out by the Act of Uniformity. His tutor was one Mr. Northmore, a Devonshire man, of great note for piety and learning, and an acute disputant.

One who was his contemporary in Magdalen-Hall, gives us this account of him, that he was observed to be a very close hard student, and his demeanour in the house was, in all respects, very good.

He continued there till he was Bachelor's standing; but then he and some others his contemporaries

in the same house, (Mr. Brice and Mr. Cudmore,) scrupling something that was required of them for their degree, as I am informed, chose rather to wave taking it, than to submit to the impositions they were then dissatisfied in.

Soon after that he left the university, and went to his father's in the country, and in a little while went to be chaplain to Mr. Foyl, of Chute, in Wiltshire; from thence he moved into the family of Mr. Smith of Tedworth, in the same county, as tutor to his and some other gentlemen's sons. After some years he was courted by the Earl of Orrery, Lord President of Munster, (who was Mr. Baxter's great friend,) to go over with him to Ireland; which he did about the year 1667.

The Earl set up a school at Charlevill for the strengthening of the interest of the protestant religion in that kingdom, and nominated Mr. Burgess the head-master of it. There he had the education of the sons of many of the nobility and gentry of that part of Ireland. After he left that school, he was for some time chaplain to the Lady Mervin, near Dublin.

He was ordained in Dublin, by Dr. Harrison, Dr. Rolls, and some other ministers there. There he married Mrs. Briscoe, by whom he had a son and two daughters.

He continued in that kingdom about seven years; but his father growing infirm, sent for him over to settle near him, which he did in 1674.

He took up his residence at Marlborough in Wiltshire, where he applied himself closely to the work of the ministry, as the difficulty of the times would permit: for he had the courage to put to sea in a storm, and when very few nonconformists did.

He laboured abundantly, and with great success, at Marlborough, and in the parts adjacent, and afterwards preached statedly at Baden, and occasionally at Hungerford, Ramsbury, Alborn, and other places thereabout.

And as he was much followed by those who loved and valued his ministry, so he was greatly persecuted by those who hated it, and much hardship he underwent. Being once taken up for preaching, he was committed to the common gaol, at Marlborough, where he had nothing either to sit down, or lie down, upon, but was forced to walk all night, till next day his friends got a bed in to him at a window. He was likewise denied a copy of his commitment; but after some time he came out upon bail. His prosecutions at assizes and sessions were very expensive to him; and as he laboured, so he suffered, abundantly.

The violence of his prosecutors in the country at length forced him to London, about the year 1685. And there he was when the dissenters had some breathing time allowed them, in 1687, and then he first began to be taken notice of in the city; and some little singularities he had in his preaching, made him to be the sooner and the more taken notice of: and in a little time his hearers were very numerous; and among them divers persons of distinction formed themselves into a society, and took a meeting-place for him in Bridges-street, near Covent Garden: divers of them were the remains of Dr. Manton's congregation thereabouts. There he continued many years.

After that turn of the tide in favour of the dissenters, he was advised by a great man to take his advantage against those in the country, who had prosecuted him beyond the law; but he said, no, he had freely forgiven them, and would never meditate revenge.

He often said he chose rather to be profitable than fashionable in his preaching, and that he thought it cost him more pains to study plainness, than it did others to study fineness; and he would be willing to go out of the common way to meet with sinners, to persuade them to return to their God. "That is the best key (said he) that fits the lock, and opens the door, though it be not a silver or golden one." And many have acknowledged that they came to hear him at first only to scoff at him, and make a jest of what he said, but went away under such convictions about the concerns of their souls, and another world, as, it was hoped, ended in a happy change of their spirits.

In his preaching he insisted mostly upon the first and great principles of religion, which all good Christians are agreed in; and one who was a very competent judge told me, he thought he had as good a faculty in demonstrating them, and making them plain and evident, as most men he ever heard. He much lamented, and vigorously opposed, the growth of deism and infidelity among us, saying, he dreaded a "Christless Christianity." He meddled not with party matters, or matters of doubtful disputation, but plainly made it his aim to bring people to believe in Jesus Christ, and to live in all godliness and honesty. He was particularly careful to explain the two covenants of works and grace, and to guard against the two rocks of presumption and despair.

He was observed to be very serious in prayer, and not to allow himself there such liberties of expression as he sometimes took in preaching.

He had a great dexterity in resolving cases of conscience, abundance of which were brought him from other congregations as well as his own.

He now and then used some plain similitudes, or surprising turns of expression, or little stories, such perhaps as we find Bishop Latimer's sermons full of, (that celebrated preacher and martyr,) which, by some, were turned to his reproach; but it is certain many particular stories were maliciously fathered on him, that were abominably false, and were raised by a lying spirit only to obstruct his usefulness; and in the general he was industriously misrepresented

by many, who it is to be feared therein discovered no kindness for serious godliness. A gentleman having once the curiosity to go to hear him, when he had done, could scarce be made to believe that that was Mr. Burgess: for, said he, "*I never heard a better sermon in my life!*"

His moderation was known unto all men, and he often said he cared not for being distinguished by any denomination, but that of a *Christian of Antioch*.

He was a most agreeable man in conversation, (which is all I can say concerning him of my own knowledge,) very ingenious and pleasant, and his discourse good, and to the use of edifying. He had wit and learning, and could use them aright.

He was much respected by many considerable men: and, like St. Paul, passed by honour and good report, as well as by dishonour and evil report. The excellent Dr. Bates, I am told, had a particular kindness for him.

His delight was much in his study, and there he spent most of the day, and was uneasy when he was interrupted, or called from it, unless it were to do some good office. He went from strength to strength in his work, and chose rather to *wear away* than to *rust away*.

It is well known, he had many very sore trials in the latter end of his time, and some of them went very near him: the unkindnesses, at least apprehended, of some of his friends, much nearer than the insults of his enemies; which yet, said he, "I have never inclined to express my feeling of to any friend save *Elmah, Emanuel* only. But it must and shall be said, to the praise of new-covenant grace, (so he goes on in the paper I have by me,) of never-failing grace: all my nights are not sleepless, all days are not restless, every friend is not found faithless, nor are all enemies found useless: all disturbed studies are not tasteless, all the disadvantageous sermons have not proved fruitless, all the various troubles have not been comfortless, nor the comforts mixed with them successless. Some grapes have been gathered from both sorts of thorns, and the dung, wherewith the tree is so much soiled, it is hoped will make it the more fruitful. Remember what I add, when you see me not, and when I shall be seen no more. I am near home; and, whatever falls on me betwixt this and home, I shall strive myself, and exhort such as you, to maintain a holy gospel alacrity and cheerfulness: because it is most sure, 1. Our God approves it, and requires it in all states. 2. Our Lord Jesus is anointed to give it to us. 3. Our holy infirmity-helper is sent to work it in us. 4. Our dangerous enemy is advantaged by our want of it. 5. It is our spiritual bread, to strengthen us. 6. It is our bright armour, to adorn and defend us. Hereof think you, therefore, in your supplications for yourselves, and for a poor servant of that Lord, whose oblation and intercession we count our best and only riches: content, I hope, (as Luther spake,) to let our names be vilified, so that his name may be hallowed and glorified. I am sure new-covenant grace is cordial, and very supporting; and I hope no day shall pass without my experience thereof."

During his last sickness, which continued some months, and was purely a decay of nature, he had a great composure of mind, and was very much in a heavenly frame. He expressed an entire submission to the divine will, often repeating the words of David: *If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again to see the ark and his habitation; but if not, here I am, let the Lord do with me as seemeth good in his eyes.* He said, if he must work no more, he would rather be "idle under ground, than idle above ground."

His great weakness disabled him from speaking much; but most that he did say was heavenly and profitable. He once said, a little before his death, "I thank God, I have been dying every day in the week. With God is terrible majesty: and that the guilty world will find ere long. Who can dispute an all-knowing God, or evade his charges? But there is a Mediator, an Emanuel. O for a Christ, or else I die! O for that covenanting act to make him ours!

The evening before his death, a friend who came to see him, speaking of public affairs, said, it was feared there would be a storm; he answered with cheerfulness, "But God will house some of his children first." And when he was so weak, that he could scarce speak so as to be understood, he said, "*Well, here is all trouble at the gate; but when got through it, no more, no more.*" And when he seemed to be fainting away, and one of his near relations thereupon cried out, in a fright, when he recovered himself, he asked what was the meaning of that shriek: "*We thought you had been dying.*" said they: "*And what if I had.*" said he, "*what needed that confusion?*" Thus willingly, thus cheerfully, did he enter into the joy of his Lord.

He was buried at St. Clement Danes church, Strand, London, January 31, 1712-13.

The books he published were these: *Soliloquies*, which he printed in Ireland. *Mr. Noah Webb's funeral sermon*, in 1675, when he was in Wiltshire. And after he settled in London: *A call to sinners*, written at the request of Judge Rotheram, for the use of condemned criminals. *Three questions plainly resolved. A discourse of the Lord's Supper. Counsel to the rich*, with an address to King William. *Of reconciliation to God. Characters of a godly man, more or less grown in grace. The Christian decalogue. Hastiness to anger reproved. Directions for reading the word of God profitably. The golden sufferers*, the first sermon preached to the societies for reformation of manners. *Holy contention for the faith. Duties of parents and children. Proof of the Scriptures' divine original. Sure way to wealth. Funeral sermons for Mrs. Hook, Mr. Fleming, Dr. Rolls, and the Countess*

of Ranelagh. A sermon in the morning exercise, 1689, *concerning the conversion of young people. The most difficult duty made easy: or, directions to bring our hearts to forgive injuries. Foolish talking and jesting described and condemned*, in a sermon on Eph. v. 4. *Rules for hearing the word with certain and saving benefit. Forty aphorisms concerning riches. Poisons and antidotes; the sins whereby poverty tempts; and helpful considerations against them. Mrs. Sarah Bull's funeral sermon. The death and rest, resurrection and blessed portion, of the saints, with the work of the Redeemer and redeemed. Man's whole duty, and God's wonderful entreaty of him thereunto. Advice to parents and children.* And, *a Latin defence of nonconformity*, entitled, *Appellatio ad Fratres Exteros—A call to the expelled brethren.*

A CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE OF LIEUTENANT ILLIDGE,

FIFTY YEARS IN THE MILITIA OF THE COUNTY OF CHESTER:

CHIEFLY COLLECTED FROM HIS OWN PAPERS.

Christian Reader,

It is well observed by the wise man, (Prov. xiv. 10.) that the *heart knows its own bitterness*, and its own fears, cares, desires, joys, and hopes, and expectations; that as there is occasion, it is natural and easy to speak or write most feelingly concerning them. These are those *things of a man that no man knoweth, save the spirit of man which is in him*, (1 Cor. ii. 11.) which is therefore called *the candle of the Lord, which searcheth all the inward parts of the belly*, that is, of his own heart, (Prov. xx. 27.) especially when this candle is lighted by the word and Spirit of God. And when a person makes it his business to accomplish a diligent search, doubtless he may arrive at a certain knowledge of his own state and condition, with reference to God and his salvation, by observing the complexion of his own soul from time to time, and looking at himself in the glass of God's law, he may come to know what *manner of man he is.*

The world sees our ways and actions, and is apt to be either too severe on the one hand, or too favourable on the other hand, in their remarks upon them: but as to this, which is the most hidden, and yet most excellent, part of man, the thoughts, the designs, the various workings of the heart, and the secret and solemn transactions between God and it; here a man is best able to draw his own picture: which this good man has done for his own use, in the manuscripts he has left behind him, that he might know (but not with any design to make known to others) what manner of man he was.

What he had done more at large, his friend has in this extract done in miniature, and taken the liberty to show it to the world. This we find done by some, who, for their eminency in gifts, and learning, and station, have made a much greater figure in the church, and in the world; and it has met with good acceptance, and been of use for the assisting, quickening, and warning of others. And we are not without hopes, that this may have the like good effects; that it will not be despised, but be the more acceptable to some, for its plainness and simplicity, as proceeding from an honest farmer, who was a good husband of his time, and was instructed by the grace of God how to cultivate his soul, as well as his ground, and suffer neither to be overgrown with briers and thorns. These thoughts, expressions, prayers, and self-reflections, may suit the case of many others, as well as his; the tradesmen, the farmers, those who are in a public post, the aged and infirm, may here meet with instruction; and especially it may be of use to work in us such a sense of death and eternity as he had, and as, I think, is not common.

I know it will be a surprise to many of his friends, because it represents him to be a better man than, it may be, they took him to be, though, I hope, not a better man than, by the grace of God, he really was. They saw his outside; this shows them his inside: they saw some of his failings, and remember some of his gross sins; here they may see what bitterness they were to him in the reflection. And I cannot but expect, that all good men who loved him, will rejoice and glorify God in him, for the grace given unto him, whereby he was victorious over those foolish and hurtful lusts, to which too many (the more is the pity) still continue in bondage.

The case reminds me of the apostle's remarks on men's sins and good works, (1 Tim. v. 24, 25.) Some men's sins are open beforehand, &c. *that is, their sins are some way open*, or they had not come under censure; and their good words must be some way manifest, or they can have no right to absolution: so the learned Dr. Hammond understands the text. Then by good works understand, such are the genuine fruits of an unfeigned faith, and sound repentance for God pardons and absolves such, and only such, as truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel

But then, as to those his friends and acquaintance, who have gone a great length with him in sin, but yet are not conscious to themselves of such reflections on themselves as they find in these papers, it does not become me to threaten or judge; but I would with the tenderest compassion warn and exhort them, that they would bethink themselves, as they are reading the following lines, and assure themselves, that there is an eternal difference between good and evil, how industrious soever some may be to confound the ideas of them; and that when they come to die, and enter on their eternal state, they must expect no true peace on any other terms, than those on which, we trust, this good man has both hope and peace: and on these terms, peace be with you. Amen.

THE LIFE OF LIEUT. ILLIDGE.

He was born in Weston, in the parish of Wibunbury, in Cheshire; his father was of Cherlton; his grandmother was of the Pools of Blackwell; his grandfather, his father, and himself, had each four sons, and no daughter. His mother was Cecilia, daughter to Mr. Chesnis, of Mickley in Wrenbury parish, who, besides four sons, had seven daughters, who were all married, had children, and died widows.

His father once intended him for the ministry, he having a very good capacity for learning; but neither his father's abilities, nor his own inclination, would permit it. However, he made good proficiency in school learning.

When he was about fifteen years of age, being a younger brother, he was put apprentice to a shoemaker in Nantwich, whom he served faithfully; and it was a comfort to him, in the reflection long after, that he did so. When he was out of his time, he went about to divers cities and towns, to improve himself in his trade. At last he came to London, where he staid about a year; and it was a satisfaction to him in his old age, to be able to say, that in all that time he did not remember that he had neglected the religious observation of one sabbath; and that he did not keep ill company, or haunt ill houses, but delighted in the manly exercises of wrestling, leaping, &c. He was at London at the time of the return of King Charles II. And the spring following came down to Nantwich, married Mary, the daughter of Richard Price, and widow of William Minshul, and set up his trade, which he followed seventeen years.

But his genius led him more to that ancient, innocent, and honourable employment of husbandry, which, he says, was his chief worldly delight; and therefore, when he was about forty years of age, he took a rack-lease of a farm near Nantwich, on which his father and mother lived and died. It was looked upon by some of his friends as a hard bargain. But by the blessing of God, upon his great ingenuity and industry in improving the lands, he lived very comfortably upon it for thirty years, *rejoicing* with *Issachar* in *his tents*. In the first year of his removal into the country, he lost very considerably by suretiship. He said, his father, on his death-bed, gave him much good counsel, to keep the sabbath, to be obedient to his mother and master, and not to take tobacco, (he himself having found great inconveniences by it,) which he had carefully observed; and (said he) if he had given me the same charge against suretiship, it might, perhaps, have prevented that loss.

His father and mother were religious, and brought him up in the fear of God. He relates in some of his papers, that when he was about ten or eleven years of age, there was a solemn fast kept in Nantwich church, upon occasion of a great drought, where his father and the family attended. Divers ministers prayed and preached; but he was particularly affected with a sermon of Mr. Burghal's of Acton; (who was afterwards silenced by the Act of Uniformity;) his opening the evil of sin, and man's misery because of it, brought many tears from his eyes. He had a book written by Mr. Burghal, called "The perfect way to die in peace;" which, when he was old, he delighted much in. After this he betook himself to secret prayer and reading good books, and took pleasure in hearing the word, to which he all along continued a good affection.

After he married, and set up his trade, he was taken into the militia, and continued an officer in it to his death. At the last muster he observed, there was only himself and one more left alive, of about nine score who were in when he entered. He was of a lively, active temper, very bold, and would turn his back on no man, but not abusive or quarrelsome; he loved the soldiers, and they loved him; he took great pleasure in military affairs, and had good judgment in them, which recommended him to the esteem of his superior officers, who loved him.

But this proved a great snare to him; for though he fell not into that height of profaneness that many do, yet he left off to watch and be sober, and for many years lived a vain and careless life; often sitting up till midnight and morning, drinking and mispending his time and money; excusing it to himself, that this was the way to oblige the gentlemen, and get an interest in them, for the promoting of his trade, having but little to begin the world with. His reflections upon this long after are: "Happy, thrice happy, are they, who not only remember their Creator in their youth, but continue to do so from their youth up; which I humbly confess, to my sorrow and shame, that my conversation has

been loose and extravagant; I often ventured wickedly upon sin, against knowledge and conscience, and quenched the Spirit, and neglected the day of visitation. But this I can truly say, it was always with regret and reluctance. I have been a great sinner, but, through grace, a penitent sinner; both my own sins, and the sins of others, were a grief and trouble to me."

The chief thing that induced him to leave off his trade, and retire into the country, was, because he was weary of this evil course of life, and desirous to break off from that company, which he found to be a snare to him; and he found the benefit of it, and walked much more circumspectly afterwards, and kept a more strict watch upon himself. "Such a day," says he, "I unhappily fell into ill company, and, contrary to my inclinations, designs, and resolutions, was overcome by their enticements to drink to excess: a sin I have been often guilty of, and have cause to repent of all my life long. I have of late years set myself much against it; and not without success, through mercy." He set down what were the prayers which, with many tears, he offered up to God on this sad occasion. "Good Lord, in mercy, give me strength and power to overcome this, and all the enemies of my salvation; and hereafter to resist all such wicked and evil temptations, both from men and devils. Lord, thou art merciful to all true penitents, but a consuming fire towards obstinate sinners: in tender mercy, look down upon me thy poor, unworthy, sinful creature, even one of the worst of thy creation, because I have known thy will, but have not done it. Now, O Lord, if thou shouldst be severe and strict with me, I were undone to all eternity. Strike this rock, O Lord, that the waters may gush out, even floods of tears. O purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me in the blood of Christ, and I shall be whiter than snow." He said to one who was no company keeper; "I wish I had done as you have done. If I were to live my life over again, I would never keep company with those that are given to drinking." Being once at a feast where full glasses were pressed, his parish minister, Mr. Jencks, being present, took him aside, and begged of him not to humour such sots, to his own damage and danger. This good caution confirmed his resolution, and made him more afraid than ever of such company; and through the grace of God, by degrees he got a victory over temptations to this sin.

Let drunkards, who make a mock at this sin, read this and tremble; for it will certainly be *bitterness in the latter end*, how light soever they make of it; taking a pleasure, and taking a pride, in making themselves and others drunk, and turning it off with a jest. Let them know, that they must either weep for it, and bewail it with godly sorrow, and by a holy violence used with themselves, must break off from it, and become sober, as this good man did, or they must drink of the cup of the Lord's wrath, which is poured out without mixture in a lake of fire and brimstone, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, and not a drop of water allowed to cool the tongue. For, whatever they say, the God of truth has said, *Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God:*[a] they shall *not have peace who go on to add drunkenness to thirst.*[b] The wine that *gives its colour in the cup, at the last bites like a serpent.*[c]

And let not those who are unhappily entangled in temptations to this sin, despair of getting a victory over it, through the grace of God, which shall not be wanting to those that desire it, and pray for it, as this good man did, and are careful and faithful in the use of proper means for the improving of that grace. Those who are acceptable to their company, as he was, and upon that account are courted and respected in company, have need to double their guard, lest under pretence of obliging their friends, and entertaining them, and improving themselves and others by conversation, they wrong and ruin their own souls.

And let those who are out of the way of temptations of this kind, keep themselves so, and bless God, that they are so happy as to be strangers to this sin; and hope the best concerning others whom they see entangled in it, that they repent in secret of their folly, and that they may yet, through the help of divine grace, recover themselves out of this snare of the devil, in which so many are led, and held captive by him.

When he had attained to the age of fifty-seven, at which age both his father and mother died, that consideration, with some others, awakened him to a serious concern about his great change, and his everlasting state, and consequently to a closer application to the business of religion: then he began to be more diligent and serious than before, in prayer, reading, and other devout exercises. It was then, about the year 1694, that he set himself to write down his reflections and observations upon himself, his meditations and pious breathings towards God, memorandums of the sermons he heard, and very large collections out of the Scripture, and other good books he read, with some account of remarkable providences. This practice he continued from that time to his death, which was about fifteen years; and has left behind him seven books, three quartos, and four octavos, fairly written, which show him to be a man whose heart was very much upon another world, and who made it his great care to prepare for that world.

The reasons he gives for employing himself thus,

[a] 1 Cor. vi. 10. [b] Deut. xxix. 19. [c] Prov. xxiii. 31, 32.

are, because he had made it his chief end to honour the great God of heaven and earth, and his chief business to endeavour the salvation of his own precious and immortal soul; because he would often meditate on death, that he might prepare for his great change; because he would thus employ his vacant hours, that he might keep from idleness, and keep out of idle company. He hoped, likewise, that this practice would increase his knowledge, strengthen his faith, and give him more hopes of salvation. He also hoped it might be beneficial to his grandchildren, whom he desired to take the same method.

Much of what he wrote being transcribed out of the Bible and other good books, which might be thought needless, since the passages might be better read in their proper places, he thus excuses for it: that he transcribed those things which he was himself most affected with, and which, when they were collected and put together, would be the more ready for his use and meditation; that the writing of them over, would better settle them, and fix them in his memory; that both the writing and reading of them was pleasant and delightful to him; and that the time he employed herein, would, if not thus spent, in all probability, be worse spent. I wish others would be prevailed with to use the same expedient for the same good purposes.

The motto he wrote on his books was, "Piety is the way to prosperity, both now and hereafter." And thus he writes, "Should I fill my head with good thoughts, and this book with good sayings and sentences, yet, unless my heart be filled with sincerity and holy zeal, it is all as nothing." When he staid at home on the Lord's day in the afternoons, which he often did, while he lived in the country, that his whole family might go to church, he spent his whole time in this pious and profitable exercise.

And we shall now have little more to say of him, but what shall be gathered out of his own papers, and delivered in his own words, which it is hoped, may be regarded by some who had a kindness for him, and may make good impressions upon them, which may abide. We shall only glean some passages out of many of the same purport, and, for more clearness, reduce them to proper heads.

I. His deep concern about his soul and eternity. His soul was his darling, for thus he writes:

"O my soul, my precious soul, shall I hazard thee for all the good that is in the world? Surely there is an immortal spirit dwelling in the fleshly tabernacle, of more value than all earthly things, for it must live to all eternity, either in bliss or woe. This never-dying soul I value above all things here below. There is no greater folly or madness practised in this world, than over-caring for the body, and neglecting the immortal soul. The body hath no assurance of life one moment, nor of that dross and dung which most men so inordinately covet, which is transitory and fading, and not to be compared with our eternal concern. Even heathens, by the light of nature, did set a great value upon the soul of man; and shall not I then, who own myself to be a Christian, have the light of the gospel, and the knowledge of Christ, and many other benefits which tend to the advantage of my soul, shall not I above all things prize and take care of my immortal soul? Sad and miserable is their condition, who neglect their own souls, as the generality of men do. O my soul, let it be thy chief and continual care to seek and secure heaven!"

As he was walking in his fields, and looking on his improvements, he said to a friend who was with him, "All prospers, if the soul prosper. The most precious and valuable thing, that I am concerned for in this world, is my immortal, never-dying soul; which must fare in the next world according as I behave myself in this. O! it is rest for my precious and immortal soul, which I desire and aim at above all things whatsoever." He wondered at those who spent their precious time so contrary to reason and their own interest, when their immortal souls lie at stake, and are in danger to be lost to all eternity. "All my concerns here below (says he) will shortly end in death; and therefore it is my soul that I set so high a value upon, as the most precious jewel in the world, bought with the precious blood of the Son of God."

He writes this saying of Mr. Mede's: "O take heed thou art not found overvaluing other things, and undervaluing thy precious soul! Shall thy flesh, nay, thy beast, be beloved, and thy soul slighted? as if a man should feed his dog, and starve his child."

In a letter to his friend, who was concerned for his spiritual state, there are these passages: "I have read over and over your good advice, and seasonable admonitions. I take them very kindly, and give you great thanks, and do bless God, and shall do upon my knees, that any take so much care of my immortal soul. I may well take it as a message from God, whose assistance I humbly beg in the performance thereof, with your continued prayers on my behalf, against all the enemies of my salvation. With God's assistance, I shall endeavour to observe and keep your instructions, which are both necessary and pious. Your reproofs are sharp, but just and real. Should I go about to vindicate my past course of life, it is in vain; had I done any thing that were well, I am but an unprofitable servant, but shall daily beg for repentance and amendment of life. I desire two things of you; 1st, A frequent part of your prayers. 2dly, When you see or hear of any thing amiss in my conversation, that you would reprove me sharply: I shall take it kindly." So he writes, though to an inferior.

Dec. 16, 1690.

II. His exercise and expressions of repentance.

"It is my heart's desire to repent of all my sins. And I humbly and earnestly beg of God, that he would herein assist me with his Holy Spirit. It is with sorrow and shame, that I call to mind my sins, the sins of my whole life, humbly confessing them to the Almighty God. Lord, I repent, help my repentance, and make it sincere; Lord, I repent, accept my repentance through my blessed Saviour; in whose merits is my only hope of salvation. Lord, I repent, increase my repentance, that I may mourn for my sins all my days. Lord, I heartily grieve for them, and stedfastly purpose, by thy grace, to lead a new life. O seal my pardon in the blood of my Saviour, whom I stedfastly believe in. Lord, accept of sighs for tears; O that I could weep a flood of tears for my sins! O wicked wretch that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death? I desire to continue my repentance to my last moment, and to die repenting."

He writes many passages out of the books he read concerning repentance: as thus; "True repentance is a change of the whole man, the judgment, will, affections, conversation; it turns a man not only from this or that particular sin, but from all sin.—He whose mind and desires were before to fulfil the lusts of the flesh, and to prosper in the world, and enjoy the pleasures of it, now strives as hard to kill those desires, takes the world for vanity and vexation, and turns it out of his heart. No sin is rightly killed, till the love of every sin is killed. True repentance is turning to God, and setting our hearts and hopes on heaven, so that we now love holiness, and seek God's kingdom above all things in this world. To say we repent, and not to reform, to be sorry for sin to-day, and return to it to-morrow, is but counterfeit repentance."

Many confessions and lamentations of sin we find in his papers, with petitions for mercy: such as these;

"O God, when I call to mind the sins of my youth, the many and great offences, which I ungratefully committed against thee, my God; and when I consider my present state, how subject I am to failings and infirmities, and how apt I am to come short of my good designs and resolutions, I am almost ready to despair, and am full of doubts and fears: but when I call to mind the goodness and mercy, and the sufferings of my blessed Redeemer for me, I conceive some hopes."

"Lord, I am a sinful unworthy creature, that have made no suitable returns for the great and many mercies I have received from thee all the days of my life. Thou mightest justly have cut me off, and thrown me into utter darkness long ago; but good Lord, pardon my sins, and be reconciled to me, through the merits of my blessed Saviour. I have too much pampered this perishing body, and have taken too much delight in the vanities of this sinful world, little regarding the shortness and uncertainty of my life, and the greatness of that account I have shortly to make. My good desires, endeavours, and resolutions are often frustrated and disappointed; temptations overcome me; these are my daily grief. There is nothing in this world that troubles me more than sin: good Lord, remedy and amend all that is amiss in me, for Jesus's sake."

"O my soul, seek thou the Lord, humble thyself before him, beg for his grace, without which I can do nothing. Lord, I repent, and am ashamed when I look back, and consider how vile and wicked a creature I have been, the many great sins I have committed, none of which are hid from thine all-seeing eye; my sins of omission and commission, of weakness and wilfulness; many in number, heinous in nature. Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, thy poor sinful servant, who am not worthy to breathe in thine air, or to take thy holy name into my polluted lips."

"I cannot melt into tears, as I should, for my sins; but when I consider what my dear Saviour suffered for my sake, I find my mind greatly troubled, and the hardness of my heart is my grief. Where must I seek for succour, but from thee, my God? O help me, and deliver me for thy mercy's sake. Thou art the only Physician that canst heal maladies; O heal this hard distracted heart of mine; compose it, mollify it, make it such as thou wouldst have it, for Christ's sake."

"I have *known the will* of my heavenly Father, but have not done it; therefore deserve to be *beaten with many stripes*. O let me with regret and sorrow look back upon a loose, ill spent life, which I must be afflicted in soul for now, and must amend, or suffer for eternity. O let me cry out with the gaoler, *What shall I do to be saved?*"

"When I look back and consider the number and greatness of my sins, I cannot but admire the mercy of God in sparing me so long: O how often have I provoked his great Majesty to be angry with me, till he has destroyed me, and cast me into hell; but he had spared me, because his mercy and compassions never fail. Ever blessed, praised, glorified, and magnified be thy great and holy name."

"Lord, give me hearty sorrow for all my offences, and grant that I may never be at peace with myself, till I am at peace with thee."

"I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me; when I address myself to any spiritual or heavenly employment, when I design to draw nigh to God, and promise myself comfort in communion with him, then is evil present. Could I but enjoy a freedom from it in the season of my duty, and the time of my communion with God, what a comfort would it be! but then am I molested with wanderings and distractions, then is sin most busy. O this is my great misery and burthen. Good Lord, help me out of these troubles."

"Two things lie very heavy upon me at this present, and greatly trouble me; ingratitude under great mercies, and impenitence under great sins; Lord, help me under these great straits."

"I strive against sin, but am often overcome; fight, but am often foiled: Lord, assist me in my spiritual warfare, and make me a conqueror."

"The longer I live, the more sensible I am of my own frailties and infirmities, hardness of heart, distraction in duty, want of zeal in the service of God; these are my grievances; the *spirit willing*, but the *flesh weak. O wretched man that I am! My sin is ever before me.* But I am resolved, by the help of God, it shall have no rest or quiet in my heart; I will continue to fight against sin and Satan, and all the enemies of my salvation; and though, like the sons of Zeruiah, they are *too hard for me*, yet I will daily beg and pray for thy help, O Lord, and the assistance of thy Holy Spirit against them, without which I can do nothing that is good. *Mine iniquities are gone over my head, as a heavy burthen, they are too heavy for me;* but *I will declare mine iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin.*"

III. His particular striving against the sin of passion, and hastiness of spirit.

"Lord, thou knowest my frame; I humbly confess, to my shame and grief, that I have been passionate and impatient; it is a misery that has too much attended me in the whole course of my life: the Lord in mercy pardon me, and change my corrupt vile nature. Lord, give me patience and meekness, and an humble spirit, that I may bear with submission all the afflictions that come from thee, my God, and all the disturbances and injuries that are offered me by men."——Through the grace of God, he got very much the mastery of this corruption toward his latter end.

"I bless the Lord, I do what lies in me to live at peace with all men; I am willing to bear many wrongs, and freely forgive all men that have done me wrong; and were I satisfied that I had wronged any man, I would freely make restitution. I wish harm to no man: if any do to me, I pray God forgive them, for I freely do, as I desire to be forgiven myself. I confess, through passion I may jar with a neighbour, but I dare not bear malice, or harbour revenge in my heart, against any man living, nor ever had one suit or trial with any man in any court in all my life."

"I have read (says he) of a good man, who, when one wondered at his exceeding great patience in bearing injuries, answered, "When my heart is ready to rise against those that have done me wrong, I presently begin to think of the indignities and injuries that were done to Christ, which he bore patiently for me. If my own servant should pluck my beard, or smite me on the face, yet this were nothing to what my Saviour suffered; and I never leave off thinking on this, till my mind is still and quiet.—Who am I, that I should not be crossed?"

He found great advantage against this sin, by the frequent receiving of the Lord's supper; for, (says he,) "When I meet with wrongs and abuses, affront and injuries, they disturb and vex my mind, and often put me into a passion; and then, in haste, I threaten to go to law. But I presently consider that I am a Christian, that I was lately at the Lord's table, and must appear there again ere long, if not prevented by sickness or death; and how dare I then harbour malice or revenge? Then I soon alter my mind; for my great Creator hath said, *Vengeance is mine*, and my blessed Saviour hath strictly charged us *to love our enemies, and bless them that curse us.*"

IV. His doubts and fears about his spiritual state, with his good hopes and resolutions.

"When I inspect the state of my soul, doubts and fears arise; especially when I recollect the number and greatness of my sins, and observe the present hardness of my heart, and dryness of my eyes. I am subject to a wandering fancy and distractions in duty: God seems to frown, and to withdraw himself from me. It is sin that is the only cause of this my present misery; but when I think of God's mercies and Christ's merits, and the comfortable promises of the gospel, my hope revives. Lord, my sins are great, but thy mercies are greater; therefore, I will never despair: if I perish, it shall be at thy feet. *In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be confounded.*"

"I seldom miss any opportunity of coming to the Lord's table; but I want that sensible joy and communion with God, which many good Christians have, and that inward comfort, which is of more value than all the riches in the world. My heart is hard, my affections dull, I am often lukewarm, and unfit for holy duties. Lord, it is thou alone that canst help me, and vain is any other help; of myself I can do nothing; I have none to fly to but to thee; Christ is the rock on which my foundation shall be laid: O pluck me as a brand out of the fire. Thou hast said, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest:* these are comfortable words to a poor sinner. Assist me by thy Spirit, good Lord, that I may embrace them, and rightly apply them."

"O when will the happy time come, that I shall be set at liberty from sin and corruption, from the body and the world? When will the cares of this life cease to trouble me, that I may repose in God? His love and favour is the greatest comfort in the world, that will make a death-bed easy, and dying hours comfortable."

"It is the great mercy of God, that hath supported me under many temptations. I have often fallen; but, through the goodness of God, I have risen again. I have been long troubled with doubts

and fears, yet have not despaired of God's mercy. Let not his goodness encourage me to presumption or vain hopes, or to think my own case better than really it is; but put me upon striving to enter in at the strait gate, and working out my salvation with fear and trembling, that I may make my calling and election sure, while it is called to-day, because the night is very near, when I shall work no more. Lord, give me grace, though I want comfort."

It was some encouragement to him when he read the lives of good men, to find that they had the same exercises, particularly that of Mr. Philip Henry. "If such an eminent holy man" (said he) "that lived a life of communion with God, yet complained of wanderings and vain thoughts in duty, &c. I will not despond, who have the same burthens to complain of."

He also took comfort from a passage he transcribed from the present Lord Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, which was this: "The strongest encouragement of our endeavours towards heaven, is, that all our defects shall be supplied by the infinite merits of our Lord and Saviour, who knows the infirmities of our nature, takes the will for the deed, and admits honest endeavours in lieu of perfect obedience. The goodness of God is infinite, and his mercy is over all his works."

"I believe (says he) that vain and groundless hope of salvation is the ruin of many, who say they hope in Christ, but keep not his commandments; whereas, it is not saying, *Lord, Lord*, that he will accept, but doing the will of our Father; it is not my prayers, nor my reading good books, nor writing good things, that will bring me to heaven, without faith and repentance, and serving God in sincerity."

V. His self-examination, and evidences for heaven.

"Were I capable, I would write something of the hardness and deceitfulness of man's heart, since I can say so much on that subject by woful experience, for it hath been a continual trouble to me most of my days. "The heart" (says one) "is that which the eye of God is, and the eye of a Christian ought to be, chiefly fixed upon." Many an earnest prayer have I put up to God to soften this stony heart, and fix this wandering mind: O that at length my heart might be wrought into a right frame. Could I win my heart to God, and keep my heart with God, I should think myself a happy man. I pray daily that God would *create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.* O that I could obtain the favour of God, and communion with him, which I value more than all the riches of this world. The light of his countenance, an interest in Christ, and the assistance of his Holy Spirit, I desire above all worldly treasures."

"Lord, thou knowest all the secrets of my heart, and all my thoughts afar off, all my present designs and purposes, which, I hope, are well intended; but I want thine assistance. The heart is deceitful, and doubtless mine as bad as any; how then shall I judge of my spiritual state, which most judge too favourably of in their own case? If the heart be filled with sin, and so continues with delight, there is no room or habitation for God and Christ in it. O that I could put away all the evil of my doings, and repent with that repentance which is not to be repented of. So far as I know my own heart, these are my unfeigned desires. Help and assist me, O God, for thy mercy's sake. Let thy strength appear in my weakness."

"Let me not censure others, but begin at home, and examine my own conscience, and judge my own heart: I am in the sight and presence of God, whose all-seeing eye beholds all my thoughts, words, and actions; and it is dangerous to dissemble with God, or flatter myself."

Mr. Corbet's inquiry into the state of his soul, was of great use to him in this part of his work. "Doubts and fears arise, (says he,) I feel many conflicts between flesh and spirit; and though the flesh often prevails in some particular instances, yet I trust, through grace, the spirit hath the predominant power. Vain thoughts, unruly passions, often intrude into my heart, but they are unwelcome guests there, and soon turned out. I hope I shall never offend my God willingly; and that I do not delight or allow myself in any known sin."

"Some of my weak imperfect evidences for heaven are these: 1. My hope is built purely upon the mercy of God and the merits of Christ. 2. My designs, endeavours, and resolutions are frequently good. 3. It is my desire, delight, and practice to hear the word of God preached. 4. I have a great esteem for all that love and fear God, of what persuasion soever. 5. When I have done any action that I think is pleasing to God, it is my great joy and heart's delight. 6. When I have done any ill action, or committed any sin, it is the grief of my soul. 7. It is a very great trouble to me, to hear the name of God profaned, or his word undervalued, or evil spoken of. 8. I have been averse to law-suits, and, to my power, am a peace-maker. 9. I have been always willing and desirous to keep holy the Lord's day. 10. There is not that person living that I envy or hate, or seek to be revenged on; if any hate me, I pray God forgive them, for I forgive them freely. 11. Though I have been a vile sinner, yet, I hope, I can truly say, that I am a penitent sinner, and desire from the bottom of my heart, to sorrow for all my sins, and to amend my life: Good Lord, help me so to do. 12. I had rather have a heart to love God above all, to love him perfectly, than have all the riches, honours, and pleasures in this world. I would rather lose all things, than the grace and

favour of God, and the benefit of Christ, and the Holy Spirit. I hope I can truly say, with Mr. Corbet, as far as I am able to discern my own heart and ways, I have chosen the Lord for my portion; I take up my rest in him, and not in the creature. To love, fear, admire, and bless him, and to have communion with him, is my chief joy. I am heartily grieved for loving God so little: yet I am certain, I love nothing more than God, and in my esteem and choice, I prefer a spiritual, heavenly life above all things upon earth."

"Lord, I love thee, for I am grieved at thy absence, and rejoice in thy presence; I love those that are like thee; I love the place and duties where thou art wont to meet thy people; I am grieved when thou art dishonoured by myself or others; I would have a heart to love, and look, and long for thy coming and appearing in glory."

His particular actions he examined by the twelve questions in Mr. H.'s Communicant's Companion, *ch.* 4. which he transcribed and enlarged upon, concluding: "I have, to the best of my knowledge, examined myself upon these queries, and find that in many things I have fallen short, through negligence and human frailty; but in some things, conscience witnesseth for me, that according to my ability, I have kept my integrity; and I trust for the time to come, that, through the assistance of Almighty God, I shall walk more circumspectly."

VI. His contentment with his lot, and gracious contempt of this world.

Though he lived upon a rack-rent, yet he was very well pleased with the little he had of this world. Thus he writes: "It hath been my great happiness, through the goodness of God to me, that my passage through the world, thus far, hath been mostly pleasant and plentiful; I have had Agur's desire, neither poverty nor riches, being ever content with what God appointed for me. I always had a very grateful esteem of my own condition, and have not been subject to murmur and repine."

"It is my trouble, that the care and business of the world doth often take my thoughts off from better things; but I am endeavouring to bring my worldly affairs into less compass, that I may hang the world loose about me, may use it as if I used it not; setting my affections on things above, and seeking, first, the kingdom of God, not doubting, but that then other things shall be added."

"There is not one day of entire peace in these things; but either something troubles, or nothing satisfies. We may be happy without riches and honours, but cannot be happy without grace. It is madness in men, to lose their immortal souls for the dross and dung of this world. He that sets his heart upon this world, can never seek the world to come as he ought; therefore, O my soul, use all the care and diligence imaginable, to take thine affections off from the vanities of this world." Thus little do the things of time appear to those, to whom the great things of eternity are revealed by faith.

Archbishop Tillotson says, "Nothing doth so besot the mind, and extinguish in it the sense of divine things, as sensual pleasures do; if we fall in love with them, they will steal away our hearts from God. Let my soul therefore despise the world, and devote itself wholly to the fear and service of God."

"Worldly things often hinder the good designs of good men, and as for bad men, they carry them headlong to ruin; for they swim down the stream of pleasure, not considering what account they have to make, nor how it will be with them, when they lie gasping and groaning on their death-beds."

He had but little (in comparison) of the good things of this present time; yet he often said, "I have enough of this world, and as much as I desire:" and that he would not thank any one to give him 100*l.* per annum: For, "I have enough to maintain me, and am content with it; and if I had such an addition to what I have, instead of doing me good, it might perhaps do me hurt." Thus *godliness with contentment is great gain;* it is all the wealth in the world. They who think what they have enough, have enough; and who would desire more? Happy they who bring their mind to their condition.

VII. His private devotions.

It appears, by his papers, that he conversed much with God in solitude. Thus he writes in 1698: "It is my desire, my real purpose and full resolution, to do these two things for the future, as God shall enable me: 1. To fall down upon my knees three times a day to pray, and give thanks to God; so Daniel did, and David, evening, and morning, and at noon. 2. That the first and last thoughts of every day shall be of God; and that as soon as I lie down to sleep, I will call to mind the passages of the day: and how can I spend my time better, when I lie awake in the night, than in communing with God and my own heart. I know the fittest posture for prayer is upon my knees; yet, I believe, God will accept of prayers and ejaculations from his people, at any time, in any place, if they come from an upright heart."

"I bless God, according to my abilities, I frequently make my addresses to my great Creator, though I am unworthy to take his holy name into my polluted lips: I am sensible of my insufficiency for prayer, yet, I hope, my merciful Father will accept me; for he regards not so much the words of prayer, as the heart and the spirit of prayer; and he rejects no humble faithful suppliant, be his speech ever so weak; even broken words will serve, if they come from a broken heart. Prayer without sincerity is a lie to God. Lord, give me wisdom from above, and teach me to pray, so that my prayers may be acceptable to thee, my God; that every prayer may come warm from the heart, may be an effectual fervent

prayer, which availeth much. If we employ both head and heart in the service of our prayers, then we may pray at all times, and in all places. Whenever we have a heart to pray to God, he has an ear to hear. It is the heart God requires in this duty; for a dead, dull, heartless prayer is an abomination unto the Lord."

He much esteemed a book, called "The Liberty of Prayer," written by Mr. Jencks of Harley, read it much, and wrote many excellent passages out of it. He was for praying *always with all prayer;* and despised neither prayers by a form, nor extempore prayers, thinking each to have their excellences at several times; and that he who truly loves prayer, will truly love both.

In his family he prayed daily, and usually read the Scriptures, or caused them to be read, and sung psalms. There he used mixed prayers, as Dr. Fuller calls it; partly a form, which he wrote down in his book, containing the essential parts of prayer, which always remained unaltered; but adding many movable petitions to it, as the Spirit of God enabled him, and as there was occasion.

"A prayerless family (says he) is no better than a beast-house, and indeed a den of thieves, where God is robbed of his tribute, and their souls of the benefit. He that will undertake to prove that prayer is needless in families, shall oblige them to be his humble servants, or any one's, but his that made them."

VIII. His worship of God in public.

He attended the public worship of God in his parish church every Lord's day, and was sure to come early, though he was near two miles distant from it; yet he could say, he had never been absent from it any Lord's day for seven years, except twice, and then his occasions called him to other parish churches. In the afternoon, when he lived in the country, he often staid at home that he might send all his family to church, because he thought he could spend his time better at home than any of them could; but when he came to live in the town, he constantly went to church both parts of the day; and, at noon, on the Lord's day, a chapter was read to his family, a psalm sung, and concluded with prayer.

He wrote down, when he came home, the text, and what he could remember of the sermons he heard, that he might have the benefit and comfort of reviewing them afterwards.

But he was in a special manner exemplary, for his diligent and serious attendance on the ordinance of the Lord's supper; which he rarely omitted whenever there was an opportunity for it in his parish, which usually was eight times a year; and he made very solemn preparation for it. Much of what he has left behind him in writing, is sacramental meditations, partly his own, and partly gathered out of good books; Mr. Gouge's, Mr. Flavel's, Mr. Shower's, and others.

"According to the dying charge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (says he,) I do frequently attend at the Lord's table, and do that *in remembrance of him*, as he hath required. Lord, I dislike none of thy commands, they are all good and reasonable; but I find fault with my own wicked heart, that I do not more heartily love, and more readily obey, them. I bless the Lord, I have been seldom absent from his table these many years, and have found great benefit by frequent communion. I am sorry when I see but a small appearance at the Lord's supper. Some are absent, because they love their sins and will not part with them, and so slight their souls; others, because they overcharge their hearts with the cares of this world. Mr. Jenks our minister told us, 'All worldly business is either lawful or unlawful: that which is unlawful, in the name of God, renounce it; that which is lawful, and used with moderation, rather fits a man for the sacrament than otherwise.' Others are absent upon a mistake, that they can never be well prepared to receive."

He usually spent one day in fasting and prayer in secret, before the Lord's supper; and sometimes two. "These two days, (says he,) I desire to set apart for the worship and service of God, with a full purpose to make what preparation I can, by the grace of God, for receiving the holy sacrament of the *Lord's supper*. To that end, I will, as God shall enable me, humble myself, and with sorrow and shame confess my manifold sins to my merciful Father, who is a sin-pardoning God; I am ashamed, and do repent, of all my sins; and it is my heart's desire not only to confess them, but to forsake, detest, and abhor all manner of sin whatever. Lord, grant that I may not bring one beloved sin to thy table. Thou hast promised pardon to all that truly repent, and eternal life to all that believe in thy Son. Behold, O Lord, I heartily repent of my sin, and stedfastly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, putting my whole trust in him alone for salvation. Enable me, O Lord, by thy grace, to persevere to the end, that I may be blessed for ever, through Jesus Christ. Amen."

Thus he writes; "To-morrow is a day of great concern, not for our bodies, but our souls, for we are to meet the Lord at his own table. O with what humility, reverence, repentance, faith, charity, ought we to appear there! I have endeavoured to prepare myself, setting this day apart for prayer and meditation, especially on the sufferings of my dear Saviour for my sins, both in his life and at his death. I hope that my striving and struggling is a sign that I am not dead in trespasses and sins; for a dead man strives not. I beg of God often, and heartily that I may be upright in all my duties."—But he

afterwards writes; "At this sacrament my heart was but dull and sluggish, which is my great trouble; I thought I took some pains with my hard heart in my preparations, yet my endeavours proved ineffectual at this time. God be merciful to me a sinner, for the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

Another time he writes: "I did appear at the Lord's table, and receive the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper, I hope to the benefit and advantage of my precious and immortal soul; I found much joy and comfort in the ordinance, and it was very delightful to my soul. Lord, bless and sanctify it to me, and grant, O God, that I may ever bear upon my heart those promises and resolutions which I make at thy holy table."

And thus: "O Lord, I dare not approach thy holy table in my own strength or merits, but in the strength and merits of my dear Saviour Jesus Christ; for I know, when I have done all that I can, to fit and prepare myself for thy table, my endeavours will be found imperfect; yet, I will hope and trust in thee, my God, for thy help and assistance, and the free pardon and forgiveness of all my sins, through the mediation of my dear Saviour, and this I beg for Jesus' sake, and for thy mercy's sake. Amen, Amen."

And thus: "I often call to mind that memorable saying of Mr. Flavel: 'The Lord's supper and the point of death require equal seriousness; we should go to that ordinance, as if we were going into another world.' O what need is there of an awful, composed spirit, when we approach the Lord in this ordinance. O that I could humble myself at this time, and examine myself, and search and try my heart and ways, that I may find out my errors, and where my unfitness lies, that I may repent and amend! O how unsuitable is a dry eye, and a hard heart, to such an ordinance as this! Now would I free myself from all my cares of this world, be in perfect charity with all, and be affected in prayer and meditation. The chief things this vain world affords, are honours, riches, and pleasures: I desire no greater honour than the love and favour of God; no riches, but an interest in the unsearchable riches of Christ, and benefit by him; nor value any pleasure like communion with God: Lord, grant me these, and I desire no more."

"Lord, I stretch out the weak arm of my faith towards thee; O stretch out the mighty arms of thy power and mercy, and come and save me. I am fearful that I am not rightly prepared, but I hope this is an error on the better hand; then are we most fit, when we are most humble and ashamed in the sense of our own unfitness. I will, by the grace of God, use my best endeavours, acknowledging my own insufficiency. The spirit is willing, but the flesh weak; therefore will I beg of my heavenly Father, that he will direct, assist, and accept of me, through Christ my Saviour. Let this unspeakable love of thine constrain me to obedience."

Once when he was prevented from this ordinance by an unexpected throng of worldly business, which he thought did for the present unfit him for it, he writes, "It was a great trouble to me that I lost such an opportunity; Lord, pardon this great neglect, this sin of omission, and prepare me, by thy grace, to embrace the next opportunity."

His prayer, sometimes, after the receiving was, "O most glorious Lord God, let me now sing praise to thy great name; for blessed are they that dwell in thy house, and are fed, though it be with the crumbs that fall from thy table; and now I have tasted and seen how good thou art, and that thou hast heard my prayers, and granted my request: O that I might never depart from thee, or be weary of thy service. Strengthen me, O Lord, against all manner of sin, that I may say, with the princely prophet, *I have sworn and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* Direct me, O Lord, by thy Holy Spirit, and carry me through this vale of tears, this valley of the shadow of death, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*"

When he received the Lord's supper, upon the account of his office, he writes, "I doubt there are many who come upon this occasion, and neglect the duty at other times, which is a sad thing; but let me begin at home, and not judge other men, but examine myself."

IX. His thankfulness to God for the mercies he had received.

He often expresses himself much affected with the goodness of God to him, the memory of which he abundantly utters. In August 1697, he thus writes: "This being the 60th year of my age, I thank my God, who hath spun out my days to this length. I praise the Lord, that he hath made me a reasonable creature, a man, and not a beast; a Christian, and not a heathen; that he hath planted me in a protestant nation, blessed me with the light of the gospel, which I value above all things: *Come, behold the works of the Lord,* what he has *done for my soul!* I have a competency to live upon; though it seems but little in the eyes of some, yet, I bless my God, I think it sufficient, and am therewith very well content. I have enough to keep me while I live, and bury me when I am dead, and that is sufficient. Naked came I into the world, and brought nothing with me, and naked shall I return, and carry nothing away with me."

"If I look back, and review the mercies of my life, they are innumerable. I shall only name some: I never was arrested or imprisoned in all my life; never had a joint put out, or a bone broken; never received any great hurt or wound, to use a surgeon; have been long in the militia, yet never was in one

bustle, so peaceable have our days been. I have had much dealing in the world, yet never had a trial in any court, which has made my life the easier. I never was assaulted by thieves, nor had my pockets picked. I have lived in repute and credit, and never under any disgrace or scandal: and what false reports have sometimes been raised of me, never turned much to my prejudice. I have had many creature-comforts, good wives, good children, hopeful grand-children, kind friends, and loving neighbours, &c. My lot is cast in a fruitful soil, where the gospel flourisheth, and is frequently preached, when many, more deserving than I, have lived in poverty and affliction, or have been grieved with wicked relations, that have brought down *their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave*. My passage through the world has been very pleasant."

How may this good man's thankfulness to God shame those who, instead of caring and working for a livelihood, and paying a great rent, as he did, live at ease, receive great rent, and deliver all their care and business upon the heads and hands of others, and have every thing about them pleasing to a nicety, and yet seldom think of their obligations to the God of their mercies, or give him praise for his favours to them.

But see how he was affected with these mercies: "Lord," says he, "it is owing to thy goodness, not to any desert of mine, that my life has been so comfortable. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? I will acknowledge his goodness to me, and praise him while I have a day to live in this world. O that I could in some measure walk answerably to the goodness of God to me! Lord, thou hast given me abundance of temporal good things, give me spiritual grace, and I ask no more. Yet (he adds) the present pleasures of my life shall never extinguish in me the thoughts of death, because the one is certain, the other uncertain."

He often expresses his thankfulness to God for public mercies; for peace, and plenty, and health in the nation, especially our happy enjoyment of the gospel, that not only our civil rights and liberties, but our religion, is secured to us by law; that our land is not a seat of war. And he writes with great compassion concerning those countries that are so: "Sure no nation under the sun enjoys more mercies than we in England do at this time. I am obliged to praise God, not only for particular mercies to me and mine, but for his common mercies to the land wherein we live. Blessed be the God of heaven for them; and again, I say, blessed be his great and holy name for evermore. How great is the patience and forbearance of God towards us, though our sins cry aloud for vengeance; and we are very ungrateful for the mercies we receive. Some do not like the present government; others grudge at the taxes; others are highly offended at the toleration; and some are scarce content with any thing, not considering the calamities of other nations. How barbarously the poor protestants of France have been used by their tyrannical prince, and what desolations he has made with fire and sword in many of his neighbouring countries, though of his own religion!"

X. The sense he had of his afflictions.

Undertaking in his old age to give an account of his troubles, thus he begins: "My greatest trouble is for the sins that I have committed." Which he took all occasions to reflect upon with godly sorrow, abhorring himself, groaning under the burthen of corruption, longing for deliverance, and crying to heaven for help. His books are full of passages to this purpose: wondering at those fools who can make a mock at sin; who plead for it, laugh at it, turn it into a jest, and glory in it; forgetting the nature of God, the worth of their souls, and the awful eternity they are so near. Though such may have the name of Christians, it is but the name. O what heart-piercing thoughts will such have of eternity shortly; and they will be themselves astonished to think, how they could possibly make so very light of these great things.

His next trouble was, worldly care and business; "Which" (says he) "is often a great hinderance to my devotion, distracts my head, disturbs my mind, and makes me unfit for holy duties. An affable temper hath been injurious to me: I have been always ready to serve my neighbour or friend in any business that I was capable of, whereby I have lost much time; but I have therein endeavoured to do good, and show that I love my neighbour as myself. But I earnestly desire, that I may desist from worldly business one year or two before my death, that I may have the more time to prepare for it."

His next trouble was, the painful infirmities of old age, stone or gravel in the kidneys, sciatica, and the like. "Though I live (says he) with much content, yet not without a thorn in the flesh, scarce a night passes without smarting pain; but it is God's goodness that it is not worse. I have reason to bear it patiently; for it is less than my sins have deserved. Though the outward man grows weaker, I hope the inward man grows stronger. Lord, cast me not off in the time of old age." A book written by Mr. Corbit of Chichester, when he was grievously afflicted with the stone, was of great use to him, and he collected much out of it: concluding, "Lord, put thy Spirit of grace and meekness into my heart, that I may bear with patience whatever thou art pleased to lay upon me, and help me to follow this good example. I can truly say, my pains and distempers have very much drawn my mind off this world. *It is good for me I have been afflicted.*" He wrote down divers passages of Scripture, to comfort himself with under his pains: *Happy is the man whom God cor-*

rcteth, for he maketh sore, and bindeth up. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest. And many the like.

Being once wonderfully delivered from hurt by a dangerous fall from his horse, his foot hanging in the stirrup, so that he had been in all likelihood killed, if his shoe had not happily come off, he writes thus of it; "In my distress, I said, Lord, have mercy on my soul, for I see that my life is gone; my hope was in God, to whom I cried for deliverance, and he heard me according to his word: *Call upon me in the time of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* God granted me deliverance; and shall not I now endeavour to glorify thee, O thou preserver of men? O let this for ever engage me to keep close to Christ my refuge; and make me say, with Ezra, Since thou, Lord, hast given me such a deliverance as this, should I again break thy commandments? Lord, grant that I may never forget thy goodness." He failed not to give thanks to God for the mercy, upon the yearly return of the day.

XI. His zeal for the suppression of vice and profaneness.

When the minister of his parish, and others of his neighbours, (well affected to religion and virtue,) joined in a society to promote the design of her Majesty's pious proclamation, *for the preventing and punishing of vice, profaneness, and immorality*, by *informing* against offenders, in order to the putting of the laws in execution, he was an active man among them. Though many opposed this good work, and reproached them that acted in it, yet he knew he had the law of God and the land on his side, and was not discouraged in it. This good design was countenanced and encouraged by the Archbishop of Canterbury's circular letter to the bishops of his province, dated April 4, 1699, the printed sermons of the Bishops of Ely, Salisbury, Chester, Chichester, Dr. Stanhope, Dr. Willis, Dr. Kennet, and other dignitaries of the church. The Lord Bishop of Oxford thus addresses himself to those societies: "Ye brave and truly heroic souls, who have entered into a holy confederacy, not only against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, &c. your adversaries are numerous and powerful; the prince of the power of the air, with his rulers and companies, and the children of disobedience upon earth, in whom he worketh, all evil spirits, and all wicked men; and from these you must expect the most vigorous and obstinate opposition. But be not afraid of their terrors; remember that the battle is not yours, but God's," &c. Much to the same purpose is collected in the Account of the Progress of the Reformation of Manners, the thirteenth edition. It is therefore a great surprise and grief to all good men, to find those societies represented quite otherwise by Dr. Sacheverell, in his assize sermon at Derby, Aug. 15, 1709. Where he says, "That under the sanctified pretence of reformation of manners, they turn informers, assume an odious and factious office, arrogantly intrench upon others' Christian liberty and innocence, and under the show of zeal and purity, the most infallible token of a dexterous and refined hypocrite and knave, turn the world upside down. And these troublesome wasps erect themselves into illegal inquisitions; and whatever godly and fallacious glosses they may cast upon their actions, they are doubtless the unwarrantable effects of an idle, encroaching, impertinent, and meddling curiosity, the base product of ill-nature, spiritual pride, censoriousness, and sanctified spleen, pretending to carry on the blessed work of reformation, by lying, slandering, whispering, backbiting, and tale-bearing, the most express character of the devil, who is emphatically styled, The grand accuser of the brethren. No wonder then, that St. Paul has so severely stigmatized these busy-bodies in other men's matters, by ranking them with *murderers* and *thieves*, as the most proper persons to keep one another company."

When this good man was told, he would be accounted a busy-body for joining to this society; he said he valued it not, so that he was doing good, and were honouring God. He gives this account of it; "We met about twenty of us at our minister's house, the last Lord's day in the month, after evening prayer, to consult about carrying on the good work of the reformation of manners in the parish; and we had pretty good success, many were restrained from open profaneness, the poor relieved; but we met with discouragement from some, whom we hoped would have encouraged us."

Once coming into a public house, and hearing a gentleman most profanely swearing, though a stranger to him, he desired him to forbear. Said he, "Thou art some presbyterian, I warrant thee." Said the lieutenant, "Pray sir, what church are you of?" "Of the church of England," said he. Then said the lieutenant, "I am sorry you are of the same church that I am of, for you are a disgrace to it."

"I once" (says he) "heard a friend of mine talk atheist-like, very profanely. I reproved him, saying, "Sir, why do you talk so wickedly? Do you think there is neither God nor devil, heaven nor hell?" He answered, "It may be there are such things, but I know not where they are." I answered, "Sir, in time you may know, to your own sorrow and amazement." By this time he doth, for he died lately.

XII. His charity, especially for the teaching of poor children.

He was very liberal to the poor, according to his ability. A worthy knight giving away many of Mr. Gouge's tracts, entitled, *Surest and safest way*

of thriving, one of them came into his hand. After he had read it, he wrote down his resolution, which was, from that time forward to double his charity. He loved to employ poor workmen, and was kind to them, saying, they worked hard for a little money.

He wrote down such passages as these, to stir up himself to charity: "It is not he that possesses wealth, and keeps it by him, that is rich, but he that distributes it in charity, which will make men rich for ever. When thou givest to the poor, thou securest to thyself; and what thou withholdest another shall possess. Give to the poor, and it shall be given thee; it is lent to the Lord, and God twice repays it; in this world by a blessing on thy wealth, and in heaven he repays it over again. Thou shalt have in grace, what thou partest with in money."

He contributed very cheerfully to the teaching of poor children, and bought divers of that little book, called, *The guide to heaven*, to give away, and had a great esteem for that book; generally carried one about him to read at his leisure. He much rejoiced in the increase of the charity schools, and was pleased to see the children taught at those schools carry themselves reverently at church, and hear them say their catechism. When he died, out of his little, he left ten pounds to the charity-school in Wibunbury parish.

XIII. His respect to good ministers, and his grief concerning those who were otherwise, and his lamenting our unhappy divisions.

As he had a reverence and love for God, so he had for all his; his day, his people, his ordinances, his ministers. He was, in judgment and practice, for the church of England, as by law established; "for" (says he) "it is my belief that a man may, by the grace of God, live as holy a life in this church as in any." He does in his books bless God for the learned and pious clergy of the church of England. It rejoiced him to hear (a few days before he died) the present Lord Bishop of Chester preach so excellent a sermon at Nantwich, that had the marrow and substance of the gospel in it, on 1 Tim. i. 15. and to hear of that excellent charge he gave his clergy, to teach their people the necessity of divine revelation, the divine authority of the Scripture, and the divinity of our Saviour, and to press holiness of life; and that they should set a good example, and deny themselves in lawful things for the good of their people; and refrain from public houses: and as to those protestant dissenters, that carried it humbly, and as they ought, they should not be behind-hand with them in love and kindness. He rejoiced that the church had many such.

He had a great value for Mr. Jenks, who was minister of Wibunbury, and died July 19, 1700. "I got much benefit to my soul (says he) by his good preaching, and exemplary living. He was a man of a good natural temper, an ingenious preacher, sober and temperate, very charitable, and of a public spirit. He used his best endeavours to promote religion in the parish. I have heard him reprove sin and idle talk very boldly. He was diligent in the duties of a minister. He was a constant reader of the prayers, and frequently administered the Lord's supper; carefully catechised the children and servants in the summer time; visited the sick in all quarters of his parish, both poor and rich; would go to any part of the parish to baptize children that were sick, and not fit to be brought to church; took a deal of pains to get subscriptions for the maintaining of petty schools, to teach children to read. He did his utmost towards the suppression of vice, particularly the punishing of the filthy sin of fornication in the parish; but herein he was opposed by some, to his great grief, which made him often say, that Christianity was come to a very low ebb among us, when men that profess Christianity hinder the punishment of vice and debauchery. I asked him once to spend his two-pence with me: says he, "I never went to an ale-house on purpose to spend two-pence, in all my life." For repairing the vicarage-house, and improving the glebe, he exceeded most men, and endeavoured all that in him lay, to promote all the concerns of the church. Mr Lancaster preached his funeral sermon, on Acts xx 20. *I have taught you publicly, and from house to house* and gave him a very high character, which he well deserved." After the funeral, Mr. Lancaster came to Lieutenant Illidge, took him by the hand, and said "You were none of those that grieved your minister."

"In the time of our vacancy," (says he,) "it was my frequent prayer to Almighty God, that he would be pleased to send us a minister that truly feared God and loved religion." He also took the boldness in his great zeal, to write to my Lord Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, who is patron, beseeching him for Christ's sake, the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, to provide for this great parish (being eighteen townships) such a minister as may answer the great charge and trust he undertakes; one truly religious, laborious, and an able preacher, that may bring honour to God, and our holy religion, &c. praying God to direct his Lordship in the choice. And when his lordship had presented Mr. Bromfield, the present incumbent, and he had had some trial of him, he writes, "What great cause have I to thank and praise the Lord, who hath heard my prayers, and sent us such a good minister." Some time after he wrote to Mr. Bromfield, expressing his great satisfaction in him as his spiritual guide, and begging his pious advice and instruction in his spiritual concerns; "for it is from your mouth (saith he) that I receive the good word of God, and from your hand I receive the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper, and according to your counsel I purpose to proceed, as God shall enable me." He prayed earnestly for his minister, that he might live long to the glory of

God, and might be an instrument of the converison and salvation of many souls.

Concerning the divisions among us, he thus writes: "I own myself to be a member of the church of England, which, I think, is not exceeded by any other in purity: I was baptized, and have continued in that communion all my days, yet have great charity for protestant dissenters, that truly fear God, and love religion. I am much troubled when I hear such abused, and reproached, and scorned by wicked and profane wretches, that will swear, and curse, and be drunk, and stick at no manner of debauchery; and yet boast that they are church-of-England men. God knows, these are a disgrace to our church, and a great scandal to religion. • These are the men that undermine the church, and are drawing down judgments on themselves and the whole nation. And some of our high clergymen will preach against profaneness in the pulpit, but allow it, and laugh at it, in the ale-house; and will rather reproach and persecute an honest dissenter, for truly serving God, than make complaint of, or endeavour to punish, a profane swearer, a drunkard, or a debauched wretch, that blasphemes the great God. We have good laws against profaneness, but not put in execution: it is as the prophet Hosea says, *like people, like priest.* I once reproved a minister for sitting in idle company, and hearing a deal of obscene and wicked talk. He answered, "I am not to reprove such things out of the pulpit." So careless and lukewarm in religion are many of them. They live loose lives themselves, and grow envious at those who serve God after a more serious manner, though of their own communion, and true sons of the church. Doubtless it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for such men, especially those that persecute and reproach the servants of God; whoso offends one of these, better he were thrown into the sea with a millstone about his neck. Good Lord, in mercy turn the hearts of those blind guides, who call themselves the ministers of Christ, but discover the contrary, by their ambition and pride, and seeking revenge upon their poor dissenting brethren, rather promoting animosities than using means for peace."

"Another time" (says he) "I was in company at dinner, where there were many that count themselves of the high church, and abundance of cursing and swearing there was among them; and though there were some clergymen at table, they showed no dislike of it, nor gave one word of reproof to the swearers. I very much suspect that such men are no ministers of Christ, who can stand by, and hear their Master abused, and have nothing to say on his behalf. Indeed of late, there is a generation of young clergymen among us, who are proud, and idle, and loose, and fitter to go to school than to the pulpit."

Let none blame him for his zeal in this matter, since he himself knew, by sad experience, what influence the ill examples of the clergy have upon others; for he remembered with grief, that above twenty years ago, when he himself lived a careless life, he sat up one sabbath night, drinking till the next morning, and two clergymen were in company with him all that time; one that had preached that day, and the other the minister of the parish. Towards morning, when they had drunk the house dry, one of the ministers gave money, to knock up another house to get more drink. When he came home, his wife asked him, how he could answer his mispending the evening of the Lord's day so; he replied, he had been with two ministers, and he did but as they did.

Then when he lived at large himself, he was very severe against the dissenters; but when he saw the errors of his ways, he was troubled for it, and became very moderate towards them. Hearing them often reviled by those, who themselves led bad lives, he set himself to inquire concerning them, acquainted himself with some of them, and looked into their books, and found they were not the men they were represented to be, but men worthy to be loved; and then, though he continued in full and constant communion with the church to his dying day, he was himself reproached as a presbyterian; which very much confirmed him in his good opinion of them: "For" (says he) "our high churchmen will scarce admit of one serious Christian among us; for if a man begin to have that character, he is branded with the title of a presbyterian." Certainly they cannot do the presbyterians a greater kindness, nor the church of England a greater diskindness, than using such language.

It grieved him to hear some make such a noise against those whom he knew to be good Christians, calling them schismatics, when they themselves who made that noise, he thought unfit for so great a charge of souls, by reason of their immoralities, their small qualifications, or their envious, unchristian, malicious tempers. He wondered how men could make so light a matter of souls, as by their unnecessary impositions, to force men either to a sinful compliance, or (as they call it) a "damnable schism." Upon his reading the conference at the Savoy, between the bishops and the ministers, commissioned by King Charles II. he told his minister his judgment was, that the fault of our divisions lay at those bishops' door, who had power, and might have prevented them.

He prayed often for the healing of our divisions, and comforted himself with those words of the learned Bishop Stillingfleet; "God will one day convince men, that the union of the church lies more in the unity of faith and affection, than in uniformity of doubtful rites and ceremonies."

XIV. His spiritual improvement of common occurrences.

Some of the many occasional good thoughts which we meet with in his papers we shall set down.

Nov. 1st. 1699. "This, I understand, is my birthday. I now enter upon my climacteric year sixty-three, a year in which it has been observed that many die: I have found, in reading lives, that Tertullian, St. Bernard, Luther, Melancthon, Justus, Jonas, and many others, died in that year of their lives. Death is a debt I owe, and must pay ere long, whenever the great God demands it. Lord, I am willing to submit to thy holy will; do with me what thou pleasest. My time is short, my work is great, my strength is small. Lord, help me to improve that short minute of time which yet remains."

"I have lately set my house in order; and, I hope, have made an honest and equal distribution of that worldly estate my good God hath given me, endeavouring, in all things, to die with a good conscience, which will be comfortable in a dying hour."

"I have now past one month of the doubtful year, and am so much nearer my end. I endeavour to stand upon my guard, and to watch, because I am uncertain when my Lord cometh."

At the latter end of the following summer he writes, "Now the days begin to shorten, an emblem of my estate; my days decline; winter and death are coming on; wise men provide for both. Most men take care of their bodies and earthly concerns; but most wise and happy is that man that takes due care of his soul, and his eternal concerns, that in health prepares for sickness and death."

At the return of the year he writes: "I have now out-lived the doubtful year; and, I praise God, have meditated more of death this year than formerly; and, I hope, shall continue to do so all the days of my life. Death will come, and that ere long. The young may die, but the old must die. A friend of mine, not long since, said, rejoicingly, "Now I have outlived my climacteric year, I hope I may live a great while;" but he died the year following. And I know death hath the same power over me this year that he had the last, only waits for a commission from him, in whose hand are all men's lives; nay, I cannot assure myself of one day, so uncertain is the life; and the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night. I hope I shall never live out of the expectation of death, while I continue on earth. Lord, help me to watch and pray. My glass is still running, my dissolution draws near, but the time is uncertain; therefore I must wait the Lord's leisure, whose creature I am, and to whom I owe all possible obedience,—his time is the best time."

When he entered upon his seventieth year, he writes, "I may very well expect death may seize me before this year be ended: I find great decays in myself of late, so that the time of my dissolution must of necessity draw near. Should I outlive this year, and God should add more days and years to my life, I am sensible they would be but labour and sorrow, as Moses speaks; but I will refer all to my merciful Father, and resign myself wholly to his will and pleasure. It is high time to bestir myself; for the day is far spent, and the night is coming, when I must work no more. I am now arrived near the end of my journey: I have almost done with the world, and the world with me: I have hitherto passed without any signal troubles; and if now, in the close of my days, God gently lays his afflicting hand upon me, I have no reason to complain; but must own it is what I have deserved, and it is good for me that I have been afflicted. No man is more miserable than he that has no adversity."

"Such a time there was great cock-fighting and horse-races about the town; but I saw none of them, having a more serious concern in hand, to prepare for my great change. What will all the pleasures of this world avail us, when we come to lie upon a death-bed?"

When he had completed his seventieth year: "Lord," (says he,) "make me wise to salvation; teach me so to number the few minutes of my time that yet remain, that they may be spent to thy glory, and the benefit of my own immortal soul. I have lived much longer than ever I expected. Lord, as thou hast given me length of days, with much comfort and contentment, grant me the joys and comforts of thine everlasting kingdom for Christ's sake." Jan. 1st. "Lord, as thou hast given me life and health to enter upon a new year, so I pray thee give me a new heart, renew a right spirit within me, order all my affections according to thy will, that I may love what thou lovest, and hate what thou hatest; that I may abominate all my old sins, and may become a new creature in Jesus Christ; that I may spend the ensuing year to thy glory, and the good of my own soul. One year passeth away, and another comes; and still I am nearer the time of my dissolution: as the old year is expired, Lord, grant that all my sins may expire; as the new year is begun, Lord, give me a new heart, and new and earnest desires, to persevere in godliness all the days of my life."

"Old Mr. Henry desired, that if it were the will of God, he might live no longer than he was useful; and my desire is, that I may not live so long as to be troublesome."

"Now autumn is come. The days grow short, so doth my life; it declines every day, and is near expiring. It is the greatest wisdom, in time of health and strength, to prepare for sickness and death: he that really doth so, his business of dying is half done. A diseased, pained body will unfit the mind for holy duties; therefore it is good to labour in health, and make our peace with God then. Gray

hairs tells us, as the golden leaves on the trees in autumn, that our fall is near, and it is highly dangerous to defer our repentance to the last. Many on their death-bed are sorely handled; some seized in their heads, and rendered insensible; and how can the great work be done then? A virtuous life never thought ill of death. A good conscience, and a well-grounded hope of salvation, will encourage a dying man: yet good men may be oppressed with doubts and fears upon a death-bed, and go to heaven even by hell-gates."

One year he writes: "There is a great show of a plentiful crop this year; which yet our God, if he pleaseth, can deprive us of. The famous Mr. Hooker, (as I have read in his life,) when he was offered a benefice in London, desired rather to have a country parsonage, where he might see the blessings of God spring out of the earth. And a pleasant thing it is to see the fruits of the earth spring up, grow, and in a little time come to maturity. O that we may not set our hearts too much upon those things, so as to neglect the main business."

Another year he writes: "We have had a plentiful crop, and good harvest weather: What shall we render to the Lord for his mercies? Lord, with these, give us thy grace, and peace, and truth, in our days."

He records an awakening providence, which fell out to his great grief: "This day a dear friend of mine was suddenly killed by a fall from his horse. He was well and dead in a moment. O how uncertain is the life of man! Lord, imprint this upon my heart, that I may bear it in my mind, while I have a day to live; and may watch and pray, because I know not at what hour my Lord comes. O that I may from henceforward be more diligent than ever in making preparation for death, that whether it be natural or violent, sudden or slow, it may be happy."

About the same time, a young man wickedly set himself to drink brandy to that excess, that he died upon the spot, a self-murderer. And another lusty young man suddenly fell down dead in his master's shop, and never spoke a word more. These three sad accidents happened in and about Nantwich, in less than three weeks' time. On which he writes, "How foolish are they that set their hearts upon this world, which we are to look upon as an enemy, that will flatter us with its pleasures, but will deceive us, will kiss, and kill. We have heard of many that have spent their time very ill, yet, at their death, have had their eyes opened, and their consciences awakened; one crying out, 'Call time again!' Another, 'Alas! my life is done, and my work is undone!' Another, 'O that God would try me once again!' O that men were of the same mind now, that they will be of then! and do that which they will wish they had done, when it is too late!"

"Such a time Mr. Bromfield preached excellently of repentance, and the danger of delaying it, at the funeral of a young man struck dead with lightning in a moment, in his full strength. It was indeed a thunder-clap, for warning to us all that are left behind, to watch always; for who knows what a day, what an hour, what a minute may bring forth."

"Though death doth not come suddenly to all, yet it comes unexpected to many, and unwelcome to most: but, as Archbishop Tillotson saith of Mr. Gouge's death, 'To him no death could be sudden, because the constant employment of his life, was the best preparation for death;' so that it was rather a favour and blessing; the more sudden, the more easy."

"Such a day my mother-in-law died, (in 1708,) the only person, save one, that has died in my family of thirty-six years; and now it has pleased God, by death, to make a breach in my family; how it may proceed, the only wise God knows, who doth all things well, to whom I humbly submit myself, trusting in him, that he will give me strength and patience to bear whatever he is pleased to inflict upon me, living or dying; for he is my merciful Father."

"O let me not lose one moment of this precious time; let me not waste it in idle trifles and folly, but employ every moment of it in doing that work, which my Father hath sent me to do. If I do this, my time, how short soever, will be long enough; but if I squander it away in doing nothing, or nothing to the purpose, I shall find the want of it when it is too late."

As he thus improved the occurrences of his own time, so he delighted very much in reading church-history, especially the lives of good men, both ancients and moderns, and made large collections out of them. "It is my delight to read the lives of good men, and my earnest desire to imitate their good examples: the Lord enable me so to do."

He read with much affection the lives of the martyrs, admiring what they suffered for their dear Lord and Master. "Methinks, (says he,) I that have lived to a sufficient age (then near sixty-two) should embrace a natural death willingly, when so many, in the midst of their days, have, with great joy and satisfaction, suffered cruel and violent deaths, and have declared they would rather die than live. A well-grounded hope of salvation will make a death-bed easy." He gathered many things that were very helpful to him out of the life of Mr. Philip Henry.

Having collected many excellent passages out of Mr. Burghal's book, called, "The perfect way to die in peace." He adds, "I knew Mr. Burghal of Acton very well: he was a serious godly divine, was cast out of his living at Acton on black Bartholomew-Day, 1662, among a great number of his pious brethren all England over. The more the pity. I have heard him preach often; once in Nant-

wich church a soul-searching sermon, that did much affect me."

XV. His desire of retiring from the hurry of worldly business.

When he grew near seventy years of age, he grew very weary of the hurry of the world. "It hath been my desire (says he) several years, to desist from business, and retire into privacy, that I might give myself wholly to the great work of preparing for the world that is to come. I have often wished, and am still of the same mind, that I were in some private place, where I knew none, and none knew me, provided it were a place where piety was practised; I would fain make an end with the world, before death thrusts me out of it."

He had designed it several years before, but it was not till a little more than a year before his death, that he removed from his dwelling in the country into the town of Nantwich, that he might be free from the encumbrance of the world, which he found had been an hinderance to him in his soul's concerns, and that he might be near the church. He was sensible the town had more temptations of another kind, which had formerly been sometimes too hard for him; but he put his trust in the grace of God, to deliver him from them, and armed himself with these considerations: "If I should now relapse, and return with the dog to his vomit, how miserable would my condition be! I should account myself a cast-away, and undone to all eternity, and it had been better I had never known the way of righteousness; *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways.* I must daily watch and pray, lest I enter into temptation: and happy they, whose last days are their best days, and their last good works more than the first."

He reserved but very little to maintain himself; but said, "I have enough of this world, and as much as I desire; and now I hope not to remove again, till I am removed by death; which, I suppose, will be in a very short time. Lord, thy will be done in all things, whether life or death."

Some time after his removal into the town, he wrote thus: "I praise the Lord, I find much comfort and satisfaction in my late removal: I am quit from a great deal of worldly care and trouble, which I have been a long time cumbered with. O then, (my soul,) since I am retired into privacy, according to my desire, let me strive and endeavour, all that in me lies, to make the best use of it, that I may more and more contemn the things of this vain world, and set my affections on things above."

Yet still he found his true rest was not in this world. All our removals, while we are on this side Canaan, are but from one wilderness to another. It is in the future state, not in this, that there is a true and everlasting rest remaining for the people of God.

XVI. His advice to his grandchildren.

He directs one of his little books to his three grand-daughters. "My blessing (says he) I freely give you; and my earnest prayers are to Almighty God, that he will bestow his blessing and grace upon you, that you may live holy and die happy. This is the earnest desire of your poor aged grandfather. I am not capable to give you that advice that I fain would; however, I will do my best, and hope you will all take notice of it, and observe it, when I lie rotting in the dust.

"In the first place, and above all things, serve the Lord in spirit and in truth; love him with all your heart; count all things here below of no value, in comparison of God and Christ; be careful to keep God's holy laws and commandments; be frequent in prayer, and hearing the word. He that will taste the love of God, must be no stranger to meditation and prayer, and must not be cold or inconstant in them, but dwell and walk above with God. He must be wholly addicted to improve the talent he is intrusted with. His design and trade on earth must be to do all the good he can, and to keep his soul clean from the flesh and worldly vanities, and to such a soul, God will make known his love. Good children, I entreat you again and again to serve God, and then he will bless you; live religious lives, then you will be happy here and hereafter too. Remember your Creator in the days of your youth; for godliness is great gain; as you sow, you will be sure to reap. Think not to do ill, and yet hope that all will end well. I love both your bodies and souls, and would have you do well for both, by living in the fear of God."

"Have a special care of your reputation; for it is better than precious ointment, and rather to be chosen than great riches. Remember the verse you learned;

> Thy credit wary keep, its quickly gone;
> By many actions got, but lost by one.

"The way to get and keep a good name, is to live in the fear of God; to be modest, and chaste, and virtuous, will please your God, rejoice your friends, and turn to your own comfort. I charge you all, in the name of God, to take heed of the society of vain, loose young fellows; let not such come into your company, nor scarce into your sight, or thoughts, but flee from them as from a lion or a bear."

"Earnestly implore divine grace to guide, counsel, and establish you; for without that we can do nothing. Remember, God's eye is ever and every where upon you. Endeavour to live in godly families; dwell where God dwells, and be in such company as you hope to be with in heaven; then at death you will only change your place, not your company. As death leaves us, judgment will find us. Nothing flies so swiftly, as the soul out of the

body. Eternity hangs on a moment, for such is our life. Ask your hearts every night what you have done this day, because any night may be your last: work, pray, believe, repent, get assurance of heaven, and be happy for ever. Earthly comforts are short-lived; riches have wings, beauty is but skin-deep; all is but vanity. A frothy wit and a vicious life will carry directly to atheism, which is the master-mischief of this age. Thoughts are not free, nor words kind; they will both judge us another day. Get ready for death; it is a great word to say upon good grounds, *I dare die.* Redeem time, for how cutting will the remembrance of good hours ill-spent be!

"Be obedient, loving, and dutiful to your father; take his advice in all your concerns, both spiritual and temporal. O that you would all of you be as great a comfort to your father as he hath been to me. He is now above forty years of age, and I can truly say he never vexed or grieved me in his life, but was always dutiful, loving, and obedient to me. I must own that he hath been a great assistance to me in my spiritual warfare: be you sure that you all strive to rejoice and comfort your father's heart, as he hath rejoiced and comforted mine."

"As to your mother, you had but little knowledge of her. It pleased God to take her out of a troublesome world, when you were but infants. She was a pious, modest, good woman. I pray God you may be like her; and that her virtues may, by the grace of God, be stamped upon all your hearts. She was a pattern of piety and patience. From a child she was discreet and serious, not in the least given to pride or vanity. In disposing of herself, she took the advice of her pious and judicious parents. She was of a solid, serious disposition, and mighty cautious what company she entertained, or came into.

"Good children, as you tender your own good, or expect the blessing of God, and comfort here, and eternal happiness hereafter, do not slight or despise the advice or counsel of a poor dying grandfather. Though I yet live, it cannot be long, this being the sixty-seventh year of my age; therefore I am daily expecting and preparing for my great change, which you may observe, if you will take the pains to read over the following weak meditations; and as I wrote them for my private use, I desire they may not be exposed to the scorn of bad people."

"Dear children, I shall conclude my weak advice with some few profitable texts of Scripture. Rom. viii. 13. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye, through the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* Heb. xiii. 16. *To do good, and to communicate, forget not.* Ps. l. 22. *Now consider this, ye that forget God.* Deut. xxxii. 29. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.*

"Now the God of all mercy, power, and love, bless you all, and keep you in his true faith and fear, in the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, for evermore. Amen."

XVII. His expectation of, and preparation for, death.

This was indeed the chief subject of the papers he wrote. One might collect a little volume of his serious thoughts about death, and the passages he wrote referring to this. It was the sense he had of death approaching, that put him upon all this concern about his soul, and he had the comfort of it in his dying hours.

"Sept. 6, 1698. It is my serious thought, and heart's desire, to note down, or compose, something in way of preparation for my approaching dissolution. I am now above sixty, my head hoary, my eyes dim, my strength fails, the chips fly off, and the tree must fall. It is great wisdom in all to prepare for death, especially the aged. The young *may*, the old *must*, die. It is an unwelcome messenger to most men; but it is great folly to strive against such a stream, and neglect a work that must be done. Death is most certain, and nothing more necessary than a due caring for the soul, and a serious preparation for the hour of death, and the day of judgment, which is my real purpose. Good Lord, for thy mercy's sake, direct and assist me in this most great and necessary work, by thy Holy Spirit, that I may persevere in this my duty, all the days of my life, till my change come. To this end, it is my design to collect some texts of Scripture that treat of death and judgment; also the sayings of some good men, and my own weak sentiments adapted to my own condition: *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayers. Cast me not off in the time of old age. Be not far from me, O my God, make haste to help me.* Now, *when I am old and gray-headed, forsake me not. Whom have I in heaven but thee?* Job xiv. 14. *If a man die, shall he live again?* &c. Rev. xiii. 14. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord,* &c. Ps. lxxxix. 48. *What man is he that lives, and shall not see death?* Gen. iii. 19. *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.* Isa. lx. 6. *All flesh is grass.* Jam. iv. 14. *What is your life but a vapour?* Ps. xxxix. 5. *Every man at his best estate is vanity.* Matt. xxiv. 44. *Watch, therefore. Few days and full of trouble. Lord, make me to know my end.* Heb. ix. 27. *After death, the judgment.* Eccl. xii. 14. *God shall bring every work into judgment.* 2 Cor. v. 10. *We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.*"

"It has been my earnest desire and endeavour to leave sin before it leave me. Who will not arm himself against an enemy that threatens every hour? Our breath is in the hand of God: we may be well one moment, and dead the next. Many have gone well to bed, and been dead before morning. The time

when, the place where, the manner how, are all uncertain. Many are taken away, not only in the midst of their days, but in the midst of their sins. It is my earnest desire to make my peace with God in time of health; that I may not have oil to buy when I should burn it. It is dangerous deferring repentance; that makes a death-bed uneasy, and dying hours uncomfortable."

"Mr. George Herbert, on his death-bed, said, 'I am sorry I have nothing to present to my merciful God but sin and misery; but the first is pardoned, and a few hours will put a period to the latter.'"

"He that lives well cannot die ill; but he that lives without fear shall die without hope: he that hath no grace in his life, can have no true peace in his death. The longest day has its night, and the longest life has its death; that man's soul is in no good case, that is loth to think of dying."

"When death calls, I believe I shall be as willing to go as flesh and blood will allow; for I am willing to part with every thing in this world. I desire to live in continual expectation of death; for that will make a man more careful to serve God, and will make a pious life the more pleasant; it will check inordinate desires of the world, and it is our Saviour's express command, *Watch always.*"

"It is a serious thing to die: it is a work by itself. A dying friend once said to me, 'It is a hard thing to die.' It was the saying of one; 'If thy youth have been faulty, it is a comfort if thy age be otherwise.' It is bad to be wicked, but worse to continue so."

"What thoughts hast thou of thy dying hour, and thy departing soul? It must ere long be required of thee; will Christ receive it? Hast thou made sure of that? If not, thou hast done nothing, but art undone to all eternity. If life be of such value as we think it is, what are our souls worth? But we are earnest in pursuing shadows, and let go the substance; we busy ourselves about trifles, and neglect the most weighty matters."

"July 15, 1700. I desire it may be my daily practice while I live, and am capable, to meditate something of death, and of my dying hours." Mr. B. in his treatise of self-denial, gives many reasons why we should submit to death, and be willing to die. 'Our lives are not our own, but his that doth require them, and he is Lord of them. The greatest potentates must undergo the stroke of death. All things in heaven and earth are at God's disposal: he gives and takes life at pleasure. How many beasts, birds, and fishes die, to feed us! The best saints have trodden this path before us. Our Lord Jesus drank of this bitter cup, to conquer death, and unsting it for us: the best may be afraid, but death puts an end to all their fears; it is joy when it is over. We should be willing to leave this wicked world, to go to the glorious society above. One would think these considerations sufficient to make any Christian willing to part with life freely."

And afterwards he writes, "It is the greatest wisdom, in time of health and strength, to prepare for sickness and death: he that really doth so, his dying work is half done. I ought to do so more especially now; for my parents both died before my age. I had three brothers, and all dead; and this is my climacteric year. I desire, that thoughts of death may fill me daily, that I may make it familiar to me."

—— "One says, O foolish soul, I wish thou wert as covetous after eternity, as thou art after a fading, perishing life; and after the blessed presence of God, as thou art for continuance with earth and sin. Did we but love God as strongly as the worldling doth his wealth, or the ambitious man his honours, we should not be so loth to leave the world, and go to God. Turn thy thoughts from the vanities of this world; set thyself to study eternity, and busy thyself about the life to come; labour to get your hearts into heaven, and doubtless yourselves will follow after shortly."

—— "I have here no abiding city. Let me not set my affections on the things of this world; let me often consider, that this poor body of mine shall become as noisome as the vilest carrion, must be laid in the earth, and become a prey to worms; but my soul shall still live to all eternity. Death hath no power over that immortal part. I praise the Lord, and it doth rejoice my heart, that I have of late fallen into this method of considering and meditating much on my latter end."

—— "I often see younger and stronger than I go before me; yet it must be my lot ere long. Forbearance is no acquittance; death will not be put off, or bribed."

——"It is the greatest concern of life to prepare for death; but, alas! it is too much neglected by the most of men, who put the evil day far off, and promise themselves long life, when they know not what a day may bring forth. They that will not remember death, death will be sure to remember them; and they that put off the thoughts of death, will certainly be surprised at last, and seized unawares, to their everlasting amazement. O deceitful hopes, how many have you deluded! And while you promise men old age, you have cut them off in their youth. Then all the treasures, pleasures, and honours of the world will avail nothing: then, to have the favour of God, an interest in Christ, and a good conscience, are the things that will stand us in stead, and make a death-bed easy. Good Lord, in mercy help me, that I not only write these good things in my book, but may practise them."

—— "I doubt too many never think of dying till their dying day comes; and then what would they give to escape it? Then what promises of new obedience, which yet prove abortive, like Pharaoh's?

Many are like seamen; they never seek God for help, as long as they are able to help themselves. O my soul, remember death, remember that eternity, which thou mayst begin to-day, or to-morrow, but never end."

—— "One says, I must be at God's disposal, whether I will or no: there is no rest for souls, but in the will of God. Our own wills have undone us; they have misgoverned us; they are our greatest enemies, our disease, our prison, our death, till they are brought over to the will of God. There is no true peace or felicity, but in the conformity of our wills to the will of God."

—— "To prepare for my great change is my chief concern in this world; it is an important business of a high nature; it is the concern of my soul, which is of more value than all the world. Mr. Shower has many excellent sayings suited to my present purpose. The life of man is short and fleeting; our days on earth few and uncertain: how careful then should I be to manage every hour well! All the time that is past is irrecoverable, and the little that remains flies apace: how quickly will it be gone! How suddenly may an unexpected stroke of death conclude it! And this is all the opportunity I have of making my peace with God, and preparing for an everlasting world. I can have no business of greater moment, than to secure the happiness of my soul in another world; for what will all other business signify in the end, if this be neglected? but how have I trifled away my precious time in sloth and idleness, in foolish mirth and hurtful company, in vain thoughts and impertinent discourses! Lord, make these meditations effectual, to prevent my loss of time for the future, which, sooner or later, will be esteemed precious. O how swift, how short, is my time of trial, in order to eternity! How difficult, how important, a work is it to prepare for an everlasting state! What is all this world! how little, what a mere nothing, to a departing soul? And shall I continue to pursue shadows, and please myself with empty dreams, being so near my final judgment?

"Let me therefore endeavour to impress the consideration of death and eternity, as at hand, more deeply on my heart, that I may walk and live, may discourse and pray, and demean myself in every thing, as near an unchangeable state. My time is near an end; I must shortly take death by the cold hand; Lord, direct and assist me in this great concern."

—— "Remember this, (O man,) that *dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.* This is a mourning verse, which God himself delivered to Adam. Thou art but a bubble; thy life as the passing of a shadow. Why dost thou heap up riches, O thou covetous wretch, when as this night thy wealth may be taken from thee, or thou from it."

—— "I praise God, the thoughts of death are often in my mind, and my great change still before my eyes. My time is short, my days that remain are but few; yet, I fear, I do not make that preparation for death that I ought *In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing. To will is present, but how to perform that which is good I know not.*"

—— "I may well expect the summons of death every day: the most earnest business I can set about, is to prepare for it; and, in order to that, to consider often how it will be with me, when I lie gasping and groaning upon my death-bed."

—— "Therefore I often think of death, because it is my earnest desire, that when it comes it may not be terrible to me. Death has some terror in it, therefore I would learn how not to fear it. The way never to fear death, is always to think of it."

"To meditate on mortality is necessary for all, especially the aged. Our glass is always running, and now almost run out: our time always going, and now almost gone; we have one foot in the grave; death stands daily over our heads, ready to strike: I ought therefore to say, this day I stand at the door of eternity, because we die daily. Still think of thy hour-glass."

—— "I often think of death, but cannot live up to what those thoughts require as I would, and should, nor perform my duty to God with such life and zeal as I ought. O my soul, think what will all the world avail a dying man! The peace with God, and peace of conscience, are of more value than all the world."

—— "The learned Salmasius said upon his death-bed, 'O! I have lost a world of time; time, that most precious thing in the world, whereof had I but one year more, it should be spent in David's psalms and Paul's epistles.' O sirs! mind the world less, and God more. The fear of God is true wisdom."

—— "I see or hear every day of the death of one or other younger than myself; they go to the grave before me; I survive, but am in expectation. I know the lot will fall on me whenever it pleaseth God. I hope I shall with meekness and patience submit to the will of my heavenly Father, and freely resign my soul to him that gave it."

—— "One says, To thee, O my Saviour, I commit my soul: it is thine by redemption, thine by covenant, sealed by thy Spirit: thou hast promised not to lose it, hast promised rest to weary souls. Lord, I am not only weary of suffering, but weary of sin, weary of the flesh, weary of my darkness, dulness, distance; weary of this wicked, blind, unrighteous world; and whither should I look for rest but homewards to my heavenly Father. To thee I am but a bruised reed, but thou wilt not break me: I am but smoking flax, but thou wilt not quench what thy grace has kindled."

—— "O let me not be surprised, and think it strange when death seizes me, and throws me upon

a sick and dying bed; then let me submit to my Father's good pleasure, and resign myself up to him. I have fair warning given me by the death of others, day after day, time after time, to prepare for my great change: Lord, direct and assist me in this great concern. I have here no abiding city, and therefore seek one to come; for how can I be in love with this world, which is so vain, sinful, and uncertain."

—— "Have not we seen and known some that have been suddenly struck, sound and sick, quick and dead, in the space of one hour and less; how dare we then defer our repentance? Death may seize us in our delays, and deliver us up into eternity. Lord, grant that every day I may remember my last day, may every day take a turn or two with death; so shall I be acquainted with its face, and not feel its sting. To trust to a death-bed repentance, is a very high affront to Almighty God: what do those make of him, who think to live in sin all their days, and then expect pardon when they can live no longer?"

—— "Dr. Taylor says, We complain our life is short, yet we throw away much of it. We want company, seek out arts to drive the time away, and then weep, because the time is gone too soon. He that desires to die well, must not live a soft voluptuous life."

—— "An idle man is never ready to die, and is glad of any excuse: a busy man hath always something unfinished, and is ready for every thing but death: but remember, thou must carry no more out of the world than thou broughtest in; therefore be satisfied with a little; thou must be gone shortly, eternity is always at hand."

—— "I often resolve to observe these good instructions which I read and write, but am too often disappointed, and taken off by worldly business. Such are my present concerns, being born to no estate, that I must pay my rent, and make necessary provision for my family, and this will not be done without care and pains in worldly business; yet I count all things here below but dross and dung, in comparison with God and Christ: on them I desire to set my heart and affection."

—— "One says, The raising up of the soul to God is indeed the greatest work; but the mortifying of the flesh, and denying self, is surely the next to it; for selfishness is the most treacherous, deceitful enemy in the world; and, of all views, the hardest both to find out, and cast out. The world is so great with some men, that God and everlasting life are as nothing: they are so full of the creature, that they have no room for the Creator; so busy about earth, that they have but little time for heaven. Lord, let my meditations of death prove effectual, to wean me from the world, and to make me live a holy life, without which my meditating, speaking, and writing of death, will avail me little. Lord, work in me both to will and to do of thy good pleasure."

—— "I am told, that if I be heartily concerned about my soul and eternity, and carefully seek the favour of God through Christ; if I strive against sin, make conscience of my words and ways, and have respect to all God's commandments, I have reason to hope, that notwithstanding my daily infirmities, my spiritual state is good. I think I can truly say, that I neither love nor delight in any sin, and desire always to be found in the way of my duty. Lord, grant I may not deceive myself."

—— "One says, It is my certain duty to seek heaven with all the fervour of my soul, and diligence of my life. Everlasting glory should be preferred before perishing vanity. I am sure this world will shortly be nothing to me, and therefore it is next to nothing now. Either joy or misery is near at hand to every man. This should awaken us to cry, to search, to beg, to strive, to watch, to spare no care, or cost, or labour, to make all sure in a matter of such weight. This should be done with speed, with zeal and earnestness, and a full resolution of soul. Who can stand dallying, as most men do, at the door of eternity, when they believe their immortal souls must be there shortly?"

"I cannot say that I am prepared for death as I ought to be, but am endeavouring it the best I can. I am sensible that my time on earth is short and uncertain. Mr. Fox says, 'You gray-headed sinners, against whom death hath raised his batteries, you have but a few sands in your glass, your departing hour cannot be far off; your candle is in the socket, and will be a stinking snuff shortly; the next blast the house may fall. You that lean on staves, and look through your spectacles, you are just ready to enter into eternity; if you do not mind your great work immediately, woe, woe be to you for ever! Poor mortals, since you cannot prevent death, make all the preparation you can for it; for it is the grand business of this life.' These good sayings of Mr. Fox I often consult, and am much affected with them. I take them to be spoken to myself; for I am under those symptoms of old age he mentions." On this occasion he writes these verses, which we will insert, though divers such pieces of his plain poetry we have omitted:

My head is gray, my time is almost spent;
Prepare for death, O wicked heart, repent.
When death doth call away, then go I must,
My soul to God, my body to the dust.
Christ died for me, my hope is fixed there;
I hope in mercy, yet I live in fear.
I fear my God, yet other fears I have;
I've broke his laws, why should he own and save
A wicked one, that spent his days in sin,
That knew his word, and what's contain'd therein

In mercy pardon all I've done amiss,
Through Christ, my Lord, my happiness and bliss.

——" I am now at the last stage of my life; I may well expect the summons of death every day; my time is even at an end; O let not me be one of those that desire to die the death of the righteous, but will not live the life of the righteous; but let it be my chief care, my earnest endeavour, to serve God, and please him. lest death should come upon me like a thief in the night, or surprise me at midnight, as the bridegroom did the sleeping virgins that had no oil."

" Mr. Gouge says, ' O sinner, it had been better for thee never to have been born, than not to be born again; it is as necessary as heaven and happiness. I beseech thee, for thy precious soul's sake, stir up thyself to work out thy salvation.' This is excellent advice; Lord, give me grace to take it."

——" I will not for a few merry hours hazard my eternal safety; I desire not to flatter myself, or think better of my state than it is; but would judge myself, that I may not be judged of the Lord; for, as old Mr. Henry used to say, when we set our sins before our faces in repentance and confession, God casts them behind his back in pardon and remission; but if we carelessly cast them behind our back, God justly sets them before his face."

——" Whether we are ready or unready, death will not stay; it is the greatest change that can pass upon us; it carries us from all present enjoyments, turns the body to dust, brings the soul into the presence of God, removes us from time to eternity. The awfulness of the change should make us careful to get ready; and it is no easy thing to prepare, as we should, for death. The whole time of our life is not more than sufficient; we have no time to lose or squander away; we have many sins to repent of, many graces to obtain, temptations to resist, difficulties to break through, duties to perform: we must get our guilt removed, our hearts purified, our natures refined; the image of God impressed on us, and all our corruptions mortified. O strive to live much in a little time: live apace in this sense; despatch the great business of life out of hand." This paragraph he gleaned out of Mr. Calamy's sermon on the death of Mr. Sylvester.

——" Meditation of death hath been my frequent practice many years; but, as Mr. Burghal says, it is but lost labour, unless that meditation draw us to serious preparation for it. Bishop Patrick says, O let it please my God, to strengthen me in my holy resolutions, till I arrive at his heavenly court: O let his Spirit breathe upon me, and carry away my soul in holy desires towards him; let him guide my course through this troublesome sea, on which I am tossed, and bring me safe to a quiet haven of eternal rest and peace."

——" Death, and preparation for it, I desire to make the chief subjects of my meditation, according to my weak and mean capacity. I hope my merciful Father will accept me, who knows my frame, and remembers I am but dust. A religious life is certainly the happiest life we can live in this world: it is pleasant while we live, and comfortable when we die; it makes a death-bed easy."

——" God in his great wisdom hath left us all at uncertainties, as to the time of our death, that we may be always on our guard, and improve our time. Let us frequently put this question to ourselves, Where must I be for ever? I have lived so long, what have I done all this while? Do I find myself better than I was some years ago? Am I more heavenly-minded? Do I prepare for another world before I am called out of this?"

About two months before he died, he began to read Monsieur Drelincourt's *Consolation against the fear of death.* " I propose" (says he) " to transcribe several things out of it, since it is a book which treats much of death; for such books I have studied much of late years." The last thing he wrote in his book, and we suppose the last he ever wrote, was a prayer proper for one dying, out of Drelincourt.

June 1, 1709, (which was about ten days before he died,) he thus wrote: " It hath been my desire these many years, to prepare for my death: to that end, I have used my best endeavours to make my peace with God. It is my great comfort, that I have taken this method for eight or ten years, to be always expecting death's approach. These endeavours I have used with much weakness and imperfection, so that I may well say I am but an unprofitable servant. If my heart doth not much deceive me, I desire to renounce all things, and to rest only upon Christ: Lord, what need have I of thy grace and favour, and the assistance of thy Holy Spirit! which I humbly beg, for the sake of my blessed Lord and Saviour."

Almost every page of his books hath some passage or other concerning death. Over his chamber door was written *Memento mori—Remember death.* Many of those Scriptures which speak of death, he got fairly written, and hung in a frame, with a death's head under them.

XVIII. The meditations and prayers which he prepared for the use of his death-bed.

He began these about 1700, and continued them at times after: he called to his son to read them to him a few hours before he died.

" I am going the way of all flesh, and find that death is very near me, and I am now launching into eternity. What may be the issue of this illness, God knows, who is only wise.—I am often assaulted with doubts and fears concerning the state of my precious soul, which is my chief concern; yet I hope I shall never despair of the mercies of God, for

they are infinite, and the sufferings of Christ are meritorious. Here is my main stay and strength: here is the hope of my salvation."

"I humbly confess, to my shame and sorrow, that my sins have been many and great: I cannot plead innocency of life, no, nor justify the best of my actions, but acknowledge myself sinful, and an unprofitable servant. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death? None but Christ, none but Christ."

"My only hope and comfort is, I have to do with a merciful God, who will abundantly pardon all penitent sinners; and a blessed Saviour, who hath redeemed me with his precious blood, and is now interceding with his Father in my behalf: O what a comfort is this to a poor doubting sinner."

"I will say, with Mr. Gearing, 'O Lord, thy Son hath offered satisfaction, and thou hast accepted it.—Thou, O my Saviour, hast laid down thy life for mine; and thy Father and my Father is well pleased with it. Blood is paid, justice is satisfied, heaven doors are widened, thy arms open to receive me, nothing wanting but my heart. Make it such as thou wouldst have it, (good Lord,) then take it to thyself. I have sinned against mercy, but not above mercy; for thou art a God of infinite mercy to all that repent."

"Lord, I owe thee a death, O let it not be terrible! Then take thy own time. What shall I say or do to make my peace with God, whom I have so much offended: Lord, I repent of all my sins from the very bottom of my heart; I will, with sorrow and shame, confess them, and will beg pardon and forgiveness of my merciful Father; I will cast myself on the rock Christ Jesus, my only Saviour, who laid down his life to save my precious soul; blessed be God for Jesus Christ, the inestimable gift. Lord, increase my faith, without which it is impossible to please thee."

"Why should I be loth to part from this troublesome world, or unwilling to die, and enter into those joys which my blessed Saviour hath purchased for me? All this is for want of assurance: doubts and fears are apt to arise; yet *in thee, O Lord, do I put my trust.*"

"O merciful Lord God, whenever thou pleasest to cast me upon my sick-bed, and bring the bitter pangs of death upon me, then be with me, support and comfort me in that time of my distress; strengthen me and help me, that I may have power to resist my enemy, who may strongly assault me when I am weakest: O bring me through that great trial with some ease and comfort; and, for thy mercy's sake, lay no more upon me than I am able to bear; for thou knowest my frame. When thou requirest my soul, embrace it in the arms of thy tender mercy: let thy good angels guard it into its everlasting rest, for Christ's sake."

"Lord, give me wisdom from above, that I may duly consider the shortness and uncertainty of life. Give me grace to make preparation for the hour of death, which time draws very near. It is my resolution, by divine assistance, to submit to the will and pleasure of my merciful Father. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* If he lay his hand heavy upon me, I confess it is my deserts; if he be favourable, it is his mercy and goodness: therefore I hope I shall never repine at the Lord's dealing, nor despair of his mercies."

"When pain, and sickness, and anguish beset me on every side, and death seizeth me, then let me call to mind the sufferings of my dear Saviour for my sins, though he committed no sin; how his precious body was torn, and his precious blood spilt, yet he patiently bore all with submission to his Father's will: and shall not I, a poor, sinful, vile, wretched creature, patiently suffer whatever the only wise God pleaseth to lay upon me? Then let me call to mind the folly and wickedness of my younger days, even the sins of my whole life. Sins bring all miseries upon us: *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him. Correct me, O Lord, but with judgment, not in thy anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.* I have deserved thy hot displeasure, but, Lord, in judgment remember mercy, and comfort thy poor servant in distress."

"Truly my soul waits upon God; from him comes my salvation. Thy loving-kindness is better than life. Lord, help me in this trouble, be merciful to me, for my soul trusteth in thee: in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge."

"*Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness,* &c. Ps. li. 1—3. It is my greatest trouble that I have sinned against so good a God; yet this comforts me, That *a troubled spirit, a broken contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord. Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies. Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me,* Ps. xxv. 16—18.

"When the pains of death get hold of me, then, good Lord, give me sense to pray, and patience to bear what thou layest upon me; then be thou with me, and comfort me for thy mercy's sake. Prayer and patience are the best remedies for a dying man: then let thy strength appear in my weakness, and enable me to overcome all the enemies of my salvation."

"Let the promises of the gospel be comfortable then to my distressed soul. As that, John iii. 16, 17. 1 Tim. i. 15. *Lord, preserve my soul,* for I desire to be *holy,* Ps. lxxxvi. 2—6. When the pains of death beset me, where then shall I seek for help, ease, and comfort, but with thee, my God? Then, good Lord, be thou with me, support and comfort me, smile upon me, for thy benignity is better than life."

"Christ is the only physician that can give ease

to a poor dying sinner. Remember me then, O Lord, with the favour thou bearest to thy chosen, visit me with thy salvation. Upon my sick-bed I desire to remember thy word, (Prov. iii. 11, 12.) *Despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint.* O let me have such a perfect subjection to the Father of spirits, that this chastisement may be for my profit, that I may be a partaker of thy holiness. O thou Captain of my salvation, who wast made perfect through suffering, sanctify to me all my pains and terrors, make me to bear them cheerfully and thankfully: chasten me as thou pleasest here, so that I may not be condemned in the world to come."

"Our afflictions, though sometimes severe and painful, are but for a moment; and they are nothing in comparison with the torments of hell, which are eternal and intolerable. Our God is gracious, and *will not always chide.*"

"If in health I have made preparation for death, when it comes I have not a new work to begin, but an old work to renew."

"Stay thyself, O my soul, upon the rock Christ Jesus, who is a merciful and faithful Priest, a sweet Shepherd, his rod and staff shall comfort thee. In the agonies of death cast thyself into the arms of thy blessed Saviour. If Satan assault thee, by setting before thee the greatness and multitude of thy sins, remember that sweet place, (Mic. vii. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity?* And that, (Isa. i. 18.) *Though your sins have been as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.*"

Out of Dr. Andrew Rivet's last hours; "Lord, let not this trial exceed my strength: O how light is this chastisement if compared with my fault! and this temporal pain, if compared with eternal torments, from which I am redeemed by him that poured out his soul unto death for me! Lord, let not thy good Spirit depart from me, that in this conflict I may be more than a conqueror. Lord, let nothing separate me from thee, or cause me to doubt of thy love and favour."

"Lord, make my pains tolerable, or furnish me with fortitude to bear them, that I may not offend with my tongue. Crucify, O Lord, the old man, that the body of sin may be destroyed, and I may rise again to a new life."

"Help me to wait with patience till my change comes; continue thy wonted mercy to thy poor servant. Make thou my bed in my distress and misery, that I faint not under thy hand."

"I have cast the care of me, of mine, of all my affairs, upon God; let him do with my body as seemeth him, so it be well with my soul. I lament not my leaving the world; I have lived long enough in it, have made trial of it, and find it is all vanity and vexation of spirit."

"To whom shall I go for help, O Lord? In whom is my hope? Truly in thee. I desire *to depart* and *to be with Christ.* It is enough, Lord, receive now my soul. When I leave my body to the earth, I commit my spirit into the hands of God who gave it. I know this tabernacle cannot be dissolved without pain, the flesh must suffer and fall; but it matters not, provided the soul obtain new strength, and I arrive at a better place. Lord, strengthen me, and help my infirmities; be not far from me in the day of my sorrow; say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Have pity on me, O God, and deal graciously with me; let death be my passage to life eternal. I hope the combat will not continue long. Bring to pass, O Lord, that the end may crown the work. Receive my soul to thyself, O Lord; I yield it into thy hands, thou hast redeemed it, O God of truth. The Lord shall perfect that which concerns his glory, and my eternal salvation."

"I desire and hope, that I shall submit to God's good will and pleasure, and not wish to live any longer. When God calls, and my appointed time is come, then will I call on the Lord and say, *I have waited for thy salvation*, leave me not. When my heart fails, Lord, be thou my helper. *Deliver my soul from hell, my darling from the power of the lion.* Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee."

"Lord, loose these bands; how long, Lord Jesus, how long! Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me, and receive my soul! O happy day, when shall I depart out of this sinful world, and go to heaven! Lord, I feel my strength failing me in this earthly tabernacle; I am ready to depart, breath fails, and death appears ready to strike the last stroke; but I know I shall rise again to behold thy glory."

"It is my thoughts, that these poor meditations may be useful and comfortable to me, when I lie upon my sick and dying bed; then I hope the Lord will in mercy remember me, and take pity on me, and accept of me and my poor services, through Christ my Saviour. Lord, if it please thee, grant me that favour, that when I lie dying I may have the use of my reason."

HIS DEATH.

In these his meditations of death, and preparations for it, there appears something extraordinary; and one cannot but wish now to know what was the end, the exit, of such a conversation, and how he finished his course at last. Of which, take this short account.

On Friday, June 10, 1709, he rode to Cheerbrook, where he had lived about thirty years, walked with his son in the gardens and orchards; there he was taken with the gripes, a distemper he had been afflicted with some time before, but he rode near two miles after, designed to have given his old minister

at Wibunbury a visit, but his pain increasing, he hastened home, and had a bad night. In the morning, when his son came to him, he said, "I am very bad, but I am willing to die, having lived above the age of man." He expressed his hopes of salvation through Christ. He said his house was in order, and he hoped his soul also. He would by no means have any physician sent for, but said, it was time for him to leave the world, and it did not become him at that age to use a physician. About noon on Saturday, he was persuaded to take some drops to ease his violent pain, and had for a few hours great ease; but at night his pain returned again. On the morning of the Lord's day, he spoke to his wife and son about his burial, which he would have to be private, and ordered matters, as if he had known that that must be his dying day, as it proved, though they about him thought he might recover, or at least have continued many days, being of a strong body, and considering his age, of a healthy constitution, and because he bore his pains with such patience, without groan or complaint. But when he was asked how he did, he said, "Worse and worse, I cannot live long in these pains."

At noon, being the Lord's day, he desired to be prayed for publicly; and called to his son, to read to him the foregoing meditations of death, which he did at several times; and he said, they refreshed and comforted him; and it was for such a time as this that he had drawn them up. They were also very affecting to those about him. He also repeated divers of them himself.

He said to his son, "I would not, for all the world, that I had my work of preparation for death to do now." About two o'clock, he called to his son to pray by him; which he did; and at the close of his prayer, added some of the petitions which the good man had prepared in his book for such a time. He then bid him go to the public worship; which he did, not thinking his father's end had been so near as it proved. In about an hour and a half, he returned, and found a great change. His voice was gone, and it appeared he was dying; but he did not groan, or make any complaint. His son kneeled down to speak some comfortable words to him in his dying conflict; to which he answered, "I shall be well presently," and scarce spoke a word more. The minister of the parish came in, and prayed with him, and commended his soul into the hand of the Almighty. He had just before put out his hand to a friend that came in to see him, by which it appeared he was sensible; but quickly after, while the minister was with him, about six of the clock, he breathed his last, June 12, 1709.

On Tuesday following, his corpse was carried on a mourning carriage to Wibunbury, attended by a great number of people. The captain of his company, who was major of the train-bands of the county, attended the funeral with his company, put the drum in mourning, marched with their arms, and gave him several volleys over his grave.

Mr. Bromfield preached his funeral sermon on the text which he himself chose, Ps. ciii. 13, 14. *Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him; for he knows our frame, and remembers we are but dust.* The reason he gives for choosing that text was, because he had chosen that excellent psalm (as he calls it) for the subject of his morning meditations for a great while; and usually repeated it all to himself as soon as he awaked, before he rose: and these words particularly he thought very comfortable to a doubting, drooping soul. He had himself drawn up meditations upon those words, to the length of a sermon.

The minister, in the close of his discourse, spoke of him thus: "A good name has this our deceased brother left behind him; and a good character do all those deserve that are so diligent in the discharge of their duty, both to God and man, as he was. He gave proof of his love to God, by his constant resort to his house and ordinances, his affection to the prayers of the church, and devout joining in them, his attentive hearing the word read and preached, and his frequent and devout communicating; and he kept a constant course of religious exercise in his family; a thing too much neglected among us. I doubt not, but his worshipping of God in secret was daily and devout, agreeable to his care of family worship. He took great care that the Lord's day was kept holy, both by himself, and by his family; and further evidenced his love to God by his bold and ready appearing against profaneness and immorality."

He was a very useful man in his neighbourhood, being ready to do good to all, both rich and poor, according to his ability and opportunity. He was very happy in the love of his neighbours, was active and successful in the blessed work of peace-making among them; was just in his dealings, a faithful friend, a careful father, and a very affectionate husband; in a word, his conversation showed him to be a true lover of virtue and goodness, and a very serious Christian.

Upon his death-bed he was patient, and wholly resigned to the will of God, in a humble hope of his mercy in Christ; and at his departure, had the prayers of his minister, by whom his soul was commended into the hands of the Almighty, and into the state of blessed souls. I question not but that our deceased brother is received; for, *like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knows our frame, and remembers we are but dust.*

He was generally lamented at his death, as he had been universally beloved and respected by all that knew him while he lived. The members of par-

liament for the county, and other gentlemen of the first rank would visit him at his house. When the troubles were in Ireland, Col. Cook's family lodged at his house for some time, and always after expressed a great kindness for him; and he retained a mighty respect for that worthy Colonel, and his family, and friends. He made some verses to be added to the inscription on his grave-stone, if his son thought fit; but this, says he, or any other, or none at all, I leave to your discretion.

Lieutenant Richard Illidge died June 12, 1709, aged seventy-two. In his life-time he had served four sovereigns, three kings, and one queen, as a sub-officer in the militia of this county, for the space of near fifty years.

Now slain by death who spareth none,
And lies full low under this stone:
Take heed, and read, and thou shalt see,
As I am now so shalt thou be.
Rotting in dark and silent dust;
Prepare for death, for die thou must.
Life is uncertain, death is sure;
Sin is the wound, Christ is the cure.

MEMENTO MORI.

He was of a middle stature, strong and well set; of a healthy constitution, comely visage, inclining to feed, which made him spare in his diet, eating little but at dinner.

When his friends told him, that if he should leave off worldly business, and retire into privacy, he would find it a melancholy sort of life; he answered: "I thank God, my time never lies upon my hand, I can cultivate the little garden of my soul, when I have no other business, and I have good books for my companions.——I may with shame and sorrow (says he) look back upon an ill-spent life; my childhood and youth were folly and vanity; my riper years were mostly spent in carking and caring, and seeking after the profits and pleasures of this world; and I have too much neglected the main business, my duty to God: Lord, I repent; Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief; free me from every weight, and the sin that doth most easily beset me."

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

OPENING OF THE NEW MEETING-HOUSE AT CHESTER,

AUGUST 8, 1700.

JOSHUA xxii. 22, 23.

The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know, if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord,——that we have built us an altar.

THUS the two tribes and a half begin their solemn reply to the remonstrance of the other tribes, who, with sword in hand, ready to make good their challenge, boldly charged them with a crime no less black and dangerous, than apostasy from the truth and worship of the God of Israel. Thus the indictment runs, *v.* 16. that they had rebelled against the Lord, and turned from following him, *v.* 18. and these were indeed heinous crimes, and, in the sense of the patriarchal age, *an iniquity to be punished by the judges*, Job xxxi. 28. thus to have denied the God that is above, if they had been really guilty of it.

But never was there any controversy more innocently begun, more prudently and discreetly managed, nor more happily compromised, and taken up, than this was; for whereas in most quarrels there is a fault on both sides, in this there does not appear to be a fault on either side; and whereas the *beginning of strife is as the letting forth of water*, the occasion of much mischief, the beginning of this was an occasion for both sides to give evidences of their zeal for religion and love.

Let us look into the particulars of the story:

1. That which gave rise to the controversy was an altar erected by the two tribes over against the land of Canaan in the borders of Jordan, *a great altar to see to*, *v.* 10. and this done without any leave asked, or warrant obtained, from Joshua or Eleazar; without any notice given to, or consultation had with, their brethren of the other tribes; yet being done with an honest design to preserve the entail of religion to their posterity, and to be a token of their communion with the altar of the Lord at Shiloh, was not only warrantable, but commendable. This they solemnly declare to be the true intent and meaning of their building this altar; that they had no idolatrous, superstitious, or schismatical design in it, but that they intended it for a witness *(in perpetuam rei memoriam—in perpetual attestation)* of their alliance to their brethren, from whom they were divided by the waters of Jordan. They did not set it up as a mere stone or rock of division, much less *as a stone of stumbling or a rock of offence*, but as a badge of relation, and consequently a *nexus* or bond of union, wisely foreseeing and providing against so great a mischief, as the alienating of their posterity from the church privileges of the seed of Israel; for fear, say they, lest in time to come *your children might speak to our children, saying, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel?* *v.* 24. the consequences of which, in after and more degenerate ages, might be most fatal.

They who have themselves found how good it is to be near to God, and what an unspeakable pleasure and happiness there is in communion with him, cannot but be concerned to take all possible care, and make all probable provision, that their children after them may not be made to cease from following the Lord, or be looked on as having no part in him. With the human nature, which we transmit to posterity depraved and corrupted, it is very desirable to transmit pure and entire those sovereign remedies which religion has provided for the cure of that hereditary disease: not the narrow and private interests of a party, which in kindness to posterity we should study how to bury in oblivion, but the great and noble principles of catholic Christianity; these we should desire to entail the knowledge and faith of upon our *seed's seed, henceforth and for ever*, Isa. lix. 21. They who rejoice in the light of the gospel, will desire that it may not die in their hands; and they who find themselves enriched with

the true treasure, and know how to value it, cannot but wish it may not be buried in their graves, Ps. xxii. 30. cii. 28. but well secured to their heirs, that in their tribe, and the families thereof, the name of Christ may *endure for ever, and his throne as the days of old.*

2. The godly jealousy of the other tribes, who suspected their altar to be of dangerous tendency, and to be an ill step towards idolatry or schism, was likewise praise-worthy; and their warm resentments, when they had such a colour of cause for them, were a laudable instance of their pious zeal for the honour of the Lord God of Israel. The thing *prima facie* looked bad, and gave ground for suspicion. The law of Moses had expressly required them to offer all their sacrifices in the place which the Lord should choose to put his name there, and not elsewhere, under the severe penalty of excision, Lev. xvii. 8, 9. Deut. xii. 5, 6. and it was no strained inuendo, or foreign surmise, from the building of an altar in the borders of Jordan, to infer an intention to offer sacrifice there contrary to the law of God. This they take very heinously, and seem to be touched by it in a very tender part; they reckon the confronting of God's altar an intolerable affront to the government, *et altaria contra altaria* no less dangerous than *imperium in imperio,* and to be animadverted on accordingly.

The God we serve is very jealous in the matters of his worship, (which are to him as the apple of his eye,) and he expects we should be so to, and afraid of all appearances of evil; yea, and dreading the first step towards apostasy from God, and so cordially espousing his institutions, and the honour and purity of them, as to be jealous of any thing that looks like an encroachment upon them: when the cause is plainly God's, our call to appear in it is clear, and when the thing we do is good, nothing better than to be zealously affected in it, Gal. iv. 18. When our Lord Jesus had commended the angel of the church of Ephesus, particularly for her patience, he adds this further character, (which though it seems contrary to it, yet is very consistent with it,) that she could not bear them that were evil, Rev. ii. 2. It is no part of Christian patience to bear with sin; the meekest man upon earth was more than once angry at sin. The nearer any are to us in relation and neighbourhood, the more jealous we should be of their departure from God, and the more industrious to prevent and reduce them, lest we ourselves or ours should catch the infection. *Jam——tua res agitur paries cum proximus ardet—Thy own goods are endangered when the adjoining house is on fire.*

3. The method they took in prosecution of their resentments was regular and exemplary; their zeal in this matter was for the most part guided and governed by the meekness of wisdom. An assembly of the states was called at Shiloh, and the report concerning this altar was taken into consideration, the result of which was, that the business should be fairly and impartially examined, and the supposed delinquents heard to speak for themselves; who if they would hear and submit to their reproof, well and good, *they had gained their brethren,* Matt. xviii. 15, 17. but if they refused, then, and not till then, it was time to deal with them as heathen men, and devoted Canaanites. These tribes of Israel, though apt to war, yet would not send forth their armies to give them battle, till they had first sent their ambassadors, (and those men of the first rank,) to treat of peace, and to inquire into the merits of the cause, *v.* 13, 14. He to whom all things are naked and bare, would not punish the most notorious criminals, the cry of whose wickedness alarmed heaven itself, but he would first go down and see, Gen. xviii. 21. It is the advice of the wise man, and it will be our wisdom in all such cases to take the advice, Prov. xxv. 8, 9. *Go not forth hastily to strive, but debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself.* Many an unhappy strife, and all the mischievous consequences of it, would be prevented by an amicable and candid inquiry into the matter of the offence. The reason why we do not love one another as we ought, is because we do not, and will not, know one another as we might: the rectifying of mistakes and misunderstandings, and the setting of misconstrued words and actions in a true light, that they may appear as they are meant, and not otherwise, would be in many cases an effectual way to accommodate both private and public quarrels, and bring them to a happy period.

4. The defence which the two tribes made for themselves, to clear and vindicate what they had done, was very ingenuous and fair. Though there was somewhat more of warmth in the charge exhibited against them than was needful, and the fault was too much taken for granted; yet they patiently heard them out, and then replied with a great deal of calmness, very fairly stating the case, and showing the suspiciousness of their brethren to be (though not without a colourable pretence, yet) without a just ground, not doubting but they would lay aside their jealousies, and let fall their action, when they understood their honest and sincere intention and design in building this altar.

Lastly, The effect of this was very good and happy; the princes were satisfied, and receded from their charge, and thereby showed themselves to be under the government of that great law of charity, which teaches us not *to rejoice in iniquity, but to rejoice in the truth;* hereby further mischief was prevented, the peace and honour of their infant state preserved, and God had the glory of all, *v.* 33.

The text begins that defence which had so good and happy a success. It may be of use to us to observe how it was managed, that we may learn in the like cases so to vindicate ourselves, as not to pro-

voke, but pacify, our brethren. Here is not a word of recrimination, no return of suspicion for suspicion; (though nothing is more easy to retort than that;) they do not blame their brethren for their rash, and hasty, and uncharitable censures, nor upbraid them with the good services they had done them in helping to put them in possession of their land, nor defy their threatened arms, and bid them do their worst; here is nothing that savours of pride or passion, but all fair and candid: though the periods of their speech are elaborate enough, and the style proper, yet nothing appears to be so much studied in it, *as the things that make for peace.*— Observe,

I. The manner and form in which the plea is drawn up: it runs both as an appeal to God, and an apology to their brethren.

1. Here is a solemn appeal made to God concerning that which they had done, repeated to make it the more solemn, *The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knows.* That glorious title of God, which speaks him higher than the highest of the angels in heaven, the princes and potentates of the earth, and the imaginary deities of the heathen, (for each of these are called gods,) is here made use of, to express a holy awe and dread of that God to whom they appeal, upon their own spirits, and to beget the like in the minds of those with whom they speak. The sense had been complete if they had only said, God knows; but then they had not taken the occasion given them, to express their high and honourable thoughts of the great Jehovah. Let us learn hence to speak of God with reverence, and mention his glorious name with a solemn pause. Is it a piece of respect due to earthly princes in addresses made to them, to give them their title of honour; and shall we speak as slightly and carelessly of the King of kings, as if he were not only a man like ourselves, but a common man in our own rank? Is this to fear that glorious and fearful name, the Lord our God?

In appeals to heaven, it is especially necessary that there be a very awful decorum and solemnity observed, for God is appealed to, not as a common witness, but as a judge, whose tribunal is in the heavens, and by whose definitive sentence all causes must be finally and irreversibly determined; those therefore that appeal to him upon every trivial occasion, and with a slightly superficial God knows, while they never think of God, nor have any regard to his knowledge, profane his name by taking it in vain, and instead of honouring him, put the greatest affront that can be upon him. Appeals thus put into the court above, will not only be rejected and thrown out (how just soever the matter may be) as not being put in due form, but the appellant prosecuted for a contempt of the court.

This appeal here is a good pattern or precedent in drawing up appeals. *The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knows:* he that is the God of gods, even Jehovah, (so it is placed in the original,) is both a rightful and competent judge of all appeals made to him: who should judge and pass sentence but he that is Jehovah, the mighty God, even the Lord? for so this same title which is here used is translated, Ps. l. 1. where God is spoken of at large as the sovereign and universal Judge. If he be Jehovah, he is perfect in knowledge, wisdom, and justice, and we are sure that his judgment is according to truth; that it is such as the guilty have reason to dread, and the upright reason to rejoice in. If he be the God of gods, the mighty God, his jurisdiction cannot be demurred unto, nor his authority disputed; no further appeals can be made to any higher court, nor can the executions taken out upon his judgments be opposed or resisted; the God of gods is a Judge that will not be baffled.

To the tribunal of the mighty God the two tribes here refer the decision of this matter in variance. If we have done this in rebellion, and with an ill design, the Lord God of gods he knows it, (for he is acquainted with all the transgressions that are committed against him, even those that are gilded over with the most plausible pretences,) and he that looks upon it will require it, will revenge it; but we are sure he knows the contrary, and that however it be interpreted, it is honestly intended. From whence we may observe,

(1.) That in every thing we do in religion it concerns us highly to approve ourselves to God in our integrity, so as to be able with a holy, humble, well grounded confidence to appeal to him concerning it; herein we must labour, and this must be the top of our ambition, in every service that we may be accepted of the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 9. doing it as unto the Lord, and not to men, and then it is done heartily, Col. iii. 23. It was the total miscarriage of the Pharisees in their devotions, and the dead fly that tainted all their precious ointment, that all their works they did to be seen of men, their approbation and applause they coveted, to them they were industrious to approve themselves, and *verily they had their reward,* Matt. xxiii. 5. vi. 2, 5. In this therefore our righteousness must exceed theirs, or we shall never get to heaven, Matt. v. 20. All our works we must do to be seen of God, setting ourselves in the doing of them before him, having our eye towards him in every performance, diligently observing his will as our rule, and his glory as our end, and earnestly desiring and courting his favour and acceptance, as our felicity, recompence, and chief good; accounting that if he be well pleased with us, and say, Well done, we have gained our point, we have all we need all we would have; if we have praise of God whether we have praise of men or no, we are happy and ought to be easy. Let us therefore see to it, tha

in all our exercises of piety and devotion, public and private, our hearts be upright with God, that we be really as good as we seem to be, because God knows whether we be so or no, and will accept us no further than we are so; that our eye be single, our intentions sincere, and all we do be done from an unbiassed principle of regard to God as our ruler and portion, as that which consecrates our services to the Lord, and recommends them, through the mediation of Christ, to his acceptance.

(2.) That when at any time we fall under the censures of men, and their reproaches, who condemn us because they do not know us, it is very comfortable to be able to appeal to a God that knows us, concerning our integrity. When holy Job was run down by his friends as a hypocrite, this was his comfort, Job xvi. 19, 20. *My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high: my friends scorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.* David oft found relief by taking the same course, and appeals from the unjust and uncharitable accusations of his enemies to God's knowledge of his integrity, and is so far from dreading and deprecating God's judgment, (as every wicked man if he knows himself must,) that he begs it, and refers himself to it: (Ps. xvii. 2.) *Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.* Ps. xxvi. 1. If God say, Well done, good and faithful servant, the matter is not great who says otherwise; for so shall our doom be, as God hath decided it, and not as men give their opinion of it. If therefore he that judgeth us is the Lord, surely it is a very small thing, and not worthy our consideration, or fit to affect us much, especially so as to turn the scale of our resolves, how we are judged of man's judgment, 1 Cor. v. 3, 4. If men brand our devotion as counterfeit and hypocritical, and put us under the blackest characters, let it not disquiet nor disturb us, while we have good hopes, through grace, that God accepts us and our services, as sincere; let not them therefore that know righteousness, (that know what will bear them out, and bring them off,) and in whose heart is the law of God, (and not in their mouths only,) let them not fear the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their revilings, so as thereby to be either diverted from, or discouraged in, their duty; *for the righteousness that will justify them shall be for ever, and the salvation following it, from generation to generation,* Isa. li. 7, 8. This will be our rejoicing in the day of evil, even the testimony of our conscience, which is God's deputy in the soul, 2 Cor. i. 12. Let, therefore, the generation of the upright, when most misrepresented, commit their cause to God. He who knows their righteousness will sooner or later bring it forth as the morning, and if their integrity be manifest to God, (as undoubtedly it is,) it shall in due time also be *manifested in the consciences of men,* 2 Cor. v. 11.

2. Here is a sober apology presented to their brethren: *Israel he shall know.* We are ready to let Israel know; ready to give such an account of our meaning in this attempt, as we doubt not will give our brethren other thoughts of us, and it, than they now have: which teaches us this, that though the record on high, and the witness in our own bosoms, are principally to be secured for us, yet there is a satisfaction which we owe to our brethren, who doubt concerning the integrity of our actions.

Though our brethren are not our judges, by whose sentence our state is to be determined, yet they are our friends, in whose opinions we should desire to stand right. Though to be accepted of God is without doubt the chief and most desirable good, yet it is also desirable and well worthy our endeavour, like Mordecai, Esth. x. 3. *to be accepted of the multitude of our brethren.* If our sincerity be known to God, we should study how to let others know it, and to give evidences of it to those that have their eyes upon us. It is part of the debt we owe to ourselves, to preserve our own good name, and part of the debt we owe to our brethren, to value and seek their good will, and as far as we can to rectify their mistakes and prejudices.

We should especially study how to give satisfaction to those, who though they misunderstand our words and actions, and judge of us accordingly, yet show a zeal for the glory of God, as these ten tribes here did. The reproaches of the fools in Israel are to be despised; it is no matter what they speak against us who profanely speak against God, nor should it much affect us if we be made the song of the drunkards, but the deliberate censures of wise and sober men cannot be made so light of. It is a desirable thing to be accepted of those, who we have reason to think are accepted of God; therefore David prays, Ps. cxix. 79. *Let those that fear thee turn in unto me.* Though we ought not to be ambitious of the applause of any, yet we should wish and endeavour not to lie under the hard thoughts of good men; and for this reason, we should be always ready to give an answer to those that ask us *a reason of the hope that is in us,* 1 Pet. iii. 15. and not say, What is that to you? Though that which satisfies our own consciences may not always be satisfactory to others, nor convince them that we are in the right; yet if it be produced with meekness and fear, as it ought to be, it may perhaps beget a more favourable opinion, and somewhat abate the edge of censure, when it appears that we are not altogether without excuse. Perhaps after the two tribes had so fully vindicated themselves, and what they had done in building this altar, their brethren of the ten tribes, or some of them at least, were not fully convinced of the expediency of it, but were still of the mind that they had better have let it alone, and that it was altogether needless; but, however, it had this good effect, that

it made the matter abundantly better than at first it seemed, and prevented the unhappy rupture that it threatened; and the ten tribes, though no great admirers of the contrivance of this altar, yet agreed to be neighbourly and friendly with their brethren, and resolved they would not quarrel about it, nor go up in battle against them.—Observe,

II. The matter insisted on in their plea: they plead Not guilty to the charge, and though the fact was plain enough, yet they deny the fault, and aver that it was not in rebellion, nor in transgression against the Lord, that they had built them an altar; they humbly desired, that it might not be misconstrued as done with any design to infringe the honour, or weaken the true interest, of the national establishment, (which they express a very tender concern for,) but only to preserve and promote the common interests of true religion and godliness among themselves on the other side Jordan, in communion with their brethren, and not in any affront or contradiction to them, and therefore not in rebellion or in transgression against the Lord. Learn from this, that it highly concerns those who build an altar, for themselves to see to it, that they do it not in rebellion or in transgression against the Lord. Building of altars was an ancient act of piety and devotion; Noah and Abraham were famous for it; but that, as other outward instances of religion, if not done from a right principle, and for a right end, may and will turn into sin. We read of Ephraim making many altars to sin, Hos. viii. 11. The multiplying of his altars was the multiplying of his transgressions, and the righteous God turned it into his punishment, *therefore altars shall be unto him to sin*, that is, they shall be a continual snare to him; and the connexion of the parts of the charge against Israel, Hos. viii. 14. is very surprising; *Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples.* Those who build altars on which to offer in the Eucharist a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of quick and dead, (as the church of Rome does,) do in effect deny the sufficiency of that one great sacrifice, which Christ offered once for all upon the cross; and by the pretended repetitions of it, insinuate that it is of no more force to take away sin than the legal sacrifices which were heretofore offered year by year continually; because these could not make the comers thereunto perfect, and therefore those altars are certainly built in rebellion and transgression against the Lord, Heb. x. 1. Those that build altars for the maintaining and propagating any heresy, or the promoting and carrying on any design against religion in the power of it, that build altars to support a monopoly of the church, and engross to themselves its privileges, to the exclusion of others, spoil the acceptableness of the altars they build; and it will be construed to be done in transgression against the Lord. If we bestow all our goods in building temples and altars, and have not charity, the reigning love of God and our neighbour in our hearts, all the cost is thrown away, and spent in vain, and we are but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. and shall be dealt with as rebels against the Lord. Let it therefore be our care, to do not only that which is good for the matter of it, but to do it well, for *then, and then only, we shall be accepted*, Gen. iv. 7.

You see, my brethren, how the further opening of this would lead me to the vindication of what we have done here, in furnishing ourselves with these conveniences for our solemn assemblies; but it was not for that purpose that I chose this text, nor shall I enter upon that subject; partly because, I bless God, I know not of any that exhibit so high a charge against us, as that we have done it in rebellion or in transgression against the Lord, and I am very willing to hope the best concerning our brethren's thoughts of us; and partly because I am resolved industriously to decline every thing that looks like controversy, and I should fear lest our defence be construed our offence, or at least be interpreted an invitation or persuasion of people to our way, and an attempt to make proselytes to a party, which you know I have always been studious to avoid. It is a string that can scarce be touched so tenderly but it will have a jarring sound, than which nothing is more disagreeable to me. I am sure this is not a time of day for us to pick quarrels, while through the clemency of our governors we enjoy great quietness; and we have as little reason to do it in this place as any where: while the prime dignitaries of the established church among us seem to have buried the thoughts of our unhappy differences in such a hearty, pious zeal for the reformation of manners, we are very unjust and unwise if we say or do any thing to revive them. Are these thoughts laid to sleep? may they on both sides sleep perpetually! But that which I further intend in the application of what I have opened to the present occasion, is from this text and story to borrow some light,

1. For the stating of our case as it truly stands, and giving a just account of what we have here done.

2. For the directing us in the duty of this present day, which I principally aim at.

For the first; our building us an altar, besides that which stands upon the foot of the national establishment, *(altare juxta altare,)* is a thing which needs explication, for the preventing and rectifying the mistakes of some unthinking people, who are apt to look upon those who go to church, and those who go to meetings, as of two different religions, and the distance between them is widened to a degree equal to that between papists and protestants; thanks be to God the matter is not so: let us therefore see how it stands between us and our brethren of the ten tribes.

1. We also are Israelites in common, and there-

fore in communion with those of the national establishment. Are they Christians? so are we; we worship the same God, in the same name, and heartily consent with them in all the articles of the ancient creed, holding just the same form of sound words, and contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. We are baptized, and do baptize, in the same great and sacred name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as three Persons, but one God. We read the same Scriptures, and adhere to them as the standing rule of faith and practice, and make use of them as our oracle and touchstone. We pretend to no inspiration in our praying and preaching, nor do we set up any light within, in competition with, much less in contradiction to, the written word. We build our hopes of salvation upon the covenant of grace, and the promises of it made to us and to our children, and submit to all gospel-ordinances, particularly that of the ministry. Whatever the way in which we worship the God of our fathers is called and counted, we believe all things which are written in the law and the prophets, and the everlasting gospel, and have hope towards God, which they also allow, *that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust*, Acts xxiv. 14, 15.

We are far from engrossing religion and the church to ourselves, and those of our own way, or thinking that we are the only elect people of God; from our hearts we abhor and renounce all such narrow principles as are contrary to catholic Christianity, and undermine and straiten its sure and large foundations. We do hereby solemnly profess, and shall take all occasions to repeat it, that we celebrate our religious assemblies *in communion with all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours*, 1 Cor. i. 2. We neither say nor do any thing here to the reproach or prejudice of the national establishment; we take not upon us to arraign or censure the constitutions of it, or to judge or despise those that adhere to them; but in those few and small things wherein our apprehensions differ, (whilst in the most and greatest things of all we cordially agree,) we desire faithfully and conscientiously to walk according to the light that God has given us, charitably believing that others do so too, whom we hope to meet in the general assembly of the first-born, though now we are divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel. This profession we make in the sincerity of our hearts, with a resolution, by the grace of God, never to act contrary to it.

And now may we not claim it as our right to be owned and looked upon as members of the catholic church, though a weak and small part of it, yet a part of it, and I trust not a corrupt part; and being united with our brethren of the other tribes, under one civil government, and being (abundantly to our satisfaction) within the same allegiance, and even in our religious interests taken into the same protection, we see not why we should not be looked upon as belonging to that part of the catholic church which God's own right hand hath planted in these kingdoms.

2. Though we also are Israelites, yet our lot, like that of the two tribes, happens to fall on the other side Jordan, a river dividing between us and our brethren, which, without hazarding the peace of our consciences, we cannot wade through or swim over.

Some of the tribes of our English Israel have been so situated ever since the reformation, as early as Edward the Sixth's time, through a dissatisfaction about the injunction of some indifferent things, the more minute parts of the national establishment. The first settlement of the two tribes on the other side Jordan was looked upon by Moses and the rest of the tribes with a jealousy, as tending to weaken the common interests of Israel; and their proposing of it (as here their building of an altar) was severely censured, till they had given their reasons, cleared themselves of any ill design in it, and promised their best assistance to their brethren in the common service; and then Moses allowed and ratified their choice, as we have the story at large, Numb. xxxii. where we find, that two things induced them to desire their lot on that side Jordan, though thereby they put themselves out of the way of the preferments which attended Joshua and the ark into the land of Canaan, and exposed themselves to the contempt and censure of their brethren, as strangers to the commonwealth of Israel.

(1.) That there was good pasture in the land, *v.* 4. *It is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle:* they would sit down by the *footsteps of the flock, and feed their kids beside the shepherds' tents.*

(2.) That then they should not have the trouble of passing the river, *v.* 5. *Bring us not over Jordan.* Whether these inducements were justifiable we will not now dispute, but it appears that the rest of the tribes, who could satisfy themselves to go through Jordan, did not therefore disown them for their brethren.

From the first planting of Christianity, there appears to have been a variety of sentiments among wise and good men, concerning the less weighty and less evident matters of the gospel, as concerning the distinction of meats and the observation of days, Rom. xiv. 2, 5. some regarding all days and all meats alike, others making a religious difference. The apostle Paul, by his unquestionable authority, might have determined the matter in favour of one side, and have obliged the other to a compliance; but he chooses to accommodate the matter, without engaging either to change their opinions or their practice according to them, but prescribes a mutual

charity and forbearance, as a sovereign remedy against all the ill consequences of this variety of sentiments, Phil. iii. 15, 16. *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not*, Rom. xiv. 3. *But let every man be persuaded in his own mind*, v. 5. Which no doubt were intended to be standing rules for the management of the like differences in all the ages of the church; and if these rules were strictly observed by all churches and all Christians, the river of Jordan would be dried up, at least be *driven back at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob*, Ps. civ. 5, 7. the God of peace and love: and a way would be made for those *of the ransomed of the Lord to pass over*, whose lot is on the other side of it; but alas, who shall live when God does this!

In the mean time, for the divisions of Reuben, (one of the two tribes that was divided from the rest by the waters of Jordan,) there cannot but be great thoughts and searchings of heart, as Judg. v. 15, 16. with all that desire and pray *for the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem*.

3. Being Israelites, (though on the other side Jordan,) it ought to be our care and endeavour, according as our lot is, to promote the common interests of our holy religion, and to do what we can to preserve and advance them. *And the Lord God of gods, he knows* it is with this design that we have built us an altar; not for the support of a sect or party, or the carrying on of any private interests, but for the service of catholic Christianity according to the Scriptures. We know very well *that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*, Rom. xiv. 17. that it is not maintained either by the imposition or opposition of indifferent things, but that it consists *in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; these are the things in which lie the being and power of the divine life, and not in a zeal either for or against ceremonies: we know very well, that *neither circumcision is any thing, nor uncircumcision any thing*, to our acceptance with God, *but the new creature*, and *faith which works by love*, Gal. v. 6. vi. 15. That therefore which is of uncontroverted necessity, and which is the very life and soul of religion, we would do our endeavour, and make it our business, at this altar, to maintain and carry on, so that we *and our children after us may have a part in the Lord, and may never cease from following him*. We would endeavour to glorify the great name of God in Christ in our prayers and praises, and, in concurrence with the universal church, to pay due homage to the universal Lord. We desire and design in the preaching of the word, to propagate the knowledge of the *only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, which is life eternal*; to push on the holy war against sin and Satan, the world and the flesh, under the banner of the exalted Redeemer. Our intention in all our ministrations shall be the same with the intentions of the ministry in general, Acts xxvi. 18. *First to open men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*; to recover people from under the dominion of a worldly, carnal, sensual mind, to the faith and obedience of the everlasting gospel; and then, *for the building up of the saints in holiness and comfort, and the edifying of the body of Christ, till they all come to the perfect man*, Eph. iv. 12, 13. And herein we are still *determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified*.

And this we do not in opposition to, but a hearty concurrence with, the national establishment, as far as it aims at these ends. *God forbid that we should preach Christ, who is our peace, out of envy or contention*; no, we desire to have all our different apprehensions and sentiments swallowed up in a pious *zeal for the common faith of the precious Jesus, and the common salvation* of precious souls; and in token of this communion with our brethren of the other tribes, we have built us this altar, that we may say as they, *v.* 28. *Behold the pattern of the altar which we have built!* not to entail a schism, and to perpetuate a causeless separation, but for the solemnity and decorum of our religious assemblies, (until God shall open a door into the national establishment,) *and the rolling away of their reproach, that it may not be said to us, as it was to the Gileadites*, (the half tribe whose lot was on the other side Jordan,) *Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim*, Judg. xii. 4.

We need not, we cannot, put it into our apology, that we have not built our altar for burnt-offerings and sacrifices; for, blessed be God, we are not under the gospel tied up to worship in one place, John iv. 21. as the Jews were under the law. *The hour now is, when, neither to this mountain, nor yet to Jerusalem shall religious worship be confined; but in every place incense shall be offered and prayers made*, Mal. i. 11. *every where*, without respect of places, 1 Tim. ii. 8. We know no temples, *no altar, that sanctifies the gift*, or the service, but Christ only, Heb. xiii. 20. But this we can say, that we have not built our altar in rebellion, or in transgression against the Lord, or to make a breach upon catholic unity. Thus I have endeavoured, with the words of truth and soberness, to state our case; and I know I speak the sentiments of many.

What remains is, Secondly, to direct you in the duty of the present day and occasion. And now, my brethren, *What doth the Lord our God require of us?* I take it for granted you are willing to know, and therefore, I beseech you, suffer the word of exhortation.

1. Let us give God the glory of our peaceable settlement in the land of our possession. We have reason to acknowledge it to a kind providence that cast our lot in such a land as this, an exceeding good land, like that of Canaan, *a pleasant land*

Dan. viii. 9. a glorious land, or land of delights or ornaments, wherein there is no want of any good thing, nor any reason to envy (all things considered) either the soil or climate of any other land. The constitution of our civil government, and the defences and securities of our liberty and property, are such as make our nation easy, safe, and happy. Our lot is also cast in a good day, wherein we have not for many years felt the strokes of any desolating judgments, either war, famine, or pestilence. While thus we dwell peaceably under fruitful *vines and fig-trees*, we are much to blame if we praise not the name of the Lord.

The two tribes built this altar here to the glory of God, when they were returning triumphantly to settle in their inheritance, as David fetched the ark to the place he had prepared for it, when God *had given him rest from all his enemies round about*, 2 Sam. vii. 1. The Israelites, every time they offered their first-fruits, were appointed to make a thankful mention of the mercy of God to them, in giving them that good land, Deut. xxvi. 3, 9, 10. And we have a great deal of reason to do the same, now we are offering the first-fruits of our altar. If we consider how melancholy the reverse of our present circumstances would be, we should see what great cause we have to be thankful to God, for our share in the public peace and plenty. National plenty in the success of trade, and the increase of the earth, contributes to the support and comfort of our religious assemblies; for thus we have wherewithal to honour our God. When famine reigned, *the meat-offering and the drink-offering failed from the house of God*, Joel i. 13. compare *ch.* ii. 14. National peace does no less contribute to the comfort of our assemblies, *for in the peace of the nation we have peace.* We have great reason to bless God that our land is not the seat of war, *and that the sword of the Lord is not drawn among us*, (as sometimes it has been,) *and commissioned to lay heaps upon heaps: that the city, the place of our solemnities, is a quiet habitation*, Isa. xxxiii. 20. It is easy to imagine what desolations war, especially civil war, would make, not only with our cities and houses, but with our temples and altars. *(Inter arma silent leges et evangelium —in the din of arms neither the voice of human law nor of the gospel is heard.)* What a mercy is it that we are delivered from *the noise of archers*, and *all other the alarms of war, at the places of drawing waters! and therefore, there ought we to rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord*, Judg. v. 11. We have reason to call the altar we have built, as Moses called his, Exod. xvii. 15. (in thankfulness after the discomfiture of Amalek,) *Jehovah Nissi—The Lord my banner*, in whom we triumph; and as Gideon called his in faith, before the defeat of Midian, *Jehovah Shallom—The Lord our peace*, in whom we trust.

2. Let us much more give God praise, for the national establishment of our religion, with that of our peace and civil liberty. That our Canaan is not only a land flowing with milk and honey, but (which is a much greater advantage) that *it is Immanuel's land*, Isa. viii. 8. that the Christian religion, that choice and noble vine, which was so early planted in our land, is still growing and flourishing in it, in despite of all the attempts of the powers of darkness to root it out; that it is refined from the errors and corruptions which the church of Rome had (with the help of ignorance and tyranny) introduced, and that the Reformation was in our land a national act: that Christianity thus purified, is supported and defended by good and wholesome laws, and is twisted in with the very constitution of our government. It is a maxim in our law books, that the law of God is the law of the land; that the Holy Scripture is of sovereign authority; and that if any statute be made directly against the law of God, it is void; and that every thing that is for the support of religion shall be favoured. *Summa ratio est quæ pro religione facit —that construction is to be preferred which supports religion*, and (which I would observe as a justification of the civil punishment of sabbath profanation) it is a constant rule of our law, *Dies Dominicus est dies non juridicus—Sunday is not a day in law*, that the law is so far from countenancing, that it nullifies and invalidates, all writs, processes, and judicial acts upon the Lord's day: and if the administration of right and justice consents to give way to the solemnity of the Lord's day, shall a common petty trade, or a vain idle sport, intrude or intrench upon these sacred hours, and not be animadverted upon?

The banks and bulwarks which the civil government hath raised, against the threatening force of atheism, deism, profaneness, and irreligion, on the one hand, and of popery and idolatry on the other hand, though they should not make us secure, and, as it were, in no danger from them; yet they should make us thankful, that God has not only set up his tabernacle among us, but hath set such a guard upon it, as we hope will preserve it to the generations to come, that the English nation may never be otherwise than a Christian protestant nation. The encouragement which the government gives to religion, is also a great support to it, and ought to be matter of rejoicing to all good men: that the civil powers speak comfortably *to them that teach the good knowledge of the Lord*, 2 Chron. xxx. 22. and take the ministry and the administration of ordinances under their protection and patronage. *God has not dealt so with other nations*, with other churches. True Christianity, we may safely say it, has not such a nursing father of any crowned head in the world, as it has in our land. The mercy is more sensibly great, because it is not long since our religion, and all the defences of it, with all its supports, were at

the brink of ruin; and, like Isaac upon the altar, lay ready to be sacrificed to the malice of our popish enemies; and had the ship then sunk, our cabin could not have been preserved. Deut. xxxii. 27. *But fearing the wrath of the enemy, lest they should behave themselves proudly;* Ezek. xxxvi. 32. *And not for our sakes be it known unto us,* God sent from heaven to save us, and raise up a deliverer for us, to whose seasonable and successful application we owe, under God, our present tranquillity. A mercy never to be forgotten, and to which every year's revolution makes a fresh addition; that notwithstanding our manifold provocations, by which we have forfeited our peace under the present government, and the restless and unwearied attempts of our enemies, who have been industrious to overturn it, we are yet in the enjoyment of its benign influences. This ought to be the matter of our wonder and praise. *Surely because the Lord loved us, he hath set a king over us,* and continued him so long, that answers Mordecai's character, Esth x. 3. *Seeking the welfare of his people, and speaking peace to all their seed.*

3. Let us acknowledge, with thankfulness to God, the favour which we on this side Jordan have found with the princes of our Israel; that they are so far satisfied that the altars we build are not in rebellion or in transgression against the Lord, that they do not go up to war against us, as these princes here resolved, *v.* 33. We have great reason to bless God for our present liberty, and that we have it confirmed to us by a law, and the wide door of opportunity continues open; God grant it may be effectual. Now, for a little space, (nay, for a long space, much longer than we would have flattered ourselves with the expectation of,) *grace has been showed us from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape those many dark and cloudy days* which passed over the heads of our predecessors, and some of ours; *and to give us a nail* (a fixing and settlement, and constant abode) *in his holy place:* that *our God may lighten our eyes, instruct and comfort us, and give us some reviving,* Ezra ix. 8. While we enjoy the comfort of our liberty, we ought to repeat our thanksgivings for the mercy of it; and an invaluable mercy it is, that *there is a defence upon our glory,* Isa. xlv. 6. and that our religious assemblies are taken under the kind protection and shelter of the government. Would we have this liberty continued? let us be thankful for it, and give diligence to make a good use of it while the gleam lasts. In the receiving of it *we were like them that dream,* Ps. cxxvi. 1. such was the surprise of it: let it not be said of us, that such is our slothfulness and carelessness, we are like them that dream, in the improvement of it; as the hungry man that dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty.

We have reason to be thankful, that the reproach of sedition, and disloyalty, and disaffection to the government, is quite done away from our assemblies, and that there is now no colour for the imputation of that, (which from our hearts we always abhorred,) the disturbance of the public peace; but that while *we live in godliness and honesty, we may live quiet and peaceable lives, and there is none to make us afraid.* If Ezra were so thankful to God for the countenance of a heathen king, and *that God had put such a thing into the king's heart,* Ezra vii. 27, 28. much more reason have we to be thankful for the countenance of a Christian and protestant government; *the good of which we are obliged to seek, because of the house of the Lord our God,* Ps. cxxii. It adds much to the comfort of our present liberty, that in the ratification of it by a law, it was not intended (as we have reason to fear it was on the first precarious grant of it) for a trap and a snare, and the serving of a design against our common interests; but for our ease, comfort, and benefit: and that in the preamble of the statute, it is declared to be for no less a public good, than the uniting of his majesty's protestant subjects in interest and affection. *This is the Lord's doing;* and as at first the surprise of it made it marvellous in our eyes, so the continuance of it makes it no less so. The altar we have built, we may call *our Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto the Lord has helped us.*

4. While we enjoy the liberty of our altars, let us remember and sympathize with our brethren, with whom *it is a day of treading down, and of perplexity;* I mean the poor persecuted protestants in France, who *are killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter, and whose blood is barbarously mingled with their sacrifices. They are our bone and our flesh, fellow-members of the same body,* concurring with us in the same testimony against the antichristian generation; but how is a *flourishing church made a wilderness, the gold become dim, the most fine gold changed.* While we meet together in full assemblies, they are scattered. We have decent and convenient places to meet in; but they are driven into woods and wildernesses, and *are counted as the offscouring of all things.* We are safe in our assemblies and there is none to make us afraid; but they are exposed to the cruelty of bloody men, and cannot come together to worship God according to their consciences, but in peril of death, or a slavery much worse, and more terrible. When we consider this and the sad desolations of the sanctuary in other places, our joy in the altar we have built admits a great a mixture and allay, as theirs did who laid the foundation of the temple, Ezra iii. 13. *When the noise of the shouts of joy could not be discerned from the noise of the weeping of the people.* What a damp does this cast upon our comforts, and what a sadness does it put upon our countenances! as it did on Nehemiah's, to hear that the remnant that were *left of the captivity were in such great affliction and reproach,* Neh. i. 3, 4.

Let us therefore, with the greatest tenderness, *remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them;* let us feel their burthens, and let not all the trouble they are in seem little to us; let us pity them, and pray for them daily, and by a Christian sympathy suffer with them, as all the members of the body do with a pained one. Let the truths they suffer for be precious to us, and the liberty they long for be valued by us. When we begin to despise the manna, and to call it light bread, and when our full souls loathe the honey-comb, think what they would give for one of those peaceable opportunities, which we so easily neglect; and how they would welcome those days of the Son of man, which we think return too fast. Let their calamities also be warnings to us, to take heed of settling upon our lees, *because we have been at ease from our youth*, Jer. xlviii. 11. Time was when they were as sure of their peace and liberty, as we can be of ours, and *thought their mountain stood strong, and should not be moved:* but God, by his dealings with them, will make all his churches to know, that they have no lease of their privileges, but are tenants at will; that they may give diligence while they have the light, to believe and walk in it, *lest darkness come upon them.* When we begin to grow secure and careless, and to leave our first love, *let us go and see what God did to Shiloh*, Jer. vii. 12. and dread *the removing of our candlestick also*, Rev. ii. 5.

But is their wound incurable? Has God cast them off for ever? We trust not. *The rod of the wicked shall not always rest upon the lot of the righteous*, Ps. cxxv. 3. *There is a time, a set time, to favour Zion*, Ps. cii. 13, 14. which undoubtedly will come. Let us therefore believe and hope, and pray and wait: *the vision is yet for an appointed time; and at the end of it shall speak and not lie. Did God bring back our captivity, and do such great things for us, whereof we are glad?* let us be earnest with God to complete the mercy of our peace, by working deliverance for them, and *turning their captivity as streams in the south, being assured that they who sow in tears shall reap in joy*, Ps. cxxvi. 1, 3—5. Rev. xi. 8, 9. *The witnesses, though they were slain, yet are not buried; and the bones, though they are dead and dried, yet they are above ground in the open valley*, Ezek. xxxvii. 1, 2. which ministers some assistances to our hope that they shall rise again, and even these dry bones live.

5. Let us cordially concur with the other tribes of our English Israel, in driving the Canaanites out of our land; this was that which Moses indented with the two tribes for, when he settled them on that side Jordan, Numb. xxxii. 20. that they should give the best help they could to their brethren, in their war against the common enemy: and still there are Canaanites in our land; vice, and profaneness, and debauchery, are the enemies I mean, which war against both our civil and sacred interests; and, as it is said of the remainder of the Canaanites, Josh. xxiii. 13. *They are thorns in the eyes of all good men*, and a snare to us. It is too plain to be denied, that iniquity abounds among us, and goes barefaced; our air is infected with the poisonous and malignant breath of blasphemous oaths and curses, which are grown so common, that they seem to be idioms of our language. Our land is defiled with drunkenness and uncleanness, which some make a trade of, and others a sport of; the beauty and honour of our religion is stained by the profanation of the Lord's day, and an atheistical contempt of holy things. *How can we say we are not thus polluted*, Jer. ii. 23. *and shall not God visit for these things; shall not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this?* Have we not reason to expect that a deluge of judgments should follow such a deluge of impieties? And is any thing more the interest of the nation, than to endeavour the rooting out of these Canaanites, that if possible they might not be among us; or at least the putting them under tribute, that they may not rule, or bear sway among us; which surely is not a thing impracticable.

Against these Canaanites, the government hath by repeated proclamations waged war; *and therein God hath given a banner to them that fear him, to be displayed, because of the truth and holiness*, Ps. lx. 4. And now the inquiry is, like that of Moses in the gate of the camp, Exod. xxxii. 26. *Who is on the Lord's side?* or that, Ps. xciv. 16. *Who will rise up for me against the evil doers, or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?* Who will put a hand to so good a work, as the reformation of the morals of our nation? Who will help to bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end, and to drive the unclean spirit out of the land? Let us, in our places, be volunteers in this service, and cheerfully put our necks to this work of the Lord's, that we come not under the *brand put upon the nobles of Tekoa*, Neh. iii. 5. When the remains of the Canaanites made head so far, as mightily to oppress Israel, under Jabin and Sisera, Judg. iv. 23. it was the reproach of the two tribes on the other side Jordan, that they came not to the help of their brethren, but basely and ingloriously sneaked, when there was service to be done to the common interest. Gilead abode beyond Jordan, and Reuben among his sheepfolds, Judg. v. 16, 17. which made their division by the river greatly lamented by all thinking men, and occasioned many searchings of heart. Let us be industrious to prevent so ill an effect of our divisions, otherwise unhappy enough. Let us be willing to appear, willing to act, willing to venture, for the promoting of a reformation, which all good men agree to be necessary. Now is a time (when that blessed cause hath life in it, and we have so many good leaders to follow) to show ourselves for God,

and valiant for the truth in the earth, Jer. ix. 3. Are not evil doers afraid, nor ashamed to appear in opposition to religion and virtue? and shall we be either afraid or ashamed to appear for the defence of them? If we now sit still, and say, Let our brethren of the ten tribes drive out the Canaanites that are among themselves, and we will only look to our own border; surely (as Moses told the two tribes, Numb. xxxii. 22, 23.) *we have sinned against the Lord, and be sure our sin will find us out.* Nothing will contribute more to the healing of our breaches, and the uniting of us one to another in communion, than a hearty concurrence in this, wherein confessedly we are agreed. When God turns to *our people a pure language*, then, and not till then, *we shall serve him with one consent;* for betwixt them there is a manifest connexion, Zeph. iii. 9. Holiness and love, purity and unity, mutually befriend and advance each other.

6. Let us be able, with humble confidence, to appeal to God, that our acting separately in building us an altar, is not done in rebellion, or in transgression against the Lord. That we may then approve ourselves to him in the integrity of our hearts, we must take heed *to our spirits: the Lord God of gods, he knows*, and he only knows, the thoughts and intents of the heart, and by them he judges of us, and of our actions; that we may approve ourselves to him, it therefore concerns us to do all according to the manner, the appointed manner, Neh. viii. 18. and in due order, 1 Chron. xv. 15. Let us see to it, that our eye be single, and our intentions sincere, and our ends right; for it is a pity a good work should be spoiled, and rendered unacceptable, by an ill principle; that what for the matter of it is good, should become otherwise by a mismanagement.

If it be in pride and vain-glory that we have built us an altar, only that we may make a fair show in the flesh, and be like the nations, then it is done in rebellion and in transgression. To be proud of any ornaments, but especially of those that belong to the solemn assemblies, very ill becomes those who are but dust and ashes, and ought especially to remember that they are so when they draw near to the Lord of glory, Ps. xxix. 2. *The beauty of holiness*, in which we are to worship the Lord, *is not that outward adorning of magnificent and curious structures, but the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible*, 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4. To hide pride from his worshippers, God appointed that they should make him an *altar of earth*, Exod. xx. 24. or if of stone, *not of hewn stone*, v. 25. The garnishing and enriching of temples, by which a gay humour was indulged, and primitive plainness and simplicity lost, never did any real kindness to the church, but by degrees turned to its prejudice. *Hodie venenum funditur in ecclesiam—to-day is a poisonous mixture introduced into the church.* If it be in opposition to our brethren, or from a principle of envy or ill-will to them, it is in rebellion and in transgression; but I hope you have not so learned Christ. Our Master will never be pleased with that which is done from a spirit of contradiction to, or contention with, our brethren and fellow-servants: the hands lifted up in prayer, will never reach heaven, unless they be *lifted up without wrath and contention;* so it might be rendered, 1 Tim. ii. 8. without disputation, Jam. i. 20. *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*, i. e. it neither gains acceptance with him, nor does any real service to him. But if in building this altar, and in all our attendances upon it, we sincerely design the honour and glory of God in Christ, and the spiritual and eternal welfare of our own souls, and the souls of others; if we make every particular opportunity serviceable to the general interests of our Christianity, to further us in our way to God, and fit us for our rest in him; we may then rejoice in the testimony of our consciences, that it is not in rebellion or transgression against the Lord, but in simplicity and godly sincerity, that we have built us an altar.

7. If the Lord knows our integrity, let us study how to let Israel know it also. Let us demonstrate our good principles, by our agreeable practices, and that will be the best and most effectual way to convince the world that we have not built this in rebellion, or in transgression against the Lord: our protestations of our integrity and good intentions will be of no avail, if our actions give our words the lie. When our lights are thus put on a candlestick, and not under a bushel, so that many eyes are upon us, we ought to take care that our light so shine before men, as that they may not only hear our good words, *but see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven*, Matt. v. 16. This is the method the apostle prescribes for silencing gainsayers, *We must effect it by well doing, for so is the will of God*, 1 Pet. ii. 15. Having a *good conscience*, let us evidence it by a *good conversation*, v. 16.

There are three ways by which, if our hearts be upright with God, Israel also he shall know it.

(1.) By our serious piety in all the instances of religious worship and devotion. Have we built this for religious worship, and under the umbrage of a zeal for its purity? Let us then approve ourselves religious worshippers; let your piety towards God appear in the constancy of your family devotions, which I think no good Christian, that has the charge of a family, dares live in the neglect of. Think not that a church here will excuse for the want of *a church in your houses*, Rom. xvi. 5. Though public worship have the preference, yet it must not supersede family worship: this ought you to have done, but not to leave the other undone. All the faithful seed of Abraham must herein be followers

of him; that wherever Abraham had a tent, God had an altar, at which he called upon the name of the Lord. See Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 18. Let our houses be Bethels, houses of God, that he dwelling in them, we may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever, even all the days of our lives. Let Joshua's resolution be yours, *that whatever others do, you and your houses will serve the Lord*, Ps. xxiii. 6. Josh. xxiv. 15. Carry away the impressions made on your souls by public worship, and bring them with you into your families, and there go over them again, that they may be as a nail fastened in a sure place. It is supposed that the silver shrines for Diana, which we read of, Acts xix. 24. were copies of Diana's temple in miniature, which her worshippers had in their houses, for the use of their families. Had they such respect to a dunghill god, and shall ours be less to the Lord of the whole earth? Religion is then, and not till then, likely to flourish in our land, when all our families are praying families, and nurseries of piety. *Though the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob*, yet in them also he ought to be praised and *served as the God of all the families of Israel*, Ps. lxxxvii. 2. Jer. xxxi. 1.

Let your piety appear, also, by your decent and reverent deportment in our public assemblies. It is true God looks chiefly at the *heart, and bodily exercise profits little*, 1 Tim. iv. 8. if alone, it profits nothing; but it is as true, that in concurrence with our spirits, we are to *glorify God with our bodies, and to present them to him a living sacrifice*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. Rom. xii. 1. Though the outward expressions of reverence and affection be not an infallible sign of a serious spirit, (a vain and trifling heart may be covered over with a grave and demure appearance,) yet the outward expressions of a carelessness and unconcernedness, I think, are a certain indication of an evil heart of unbelief: if the special presence and inspection of the angels, in our solemn assemblies, should forbid that which is unhandsome, as the apostle intimates, 1 Cor. xi. 10. much more should the eye of God upon us oblige us to observe a decorum. Does not even nature teach us, that when we are engaged in serious work, we ought to show ourselves serious in it? When we are worshipping the great God, we ought to express such an awe of him, as may strike an awe upon others; so that if an unbeliever should come into our assembly, as the apostle argues, 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. he may acknowledge that God is among us, and the fear of God is in us of a truth. The Jews, since their worship came to be a rebellion and transgression against the Lord Christ, have been notoriously irreverent in it; as well did Isaiah prophesy of them, Matt. xv. 7.

It hath been turned to the reproach of the assemblies of dissenters, that in shunning superstition they have run into rudeness and irreverence. If any have given occasion for such a reflection, let them bear their own burthen; but I desire that we, in our assembly, may give no offence of that kind. Standing in prayer is spoken of as a gesture proper enough, Mark xi. 25. *When ye stand praying*, but kneeling is certainly the most fit and proper posture in adoration, and should be chosen rather where the convenience of the place (as I hope ours will) and the ability of the person will allow it. Paul, when a Pharisee, *stood and prayed*; but *afterwards he learnt to bow his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Eph. iii. 14.

(2.) By our strict purity in our whole conversation: hereby we must let all that know us know that in the integrity of our hearts we have done this. Let it be our daily care and exercise *to keep consciences void of offence towards man as well as towards God:* to pretend to purity in our worship, and yet to allow impurity in our lives, is to contradict ourselves. Let all the days of our lives be of a piece with our sabbath days, and let a thread of holiness run through the web of all our actions. The best consecration of our place *will be to consecrate ourselves this day unto the Lord*, Exod. xxxii. 29. Let your sobriety and temperance in all your enjoyments, your justice and honesty in all your dealings, beautify that profession, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, Tit. ii. 1. and let not the glory of our assembly be stained by any practices unbecoming Christians: *Let your merchandise and your hire be holiness to the Lord*, as is prophesied of Tyre, Isa. xxiii. 18. and *let every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah*, even the common utensils of your houses, *be like the bowls before the altar*, Zech. xiv. 20, 21. of which *it was said, Be ye clean that bear them*, Isa. lii. 11. You that in building yourselves an altar, have done more than others, cannot evidence the sincerity of your hearts therein, if in the common instances of justice, and friendship, and charity, you do less than others. Remember the hint you just now had out of the psalm that was read in course, Ps. xciii. 5. *Holiness becomes thy house, O Lord, for ever*, and therefore unholiness very ill becomes any that belong to it. Remember also the good hint you had lately from another hand; that whatever disputes there are about holiness of places, there is none about the holiness of persons; the necessity of that, we are all agreed in, Heb. xii. 14. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.*

(3.) By our peaceableness and charity towards our brethren, Jam. iii. 17, 18. The wisdom that is from above is not indeed pure, if it be not peaceable. The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, and then it is likely to come up and flourish; they were the sons of peace that bid the gospel welcome, Luke x. 5, 6. Be at peace with those from whom you differ in opinion, and *receive them not with doubt-*

ful disputation, Rom. xiv. 1. Carefully watch that a diversity of communion cause not an alienation of affection, but be as ready to do any office of love and kindness and respect to those from whom you dissent, as to those with whom you consent; resolve, though you differ from them, you will not differ with them. If our separation be not schismatical in its own nature, (as for my own part I am well satisfied it is not,) let us not at any time make it so by our uncharitable censures, or our unchristian heats and passions.

Be at peace also among yourselves. Let your meeting to worship God in one place, prevent and put an end to all the little piques and quarrels which may happen at any time, and *never let us be three against two, and two against three, in this house.* Our peaceableness will be both our strength and beauty.

Let me therefore welcome you into this place, with the same exhortation with which St. Paul takes leave of his friends at Corinth, *Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in love and peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*

A

TREATISE ON BAPTISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF BAPTISM.

THE apostle, among his six principles of Christianity which constitute the foundation, reckons *the doctrine of baptisms*. Thus intimating, that baptism is to be asserted and adhered to, as a fundamental point in our religion. He uses the plural number (probably) in reference to the different kinds of baptism mentioned in the New Testament; where we read of *the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire*,[a] and *the baptism of blood*[b] or suffering, as well as of *the baptism of water*. The latter indeed alone is properly so called, the others are termed Baptisms, only by way of analogy and resemblance. And this is the baptism concerning which we are to make further inquiry. The baptism of water, i. e. in plain English, washing with water; though in our translation (and indeed in most others) the Greek word *baptism* is generally retained, as peculiarly significant.

Washing (or *baptizing*) with water, was long used before our Lord's time, not only as a common action, but as a religious rite. It was so used even in some heathen countries;* and still more among the professing people of God, from the earliest ages. It was prescribed by the law of Moses in almost all cases of ceremonial pollution, and on all occasions that called for peculiar purity. It was customary among the Jews to admit proselytes into their church by baptism, and even their own female children.† In conformity to this sacred custom, John, the harbinger of Christ, who was sent to proclaim his approach, and prepare the way for his coming, admitted persons his disciples by the same rite. A rite which our Lord himself owned, and honoured, by submitting to it; and that as a part of righteousness.

Water baptism then, when our Lord appeared, was no new thing: it had been applied, in every age of the church, and especially under the Mosaic dispensation, to religious uses. For this reason, among others, our Lord might probably choose it, as one of his institutions; thereby showing, that the spirit of his gospel was not a spirit of innovation and contradiction. And this institution he bequeathed to his church at his departure, as a sacred depositum, to be preserved pure and entire, without further alteration, till his second coming.

The nature of this ordinance, then, it will be proper more particularly to consider.

Those ordinances of worship which are *moral*, and of natural and perpetual obligation, have no difficulty in their explication, (we readily understand what praying, and praising, and reading the word of God are,) but those institutions which are *positive*, require a fuller illustration. Concerning them, the question should be asked, *What mean ye by this service?* (as concerning the Lord's passover, Exod. xii. 26.) And the rather, because unsanctified understandings are so unapt to receive, and so prone to mistake, such institutions. It is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that in a Christian nation there are so many who bring their children readily enough to baptism, and would take it very hard if it were denied them, who yet understand no more of the ordinance, than that it is the custom of their country, and the usual time of naming their children, and treating their friends. It is therefore requisite to inquire a little into the true nature of this ordinance. And,

FIRST. In general, it is a *sacrament*.

This indeed is a Latin word, and therefore not to be found in the Scriptures; but it is a word which

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[a] Matt. iii. 11. [b] Mark x. 38.

* By baptism, disciples were initiated into the secrets of Mythra and Isis, and the priests of Cotyttus were called Baptæ, because by baptism solemnly admitted into their office.

† The Jewish doctors had a tradition, that when the Messiah should come, there would be so many proselytes, that they could not be circumcised, but should be baptized.

the church has long used, and therefore we willingly receive it. Among the Latins, it was used to express an *oath*; (which has ever been accounted a sacred thing;) and more particularly a *military oath*; the oath which soldiers took to be true to the government, obedient to their generals, and never to quit their post, or run their colours.

Waving a discussion of the several definitions of a sacrament, we may acquiesce in Paul's description of one, Rom. iv. 11. where speaking of circumcision, (the initiatory sacrament of the Old Testament,) he calls it *a sign*, and *a seal of the righteousness of faith*.

The tree of life was a sacrament to Adam in innocency; a sign and seal of the covenant of works; *Do this and live*. Since the fall (by which our intellectual faculties are sadly depraved, and the veil of flesh thickened) we have much more need of sacraments; outward and sensible representations of things spiritual, to carry them home with the greater clearness to our understandings, with the more convincing certainty to our faith, and with the stronger impression to our affections. When the sanctified soul shall be released from the body of flesh, or when re-united to it refined and made spiritual, there will be no need of sacraments. These glasses shall be laid aside, when we shall see *eye to eye*, the distant object being brought nearer, and the debility of the organ cured.

But in the mean time, we are, with a cheerful thankfulness, and a ready compliance, to acknowledge the great goodness of God, in condescending to lisp to us in our own language; and to represent, seal, and apply to our souls things spiritual, by those things which are natural and ordinary. Thus doth Christ, in the sacraments, *tell us earthly things*, (as some understand John iii. 12.) i. e. spiritual things clothed with earthly expressions; (as there the mystery of sanctification by the metaphor of a new birth;) and if we do not believe, and understand, how should we apprehend those things, if they were spoken to us in their own abstract and simple notions, and in the language of the upper world? God, in the sacraments, speaks to us *after the manner of men; uses similitudes*;[c] not only to our ears, as by the ministry of the prophets, but to our eyes, that, if it be possible, spiritual things may that way insinuate themselves into, and get possession of, our hearts.

Thus it hath pleased God to deal with men, in his covenant transactions with them. When he made a covenant with Noah and his sons, never again to drown the world, or interrupt the succession of day and night, he gave them a sacrament, the *bow in the clouds*; (Gen. ix. 12, 13.) which doubtless was there before, (whenever there was a like disposition of the air,) but never till then a token of the covenant.

Sacraments are instituted to be,

I. Signs.

Not natural signs, as smoke is a sign of fire, but voluntary and instituted. Not purely intellectual signs, as the sign of the prophet Jonas, but sensible and visible.* Not signs barely for memorials, as the heap of stones in Jordan, but signs that do exhibit, and, as instruments, convey. So that the essence, or formal nature, of a sacrament, doth consist in a relative union between the sign and the thing signified.†

II. Seals.

Not bare signs, as the map of a lordship represents that lordship to every one who looks upon it; but such signs as deeds, or charters of feoffment, sealed and delivered, which convey the lordship to the feoffee, upon such conditions; and give him a right and title to the premises, to all intents and purposes, upon the performance of those conditions. Thus the rainbow, Gideon's fleece, the coal from the altar that touched Isaiah's lips, and many others, were not only signs signifying, but signs confirming, the promises to which they were annexed.

But not to expatiate in this large field, let us confine our thoughts to the sacrament of *baptism*. In which (as the nature of a sacrament requires) there is a *sign*, and the thing signified by it.

I. A sign.

And that is washing with water. The *element* is water; the *action*, washing with that water. And here, if we inquire why this sign was appointed for the ordinance of admission, this and no other, it must be referred to the will of the Lord Jesus, who instituted it. And his *will*, in this as in every thing else, is most certainly his *wisdom*. But it may be useful to observe what kind of a sign it is. And,

1. Washing with water is a common thing; common to all persons, to all times, and therefore fitly chosen to be stamped for an ordinance, whereby to admit persons into the belief of the *common salvation*, Jude 3. Such the gospel salvation is. Therefore, in the other sacrament, eating and drinking are the sacramental actions, which are also common actions, used by all the world; for Christ is a Saviour to all, and whoever will, may come and take of the waters of life.

As long as the church was confined to one people, the sign of admission was a thing very unusual, perhaps to note the peculiarity of that dispensa-

c Hos. xii. 10.

* Sacraments are *verba visibilia*, σφραγὶς σημείου τοῦ ἀοράτου.

† This Alice Driver, one of the female martyrs, urged to her examiners, when she was pressed to give her opinion of the sacrament of the altar; she asked, What is a sacrament? and being answered, It is a sign: Very true, (said she,) then it is not the thing signified.

tion; but now the veil is rent, and the partition wall taken away, Infinite Wisdom hath appointed the *common salvation* to be sealed by a *common action*.

2. Washing with water is a cheap thing.

It puts us to no expense; which may intimate that the poor are welcome to Christ as well as the rich. If he had intended to have taken the rich only into the bond of the covenant, he would probably have appointed some costly ordinance of admission, which would have been more agreeable to the state and spirit of the rich, and within the reach of them only: but God hath called and chosen *the poor of this world*.[d] In point of acceptance with God, rich and poor stand upon the same level; and therefore, since the poor cannot reach a costly ordinance, God will have the rich stoop to a cheap one. The ceremonial institutions were many of them chargeable; and good reason, because that dispensation had more of the promise of the life that now is. When God had freely given the Israelites *so good a land, houses full of all good things*, (a very considerable grant in that covenant,) they could not complain, if he required, as a chief rent by way of acknowledgment, the *lambs out of their flocks*, and the *bullocks of their stalls*. And yet even then, in divers cases, poverty was considered, as Lev. xii. 8. But now, under the gospel, the appointments are cheap. Christ will reject none for their poverty. As in other things, so in holy ordinances, *rich and poor meet together*.[e] In Christ Jesus there is neither *bond nor free*.[f]

3. Washing with water is a plain thing.

And the perfection of a gospel ordinance lies much in its simplicity. Baptism is an ordinance which will neither puzzle the understanding with the intricacy, nor burthen the memory with the multitude and variety, of its circumstances. *It is a highway, and a way* not hard to hit, *the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein*.[g] The institution of the water of purification, appointed by the Levitical law, was attended with so many nice circumstances, to be religiously observed, as did not only clog it, and make it difficult, but cloud it, and make it obscure. It was so with the other ceremonial appointments. But the New-Testament baptism is plain. Nothing appointed, but only, *Go and baptize them*: the necessary circumstances are left, partly to Christian prudence, and partly to the directions which the nature of the thing gives. And for additional ceremonies, the institution knows none. It should seem, that some have thought it too plain to please the luxuriant fancies of *men of corrupt minds*, and therefore have been patching and painting it, and tricking it up with their own inventions, adding I know not what significant (or rather insignificant) ceremonies of their own: (witness the Roman ritual:) but our great Master, who came to abolish the law of commandments, and to introduce a spiritual worship, I am confident, will, another day, give those no thanks who think so meanly of the comeliness he hath put upon his spouse, as thus to dress her up in the tawdry attire of a harlot; as if that would improve, which doth indeed impair and spoil, her beauty.

4. Washing with water is an easy thing.

It was not a causeless complaint that was made of the ceremonial law, that it was a *yoke, which neither their fathers, nor they, were able to bear*.[h] Those who are under it are said to be *in bondage to the rudiments of this world*. And some think, it is this which our Lord supposes those to be *weary of, and heavy laden with*,[i] whom he invites to submit to his *yoke*, (i. e. his institutions,) *as very easy and light*. And, certainly, in this ordinance there is nothing hard or uneasy; no burthen of which there is the least pretence to complain. Indeed, such are the privileges which attend the ordinance, that if our Master had bid us do some great thing, would we not have done it, rather than come short of them?[k] Much more, when he only saith unto us, Wash and be clean; wash and be Christians.

5. Washing with water is a safe thing.

The ordinance of admission under the law was a painful and bloody rite, and proved fatal to the unwary *Shechemites;* but there is neither pain nor peril in baptism. The Lord hath made it appear that he is *for the body*, by appointing an ordinance so consistent with its ease and safety. It is so safe, that it may be applied to infants, without the least difficulty or danger; a presumptive evidence, that Christ designed it for them.

6. Washing with water is an *expressive* and significant thing.

So it hath been reckoned in other cases; and so it is in this institution. How could it be otherwise, when chosen by Infinite Wisdom, by him *who did all things well?* Though the significancy of it ariseth from the institution, yet it hath a peculiar aptness so to signify.* But this brings us to consider,

II. The *thing signified;* the *substance* represented by this *shadow*.

This, like the kernel in the nut, is the main thing in the ordinance, viz. the meaning of this service. Now the outward sign is such, as that we are purely passive therein; *washed with water;* not washing ourselves; which intimates, that the chief thing intended to be signified, is that which God in the covenant doth for us, (the communications of his grace and favour, in which we are receptive,) and our obligations and engagements to him, only by way of necessary consequence. The washing with water implies the doing of something *for us*, and *upon us;* whence we infer, something to be done *by us*.

d Jam. ii. 5. e Prov. xxii. 2. f Gal. iii. 11. g Isa. xxxv. 8.
h Gal. iv. 3. i Matt. xi. 28. k 1 Kings v. 13.

* Neque in sacramentalibus speciebus, quæsivit Dominus dignitatem sed aptitudinem.

1. The water in baptism signifies the *blood of Christ;* and the sprinkling of that for justification. The *washing of the body with pure water*, represents *the sprinkling of the heart from an evil conscience.* One great promise of the new covenant is, *that God will be merciful to our unrighteousness*, so that the seal of the covenant, as it is a covenant of reconciliation, is principally intended to be the seal of a pardon. Hence, the Nicene creed supposes the remission of sins to be principally intended in baptism: *I believe in baptism for the remission of sins.* Now, for as much as sin is pardoned, only in and through the merit of Christ's death and sufferings, that pardon is signified, and sealed, by washing with water, which represents the application of Christ's blood to the soul. The blood of the legal victim was necessary to make atonement, (Heb. ix. 22.) therefore the benefits of redemption are often attributed to the blood of Christ, as the meritorious and procuring cause; especially remission of sin. See 1 John i. 7. *The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin;* and Rev. i. 5. *Washed us from our sins in his own blood.* And his blood, in allusion to the legal purifications, is called the *blood of sprinkling*, Heb. xii. 24. Compare Heb. ix. 13, 14. Cyril calls baptism the antitype of Christ's sufferings. His passion, with the fruits and benefits of it, are represented and applied, in this ordinance, by washing with water. Hence Ananias's exhortation to Paul, *Arise and wash away thy sins*, Acts xxii. 16. It is generally supposed to have been in the person of the suffering Jesus, that David complained, *I am poured out like water*, Ps. xxii. 14. And there is something of the same metaphor in that expression, *He poured out his soul unto death*, (Isa. liii. 12.) as water was poured out, especially in sacrificing. See 1 Kings xviii. 35. compared with 1 Sam. vii. 6. Thus was a fountain opened, the rock smitten, that thence streams of water might issue for the use of Israel. In baptism this is applied. So that therein, the forgiveness of sins, upon repentance, is sealed by the application of Christ's blood.

It is observable, that the grant of remission is, in both the sacraments, signified and applied, by something that primarily represents the blood of Christ, by which that remission was procured; in baptism by water, in the Lord's supper, by wine. The design of God herein, is to convey spiritual and heavenly blessings to us, in such a way as may most advance the honour of Jesus Christ, and recommend him, and his salvation, to our esteem and affection. He will have us to see all the precious privileges of the new covenant flowing to us in the blood of Jesus. In the water of baptism, we may see *(pretium sanguinis)* the price of blood, written upon all our benefits; which should engage us to prize them, and to glorify God with them. *It is the blood of these men*, saith David; (1 Chron. xi. 19.) only blood exposed; but this is the blood of the man Christ Jesus; blood actually shed. What a value then should we put upon it!

2. The water in baptism signifies the Spirit and grace of Christ, and the sprinkling of that for sanctification.

It must signify this, as well as pardon by the blood of Christ, for they are inseparable in the application of them. Ye are washed, (saith the apostle,) viz. in baptism, which signifies, both that *ye are sanctified*, and that *ye are justified*;[l] for they always go together. The *water and the blood* came together out of the pierced side of the dying Redeemer, John xix. 34. Wherever Jesus Christ is *made of God righteousness to any soul*, it is certain, that he is made of God, unto that soul, *sanctification.*[m]

Fallen man is to be looked upon, not only as guilty, but as defiled; not only as liable to the punishment of sin, but subject to the power and dominion of sin; and therefore as standing in need, not only of a *relative* change, in justification, by the righteousness of Christ imputed; but of a *real* change, in sanctification, by the grace of Christ implanted. And this also is signified in baptism: which is therefore called *the washing of regeneration*, Tit. iii. 5. Yea, not only *signified*, but *sealed* and *applied*, conditionally. As is the promise, so is the sacrament; the seal operates, as it is led and directed by the words of the deed to which it is affixed. Now the promise is, *Turn ye at my reproof, behold I will pour out my spirit unto you:* those who are baptized may, upon their turning, therefore, plead their baptism as the seal of that promise.

Now these two, the blood of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ, include all the benefits of redemption; some are the acts of God's grace *for us*, others are the work of God's grace *in us;* and both these are signified and sealed in baptism. If then we be not wanting to ourselves, we may from our baptism fetch a comfortable assurance, that God will not be wanting to us. That we might have strong consolation, he has instituted a sign, apt and proper, to signify these two main springs of our comfort and happiness, the merit and grace of Christ; and the particular application of them to us. For being baptized into Christ Jesus, we are *baptized into his death.*[n]

Second. Having thus opened the nature of this ordinance in general, as it is a sacrament, we come next more particularly to inquire into the meaning of this service.

And our best way will be, to have recourse to the institution, which gave it being as an ordinance, and put the stamp upon it. Bring the word to the

l 1 Cor. vi. 11.

m 1 Cor. i. 30.

n Rom. vi. 3, 5.

element, and that makes the sacrament. As the impression of the seal upon the wax, and the solemn delivery of the instrument so sealed, puts a great value on that, which, otherwise, is but a mean, common thing. And therefore, as from the institution we must take *warrant* for the practice, so from the institution we must take *light*, touching the nature of the ordinance. When a question was put to our Lord Jesus, by the Pharisees, concerning marriage, he refers them to the institution and original law, (Matt. xix. 3, 4.) to teach us to go by the same rule in other ordinances. Run up the stream of the observation (which in a long course sometimes contracts filth) to the spring of the institution, and see *what it was from the beginning*. We are taking that method, in the explication of this ordinance.

The institution of baptism was at Christ's sixth appearance after his resurrection, viz. that at the mountain in Galilee, not only to the eleven, but to many others of the disciples, probably the five hundred brethren, spoken of 1 Cor. xv. 6. He had mentioned this appointed meeting, both before and after his resurrection: and whereas most of his other appearances were occasional and surprising, this seems to have been solemn and expected. And here, the four evangelists explain and enlarge each other. Matthew, who wrote first, gives the fullest account, (chap. xxviii. 19, 20.) *Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.* Where, we have not only a *warrant* to make baptism lawful, but an order to make it a duty.

1. He premiseth his own authority; his commission under the broad seal of heaven, (*v.* 18.) *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

As a divine person, all power was originally and essentially his; but as Mediator, all power was given him. What that power more especially was, he himself tells us, (John xvii. 2.) *Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.* So that this mediatorial power was an authoritative disposition of the eternal states of the children of men, (Rev. i. 18.) *the keys of hell*, (or the unseen world,) including the keys of heaven too. *The world to come was put in subjection*, not to *angels*, but *to Christ*, Heb. ii. 5. Jesus Christ is *set (fixed, inaugurated, enthroned) King upon the holy hill of Zion*:[o] constituted absolute sovereign in his church; invested with legislative power. As King, he hath sole authority to institute and appoint ordinances which shall be binding; and it is certainly a daring, and very unjustifiable, presumption, for any creature (though calling himself by ever so great and pompous a name) to assume to himself a like power in the church. To institute ordinances is Christ's prerogative, and a branch of his glory which he neither doth nor will give to another. Our Lord Jesus *glorified not himself* herein, *but was called of God to it*, (Heb. v. 4, 5.) and his call was completed when he was raised from the dead. Then it was that the Father said unto him, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Compare Acts xiii. 33.

It was after his resurrection that our Lord claimed all power. We read of power given him before, (Matt. ix. 6.) *power to forgive sins* —εξουσιαν εχει; but here —πασα εξουσια, *all power.* It was by dying that he won the *name above every name.*[p] Now he was entering upon the exercise of his authority; was hastening to the *far country, to receive for himself a kingdom.*[q] It was part of the glory which he claimed as the recompence of his sufferings, John xvii. 4, 5.

Power in *heaven* and *in earth*, i. e. in all places: heaven and earth comprehend the whole universe, Gen. i. 1. Jesus is the only universal monarch. He has power in heaven over the angels, (Eph. i. 10.) and power on earth to subdue the Gentile world to his sceptre.

2. He directs his commission to the apostles and their successors. (Compare John xx. 21. *As the Father hath sent me, so send I you:* which speaks not equality of power, but similitude of mission.) Having showed how the Father had sent him, he here sends them. *Go ye:* ye apostles, primarily; (for they were the master-builders who laid the foundation;) including, likewise, their successors in the pastoral office to the end of the world. Ministers are the *stewards* of this, as well as the other *mysteries of God.*[r] And much of the wisdom and goodness of our Lord Jesus Christ appears in his appointing such officers in the church. Now he was *ascending on high, he gave gifts unto men;* and they were precious gifts; not only apostles, prophets, evangelists, (extraordinary ministers,) but pastors and teachers, (ordinary ministers,) to continue in succession to the end of time. Though the keys are said to have been given to Peter, perhaps because he was the first who opened the door of faith to the Gentiles, yet all the apostles, and in them all Christian ministers, were invested with the same power; John xx. 23. a power of admitting into the Christian church, according to gospel terms. Nor need we contend for an uninterrupted succession, in a right line, from the apostles; for this power is not received from the ordainers, but from Christ; and ordination is only the solemn designation, approbation, and benediction, of a person judged duly qualified to be the subject of this power.

3. He extends their commission to all *nations. Go ye;* a word of command and encouragement:

o Ps. ii. 6. p Phil. ii. 8. q Luke xix. 12. r 1 Cor. iv. 1.

Go and fear not; have not I sent you? Those whom Christ sends, have often need of encouragement against their fears, when those whom he sends not, run with boldness. These words broke down the partition wall, which had so long kept out the Gentiles. Hitherto, in Judah only was God known; a little spot; but now the veil is rent, and the despised Gentiles admitted into the holiest. The baptism of John was only for the Jews; the morning star appeared only in that horizon; and even the Sun of righteousness, while rising, was pleased to confine his influences to the *lost sheep of the house of Israel.* When he first sent out his disciples, he charged them *not to go into the way of the Gentiles;* (Matt. x. 5.) but now the commission is enlarged, *Go ye into all the world,* Mark xvi. 15. The enmity between the Jews and Gentiles had been very great; but that enmity was now slain, and they *both became one sheepfold, under the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.*

Teach all nations; i. e. all whom ye can reach. Exclude none out of the church who are willing to come in, i. e. none who do not exclude themselves. And accordingly, their sound did go *into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world,* Rom. x. 18. *The heathen* were given to Christ for an inheritance; and therefore he sends his apostles into all the territories of his dominions. He having purchased, they must proffer, a *common salvation.*

4. The commission itself is, *Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Here is our warrant, without which we would not, we dare not, baptize. The word which we translate *teach* is, μαθητευσατε, and I think is not well translated. It is a different word which is used *v.* 20. *teaching them to observe,* διδασκοντες—*Go, disciple all nations,* I think it should be rendered.* Make them my disciples, i. e. admit them my scholars. I find the word used only here, and in two other places; viz. Matt. xiii. 52. *every scribe* (μαθητευθεις) *discipled unto the kingdom of heaven,* (i. e. a Christian scribe, or such a disciple of Christ as is arrived at the standing and proficiency of a scribe,) *is like a man that is a householder:* and Matt. xxvii. 57. concerning Joseph of Arimathea, ος και αυτος εμαθητευσε τω Ιησε, *one who had given up himself as a disciple to Jesus;* had discipled it, or been ranked among the disciples of Jesus; or (as some understand it) had discipled others to Jesus. So that the word here must signify, to make disciples, as the phrase is John iv. 1. i. e. to admit them into the school of Christ. Thus a Jewish ear would readily apprehend it; for, as Lightfoot observes, discipling was not of persons already taught, but to the end that they might be taught. And in their schools, a person was made תלמיד, a scholar, or disciple, when he gave up himself to be trained up by such a master. *Proselytum me fac, ut me doceas.*

I insist so much upon the right sense of the word, not only to vindicate the text from the mistake of those, who will have none baptized (of whomsoever born) till they are thoroughly taught, grounding it on the words of the institution; (which, if rightly Englished, would intimate no such thing; for though infants are not capable of being taught, they are capable of being discipled;) but also, from hence, to explain the nature of the ordinance. Which is,

I. A solemn admission into the visible church of Christ. *Go, disciple all nations;* open the door to them all; and those who are willing admit by *baptizing them;* let that be the sign and ceremony of admission.

II. A seal of the covenant of grace. *Baptizing them in* (or into) *the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* So that we need look no further for the meaning of this service.

I. Baptism is an ordinance of Christ, whereby the person baptized is solemnly admitted a member of the visible church.

It is a discipling ordinance. The professors of the Christian religion were first called disciples, till at Antioch the name was changed, and they were called *Christians,* Acts xi. 26. To disciple all nations then, (to speak according to the change of the title,) is to Christianize all nations. So that baptizing is, as it is commonly called, (significantly enough if it were duly considered,) *Christening.* Not making a person a Christian, *in foro Cœli*—in the judgment of Heaven, but declaring him a Christian, *in foro ecclesiæ*—in the judgment of the church.

1. I say of the *visible* church.

Not of the invisible church, (as it is called,) *the church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven,* but the visible church; comprehending all that profess faith in Christ, and obedience to him. Many are baptized, and so taken into that number, who yet remain *in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity;* witness Simon Magus, Acts viii. 13, 23. But, *de secretis non judicat ecclesia*—the church does not judge the secrets of men. Baptism is an ordinance of the visible church, appointed for the admission of visible church members; admission, not into the internal communion, but only into that which is visible and external, in the profession of faith, and participation of sacraments.

2. I say the *visible church,* meaning the catholic universal church.

Baptism is not to be looked upon as the door of admission into any particular church. The eunuch could not be admitted into such a church, and yet was baptized. And hence appears the mistake of those who maintain, that because they were baptized

* Discipulate (saith Bullinger, with an apology for the harshness of the word) sive facite mihi discipulos.

into the church of England, they are therefore bound never to leave it, nor attempt any alterations in it.

3. He who seriously professeth faith in Christ, and obedience to him, but is not yet baptized, hath a sort of church-membership, but remote, imperfect, and irregular. Many in the primitive times, upon a mistaken apprehension of the unpardonableness of sin committed after baptism, deferred it long, (some even till the dying moment,) who yet are not to be looked upon as outcasts. Many of the martyrs died in the state of catechumens. So that baptism doth not give the title, but recognize it. Only educe the *power* into *act*, and complete that church membership, which before was only *(in fieri)* in the doing.

Now, when I say that by baptism we are brought into the church, I mean,

1. That we are added to the number. Thus, (Acts ii. 41.) those that were baptized, are said to be *added to the church, i. e.* to the number of visible believers. The number of the church militant is daily decreasing by death; baptism is appointed for filling up the vacancy, that there may not want a church to stand before the Lord on earth, while the sun and the moon endureth.

2. We are entitled to the privileges of the church.

Church privileges are either such as are peculiar to true believers, even union and communion with Christ in grace and glory, and fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, by the Holy Ghost; (and though baptism does not give a title to these, it seals and ratifies that title to true believers;) or,

Such as are common to visible believers. And these, baptism, duly administered, doth entitle us to, and invest us in.

Now the privileges of visible church-membership which baptism confers, are such as these:

1. Honour. To be set apart among the peculiar people, and numbered among the chosen. Is it not an honour to bear the name, and wear the livery, of the Lord Jesus? to be called Christians, a people near unto him? To be baptized, is a great preferment; it is to be enrolled in a very honourable corporation; admitted into a society upon all accounts truly great and noble.

2. Safety. The visible church is under God's peculiar care and government. He is *a defence upon all its glory.*[s] Those who are taken into the church (to borrow the Jews' expression) are gathered under the wings of the Divine Majesty; and so are often sheltered from those calamities to which others lie exposed. Baptism is compared to the ark (1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.) which sheltered even Ham from the universal deluge. It is a privilege to be on the protected side.

3. Communion. Baptism gives a title to the ordinances. Those who were baptized, we presently find *in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers,* Acts ii. 41, 42. The word, and prayer, and the Lord's supper, and church fellowship, are the ordinances which those who are baptized may (as they become capable) lay claim to. And is it not a privilege to be interested in the ministers of Christ? *Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas;* variously gifted, but all their gifts bestowed upon the visible church, and intended for the good of its members? the labours, the sufferings, of ministers, for the church's sake? See 1 Cor. iii. 22. and Eph. iv. 11, 12. Is it not a privilege, to be a partaker of the prayers of all the churches? to be remembered by them at the throne of grace, as one with them? Is it not a privilege to sit down with them at the table of the Lord? to be admitted to that feast, that altar, which they have no right to eat of who serve the tabernacles? Is not the communion of saints a privilege? to have a share in the friendship and affection of all who fear God, and the right hand of fellowship in all the ordinances? to be with those among whom Jesus walks, and with whom God is of a truth? to have a nail in God's holy place?

4. Opportunity. The lively oracles are committed to the visible church. It is in the church that the ordinary means of salvation are; *he hath showed his word unto Jacob: there God is known, and his name is great:* there *the joyful sound is heard;* and *blessed are they that hear it.*[t] The visible church, though it is not the fountain of truth, (as the papists would have it, deriving the authority of the Scriptures from the dictates of the church,) yet is the channel of conveyance. It is the *pillar and ground of truth;* (both the body and basis of the pillar;) not as the pillars of a house, on which the house is built, (for in this sense, the church is built upon the truth, not the truth upon the church,) but as the pillar, which hath an inscription upon it, or to which a proclamation is affixed, it holds forth to the view of all what is so put upon it. Thus the church is the pillar of truth. It is a great privilege to be taken into the church, for that is the Goshen, the land of light; out of which there are no ordinary means of saving knowledge. Those who are taken into the church, have gospel discoveries and gospel offers made unto them: and (which is a great advantage, and contributes to the efficacy of the word) by being admitted into the church, gospel offers have more hold of them than when they were without.

3. We come under the laws of the church. Not of this or that particular church, but the universal church. I mean, that being admitted to the privileges, we are engaged to the duties, of the communion of saints

[s] Isa. iv. 5, 6.

[t] Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20.

The laws of the church are; to own the ministers of it, and to esteem them highly in love for their work's sake; to adhere to its ordinances, and to receive, observe, and keep them pure and entire, as part of the church's treasure;* to keep to the fellowship of the saints, not *forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, but exhorting one another daily;* to do good in an especial manner to the *household of faith*, i. e. *to all in every place, who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, both their Lord and ours;* to own all baptized Christians as our brethren and fellow-members; and to comfort and edify one another, as we have ability and opportunity. Thus baptism is an ordinance of admission into the visible church. It is also,

II. A seal of the covenant of grace.

This I gather from those words of the institution, baptizing them *in* (or *into*) *the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

For the opening of this, I shall endeavour to show what the covenant of grace is; and then, (from the words of the institution,) how baptism is a seal of this covenant.

1. What this covenant of grace is.

A covenant properly signifies, a voluntary compact or agreement between distinct persons, touching the disposal of things in their power, to their mutual content and advantage. But when we speak of God's covenanting with men, we must remember that he is the sovereign Ruler and Owner of mankind, and therefore, that his transactions with us are not mere covenants, as amongst men, between equals, or at least between persons who were antecedently disengaged. No, God is *the lawgiver* who hath authority *to save and to destroy.*[u] But the revelation of his will, which he hath made, for the direction of our duty to him and our expectations from him, is therefore called a covenant, and proposed to us under that form, because infinite goodness would deal with us in a rational way; and thus *draw us with the cords of a man;* (such cords as men are used to be drawn with;) and that his righteousness in the ruin of the refusers, might be the more magnified.

The same revelation of the will of God concerning man, may be considered, therefore, either as a law, backed with promises and threatenings as sanctions, and so there needs not the creature's consent; or as a covenant, and so there must be a restipulation from the creature. Now the sacraments relate to this revelation, as a covenant, i. e. a promise upon a condition, to which the sacraments are annexed as seals. The promises are, of reconciliation, relation, and recompence; the conditions are, faith, repentance, and sincere obedience to the whole will of God. This covenant is founded on free grace, and purchased by the blood of Christ. It was revealed, *at sundry times, and in divers manners*, to the Old-Testament saints; and now, under the New Testament, may be considered two ways; viz.

1. In its internal administration: as savingly closed with by true believers, who join themselves unto the Lord, by a free and hearty consent, which entitleth them to the saving benefits of this covenant. And it is not to this, that the sacraments are appropriated: for we find Simon Magus baptized; and multitudes on the left hand of Christ at the great day, who had eaten and drank in his presence. And the stewards of the mysteries of God would remain under perpetual doubts and uncertainties, if they were to go by this rule in applying the seals. *The Lord* infallibly *knows them that are his*, but we do not. In this internal administration, the Spirit is the seal, Eph. i. 13.

2. In its external administration: and so considered, all who profess faith in Christ, and obedience to him, are in the covenant at large, and have a right to the seal. As the church of the Jews; *with many of whom God was not well pleased; yet to them pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises*, Rom. ix. 4.

Now the sum and substance of this covenant is, that *God will be to us a God, and we shall be to him a people*, Heb. viii. 30. This is frequently set down in Scripture as the abridgment of the covenant; which includes all the other promises and conditions. All the privileges of the covenant are summed up in this one, *that God will be to us a God;* and all the duties of the covenant are summed up in this, *that we must be to him a people.* And herein it is certainly well ordered and sure; is all our salvation, and should be all our desire. I am to show,

2. How baptism is a seal of this covenant.

Covenanting signs and ceremonies have generally been used by all nations by which contracts have been confirmed and ratified; and those signs, not natural, but instituted. We call this ordinance a seal, because with us the usual way of confirming contracts is by *sealing;* which gives validity to the covenant, and mutual assurance of the sincerity of the covenanters; who do hereby, with the more solemnity, oblige themselves to the performance of the covenant. Now *God being willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, hath confirmed it*, not only *with an oath*, but with *a seal, that by all these immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie*, (or to put a cheat upon his creatures,) *we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge* to the everlasting covenant, *to lay hold on that hope* as the horns of the altar, Heb. vi. 17, 18.

There was a covenanting sign instituted by the

* The κειμηλια of the family.

u James iv. 1.

Jewish law, which was very significant; in case of a person's binding himself perpetually to his master, his ear was to be bored with an awl to the door-post, by his master, (Exod. xxi. 6.) by which the master engaged himself to continue his protection and provision, and the servant became obliged to continue his duty and obedience. Thus was the covenant sealed. Baptism is the seal of such a covenant between God and man; an act which obligeth us to be his willing servants for ever. More plainly, when I say that baptism is a seal of the covenant of grace, I mean,

1. That God doth, *in* and *by* that ordinance, assure us that he is willing *to be to us a God*, according to the tenor of the covenant. A sense of our meanness as creatures, especially of our vileness as sinners, might make us despair of the honour and happiness of such an interest and relation; this ordinance therefore is appointed, not only to convince us that God is reconcilable, but to convey to us all the benefits of reconciliation upon gospel terms. This is the covenant, (Gen. xvii. 7.) *To be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee*, and in token thereof, (*v.* 10.) *you shall be circumcised.* And forasmuch as our defilements by sin are the greatest discouragements of our faith in God as our God, to obviate those discouragements, the instituted seal is a significant sign of our cleansing from those defilements.

2. That God doth, *in* and *by* that ordinance, engage us to be to him a people.

His creating us, and preserving us, and all the gracious methods of his providence concerning us, engage us *to be to him a people*: because *he made us, and not we ourselves*, it follows, *that we are his people*, Ps. c. 3. But he doth by this ordinance lay a stronger and more explicit tie upon us to be his; *bores our ear to his door-post*; takes us to be *a people near unto him*; obliges us, not only by the bond of a law, but by the bond of a covenant, to be his. And all little enough; our corrupt hearts are so very treacherous and deceitful, and the enmity of the carnal mind so strong and inveterate. And because our cleansing is a necessary qualification for this relation, we are thus taken *to be to God a people*, by washing; for *he purifies to himself a peculiar people.*[v] The church *must be sanctified and cleansed, with the washing of water.*[w] We must first have our *consciences purged from dead works*, before we can acceptably *serve the living God.*[x] God doth in this ordinance, as it were, lay hold of us, set us apart for himself, and bind us to our duty; that if afterwards we be tempted sacrilegiously to alienate ourselves from him, and to serve under the opposite banner, the abiding obligations of this ordinance may help to keep us steady.

I will be their God, and they shall be my people, is the meaning of this service. It is a seal to those articles of agreement, which we find engrossed in the Scriptures, between God and man. An ordinance in which we are marked for God, and receive his image and superscription; marked for his service, marked for his salvation.

This being laid down in general, I now proceed to open it more particularly, from the institution; *baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* That is,

1. By authority from the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

All the Persons of the blessed Trinity concur, as in our creation, (Gen. i. 26. *Let us make man,*) so to our redemption, salvation, and consolation. If we ask the question which Christ put concerning John's baptism, *The baptism of Jesus, is it from Heaven or of men?* it must be answered, *It is from Heaven.* Which stamps a very great honour upon the ordinance. Though to a carnal eye it may appear mean and contemptible; yet looking upon it as beautified with the sacred authority of Heaven, it appears truly great: and it is comfortable to those who are called to be *stewards of the mysteries of God*, that they act by an authority which will bear them out.

2. Invocating, or calling upon, the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

To do what we do in the name of God, is to sanctify all we do by prayer. So great an action as this, doth in an especial manner require that solemnity. It is prayer which fetcheth down that presence of God with the ordinance, and that blessing of God upon it, which is really the beauty and grace, the life and efficacy, of the ordinance.

3. There is more in it than this: we are baptized (εις ονομα) *into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: i. e. in token of our believing in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

It is said, (1 Cor. x. 2.) that the Israelites were baptized, εις τον Μωσην—*into Moses*; which refers to (Exod. xiv. 31.) *they believed Moses*, or in Moses. Faith has in it an assent of the understanding, and a consent of the will; so that to be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is to be baptized into a solemn profession of these two things.

Our *assent* to the gospel revelation concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and our *consent* to a covenant relation to these divine Persons. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Three Persons in the ever blessed Trinity, are in the New Testament not only *made known*, but tendered and offered to us. The gospel contains, not only a doctrine but a covenant, and by baptism we are brought into that covenant. The Jews were *baptized into Moses*, i. e. were thereby committed to the conduct of Moses: and so

v Tit. ii. 14. w Eph. v. 26. x Heb. ix. 14.

(Cor. i. 13, 15.) Paul pleads, that he baptized few or none, for this reason, lest they should say he baptized *in his own name*, i. e. into himself, and his own guidance as their ruler. So that to be *baptized in the name*, is to be solemnly devoted, and dedicated, to *the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

Now this dedication to God, this entering into covenant with the whole Trinity, implies two things:

1. A renunciation of every thing that is contrary to God.

An oath of allegiance to God, as our rightful Sovereign, (and such an oath baptism is,) doth necessarily imply an oath of abjuration of all those powers and interests, which stand in opposition to, or competition with, his crown and dignity in our souls. The dedication of ourselves to the conduct of God, implies an utter disclaiming of the rule of the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh:* for what fellowship hath light with darkness, or how can two such masters be served? Hence we are said *to be buried with Christ by baptism*, and *planted in the likeness of his death*, (Rom. vi. 4, 5.) which intimates our dying to every lust and sin.

In the early ages of the church, when adult persons, who had been trained up under the power of Pagan delusions, were baptized Christians, it was required, that they should solemnly and expressly renounce that heathenism in which they had been brought up, and disclaim all relation to those gods they had been taught to worship; that none might be admitted, who retained any good opinion of their former idolatries and superstitions; and that those who were admitted, when tempted to apostasy, or base compliances, might be deterred by a serious reflection upon so solemn and express a renunciation: and a form of renunciation, similar to that of the ancient church, the English liturgy still uses. And even those who have laid aside the form of renunciation, as not countenanced by the precepts or examples of Scripture, allow that the renunciation itself is in effect made, being included in that dedication to God, which enters into the essence of Christian baptism.

Our dedication to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in that ordinance, then, necessarily implies a renouncing,

1. Of all subjection to Satan's rule. It is throwing off the devil's yoke. The sinful heart is represented in Scripture as Satan's palace, where he resides, where he reigns, where he keeps court, where he keeps garrison. Now our covenanting with God implies, a revolt from Satan's jurisdiction. Baptism wrests the keys of the heart out of the hands of the strong man armed, that the possession may be surrendered to him *whose right it is.* When, by baptism, we enlist ourselves under Christ's banners, we thereby proclaim war with the devil and all his forces.

God, in this ordinance, seals to us a deliverance from Satan, a rescue out of that house of bondage, that iron furnace, the terrifying and tormenting power of the devil; and we seal to him a compliance with that deliverance, by a steady opposition to his tempting, deceiving power, and a constant disowning of his conduct; keeping ourselves, that we may not be touched by that wicked one, in whom *the world lieth.*

2. Of all consent to fleshly lusts. The flesh is another enemy against which, in baptism, we declare war. We promise to quit the conduct of that *carnal mind which is enmity against God;*[e] engaging to be no longer guided by its dictates, and governed by its laws. The water of baptism is designed for our cleansing from the spots and defilements of the flesh. Hence, the apostle urgeth our baptism as a pressing motive to persuade us to the mortification of sin, Rom. v. 2, 3. Those who are *baptized into Christ*, have professedly *put on Christ;* and it is inconsistent with our putting on Christ, *to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.*[f] Being in baptism enrolled among those pilgrims who are journeying towards Canaan, we engage to abstain from, and fight against, those *fleshly lusts that war against the soul.*[g]

3. Of all conformity to this present world.

We disclaim, in baptism, the customs of this world as our rule, the company of this world as our people, and the comforts of this world as our portion. Grotius thinks, that St. Paul hath an especial reference to the baptismal covenant, in that caution, (Rom. xii. 2.) *Be not conformed to this world.* Being by baptism engaged to conform to the designs and interests of the other world, we must needs be disengaged from a compliance with the counsels and concerns of this world. By this ordinance, we are engaged to swim against the stream of the impieties and follies of the age in which we live. We covenant not to take up with that *any good* which will satisfy the most of men; not to accept of a portion in this life. We are by Christ delivered from this present evil world, and in baptism we promise never to deliver ourselves up to it again, but *to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free.*

Thus stands our baptismal renunciation; which is notoriously contradicted by every wilful act of compliance with the allurements of the flesh, the world, and the devil. Baptism also implies,

2. A resignation of our whole selves to the Lord.

This must always accompany that renunciation. *If thou wilt return, O house of Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me.* Our quitting the rule of sin, and Satan, and the world, is not that we may be lawless,

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e Rom viii. 7. f Rom xii. 6. g 1 Pet ii 11

but that we may be brought under the yoke of the Lord Jesus Christ. The tyranny is exchanged, not for anarchy, but for rightful sovereignty. It is not enough that we overrun the service of the citizen of the country, but we must submissively return to our Father's house. And this part of the covenant is sealed in this sacrament. In baptism we are not only *planted in the likeness of Christ's death*, but also *of his resurrection*, Rom. vi. 4, 5.

1. It is a resignation of ourselves, our whole selves; body, soul, and spirit. This is what is given up in baptism. (2 Cor. viii. 5. *First gave their own selves unto the Lord.)* It is not a resignation of our estates only, and relations, but ourselves. The soul, and all its faculties; the body, and all its parts, and powers, must be presented, as a living sacrifice. It is a marriage covenant, in which the parties mutually give themselves to each other; and in such a case, *if a man would give all the substance of his house for love*, (i. e. instead of it,) *it would be utterly contemned. I will be for thee, and thou shalt be for me*, that is the covenant, Hos. iii. 3. And therefore, in baptism, the seal is applied to the person, signifying the dedication of the man; as livery and seisin, is the giving of the premises intended to be conveyed. *Whose I am*, is the apostle's acknowledgment, Acts xxvii. 23.

2. It is a resignation to the Lord. That is the meaning of our being baptized into his name. It is declaring that we are his, and *subscribing with our hand to the Lord.*[h] Paul, when he is reproving the Corinthians for saying, *I am of Paul*, uses this argument, Were ye baptized *in the name* (or rather *into* the name) *of Paul?*[i] which intimates, that if they had been baptized into his name, they would have been *of* him. So that to be baptized into the name of God, is to be *of* God.

Now this resignation or dedication of ourselves to the Lord, is two-fold.

(1.) In respect of duty. We resign ourselves to God, to be ruled and governed by him; to be commanded by his laws without dispute or contradiction: saying, as Paul, (Acts ix. 6.) *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do. Other lords have had dominion, but from henceforth, by thee only will I make mention of thy name.*[k] (2d.) In respect of dependence. We resign ourselves to God, to be portioned and made happy by him. When we swear allegiance to him, we do withal put ourselves under his protection, and profess our expectation of all good from him. Baptism fixeth our eyes upon him, *as the eyes of a servant upon the hand of his master*,[l] not only for work, but for wages. This is *to yield ourselves to the Lord*,[m] to be made holy by him, and to be made happy by him. And it is no more than we are already obliged to, by manifold ties: only in this ordinance, we do more explicitly signify our consent to that, which we were bound to before; and to all the other ties, add an obligation of our own.

Now in the form of baptism, all the persons of the blessed Trinity are named; no doubt, (1st.) To confirm the doctrine of the Trinity; which, without controversy, is one of the greatest *mysteries of godliness;* and, (2nd.) To clear the duty; or that we might the better see, and be affected with, our obligations to these sacred persons; and might from thence take direction, both what to do, and what to expect.

1. We are baptized *in* (or *into*) the name of the Father. That is, thereby is sealed our dedication to God the Father; professing to believe that there is a God, and to consent to take him for our God. *It is avouching the Lord to be our God.*[n] And the consent of the will must be guided by the assent of the understanding. We take God to be that to us which he is, and declare our consent to those moral relations, in which he is pleased to stand to us. Now, that which in the creed we profess to believe, in an especial manner, concerning God the Father, is, that he is the Creator: this then must, in baptism, be applied and acknowledged concerning ourselves; he is my Creator. We give up ourselves to him as Creator, in all those relations which result from creation. More particularly, we give up ourselves to God our Creator,

(1.) As our absolute owner and Lord; to dispose of us by an absolute sovereignty, and to actuate us by an infinite power, (Psal. ciii. 3.) *He made us, and not we ourselves*, or, as it is in Hebrew margin, *and his we are:* put them both together and they complete the argument; because he made us, and not we ourselves, therefore we are not our own, but his. There cannot be imagined any sovereignty so despotic, or any property so absolute, as that which ariseth from creation. He who gave us our being, without any concurrence of ours, may justly call us his own; and may he not do what he will with his own? That little which our parents contributed to our being, only as instruments, produceth so great a power, property, and interest, that the law of nations makes children not to be *(sui juris)* at their own command: much more is God our owner, who is the fountain of our being. Now in baptism we seal our consent to this, and resign ourselves to him, so as no longer to be *our own.*[o] We receive his mark, his image and superscription, and thereby acknowledge him our Owner.

(2.) As our supreme Governor: morally to rule us, as intellectual free agents, by his revealed law; directing us in, and binding us to, that duty, which as creatures we owe him. We hereby consent, that the Lord should be *our lawgiver and our judge;*[p]

h Isa. xliv. 5.
k Isa. xxvi. 13.
i 1 Cor. xii. 13.
l Ps. cxxiii. 2.
m 2 Chron. xxx. 8.
o 1 Cor. vi. 20.
n Deut. xxvi. 17.
p Isa. xxxiii. 22.

agreeing to it as fit, that he who gave *being*, should give *law*. The language of our baptismal engagement is, *Thou art my King, O God!*[q] It is a self-surrender to the commanding power of his revealed will.

(3.) As our chief good. He who made us, is alone able to give perfection to his work, by making us truly happy. This hath special regard to the darling attribute of God, his goodness; the source of all that good, which can satisfy the soul's desire. As in baptism we own God for our ruler, so we own him likewise for our benefactor. Christ, speaking of earthly princes, saith, *They that exercise authority are called benefactors:* (Luke xxii. 25.) and they were wont to pride themselves much in the number, compliments, and attendance of their clients, and beneficiaries. Now, to be the Lord's, is to own him for our benefactor, and attend upon him accordingly. *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee,*[r] is the meaning of our baptismal covenant.

(4.) As our highest and ultimate end. The name of God is often put for his honour and glory, so that being baptized into the name of the Father, seals our engagement to direct all our actions to his glory. This follows upon our regard to God the Father as Creator; for if he is the first cause he must be the last end. If all things are *of him*, by way of creation, and *through him*,[s] by way of providential influence, all things must be *to him*, in their final tendency and result. In heaven God is, and will be, *all in all*;[t] and what is heaven upon earth, but making him our *all in all?* Now, the consideration of this should engage us to holiness: we are not our own, and therefore may not live as we please: we are God's, and therefore must glorify him, both with our bodies and with our spirits. It may likewise serve for our comfort. When any thing troubles us, there is great satisfaction in this, that we are the Lord's. David pleads it in prayer, (Ps. cxix. 94.) *I am thine, save me.* If we are indeed his, no doubt he will look after his own.

2. We are baptized *in* (or *into*) the name of the Son.

This seems to have a peculiar emphasis in this administration: and therefore, though the other two are always implied, yet we find this most generally expressed in the New Testament; (see Acts viii. 16; xix. 5. Rom. vi. 3. Gal. iii. 27.) for into his hands the mediatorial kingdom is in an especial manner put. It is to him, that the name is given above every name, and all judgment is committed. Our religion is called, the religion of Christ; the Christian religion. The disciples are from him called *Christians*, Acts xi. 26. *From him, the whole family, both in heaven and earth, is named*, Eph. iii. 15. And therefore baptism, the ordinance of admission into that family, of initiation into that religion, is fitly said to be, into the name of Christ. As those who were initiated into the Mosaic dispensation, are said to have been baptized into Moses, (i. e. given up to God's conduct by the ministry of Moses,) so we are baptized into Christ, i. e. given up to God in Christ Jesus. That is the grand characteristical mark of the Christian religion, of which baptism is the initiating ordinance. The Jews acknowledged God the Father; and they were more agreed concerning *the spirit of the Messiah*, than concerning the *person of the Messiah;* and therefore it was requisite that this should be mainly insisted upon.

Our being baptized into the name of Jesus, doth ratify and seal two things:

(1.) Our *assent* to the truth of all divine revelations concerning him. Baptism is the badge of our profession of the truth *as it is in Jesus;* not only from Christ, as the spring and author, but concerning Christ, as the subject matter. In baptism, we set to our seal that God is true in what he hath made known to us concerning him; namely,

That Christ was, and is, the eternal Son of God, *by a generation which none can declare.* This was the summary of the Eunuch's faith, upon which he was baptized, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, Acts viii. 37. A short creed, but the rock on which the church is built. That this Son of God in the fulness of time became man, was *made flesh*,[u] was born of a woman, and so became Emanuel, God with us. That this Jesus was the true Messiah; the Saviour of the world; sanctified and sent for this purpose by the Father; to whom all the prophets bore witness; and in whom the types and predictions of the Old Testament have their full accomplishment. That in pursuance of his undertaking to redeem and save us, after he had lived a holy, useful, and exemplary life, and preached a divine and heavenly doctrine, he suffered death upon the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, and so to bring in an everlasting righteousness. That after he had lain in the grave till the third day, he rose again from the dead by his own power; and having conversed forty days upon earth, and given many infallible proofs of his resurrection to those who were to preach it to the world, he ascended, in triumph, to heaven; and sat down at the right hand of God; where he ever lives, making intercession for us. That this glorified Jesus is head over all things to the church, i. e. its supreme and only Lawgiver and King. And lastly, That a day is coming, when he will appear in the clouds of heaven, to judge the world, and to render to every man according to his works.

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q Ps. xliv. 4. r Ps. lxxiii. 25. s Rom. xi. 36 t 1 Cor. xv. 28. u John i. 14.

This is a summary of the doctrine of Christ, which as Christians we are to believe, and of which our baptism signifies and seals the belief. And it is a sin, and a shame, that many who have been baptized, and are called Christians, know little of these things. They are certainly great things; and we should labour to understand them, and to be rooted and established in the belief of them, and to feel the power of them in our souls. By baptism we were *delivered into this form of doctrine*,[v] as into a mould, and should labour, *from our hearts, to obey it.* Children should betimes be trained in the knowledge of these things; and taught to prefer the superlative excellency of this knowledge of Christ Jesus above any other knowledge whatsoever.

(2.) Our *consent* to him in all his appointed offices. Faith is the act of the will, as well as of the understanding. This great doctrine, that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*,[w] is not only *a faithful saying*, to be assented to, but *worthy of all acceptation*, to be embraced with the greatest affection. Peter said, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God:* (and considering Christ's present state of humiliation, which was a veil to his glory, it was a very great word:) there is the *assenting* act of faith. Thomas said, *My Lord and my God:* (and it was the triumph of his faith over a prevailing unbelief:) there is the *consenting* act of faith. It is not enough to believe that Christ is *Lord, and God*, but we must take him to be our *Lord, and our God.* More particularly, in baptism we are sealed, and delivered up to Christ,

[1.] As our *Prophet*, to teach and instruct us.

He is the *great Prophet* who was promised to the fathers, (Deut. xviii. 15.) and in the fulness of time *he came from God, a teacher.*[x] He taught a while, in person, and he still teacheth by his word and Spirit; hath (if I may so speak) set up a great school, and he calls upon all *to learn of him.* By baptism we are entered into that school. And (by the way) if parents commonly enter their little children, at what school they please, before they are able to choose for themselves, why may they not enter them into Christ's school; who is the teacher of hearts, and can instil his instructions into the soul, earlier than we are aware of? Christ teacheth the Στοιχεια—*the rudiments;* (Heb. v. 12.) and those who say that he will not teach little ones, reproach our Master, as if he were the worse for going to heaven; for on earth he invited *little children* to him.[y]

Baptism draws us off from all other teachers who stand in opposition to Christ, or in competition with him. Carnal reason, and corrupt understanding, governed by the dictates of a perverse rebellious will, and unsanctified affections, must be disclaimed. Instructions must not be taken from the evil examples of the world, and the prevailing customs of the times. These teachers must be renounced. On the contrary, baptism devotes us to the teaching of Jesus Christ: one who is able to teach us, and as willing as he is able. It placeth us at *wisdom's gates;* sets us at *the feet of Christ*, there *to receive his word.* And it is the fittest place for us. As baptized Christians, we are the disciples, i. e. the scholars, of Christ. *We call him Master, and we say well, for so he is.*[z] The proper faculty of the soul, resigned to Christ as our prophet, is the understanding; which must be submitted to the commanding truth of all divine revelations, how mysterious soever.* Christ is a master, whose dictates are to be received with implicit faith, without dispute. How happy were it, could we live under the power of this engagement, or behave as Christ's scholars; observant of our Master, attentive to his instructions, affectionate to our school-fellows, concerned for the credit of our school, and still following on to know the Lord.

[2.] As our Priest, to atone for us and to save us. He is a Priest for ever, and *such an High Priest as became us.*[a] Were we but better acquainted with the mysteries of Christ's priestly office, we should see, and seeing admire, the singular propriety and beauty of it. Baptism is our subscription to the mediatorship of the Lord Jesus; it seals our approbation of, and consent to, those methods, which infinite wisdom hath taken to redeem a guilty world by a crucified Saviour. In this ordinance then, we are resigned and given up to Christ,

(1.) As a Mediator of reconciliation: quitting our confidence in any righteousness of our own, for the satisfaction of divine justice; and enrolling ourselves among the ransomed of the Lord, who profess to owe all their comforts, and all their hopes, to the blood of Jesus, and to receive all, as flowing to them in that stream. In baptism *we receive the atonement*, (Rom. v. 11.) and it is a rich receiving; which makes us unspeakably happy, and without which we should be eternally miserable. (2.) As a Mediator of intercession; renouncing other intercessors, and relying on Christ, as our only Advocate with the Father, who *appears for us*, and pleads for us. We have a cause to be tried, and baptism admits us as Christ's clients, and interests us in his skill and faithfulness, in the management of that great affair.

We thereby also engage to put all our services into his hands, to be perfumed with the incense of his own intercession, and so presented to the Father. In baptism, our names are engraved upon the breastplate of this great High Priest, *who, as the forerunner, is for us entered.* On this the apostle builds his

v Rom. vi. 17. w 1 Tim. i. 15. x John iii 2. y Matt. xix. 14.

z John xiii. 13. * Oportet discentem credere. a Heb vii. 26.

assurance of the ability of Christ to save unto the uttermost, that *he ever lives to make intercession*, Heb. vii. 25. And what a source of comfort is this, to all those who sincerely abide by their baptismal covenant, that Christ himself is, and will be, their High Priest; so that all the privileges, which flow from his atonement and intercession, are theirs!

[3.] As our *King*, to rule us. *He is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour*, Acts v. 31. *A Priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace is between them both.*[b] Baptism is an oath of allegiance to Christ, as our Saviour Prince. The children of professing parents are born within this allegiance, (as our law expresses it,) and are therefore to be baptized, as Christ's free-born subjects, and in ratification of their engagements.

(1.) In baptism we are put under the *power* of Christ's government; oblige ourselves to bear faith and true allegiance to King Jesus, and cordially to adhere to the authority and interests of his kingdom; renouncing all other rule and dominion, and engaging religiously to observe all his laws and injunctions, how contrary soever to our own corrupt wills and affections. In baptism we take the yoke of Christ upon us, and profess ourselves *willing*, not only in the day of his *grace*, to be made *happy* by him, but in the *day of his power*,[c] to be made holy by him. This is to kiss the Son, as it is expressed, Ps. ii. 12. as an expression of cordial and affectionate allegiance. (2.) In baptism we are put under the *protection* of Christ's government. Where we pay allegiance we expect protection; and shall not here be disappointed, for if the *Lord* be *our Judge, our Lawgiver, and our King, he will save us*, Isa. xxxiii. 22. Christ's subjects may and must depend upon his love and care, as their guard and defence against the enemies of their souls. In baptism we come under his wings; quitting dependence upon the creature, as a false, deceitful shelter. We *appoint to ourselves one head*, as the prophet speaks, (Hos. i. 11.) i. e. own and submit to his headship.

Thus stands the covenant relation between Christ and believers, of which baptism is a seal; which is in short thus; *My beloved is mine, and I am his.*[d] Christ doth, in this ordinance, seriously make over himself to us to be ours, on condition we are sincerely his; which we therein profess and oblige ourselves to be.

3. We are baptized *in* (or *into*) *the name of the Holy Ghost*; the third person in the blessed Trinity.

When those Ephesians, mentioned Acts xix. 2, 3. confessed, that they had not so much as heard whether there were an Holy Ghost, it was asked with wonder, *Unto what then were ye baptized?* implying, that the believing, consenting acknowledgment of the Holy Ghost is essential to Christian baptism. For herein, as well as in the former particulars, are required, both our *assent* and our *consent*.

(1.) Our *assent* to the truth of the Scripture revelation concerning the Holy Ghost. Particularly,

[1.] Concerning the divinity of the Holy Ghost, which is more than intimated in this institution; and, [2.] Concerning his agency, in carrying on the work of our redemption, and completing the undertaking of Christ. That it is the Holy Spirit who indited the Scriptures, which are both the seed and the food of the new creature; so that all the benefits which flow to the church in general, and to believers in particular, from the word, (and these are neither few nor small,) come originally from the Holy Ghost. And, who works grace, and carries on that work, in the souls of believers; in a free manner, as the wind bloweth where it listeth, yet according to the election of grace. Of this, in baptism we declare our belief, in opposition to those proud opinions, which by making self all in all, make nothing at all, or next to nothing, of the Spirit. This is a truth perhaps as little thought of as any part of the baptismal profession, though as material as any.

(2.) Our *consent* to stand in a covenant relation to the Holy Ghost:

[1.] As our Sanctifier: to change our nature, conquer our corruptions, quicken our graces, and make us meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. By baptism we engage to submit to his sanctifying influences and operations, and give up ourselves to him, to be wrought up by him into a meetness for glory. We promise not to quench but to encourage, not to resist but to comply with, his workings; and for this purpose to attend upon those ordinances, which are instituted as means of sanctification, and by which the Spirit ordinarily works; desiring, and designing, to be sanctified by them, and waiting upon the Spirit for success.

[2.] As our Teacher. The Spirit is given to teach doctrines to be known and believed, and duties to be known and practised; and our baptismal covenant engageth us to receive, and submit to, these teachings. To receive with meekness (the meekness of the understanding, and the meekness of the will) that which the Spirit gives in to us. To welcome his remembrances and admonitions; and to receive the teachings of his word, not only in the *light* of them into our heads, but in the *love* of them into our hearts.

[3.] As our Guide: to show us the way in which we should go, and to lead us in it. It is the character of all the children of God, that they are led by the Spirit of God, Rom. viii. 14. By baptism, we yield up ourselves to that conduct, with David's prayer, *Thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness.*[e] The Spirit guides, out of the way of wick-

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[b] Zech. vi. 13. [c] Psalm cx. 3. [d] Cant. ii. 16. [e] Psalm cxliii. 10.

edness, the paths of the destroyer, into the way everlasting: and by baptism we are obliged to follow, humbly, closely, cheerfully, and fully. To walk, not after the flesh, as other Gentiles walk, but after the spirit, is what all are obliged to, who are in Christ Jesus.

[4.] As our Comforter. He is promised as such, John xiv. 16. (παρακλητος,) either our *Advocate* and *Intercessor* within us; and as such by baptism we become his clients, and oblige ourselves to take his advice, and trust to his management: or our *Comforter*; and as such we receive him; depending upon him for that solid, satisfying comfort, which we have foolishly sought, and may despair ever to find, in the creature. Whatever disquiets us, we are engaged by our baptism to wait upon the Spirit for our comfort, in his own way.

In a word, our Lord Jesus, in this ordinance, doth in effect say to us, as he did to the disciples when he breathed on them, (John xx. 22.) *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* And our restipulation is something like the blessed Virgin's submission to the power of the Spirit, (Luke i. 38.) *Behold the servant of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.*

And thus I have endeavoured to open the nature of this ordinance; the meaning of this service. And may we not from hence fetch matter of lamentation, that of the many who are baptized, and the many who bring their children to be baptized, there are so few who rightly understand what they do, or what was done to them? And if this be the nature of baptism, however to a carnal eye it may seem a mean thing, yet it is truly great. That which puts a value upon the wax and the seal, is the worth of the inheritance thereby conveyed. Baptism cannot be a little thing, when it is into names so great, as those *of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

CHAPTER II.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

Having opened at large the nature of baptism, we come next to inquire, to whom it is to be administered? And we may take some general rules in answer to this question, from what hath already been said, in opening the nature and institution of the ordinance. Our Master hath directed to baptize all nations; which easily affords this undisputed rule, that difference of nation makes no difference in Christianity. Greek or Jew, Barbarian or Scythian, people of all nations, are alike welcome to Christ upon gospel terms.

In a protestant nation, little needs be said to expose the folly of the church of Rome, in administering the ordinance of baptism to things senseless and inanimate; as bells, and oars, and the like. When the apostles are bid to preach the gospel to *every creature*, it must be restrained to human creatures; the chief of the visible creation.

1. Baptism, we have found, is an ordinance of Christ's mediatorial kingdom; therefore all who pertain to that kingdom are to be baptized. It is a part of our *magna charta*, which every subject may claim the benefit of, and plead an interest in, unless by any forfeiture he deprive himself of the privilege of it. It belongs not to the internal, but external, administration of this kingdom; is an ordinance of the visible church, and pertains therefore to those who are visible members of the church.

2. Baptism is a seal of the covenant of grace; and therefore belongs to those who are in that covenant, (at least by profession,) and to none other. As for a real and saving covenant interest, we cannot judge of it; it is a secret not belonging to us. In the external administration, we must proceed by a judgment of charity, upon a plausible profession. And according to these rules,

First. All those who seriously profess faith in Christ, and obedience to him, are to be baptized.

Be they heathens, *who have not known God*, or Jews or Turks, *who have not obeyed the gospel of Christ*, if they will renounce their delusions, and willingly and deliberately embrace the Christian religion, they are welcome to this ordinance. I say willingly embrace Christianity, for it is a vile abuse of the ordinance, and a contradiction to the constitution of Christ's kingdom, to force people to baptism, and by it to Christianity, by outward violence and compulsion. This was the method the Spaniards took in converting the Indians, of which they boast so much. Christ will have all his subjects *willing in the day of his power.*

This required profession supposeth a competency of knowledge; and consists in a declared consent to the terms of the covenant; in which the judgment can be made only by the outward appearance. The believing consent is in the heart, and that falls not under our cognizance; it is *with the mouth that confession is made unto salvation.*[a] In the primitive times, when Christianity was to be planted in a world made up of Jews and heathens, this profession was previously required; though it appears not in what degree of explicitness. Whether every individual of the three thousand baptized, Acts ii. 41. did make a particular confession of his faith, or whether their cheerful submission to the ordinance, upon a public declaration of the nature and obligations of it, sufficed, as an implicit consent, is uncer-

[a] Romans x. 10.

tain. The Eunuch's confession (Acts viii. 37.) was short, *that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, which was then *the present truth*. And perhaps Christianity has gained little, by the lengthening and multiplying of creeds; which, it may justly be feared, have caused more contention than they have cured.

SECOND. The infants of those who are in covenant with God, and are themselves members of the visible church, are likewise to be baptized.

As far as the records of the New Testament go, most were baptized upon the former title: and good reason for it; the Christian church was then in the planting. And hence ariseth a mistake, like that of supposing that because, upon the first conquest of a kingdom, an actual consent to the prince's sovereignty, by taking the oaths of allegiance, is justly required, as the condition of partaking of the privilege of his protection, therefore it must needs be so, after the government is settled; and that none were to be reckoned his subjects, but those who testified this explicit consent; whereas it is agreed, by the law of all nations, that those who are born of the king's subjects, and in the king's dominions, are within the allegiance of the king, and entitled to the privileges of his subjects.

And here, I profess, I enter upon a very unpleasant part of my province, (for I take no delight in opposing,) but there is no avoiding it; the truth once delivered to the saints, and entailed on them, and their seed, must be contended for. But because the ground is rough, I promise to tread lightly, and to hasten over it as fast as I can: and the rather, because so much has been said and written, by so many learned and able divines, in defence of infant baptism, which yet remains unanswered, that to be large upon the subject, would be but *(actum agere)* waste labour. I am asking for the *good old way*, and do not covet new lights.

The people we have occasion to contradict in handling this question, rather assumingly call themselves Baptists, as if there was no baptism, and therefore no Christianity, but amongst them. Call them Antipedobaptists, i. e. such as are against infant baptism; or Anabaptists, i. e. rebaptizers, such as require those who were baptized in infancy to be baptized again; and you call them right.

And as to the persons of this people, I presume not to judge them; yea, I do not doubt that many among them are such as fear God, and are accepted of him. What I myself have seen of Christ among them, I do dearly love and rejoice in; and those who only scruple the baptizing of their own children, but do not condemn infant baptism in general as a nullity, and reproach it as a vanity, though I heartily pity their mistake, I would be very backward to censure them: acknowledging, with Mr. Flavel, that there are difficulties in this controversy, which may puzzle the minds of well-meaning Christians. But for their way, I must here declare my utter dislike of it: and the rather, because in that short experience I have had of the world, I have observed these things concerning it:

1. That it is a very uncharitable way. For whatever *they do*, I am sure their *tenets do* unchurch and unchristian more than nineteen parts in twenty of the Christian world; and thus dishonour Christ by narrowing his kingdom.

2. That it is a very unnatural way: cutting children off from being parts of their parents; and prohibiting those to partake of their parents' privileges, who unhappily partake of their corruptions. And,

3. That it is generally accompanied with (and therefore probably leads to) other errors. For, not to go so far as Germany, and reflect upon the anabaptists of Munster, it is too plain, that the greater part of the anabaptists of England, at this day, run into extremes directly opposite to each other, and equally distant from the truth as it is in Jesus. And, by the way, methinks those who speak so much of free grace, and the unconditionality of the gospel-covenant, should be easily induced to honour free grace by the admission of children under its wings, though incapable of conditioning.

As to the points in question, I shall endeavour with all clearness and brevity to show,

I. What children are to be baptized.

II. What gives them their right to baptism: and,

III. What proof we have of that right.

I. As to the first of these, or what children are to be baptized? I answer,

Not all children promiscuously. If both the parents are out of the visible church, the child is not to be baptized, till it comes to years of understanding: Yet

The children of parents, only one of whom professeth faith in Christ and obedience to him, have a right to baptism; the *unbelieving parent* is so far *sanctified by the believing, that the children are* federally *holy*, 1 Cor. vii. 14.

Yea, though the parents are not actual members of any particular church, yet, as members of the universal visible church, their serious profession of faith entitles their children to baptism; for (as was showed before) baptism seals our admission, not into any particular, but into the universal, church.

But in case the parents are excommunicated, it seems to me that the children's right is thereby, for the present, suspended; supposing that excommunication to be just.

If both the parents are openly profane and scandalous, so that whatever profession they make, their practice doth notoriously give the lie to it; this amounts to the case of those who are excommunicated. Since such cast out themselves, and it is but a mockery to call them Christians, till they re-

pent, and resolve to amend; and it doth but harden them in their wickedness, to take their children into the church. Or finally,

If the parents deny the fundamental articles of the Christian religion, or refuse to consent to the covenant of grace, their children are not to be baptized. Those who do not hold the head, have not any title to membership, either for themselves or theirs. In a word, whatever, upon the first disciplining of nations, would have been a bar to a man's own baptism, in the continuation of Christianity, may justly be deemed a bar to the baptism of his children; and nothing else. As to the

II. Or what it is that gives children a right to baptism, (I mean as the requisite condition of their baptism,) I answer, the visible church-membership of one, or both, of their parents; i. e. their profession, of faith in Christ, and obedience to him.

It is not the profession or promise of any other person or persons for them, which can entitle children to baptism, except in some extraordinary cases. And therefore I think, to that great question, *Why are children baptized, when, by reason of their tender age, they cannot perform the conditions of the covenant?* the common answer, *Because they promise them by their sureties*, is not at all satisfactory: for unless there be some relation, natural or instituted, between them and their sureties, I see not how the consent of the sureties can either bind or benefit them. And I fear that building the fabric of infant baptism upon so weak a foundation, and erecting a fort so untenable against the adversaries of it, hath given them great advantage. By this reasoning, the infants of Jews, Turks, or Pagans, might be baptized, upon the profession of any Christian, though standing in no relation to them; which certainly has no foundation in the word of God. I deny not the antiquity, nor in some cases the expediency, of sponsors. In the primitive times, when temptations to apostasy from the Christian faith were frequent and strong, sureties were generally required; i. e. persons of reputation in the church, who did (1st) testify that they believed the sincerity of the parents' profession; and that, so far as they were able to judge, they were not likely to apostatize; and (2d) engage that in case the parents should die, or apostatize, they would themselves take care of the Christian education of the child. But this custom, laudable enough in its rise, hath sadly degenerated in its continuance; and the children's right to baptism been built so much upon their susception by sponsors, that the parents have been excluded by a law from professing and promising for their own offspring; which doubtless is a great abuse. If the sureties come in only as witnesses, why are they dealt with as the prime agents? If they are looked upon as proprietors of, and undertaking for, the children immediately, I see no ground in Scripture for such a susception, and therefore know not how it can be done in faith. And it is not only depriving parents of their right of dedicating their own children, but it looks too much like releasing them from their obligations to educate them, when the whole care of them is so committed to others: and it is a temptation to neglect their education; while the sureties are bound to take care of that, which they have no opportunity for, and which they are not induced to, by any natural affection. If it be said that they are the parents' deputies, (the best which can be made of it,) then certainly there should be some word or action appointed, which might, at least, imply such a deputation; and the parents should be permitted, some way or other, to signify their assent and consent to the engagement of the sureties; whereas the canon expressly provides, *that the parents be not urged to be present:* or the sureties should make some mention of the parents; and their transacting not be expressly said to be *in the name of the child.* At least it should be left to the parent's choice, whether he will make a deputy or not; whereas, on the contrary, the canon enjoins, that *no parent be admitted to answer as godfather for his own child.*

Having thus taken infant baptism off the wrong foundation, we fix it upon the right, i. e. the parents' profession of faith in Christ, and obedience to him. A plausible profession, not contradicted by evident ignorance, or wickedness.

In case of the death, or necessary absence, of the parents, it sufficeth, that this profession be credibly attested by witnesses, knowing the parents, and known to the church: (if the minister and congregation be not otherwise satisfied:) and in such a case of necessity, it is very requisite that some person related to the child, or to whom the care of it is committed, should undertake for its Christian education. But if the parents (one or both) be living, it is proper that they should make an express declaration of their belief of the gospel, their consent to the covenant of grace, and their desire to have the child brought into that covenant. This fixes the title upon the right ground, and obligeth those who are most fit to be obliged. This parents most certainly are; because,

(1.) They have the greatest interest in their children. Who so fit to have the disposition of any thing, as the right owner? When the sponsors present a child to God, they give what is not their own —and what thanks have they?

(2.) Parents have also the greatest power over their children; a power, during infancy, *to choose and to refuse*, Numb. xxx. 3—5. When the sponsors transact in the child's name, they would do well to consider, *by what authority they do these things, and who gave them that authority.* And,

Finally, The covenant is, and ever hath been, externally administered to infants in the right of their

parents. *A God to thee, and to thy seed after thee,* (Gen. xvii. 7.) not to thee, and to the seed of a stranger, whom thou canst but pick up, and circumcise, and turn home again. A true domestic owner of a child, who hath power to choose or refuse for him, may perhaps also be admitted to bring that child to baptism; because his interest in, and power over, such a child, is nearly tantamount to that of a parent. As Abraham circumcised all who were born in his house, and bought with his money, Gen. xvii. 13, 28. We proceed now,

III. To prove the right of the infant seed of believing parents to baptism.

And here, to make some amends for the unpleasantness of disputing, it is no small pleasure to be the infants' advocate; to plead for those who cannot plead for themselves. Our law favours infants, and so doth our gospel.

For clearing what follows, some things are needful to be premised: as,

1. That consequences from Scripture are good proofs. The Scriptures were written for rational creatures. And is not Scripture reasoning the sense and meaning of Scripture? If the premises are plain Scripture truths, and granted, they are unworthy to be disputed with who deny the conclusion.

2. That all truths are not alike plain in Scripture. Some things are spoken of more fully, others more sparingly. The Scriptures were written for those who have them, and therefore they speak sparingly of the state of heathens, who have them not. They were written for those who are of ability to use them, and therefore speak sparingly of the state of infants, who are not yet of that ability. And the New Testament speaks less of those things which are more fully spoken of in the Old Testament; and which therefore were well known when the New was written. And infant baptism was not then controverted; for the Jews, to whom the gospel was first sent, understood it well enough.

3. That though the point of infant baptism may seem not so great a point to be contended for, yet the grounds on which it stands, and which they strike at who deny it, are very considerable, and of great moment.

These things premised, I shall mention just a few of the arguments.

Argument I. The infants of believing parents are in covenant with God, and therefore have a right to the initiating seal of that covenant.

When I say they are in covenant, understand me of the external administration of the covenant of grace, not of that which is internal. To the Jews pertained *the covenant and the promises,*[b] and yet with many of them God was not well pleased. Baptism, as was showed before, belongs to the external administration. What I mean is this; the promises of the covenant are conditionally sealed to them, viz. if, as they become capable, they agree to the terms to which they are by their baptism obliged. And what more can be said of the baptism of adults? for the seal of the internal administration to true believers, is *the spirit of promise.*[c]

The *consequent* of this argument is seldom denied, viz. that if infants are in covenant, they have a right to the seal. If the crown devolves upon an infant, he hath a right to the ceremony of coronation: and who can forbid water to those who are in the Christian covenant? Yet it doth not therefore follow, that these infants have a right to the Lord's supper; because in the two sacraments, though the thing signified be the same, the manner of signification is different. The Lord's supper is an ordinance in which the partaker must be active, but in baptism purely passive, (which therefore is still, and in our language, spoken of in the passive voice,) as if designed, purposely, for the benefit of infants. Under the Old Testament, infants did partake of circumcision, but not of the passover.

The *antecedent*, therefore, is that which especially requires proof, viz. that the children of professing parents are in covenant with God, i. e. come under the external administration of the covenant of grace. And I prove it by four steps;

1. It is possible that they may be in covenant.
2. It is probable that they should be in covenant.
3. It is certain that they were in covenant.
4. It is therefore certain that they are in covenant.

1. It is very possible that they may be in covenant with God.

I see no contradiction in the thing itself. The great objection insisted upon is, that they cannot restipulate, or declare their consent to the covenant: as if God's thoughts and ways of mercy were not infinitely above ours; or as if divine grace, which acts by prerogative, could not covenant with those who are not yet able to express their consent. If God made a covenant with the earth, (Gen. ix. 13.) and instituted a seal of that covenant, surely infants may be *fœderati*, though incapable of being *fœderantes;* i. e. may be happily *taken into covenant*, though not *covenanters*.

A right understanding of the nature of the covenant would clear this: viz. that God is the principal agent, and works in us that which he requires of us. *I will put my laws in their hearts*, so runs the covenant, Heb. viii. 10. Hence it is called διαθηκη, which signifies as well a *testament* as a *covenant:* and if it be disputed, whether it be possible that infants should be taken into covenant, yet I hope it is

b Rom. ix. 4.

c Eph. i. 13.

past dispute, that they may have benefit by a testament.

To me it is very clear, that infants are capable of covenant relations, and of receiving and enjoying covenant privileges and benefits; not only the external, but the internal. Hence we not only read of those who were sanctified from the womb, but are assured, that John the Baptist *was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb*, Luke i. 15. And indeed, if children are capable of corruption, it would be very hard upon them to say, that they are incapable of satisfaction. That would be to give the first Adam a larger power to kill, than the second Adam hath to quicken. In a word, none deny the possibility of the salvation of infants, and if it is possible that they may be saved, I am sure it is possible that they may be in covenant with God.

2. It is highly probable that they should be in covenant with God: for,

(1.) Infants are parts of their parents. The very law of nature accounts them so during their infancy, as appears by the concurring law of nations. Hence they are said to be *in the loins of their parents*, (Heb. vii. 10.) and in them to act and receive. The propriety of parents in their children is greater than in any thing else. Now, in the day when we give up ourselves to the Lord, we lay all that we have at his feet; and pass over all our rights and interests to him; and our children among the rest. God therefore takes it as a notorious invasion of his prerogative, that his people should devote their children to another god; *Thou hast taken thy sons, and thy daughters, whom thou hast born unto me, to cause them to pass through the fire*, Ezek. xvi. 20, 21.

(2.) All God's other covenants, which he hath made with men, have taken in the seed of the covenanters; which makes it highly probable, that the covenant of grace should be so ordered. The covenant of works was made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; for we all feel the sad effects of his transgression. The covenant which God made with Noah, was made with him and his seed after him, (Gen. ix. 9.) of which we have still the comfortable experience. And the covenant of grace is paralleled with that covenant, Isa. liv. 9.

The covenant of peculiarity made with Israel took in their seed; and therefore, at the solemnity of entering into this covenant, express mention is made of the admission of their *little ones*, Deut. xxix. 11—13. Though they were not capable of actual covenanting, yet they came in the right of their parents. And that covenant, though (taken strictly) no part of the covenant of grace, yet was a remarkable type of it.*

The covenant of priesthood made with Phinehas, and the covenant of royalty made with David, included their seed: and Christians are kings and priests unto God.

(3.) The God of heaven hath, upon all occasions, expressed a particular kindness for little children. Nineveh was spared out of regard to the little children it contained: and we scarcely find, in all the gospel history, such an instance of the tender affection of the Lord Jesus, as in his reception of the *little ones* who were brought to him; whom he *took up in his arms, and blessed*, Mark x. 13, 14.

3. It is certain that they were in covenant.

They were reckoned among those, *to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the promises.*[d] It doth not very evidently appear in Scripture records, how the covenant was administered in the first ages of the world; but *then* it was administered to families. Family religion was then the face of religion: which puts it beyond reasonable doubt, that children were within the covenant. It is observable, that, in the patriarchal ages, professors were called *sons of God*, (Gen. vi. 2.) supposed to be the posterity of Seth as such. The profession of religion was *then* entailed upon families: a manifest indication of the covenant right of children, and of the designed method of the administration of the covenant, by propagating a profession.

The first clear manifestation of the covenant of grace, is in the transactions between God and Abraham, (Gen. xvii.) and it is very plain, that there the seed of the covenanter was taken into covenant. So it runs, (*v.* 7, &c.) *thee, and thy seed after thee*; and it is repeated with an observable emphasis, *a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.* To thy seed after thee, for thy sake; as appears, (Deut. iv. 37.) *because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them.* Upon Abraham's believing consent to the covenant, all his posterity was graciously admitted into the bonds of the covenant. Ishmael was therefore immediately circumcised as a child of Abraham; and Isaac afterwards: and so all the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, *to whom pertained the adoption*, was circumcised, as the seal of that adoption, and that covenant.

That the covenant with Abraham (Gen. xvii.) was not a covenant of works, the same with that made with Adam in innocency, is too evident to require

* The Israelites, throughout their generations, were undoubtedly under the *Abrahamic*, as well as the *Mosaic*, covenant; the former not having been disannulled by the latter, Gal. iii. 17. And indeed, on the former, all those hopes, which in fact obtained amongst pious Israelites in after-ages, of the pardon of presumptuous sins on repentance, and of happiness beyond death, must have been founded; since for neither of these did the Sinai covenant make any provision. And the last verse of the passage quoted above from Deut. xxix. plainly intimates, or rather asserts, that the covenant there referred to, and into which *little ones* were admitted, was the Abrahamic as well as the Mosaic. See Towgood's Baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, Intr. p. 5.

[d] Rom. ix. 4.

proof; and that it was not the covenant of peculiarity, but a pure gospel covenant of grace, will appear, if we consider,

(1.) That the grand article of this covenant is that which comprehends the whole covenant of grace, and all the riches of that covenant, viz. that *God will be a God to us*; which doth eminently include all happiness. What can a soul need, or desire more, than a special interest in God? Even the glory and happiness of heaven itself, (which is certainly conveyed by no other covenant than the covenant of grace,) is thus set forth, (Rev. xxi. 3.) *The Lord himself shall be their God.*

(2.) That circumcision, the seal of this covenant, is said to be *the seal of the righteousness which is by faith*, (Rom. iv. 11.) which must necessarily be by the covenant of grace.

(3.) That the blessing, of which the Gentiles are made partakers, by being brought into the covenant of grace, is called *the blessing of Abraham*, (Gal. iii. 14.) i. e. the blessing insured to Abraham and his seed. Those who deny infants to be in this covenant, deny them the blessing of Abraham; (for he had it to himself and his seed;) and so, as much as in them lies, cut them off from salvation: but it is well that the unbelief of man doth not make the righteousness of God of none effect.

(4.) That the covenant of grace, in the New-Testament revelation of it, is expressly distinguished, not from the covenant made with Abraham, (for it was the same with that,) but from the covenant which God made with Israel, *in the day when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt*, Heb. viii. 8—10. Now, that was the covenant of peculiarity; the Sinai covenant; which Sinai covenant is, in like manner, manifestly distinguished from the promise made to Abraham, which the law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, could not disannul, Gal. iii. 17. compared *v.* 8. Now, we build the covenant rights of infants upon the promise made to Abraham, the father of the faithful.

(5.) If the covenant with Abraham was only the covenant of peculiarity, and circumcision only a seal of the promise of the land of Canaan, how came it that all proselytes, of what nation soever, even *the strangers*, were to be circumcised; though not being of any of the tribes, they had no part or lot in the land of Canaan? The extending the seal of circumcision to proselyted strangers, and to their seed, was a plain indication, that the New-Testament administration of the covenant of grace would reach, not the covenanters only, but their seed. Now, baptism comes in the room of circumcision, as appears by comparing Col. ii. 11, 12. and whatever is objected against children's capacity, of being taken into covenant by baptism, doth very much reflect upon the wisdom of God, in taking them into the same covenant by circumcision.

From all this it appears, that the covenant with Abraham was a covenant of grace; and that the seed of believers were taken into that covenant; and therefore, that the children of professing parents were formerly in covenant with God. I am now to show,

4. That it is therefore certain that they are still in covenant.

This brings the argument home: and, I think, may be made out without much difficulty. For,

1. This follows from what has been said on the former head. If they *were* in covenant, unless evidence can be produced to prove their ejection, we ought to conclude, that they are still in covenant. Our opponents call upon us to prove, by express Scripture, that infants are in covenant: but certainly, having proved, even to demonstration, that they were in covenant, it lies upon them to show *where* and *when* they were thrown out of covenant; which they were never yet able to evince, no, not by the least footstep of a consequence. It is as clear as the sun at noon-day, that the seed of believers *had* a right to the initiating seal of the covenant; and how came they to lose that right?

For the clearing of this consequence, it is to be considered,

(1.) That the design of the New-Testament dispensation was to enlarge, and not to straiten, the manifestations of divine grace; to make the door wider, and not to make it narrower. But if the seed of believers who were taken into covenant, and had a right to the initiating seal under the Old Testament, are now turned out of covenant, and deprived of that right, the times of the law were more full of grace than the times of the gospel; which is absurd. Can it be imagined, that the Gentiles are, in respect of their children, in a worse state than they were under the law? *Then*, if a Gentile was proselyted, and taken into covenant, his seed was taken in with him; and is that privilege denied now? Is the seed of Abraham's faith in a worse condition than the seed of Abraham's flesh?

(2.) That there needed not any express declaration in the Scriptures concerning this. The not repealing a law, is enough to satisfy us of the continuance of it. It was said in the Old-Testament revelation of the covenant of grace, that God would be *a God to believers, and their seed. When* or *where* was this repealed? The gospel being made known to the Jews first, they knew well enough, by the tenor of the covenant with Abraham, that their children were to be taken in. What poor encouragement would it have been for a Jew to turn Christian, if his children, who before were in covenant, and were visible church members, must, upon the father's becoming a Christian, be *(ipso facto)* thrown out, and put to stand upon the same uncomfortable level, and at the same dismal distance from God, as the children

of heathens and infidels! A tender father would have said, "This is very hard, and not agreeable to that comfortable prospect which the prophets, in the name of God, have so often given, of the days of the Messiah, the enlargement of the church, the *bringing of the sons from far, and the daughters from the ends of the earth*, and the *owning of the offspring as a seed which the Lord hath blessed*.[e]

(3.) It is worth observing, that the gospel church is called the *Israel of God*, (Gal. vi. 16.) and the gospel covenant is said to be made with the *house of Israel, and the house of Judah*, (Heb. viii. 8.) and those who had been *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*, when effectually called to Christianity, are said to be *made nigh*, Eph. ii. 12, 13. All which intimates, that the same privileges, for substance, which God's Israel had under the Old-Testament dispensation, do now pertain to the gospel church. Now one special privilege which the Old-Testament Israel had, was, that their infant seed was taken into covenant with God: which privilege must certainly remain to the New-Testament church, till there appears some evidence of its being cancelled. It is the apostle's inference from a long discourse, *We are Abraham's seed*, Gal. iii. 29.

2. There is not only no evidence in the New Testament, of the repealing and vacating of this privilege, but an abundant evidence of the confirmation and continuation of it, in that remarkable scripture so often pleaded for infant baptism, (Acts ii. 39.) *For the promise is to you, and to your children.* The Jews had brought the blood of Christ upon *themselves* and *their children:* Now, said they, what shall we do, who have thus entailed a curse upon our posterity? Why, repent, and ye shall have an entailed promise. Peter is there inviting and encouraging the converted Jews to repent, and, by baptism, to dedicate themselves to Christ Jesus, and so to come under the evangelical dispensation of the covenant of grace. The privileges of that covenant are said to be, remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; i. e. justification and sanctification; pardon of past sin, and grace to go and sin no more; which are the two principal and most inclusive promises of the new covenant. Now this promise is *to you, and to your children*; which doth as plainly take in the seed of the covenanters, as the covenant with Abraham did, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed.* And the Jews, no doubt, understood it so; such a hint being enough to them who were brought up in the knowledge of the promise made unto the fathers. It was as much as to say, "For your encouragement to come into covenant by baptism, know, that it runs still as it did, *to you, and to your children:* not only your own lives, but your children's too, shall be put into the lease; so that if they pay the rent, and do the service, they shall share the benefit of it."

3. I do not see how else to understand those scriptures which speak of the salvation of whole families, upon the believing of the masters of those families, but thus, that all their children are thereupon brought into covenant, unless they are of age to refuse, and do enter their dissent; if so, their blood be upon their own head; but if infants, though they be not of age to consent, yet not being of age to dissent, their parents covenanting for them shall be accepted as their act and deed.

Lydia's heart was opened, and *she was baptized and her household*, Acts xvi. 15. The promise of salvation made to the jailer was, that upon his believing, his *house* should be saved; (Acts xvi. 31.) *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ* (πιστευσον;) do thou believe, and *thou shalt be saved*, i. e. taken into a covenant of salvation, *and thy house:* which, I think, may be explained by what Christ said to Zaccheus upon his believing, (Luke xix. 9.) *This day is salvation come to this house;* i. e. the covenant is externally administered to the whole family; as appears by the following words, *forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham.* The coming of salvation to his house, is grounded upon his relation to Abraham, and consequently his interest in Abraham's covenant, *I will be a God to thee, and thy seed:* which Christ hereby intimates that he came to confirm and ratify, not to disannul. Apply this to Paul's words to the jailer, and the sense is plain; Believe in Christ, and salvation shall come to thy house: forasmuch as the believing jailer also is a son of Abraham. See Rom. iv. 11, 12, 16. It is further observable in this story of the jailer, that Paul and Silas preached to all that were in his house; (*v.* 32.) probably many of them not of his family; (perhaps the prisoners;) but the expression is altered, when the writer comes to speak of baptizing them, (*v.* 33.) where it is not said, that all in his house were baptized, but *he and all his;* his little ones, no doubt, for the sake of their relation to him; and that *straightway* upon his believing. What is added in the 34th verse, *he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house*, cannot be seriously objected to this, by any who can read, and will observe the original; which is, *he having believed in God, rejoiced in* (or *through*, or *with*) *his whole house.** Though, if we allow *the believing* to be spoken of his whole house, it may only signify, that they were all by baptism enrolled amongst visible believers; and so infants are. And we read of the baptizing of whole families, besides those of Lydia and the jailer; and it is hard to imagine that there were no infants in any of them. It is more reasonable to suppose that there were, and that they were taken into covenant with their parents. By all this it is

e Isaiah lxi. 9.

* Ηγαλλιασατο πανοικι πεπιστευκως τω Θεω. He exulted, (so the Syriac,) and all the children of his house, in the faith of God.

evident, that the children of believing parents are in covenant with God, and have a right to baptism, the seal of that covenant.

It will not be amiss, before we proceed to another argument, briefly to inquire into the reasons, why God is pleased thus to take children into covenant with their parents? And, doubtless, he doth this,

(1.) To magnify the riches of his grace as diffusive of itself; conveyed, not as in a small vessel, the waters of which will soon be spent, but as in a full stream, which runs with continued supplies. The covenant of grace is a *river of pleasures*.[f] Grace is hereby glorified as free and preventing, i. e. *grace*; and here it appears, that the relation between us and God is founded, not on our choice, but his; *we love him, because he first loved us*.[g] In the providential kingdom, it is mentioned as an especial instance of the divine goodness, that God takes care of the young ones of his creatures, Ps. cxlvii. 9. So is his love manifested in the kingdom of grace. Taking children into covenant, is an encouraging instance of the goodness of his nature, and his swiftness to show mercy. David lays a peculiar emphasis upon this, in his admiring acknowledgments of God's goodness to him. (2 Sam. vii. 19.) *Thou hast spoken concerning thy servant's house, for a great while to come.* Kindness to the seed, for the parent's sake, is therefore called, *the kindness of God*, 2 Sam. ix. 3. When the covenant is so ordered, that the *seed* of the covenanters is thus *established for ever*, though *we* should fail in *singing the mercies of the Lord*, yet *the heavens themselves will praise his wonders*, Ps. lxxxix. 3. 4. compare v. 1, 5.

(2.) That the quickening influences of the second Adam may bear some analogy, in the method of communication, to the killing influences of the first Adam. There is a death propagated, and entailed upon our seed, by Adam's breach of the covenant of works; and therefore God would have some kind of life (though not a life of grace, yet a life of privilege) entailed upon our seed likewise, *by the bringing in of the better hope*; that so, within the visible church, the remedy might be as extensive as the disease. By native corruption, which we are all *born in*, sin is lodged in the heart; but by their native covenant right, which the seed of believers are all *born to*, the sin-offering is laid at the door. (I refer to one probable reading of Gen. iv. 7.)

(3.) That the hearts of true believers may hereby be comforted and encouraged in reference to their seed. It is a great inducement to come into this covenant, when it is thus entailed upon our children. An estate, *in fee*, to a man and his heirs, is reckoned of more than twice the value of an estate for life. Though a man cannot be certain that his heir may not abuse or forfeit it, yet it is desirable to leave it to him. This indeed is, in a manner, the only sufficient ground that believers have to build their faith upon, in reference to the salvation of their children dying in infancy; which, to one who knows the worth of a soul, is no small thing.

(4.) *That he might seek a godly seed*.[h] (Hebr. *a seed of God*,) that his church might be built up in a seed of saints. Thus does God provide for a succession, by a timely taking hold of the rising generation, and marking them for his own, as born within the pale; that the promise may be made good to Christ, (Ps. lxxxix. 36.) *His seed shall endure for ever. A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.* It is in consideration of the deceitfulness of the human heart; (which if left at liberty, is very unapt to choose the good;) and to lead the young ones as they spring, by these early cords of love, into the bond of the covenant: that this previous inducement may help to turn the scale of the fluctuating, wavering soul, and so determine the choice on God's side; which would be much more hazarded if it were left wholly to an adult choice. Infant baptism is intended to pave the way to early piety. The profession of Christianity is a step towards the truth of it; and may prevail to introduce it; as a plea with God to give us his grace, and an argument with ourselves, to receive and submit to it. However, Christ is hereby honoured in the world, and *his name made great among the nations*. This is one of the fortifications of Christ's kingdom, by which it is secured from the gates of hell; and the design of the powers of darkness, to cut off the line of succession, and *wear out the saints*, is frustrated. Thus, in times of general corruption, doth God preserve a *tenth, which shall return, and shall be eaten, even the holy seed*.[i] During the prevalence of the papal kingdom in the western church, though infant baptism was quite misgrounded, and baptism itself almost lost, in the great corruptions which stained its purity, yet, the preserving of the ashes, gave rise to another phœnix. Thus, it is the will of God to preserve the invisible church in the visible, as wheat in the chaff; and as the power of godliness, at the first planting of the church, brought in the form, so the form, in restoring the church, brings in the power.

So much for the first argument, which is the main hinge; and the consideration of this will serve for the confirmation of the rest; which I shall therefore but just touch upon.

ARGUMENT II. All who ought to be admitted visible church members, ordinarily, ought to be baptized; but the infants of professing parents ought to be admitted visible church members, and therefore, ordinarily, they ought to be baptized.

That baptism is the door of admission into the

[f] Ps. xxxvi. 8. [g] 1 John iv. 19. [h] Mal. ii. 15 [i] Isa. vi. 13

visible church, was showed before; *we are baptized into one body.*[k] That then which is to be proved, is, that the seed of believers ought to be admitted visible church members; and this has been so frequently and so fully proved, that a hint or two on this head may suffice.

1. The seed of believers, by God's gracious appointment, under the Old Testament, were to be admitted members of the visible church; and that gracious appointment has never yet been repealed; therefore, they are to be admitted such still. It is true, that the ceremonial institutions, which were but the accidentals of the Jewish church, are abolished, (they were a *yoke,*) but it is as true, that the essentials remain; though therefore the particular right of admission be changed, for a special reason, as accidental, it doth not therefore follow that infant church membership, which is an essential branch of the constitution, is repealed. If infants be cut off from the body, it is either in judgment or in mercy: not in judgment, for where did they, as infants, commit a forfeiture? not in mercy, for it can neither be a benefit to them, nor to their parents, nor to the church in general. If then professing parents did formerly bear their children to the Lord, why do they not still?

2. Our Master hath expressly told us, that *of such is the kingdom of God,* (Mark x. 15.) i. e. the visible church is the kingdom of God among men, and infants belong to that kingdom. A short view of the story will throw some light on the doctrine of infant baptism, and therefore we will turn aside a little to consider it: and observe in it,

(1.) The faith of the parents, or other friends, who brought the children to Christ. They brought their *children*—παιδια, little children; Luke calls them βρεφη—*infants* (the word is used concerning Jesus in the manger). They brought them to Christ, as the great Prophet, to receive his blessing; not, as many others, for the cure of bodily diseases, but for a spiritual blessing. It seems then, that infants are capable of spiritual benefits by Christ: and it is the greatest kindness their parents can do them, to bring them to him by faith and prayer, to receive them. These infants were brought, that Christ might touch them: though infants cannot take hold of Christ, yet that doth not hinder, but that he may take hold of them. Paul reduceth his interest in Christ to this, (Phil. iii. 12.) *For which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus:* and the best of those who have known God, must conclude with a *rather are known of God.* Infants have need of Christ, and Christ hath supplies for infants, and therefore to whom else should they be brought? *he hath the words of eternal life.*

(2.) The fault of the disciples in rebuking those who brought the children. It is Satan's policy to keep children from Christ; and he doth it, sometimes, under very plausible pretences. The disciples thought it a reflection upon their Master, to trouble him with such clients. We must not think it strange, if we meet with rebukes in the way of our duty: carnal reason, and a misguided zeal, prevail, not only to keep many from coming to Christ themselves, but to put them upon rebuking and hindering others; especially at their first dedication.

(3.) The favour of Christ to them. He was displeased with his disciples (ηγανακτησε); he took it very heinously, that they should thus misrepresent him to the world as unkind to little ones; and said, *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.* And the reason added is very considerable, *for of such is the kingdom of God;* i. e. his kingdom of grace, or the church (τοιωτων): not only of those who are disposed as children, for then he might have said the same of a lamb, or a dove, and have ordered those to be brought unto him: the word generally signifies not similitude, but identity; nor can any one instance be found where it excludes the person or thing mentioned. *They that do* (τοιαυτα) *such things, are worthy of death;* (Rom. i. 32.) doth not that include the things before mentioned? The argument then from this passage plainly stands thus: the question was, Whether infants might be brought to Christ to be blessed by him? By all means, saith Christ, for they are members of the church, and therefore I am concerned to look after them: they belong to the fold, and therefore the Shepherd of the sheep will take care of them. And therefore, not only in compliance with the believing desires of the parents, and in compassion to the infants, but to give a rule to his ministers in all generations of the church, *he took them in his arms, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them.* Thus did he outdo their expectations, and give them more than they could ask or think. It is true he did not baptize them, *for he baptized none;* (John iv. 2.) nor was baptism as yet perfectly settled to be the door of admission; but he did that which was tantamount, he invited them to him, encouraged the bringing of them, and signified to his disciples (to whom the keys of the kingdom of God were to be given) that they were members of his kingdom: and accordingly conferred upon them the blessings of that kingdom. And his giving them the thing signified, may sufficiently justify his ministers in giving the sign.

3. In other societies, the children of such as are members are commonly looked upon as members. Though a wise man doth not beget a wise man, yet a free man begets a free man. The king of England would give those small thanks, who should cut off

[k] 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

all the children of the kingdom from being members of the kingdom. Our law calls natural allegiance, *due by birth, ubi hæreditas—high allegiance*, and he that oweth it is called, *subditus natus—natural born subject*. And it is the privilege of the subject, as well as the prerogative of the king, that it should be so. And shall it not be allowed in the visible kingdom of Christ? By the Jewish law, if a servant married and had children, all the children born in the master's house were the master's, and were taken under his protection, and interested in possession of the family: though they were not as yet capable of doing any service, yet they were part of the master's possession. This law David applies spiritually, (Ps. cxvi. 16.) *O Lord, truly I am thy servant: I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid*; born in thy house. And those consult neither the honour of the master, nor the credit of the family, nor the benefit of their children, who, though servants in Christ's family themselves, will not let their children be such.

To deny the church membership of the seed of believers, is to deny privileges to those who once had them, and who have never forfeited them. It is, in effect, to deliver their children to Satan, as members of his visible kingdom, for I know no mean between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light. Give me leave then, as the infants advocate, to make their complaint in the words of David. (1 Sam. xxvi. 19.) *They have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods*: and to present their petition for a visible church membership, in the words of the Reubenites and Gadites. (Josh. xxii. 24, 25.) *For fear lest, in time to come, your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have you to do with the Lord God of Israel? ye have no part in the Lord: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the Lord.* Therefore, according to the warrant of the written word, we maintain baptism, as a sign of the church membership of our infants, *that it may be a witness for our generations after us, that they may do the service of the Lord, and might not be cut off from following after him.* For, whatsoever those who are otherwise minded unchristianly suggest, *the Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know: that it was in rebellion, nor transgression against the Lord.* We desire to express as great a jealousy as they can do for the institutions of Christ, and are as fearful of going a step without a warrant.

Several other scriptural arguments have been undeniably urged, to prove the church membership of infants; but what was said to prove their covenant right, and to show the reasons of it, serve indifferently to this, for the visible church, and the external administration of the covenant, are of equal latitude and extent. Grant me, that infants are of that visible body, or society, *to which pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants*, &c. in the same sense in which these pertained to the Jews of old, and to their seed: and I desire no more. That is their covenant right, and their church membership, which entitleth them to baptism.

Argument III. If the infants of believing parents are in some sense *holy*, they have a right to the ordinance of baptism: but it is certain, that they are in some sense holy, and therefore have a right to be baptized. There is a twofold holiness;

1. Inherent holiness, or sanctification of the Spirit: and who dares say, that infants are not capable even of this? He that saith infants cannot be sanctified, doth, in effect, say, that they cannot be saved: (for without holiness no man can see the Lord:) and he that can say this must be * *a hard-hearted father*: and if they may be internally sanctified, *who can forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?* Those who baptize only adults, cannot be certain that all they baptize are inherently holy; nay, it appears that many of them are not so. There is also,

2. A federal holiness: and this is that which we plead for. It is very true, that inherent holiness is not propagated, (we are all *by nature children of wrath*,) but that doth not hinder the propagation of federal holiness. The children of believers, it is true, are born polluted, but it doth not therefore follow, that they are not born privileged. David acknowledgeth the corruption which his mother bore him in, and yet pleads the privilege she bore him to, (Ps. cxvi. 16.) *Thy servant, the son of thine handmaid*: and again, (Ps. lxxxvi. 16.) *Save the son of thy handmaid.*

To prove this federal holiness, two Scriptures are chiefly insisted upon; viz. Rom. xi. 16, 17. *If the first-fruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches*: and if some of the branches were broken off, and thou being a wild olive wert graffed in, &c. That children are branches of their parents none will deny; that inherent holiness is not communicated to the branches, is certain. It must therefore be meant of a federal holiness, which is explained by being grafted into the good olive tree, i. e. the visible church: the fatness of this olive tree is the external privileges of church membership, a fatness which some did partake of, who were then broken off. The other passage is, 1 Cor. vii. 14. *Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.* Unclean, means upon a level with the seed of the Gentiles: so unclean is used, Acts x. 28. The children of parents, one or both of whom are believers, are not to be looked upon as thus unclean, but *holy*

* Durus pater infantium.

i. e. separated and set apart for God; federally holy.

ARGUMENT IV. If the infants of believing parents are disciples, they are to be baptized; but they are disciples, and therefore to be baptized.

1. They are disciples; for they are intended for learning. If you send little children to school who can learn little or nothing, you do it that they may be ready to be taught, as soon as they are capable. If our Lord Jesus has cast little children out of his school, wherefore doth he appoint his ministers to teach them, and express so particular a care to have the *lambs fed?*

2. Circumcision was a yoke upon *children* particularly, yet that is called a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, Acts xv. 1, 10. therefore children are disciples.

3. They who are so to be received in Christ's name, as that Christ himself is received in them, are to be reckoned the disciples of Christ; but the infants of believers are so to be received. See Mark ix. 37. Matt. xviii. 5. compared with Matt. x. 42. Luke ix. 48. They are said to belong to Christ, and must be received as such: as children, they can only be received as creatures, but as the children of professing parents, they may be received in Christ's name; as belonging to Christ, i. e. as disciples.

ARGUMENT V. If it is the duty of all Christian parents solemnly to engage, dedicate, and give up their children to God in covenant, whereby those children are obliged to be to God a people, then they ought to do it by baptism, which is the engaging sign; but it is the duty of all Christian parents thus to engage their children to God, and therefore they ought to baptize them.

1. It is the duty of Christian parents to engage their children to God in covenant. This hath been the practice of God's covenanting people, (Deut. xix. 11.) *Your little ones stand here to enter into covenant with the Lord.*

(1.) Parents may oblige their children to that which is good. God, as the spring and fountain of our being, may and doth oblige us in a way of sovereignty; and parents, as the natural instruments of our being, are therefore empowered to oblige us in a way of subordinate agency. If not to enlarge the obligation, (though *Jonadab the son of Rechab*[1] had that, and his seed are commended for their observance of his charge,) yet to strengthen and confirm it. The law of God allowed such power to a father as to disannul a vow made by his daughter in his house, though she were come to years of understanding. Much more is it in the power of parents, to oblige their children in infancy to that which is plain and undisputed duty. Hannah was accepted in devoting her son to the Lord as a Nazarite from the womb, (1 Sam. i. 11.) nor was it ever questioned whether she might do it or not. Whatever was the matter of Jephtha's vow, his daughter never disputed his power over her. And human authorities, that speak of this parental power as consonant to the law of nature, might easily be produced, if it were material. The common law and custom of our nation, as well as of all other civilized nations, doth abundantly evince it. It is past dispute, that as far as a child hath any thing by descent from his father, the father hath power to determine the disposal of it, in a lawful way, (especially to pay debts,) and to bind his child accordingly. We derive our beings by descent from our parents, who may therefore doubtless determine the disposal of them for God, and communicate them to us charged with that great debt of duty which we owe to the sovereign Lord. The case is much strengthened, if the obligation be built upon a contract confessedly in favour of the child, and greatly to his advantage; which is the case here. Such an obligation implying, by way of penalty, in case of an after-refusal, a forfeiture of the privileges so contracted for. Our children are parts of ourselves, more ours than any thing we have in the world: not ours to be alienated from God, (nothing is so ours,) but to be devoted and given up to him. If it be in the power of parents to prejudice their children, by their breach of covenant, (for God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children,) may they not have a power to benefit their children by an adherence to the covenant?

(2.) If they *may* thus oblige their children to that which is good, certainly they *ought* to do it. When we give up ourselves to God, we ought to give up all that we have to him, to be devoted to him according to its capacity. Those who say, they give themselves to God, but will not give him their children, *keep back part of the price.* They ought, especially, to dedicate *them*, as a testimony of their sincerity in the dedication of *themselves*, and as a means to induce their children to be his. Those who are in truth the Lord's, will lay out all their power and interest for him; and what greater power and interest can there be, than that of parents in, and over, their children?

2. If this must be done, can it be done in any better way than by baptism; which is instituted to be the mutual engaging sign, and the seal of a covenant between God and man? Under the law, whatever was devoted to God, was to be disposed of, according as it was capable, in such a way as might tend most to the honour of God, and best answer the ends of the dedication. To this purpose is the law; (Deut. xxvii.) and though this law be not now in force, the reason of it remains: God is as jealous of his honour as ever. Now the children of believers, notwith-

[1] Jer. xxxv. 18, 19.

standing their infancy, are capable of receiving the privileges of the covenant; (are capable of visible church membership;) and therefore are to be dedicated to God by baptism, the seal of the covenant, and the instituted sign of admission into the visible church. And to say that our children are to be dedicated to God, no otherwise than our houses, and estates, and callings, are to be dedicated to him, when really they are capable of a higher dedication, is to wrong both ourselves and our children; and to derogate from the honour of our Master, who would have every thing that is given to him brought as near to him as may be.

Argument VI. If it be the will and command of the Lord Jesus, that all nations should be discipled by baptism; and children, though a part of all nations, are not excepted, then children are to be discipled by baptism: I say, discipled by baptism, for that is plainly intended by the words of the institution, Matt. xxviii. 19. μαθητευσατε βαπτιζοντες—*admit them disciples by baptizing them*, as was showed before. The command is to disciple them; baptizing them is the mode of executing that command. As if a general should say, Enlist soldiers, giving them my colours; (or any like sign;) giving them the colours would be interpreted, enlisting them. So, *disciple them, baptizing them*, doth not note two distinct acts, but the body and soul of the same act; as granting land by sealing a deed, or giving *livery and seisin*. I have said before, that baptism doth not *give* the title, but *recognize* it, and complete that church membership which before was imperfect.

And all nations are to be so discipled. Hitherto, the nation of the Jews only had been discipled, by circumcision; but now, the partition-wall is taken down, and all nations are to be in like manner discipled, by the New-Testament ordinance of initiation; i. e. all consenting nations. If any communities or individuals refused, the apostles were to shake off the dust of their feet against them, as having no lot or part in the matter.

And surely infants are a part of nations; and in the discipling of nations, not a *dissenting* part, but a *consenting*, by those who are the trustees of their wills. And our Lord hath not excepted them. There is not the least word in the commission, or any where else in the whole Bible, which implies the exclusion of infants from visible discipleship, when their parents became visible disciples. And, for my part, I dare not except where Christ hath not excepted; especially where the exception would tend so much to the dishonour of Christ, the straitening of the church, the discomfort of the saints, and contradict the clear light of so many other scriptures. I dare not exclude any, who do not exclude themselves, nor are excluded by those, who have a natural interest in them, and power over them.

In this *magna charta*, therefore, we leave the cause of infants fully vindicated; and are willing to stand or fall by this commission. Many other arguments might have been insisted upon; particularly the doctrine and practice of the primitive church; but this shall suffice.

I should next have proceeded to answer the objections of the antipedobaptists; but that hath been so fully done by others, and in a great measure done in the defence of the foregoing arguments, that I shall be brief in it.

Object. I. It is objected that infants are not capable of the ends of baptism, having neither understanding nor faith. To this I answer,

(1.) That they have as much understanding as the children of the Jews had, who were circumcised, and therein received the seal, both of *justification*, (Rom. iv. 11.) and of *sanctification*, (Deut. xxx. 6.) and baptism is no more. (2.) That there are many ends of baptism of which children are capable, though not of all till they come to some use of reason. Infants are capable of being admitted subjects into Christ's visible kingdom, which is the primary intention of baptism. A lease, or covenant, between a landlord and a tenant, may be of use to a child, though he understands it not; nay though, when he grows up, he may, perhaps, forfeit the benefit of it. (3.) Parents may, and must, herein transact for their children; being appointed by nature their agents, and having a power to oblige them in other things, and therefore much more in this, which is not only the duty, but the privilege, of their children. Nor is there any danger, that the guilt of covenant-breaking should lie at the parent's door, in case of the apostasy of the children, because the parents promise not to do the duty themselves, but engage their children to do it; and only oblige themselves to contribute their best endeavours thereunto.

Object. II. It is objected, that infant baptism doth more hurt than good. But certainly,

(1.) What hurt it doth is only through the ignorance or corruption of those who abuse it. Though it may be true, that many carnal people are strengthened in their delusions by their infant baptism, it is well if it be not as true, that many are, in like manner, hardened by being rebaptized; for it is too plain that they are not all saints indeed. While on the other hand, (2.) There are many humble serious Christians, who can experimentally speak of the benefits of it. Its many practical uses will be shown hereafter. For my own part, I cannot but take this occasion to express my gratitude to God for my infant baptism, not only as it was an early admission into the visible body of Christ, but as it furnished my pious parents with a good argument (and I trust through grace, a prevailing argument) for an early dedication of my own self to God in my childhood. If God has wrought any good work upon my soul,

desire, with humble thankfulness, to acknowledge the moral influence of my infant baptism upon it.

OBJECT. III. We have no precept, (say they,) nor precedent, in all the New Testament, for infant baptism.

Though we have already shown considerable footsteps of it in the New Testament, yet, in answer to this objection, we further add, (1.) It is sufficient that the essentials of an ordinance be clearly instituted, though the circumstantials, or accidentals, be not. Christ instituted the Lord's supper, but we have neither precept nor precedent for admitting women to it. Our opponents say, that the practice of baptizing actual believers only, is more agreeable to the practice of Christ and the apostles; I say, that the practice of admitting men only, to the Lord's supper, is more agreeable to the practice of Christ and the apostles; and let the consequents stand or fall together. The substance of the ordinance of baptism is clearly instituted by Christ for the admission of visible church members, and it is left to us to infer the application of it to all those who have a right to visible church membership; which it is undeniably proved that infants have. (2.) Supposing that we cannot show any precept, or precedent, in the New Testament, for baptizing the infant seed of Christians, neither can the anabaptists show one word of precept, or precedent, for baptizing the child of any one Christian at years of discretion, in all the New Testament. I challenge them all to produce any one instance of the deferring of the baptism of any believer's child to years of discretion. Now the lawyers have a rule, *that an estoppel against an estoppel sets the matter at large.* We have no such clear direction, as some may think there should have been, what to do with the seed of believers; and if the dispute be drawn in the New Testament, I know not whither to appeal more properly than to the Old; where we find such abundant evidence of the church membership of the infant seed of believers, and of their title to the ordinance of initiation, while we do not find a word in all the New Testament which deprives them of either, (but a great deal in affirmance thereof,) that we conclude (blessed be God, abundantly to our satisfaction) that they still remain in full force and virtue.

CHAPTER III.

THE NECESSITY AND EFFICACY OF BAPTISM.

HAVING inquired what baptism is, and to whom it is to be administered, our next inquiry must be, what stress is to be laid upon it? And here we have need to walk circumspectly, for fear of mistakes, on the right hand, and on the left. What I have to say on this head shall be reduced to the following questions:

QUEST. I. Whether baptism be necessary to salvation?

In answer to which, we must have recourse to the known distinctions of *(necessitas præcepti)* what is necessary because commanded, and *(necessitas medii)* what is necessary as a mean; and also *(necessitas hypothetica)* conditional necessity, and *(necessitas absoluta)* absolute necessity. And so it seems that baptism is, *conditionally*, a necessary duty; but not, *absolutely*, a necessary mean. We have adversaries to deal with on both hands; some, who are so far from thinking it a *necessary mean*, that they deny it to be a *necessary duty;* (so, many of the Socinians;) and others, who not only plead for it as a *necessary duty*, but assert it to be *necessary as a mean* of salvation: *(so the papists:)* and the truth seems to be between them.

1. The necessity of water baptism, as a continuing duty, is proved,

(1.) From the will and command of the Lord Jesus; *Go and disciple all nations, baptizing them:* which was intended to be a warrant, not only to the apostles, in planting the church, but to all ministers, in all following ages; as the promise annexed doth abundantly prove, *Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.* The ordinance of the Lord's supper is expressly said to continue till Christ's coming, i. e. till the end of time, (1 Cor. xi. 26.) and no reason can be given, why baptism should not run parallel with it, since they are both signs and seals of the same grace. Nor did the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, supersede external ordinances, but rather lead to them; for having received the Holy Ghost, is assigned as the reason why water baptism should not be forbidden to Cornelius and his friends; (Acts x. 47.) and though the apostles are bidden to go into *all nations* and baptize, they went not into *any of the nations* till after the Spirit was poured out.

(2.) From the continuance of *circumcision* in the Old-Testament church: which was instituted not only for the founding of that church, but to be observed *in their generations*, Gen. xvii. 9, 10. As therefore circumcision continued a standing ordinance in the Old-Testament church till the first coming of Christ, by a parity of reason, baptism, which comes in the room of it, is to continue a standing ordinance in the New-Testament church till the second coming of Christ.

(3.) From the continuance of the end intended in this institution. It was instituted to be the door of admission into the visible church: and without some such door, either all must be shut out, or all must be taken in: either of which would be absurd; for the church is a society distinct from the world, and the God of the church is a God of order, and not confusion.

Though the children of believing parents have, by their birth, a remote church membership, and covenant right, yet it is requisite for the preserving of order in the church, that there should be a solemn recognition of that right, and some visible token of admission. As in the case of converted heathens; though, upon their believing, they have a right to the privileges of the covenant before baptism, (for baptism doth not confer a right, but only recognize it,) yet it was the will of Christ that they should be solemnly admitted by baptism, for the honour of the church as a distinct society. Thus, in the ordinance of marriage, (an ordinance common to the whole world,) the mutual declared consent of both parties, is the essence of the marriage, yet, for order's sake, all civilized nations have enjoined a solemnity of investiture.

(4.) From the continuance of the benefits conferred, and the obligations imposed, by baptism: which are such as pertain, not only to those who are converted from heathenism to Christianity, but to those also who are born of Christian parents. We are all concerned to *put on Christ*, and to have *communion with Christ in his death*; we all need *the remission of sins*, and *the sanctification of the Spirit*, and *eternal life*; so that while we are expecting these privileges, and taking upon ourselves these engagements, it is fit that both should be done, in that ordinance, which was appointed to signify and seal both the one and the other. The church must be *sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water, by the word, till it is presented a glorious church*, Eph. v. 26, 27.

And this may be of use to rectify the mistake of some well-meaning people, who, having been unhappily defrauded of the privilege of baptism in their infancy, when grown up, do themselves neglect it; thinking it sufficient, that they do that which is intended by baptism, though they do it not in that way. Such would do well to consider, what a slight they put upon the law of Christ. It would be thought too harsh, should we, in this, parallel baptism to circumcision, which had so severe a sentence annexed to the law which required it, (Gen. xvii. 14.) *The uncircumcised man-child*, (i. e. when he is come to years of discretion,) *whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised*, (not only through the neglect of his parents, when he was an infant, but by his own, when grown up,) *that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.*

2. Baptism is not *simply* and *absolutely necessary as a mean.* This is the popish extreme. But, as in doctrine, so in worship, the middle way is the *good old way*, the good safe way.

When we speak of baptism as a mean, and the necessity of it as such, we must distinguish between external and internal means. Internal means are such as have so necessary a connexion with the end, as that the end cannot be obtained without them. Such are faith, repentance, and justification; means of salvation absolutely necessary; so that salvation is never without them as the means, nor they without salvation as the end. But external means are not thus connected with the end, but only subservient to it, by God's ordination. Not so, but that the end may sometimes be obtained without them, and they may often miss of the end: and sacraments are such means of salvation. The Council of Trent denounceth a curse against those who say, that baptism is not absolutely necessary to salvation.* But that it is not thus necessary, is fully proved by the following arguments:

(1.) God is a free agent in dispensing his grace: *he begets of his own will*; which doth not depend upon the will of the parent, so as to be frustrated by his neglecting to baptize his child.

(2.) Circumcision, under the Old Testament, was not absolutely necessary to salvation; therefore baptism is not under the New: for then, the condition of Christians would, in this respect, be harder than that of the Jews. God appointed circumcision to be administered on the eighth day, and not before; and certainly it would have been very hard upon children to have deferred it so long, if it had been necessary to salvation. David's child died on the seventh day, consequently uncircumcised, and yet he comforts himself with the hope of its salvation, (2 Sam. xii. 23.) *I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.* Yea, all the children of Israel were forty years together in the wilderness without circumcision, which it is hard to suppose was damning to those who were born and died during that time. The threatening, Gen. xvii. 14. is against the wilful neglect, and not the involuntary privation.

(3.) If baptism were thus absolutely necessary, unbaptized children would perish eternally, without any fault of their own; and so the child would bear the personal iniquities of the father: which is contrary to Ezek. xviii. 20.

(4.) Our Saviour doth plainly put a difference between the necessity of faith, and the necessity of baptism, to salvation, Mark xvi. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved*; but he doth not say, he that *believeth not*, and *is not baptized, shall be damned*, but only, *he that believeth not* shall be damned; for faith is the internal, baptism but the external, mean.

(5.) The infants of believing parents have an interest in the promises of God, which is the thing signified by baptism; and can it be imagined, that they should be shut out of heaven for want of the sign?

* *Si quis dixerit baptismum liberorum esse, (hoc est non necessarium ad salutem,) anathema sit;* which the Trent catechism explains to be such a necessity *ut nisi per gratiam baptismi Deo renascantur, (homines,) in sempiternam miseriam, et interitum, a parentibus, sive fideles, sive infideles sint, procreantur.*

To suggest such a thing, is not only very uncharitable in itself, but, we think, reflects dishonour upon Christ; the goodness of his nature, the grace of his covenant, and the constitution of his kingdom; and must needs be very uncomfortable to Christian parents. When God hath said, that he will be a God to believers, and to their seed, the neglect of man, much less the wise providence of God, shall not make the promise of no effect.

QUEST. II. What effect hath baptism upon baptized infants, and how doth it operate?

The anabaptists say, *it hath none at all*, and therefore argue, to what purpose is this waste? Their exceptions have been answered before. The papists assert, that sacraments confer grace, *(ex opere operato,)* by virtue of the sacramental action itself: but as to baptism, it is expressly said, that it doth not save us, as it is the *putting away of the filth of the flesh*, (which is the sacramental action,) but *the answer of a good conscience*, (1 Pet. iii. 21.) and there we leave the question. And others, even many protestants, have said, that the sacrament of baptism doth as an instrumental, efficient cause, confer, and effect, the grace of actual regeneration; so that the infant baptized is freed, not only from the guilt, but the dominion of sin, and the Spirit of grace is given, as the seed, whence the future acts of grace and holiness, watered by the word, may, in time, spring forth. Thus, the church of England concludes concerning every baptized child, that it is *regenerated, and born again.* In opposition to which Mr. Baxter pleads, "That baptism was not instituted to be a seal of the absolute promise of the first special grace, *I will give them a new heart*, but to be a seal of the covenant properly so called, wherein God engageth himself, conditionally, to be our God, to save us, and we engage ourselves to be his people, to serve him, and so to perform the said condition; and if not to be a seal of the absolute covenant, then not to be an instrument of conveying the grace of that covenant, but a mean of conveying the good promised in the conditional covenant, according to the capacity of the subject: and therefore it seals, to the infants of believers, the promise of salvation, so as to be a mean of conferring the benefit of salvation upon them, not as a physical, or hyperphysical, instrument, but only as a moral instrument; by sealing, and so conveying, a legal right, which is afterwards improvable, as a mean of working a real change upon the souls of those who have faith, and the use of reason." What I have to say on this head is,

1. As to the relative influence of baptism, I look upon it to be the door of admission into the visible church; so that all who are duly baptized, are thereby admitted visible church members, and (to borrow the Hebrew phrase before mentioned) *gathered under the wings of the Divine Majesty;* and the new covenant being externally administered in the visible church, it is conditionally sealed to all who are baptized (and particularly to the seed of believers) upon the parents' faith: the parents' will being accepted for the child's, and the parents' present consent and dedication, laying an obligation upon the child for the future.

This then is the efficacy of baptism; it is putting the child's name into the gospel grant; and thus is a sealing ordinance, and a binding ordinance. The child's actual faith, and repentance, and obedience, are thereby made (to speak in the lawyers' language) *debita in præsenti, solvenda in futuro*, debts then incurred, to be paid at a future time. And surely this is abundantly sufficient, to invite and encourage parents to dedicate their children to God in baptism. For if this be true, (as it certainly is,) it is not (that *nudum signum*) that empty childish thing, which the antipedobaptists love to call it.

2. As to the real influence of baptism, we cannot be so clear; nor need we. As far as the parents are concerned, we are sure, that the children are *not* so regenerated, as not to need good instructions, when they become capable of them, and yet *are* so regenerated, that if they die in infancy, parents may take comfort from their baptism in reference to their salvation: and as to the children, when they grow up, we are sure, that their baptismal regeneration, without something more, is not sufficient to bring them to heaven: and yet it may be urged, (as I said before,) in praying to God to give them grace, and in persuading them to submit to it.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM.

BAPTISM, as a sacrament, consists of a sign, and the thing signified by it. Our inquiries now must be about the sign, and the administration of that; in which several things claim a brief consideration: viz.

I. Concerning the manner of administering, or applying water, to the person baptized.

And about this the enemy hath sowed tares; hath raised a great dispute, whether it must necessarily be done by immersion, i. e. by dipping the person all over in water: and there are those, who make this mode of applying water, of the very essence of the ordinance, and, with much bitterness, condemn those, who have so much of the spirit of the gospel, as not to impose, and make necessary, what Christ hath not made so; and who, if water be but solemnly applied, reckon it altogether indifferent, whether it be by infusion, inspersion, or immersion. Let us,

1. Examine a little the strength of their cause, of which they are so confident. And,

1. They plead that the word βαπτιζω (from βαπτω) signifies *only* to immerse, or dip into water; and recourse is had to the Greek Lexicons in proof of this; but to little purpose, as the best Lexicons render it, to wash in general, as well as to wash by plunging, or dipping: and we really think, that when Christ saith, *Baptize*, he means no more than *wash with water*. But, not to trouble ourselves with searching the sense of the word in other Greek authors, we will inquire into the sense of it in the New Testament, and hope our opponents will not refuse to join issue with us in the inquiry. Heb. ix. 10. we read of *divers washings*; (διαφοροις βαπτισμοις—*divers baptisms*;) he instanceth in the water of purification, verse 13. *the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean:* compare the two, and it appears, that that is a true baptism, or washing, which is by sprinkling.*

Luke xi. 38. the Pharisees wondered that our Lord *had not first washed,* (οτι ου πρωτον εβαπτισθη—that he was not first *baptized,*) not that he was not plunged all over in water, but that he did not wash his hands. Compare Mark vii. 2, 3, 5. It seems then, that the washing of the hands may be the baptizing of the man: and why not the washing of the face. Nay, it should seem that the usual way of washing even the hands, among the Jews, was not by dipping them into water, but by having water poured upon them: for Elisha's ministering to Elijah is thus described, *he poured water upon the hands of Elijah*, 2 Kings iii. 11.†

Mark vii. 4. among the superstitious washings or *baptisms* (as they are called) of the Pharisees, we read of the baptism (i. e. washing) of tables, or rather beds, or couches, as the word (κλινων) properly signifies; and was it likely, that beds or couches, or even tables, should often be washed by plunging them into water? Surely it was done by sprinkling, or pouring, water upon them.

Rev. xix. 13. we meet with ιματιον βεβαμμενον—*a garment baptized with blood*, i. e. stained or tinged with blood; and that by sprinkling, as appears by comparing the parallel passage, Isa. lxiii. 3. *Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garment, and so will I stain all my raiment.* If the word then, so often, or indeed any where, signifies washing by sprinkling, or pouring on of water, as it certainly doth, the argument for immersion, from the signification of the word, falls to the ground.

2. They assert, that Jesus Christ, and others in Scripture, were baptized by immersion; and therefore that any other mode of baptizing is not only unlawful, but renders the baptism null and void. To which we answer,

(1.) Supposing that Christ, and others in Scripture times, were baptized by immersion, yet it doth not therefore follow, that that mode is still indispensably necessary to the essence of the ordinance. Christ often preached sitting; is it therefore unlawful for ministers to preach standing? But that which is more considerable is, that bathing was very much in use in those times and places, especially among those who were under the ceremonial law; and while this was an ordinary way of washing, to which all persons were accustomed, perhaps it was the fittest to be used in baptism, where washing is the sign. But with us it is far otherwise: bathing is a thing seldom used; and therefore, as in the Lord's supper, not the posture of recumbency, which our Lord used, (according to the custom of the country,) but our own ordinary table gesture, is the most proper; so in baptism, not dipping, which was then an ordinary way of washing, but sprinkling or pouring water, which is now the usual way of our daily washing, is most proper. For the sign, in both ordinances, is taken from a common action, and the more like it is to that common action, the better, and the more instructive. But,

(2.) There is no such convincing evidence from Scripture, that Christ and others were baptized by dipping, as (supposing the obligation of the pattern) may justly be required to prove it essential to the ordinance.

As to the baptism of Christ, it is far from certain that it was by immersion. John indeed is said to have baptized εν υδατι—*in water*, but so is Christ said to baptize εν πνρι. Doth that mean *in fire?* no, *with fire.* The preposition εν frequently signifies *with.* See Rev. xix. 21. εν ρομφια—*with the sword.*

Again, it is urged, that Jesus was baptized εις Ιορδανην—into Jordan. But the preposition (εις) often signifies *at*, as well as *in*, or *into*. However, it does not certainly express plunging in the water: they then went bare-legged, and therefore might readily go into the water and be washed, without being dipped all over.

Moreover, Christ is said, after his baptism, to go out of the water, Matt. iii. 16. and Mark i. 10. but it is remarkable, that in both places the original is not εκ υδατος—*out of the water*, but απο τ υδατος—*from the water*; i. e. he came up the ascent from the river: though indeed, had he been only ankle deep, and not plunged, he might have been said to have come out of the water.

And once more, John chose a place to baptize in, where there was *much water*, John iii. 23. but the words are, υδατα πολλα—*many waters*, i. e. many

* Daniel iv. 30. *His body was wet with the dew of heaven*, the LXX render, και απο τ ὁρυος τ ὑραν ὁ σωμα αυτ εβαφη—his body was *baptized* with the dew of heaven.

† This mode of washing the hands, is still in daily use amongst the Hindoos, many of whose customs are of great antiquity, and bear a striking resemblance to those of the ancient Jews. See Mrs. Kindersley's Letters from the East Indies, No. lxii. and lxvi

streams; therefore probably shallow, unfit for plunging: and accordingly travellers find the river Enon only a small brook, which a man may step over.

And as to others, whose baptism we read of, I find none, except the eunuch, of whose immersion there is any apparent probability. Several were baptized in private houses; as Paul, and the jailer, and his family; the latter in the night; and it is very unlikely that he had any conveniency for being dipped there.

(3.) They plead, Rom. vi. 4. and Col. ii. 12. *Buried with him in baptism;* where they fancy an allusion to the ceremony of baptizing by dipping: which I see no necessity for at all. Good wits may from thence illustrate the text, and no harm done; but to force so uncertain an illusion, so far, as to condemn almost all the baptisms of the Christian church, in all ages, is a great wresting of Scripture. Our conformity to Christ lies not in the sign, but in the thing signified. Hypocrites and unbelievers, like Simon Magus, though they be dipped an hundred times, are not buried with Christ by baptism; and true Christians are by faith buried with Christ, though they be not dipped at all; having *fellowship of his sufferings*, and *being made conformable unto his death*, Phil. iii. 10. *We are baptized into the death of Christ*, and by baptism *put on Christ;* but it doth not therefore follow, that there must needs be, in the external sign, any thing that resembles either killing or clothing.

(4.) The testimony of men is much urged in this case: and I believe that immersion, yea, trine immersion, or plunging the person baptized three times, was commonly used in very early ages; and that, as far as popery prevailed, a great deal of stress was laid upon it: and the church of England, in the rubric of baptism, prescribes dipping, and tolerates sprinkling only in case of bodily weakness: but our recourse is to the law and the testimony.

2. Let us now see what is to be said against baptism by immersion, or plunging in water. And,

1. It unavoidably occasions a very great distraction and discomposure of mind, in the management of a solemn ordinance; and is therefore evil. Putting an adult person, unused to bathing, over head in water, must needs, for the present, unfit him for any thoughts suitable to such a solemnity: and great care is to be taken, that we may *attend upon the Lord without distraction*, 1 Cor. viii. 35.

2. In many cases, this mode is very perilous to the *health*, and even *life*, of the body: and God hath taught us, that he will have *mercy, and not sacrifice*, Matt. xii. 7. In so cold a climate as ours, especially to some people, and at some seasons, bathing in cold water would be almost certainly fatal. Ask the best physicians, if this be not true.

3. To baptize naked, or next to naked, (which is supposed, and generally practised, in immersion,) is against the law of modesty; and to do such a thing in public solemn assemblies, is so far from being tolerable, that it is abominable, to every chaste soul: and especially to baptize women in this manner. If, when veils were commonly used, the woman was to have a veil on her head, to cover her face in the congregation, *because of the angels*, (whether that mean young men, or ministers, or heavenly spirits,) I am sure the argument is much stronger, against her appearing almost naked in such a congregation. Is this for *women to adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-facedness, and sobriety?*[m]

4. However, I am sure, that to lay such a stress upon the ceremony of dipping, as not only to condemn, but to nullify, and reproach, all those baptismal washings, which are performed by pouring on water, is very uncharitable, and dissonant from the spirit of the gospel. *Bodily exercise profiteth little.*[n] In sacraments, it is the truth, and not the quantity, of the outward element, that is to be insisted upon. In the Lord's supper, eating a little bread, and drinking a little wine, sufficeth to exhibit the thing signified; and we need not, nay we should not, fill ourselves with either; and yet it is called a supper, 1 Cor. xi. 20. So in the ordinance of baptism, the application of a little water, provided there be water, and a washing with that water, is sufficient to signify spiritual washing. Aaron and his sons were the Lord's priests, though the blood of consecration was only put *upon the tips of their ears, and on their thumbs, and great toes*, Lev. viii. 24.

3. We shall just hint at what is to be said, for the administration of baptismal washing by sprinkling, or pouring, water on the face, or head; which is the more usual mode.

The overthrow of the other mode is, indeed, enough to establish this: washing is the main matter in the sign, which is sufficiently done by sprinkling or pouring water. But I add further, the thing signified by baptism is frequently, in Scripture, set forth by sprinkling or pouring water, but never, that I remember, by dipping or plunging into water. Thus, Isaiah xliv. 3. *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty;* and Isaiah lii. 15. *He shall sprinkle many nations;* a prediction or promise, which many think refers to the ordinance of baptism, and seems to be particularly fulfilled, in the commission to *disciple all nations, by baptizing them.* And again, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you.* And particularly, in the improvement of our baptism, we are said to be *sprinkled from an evil conscience*, Heb. x. 22. So Tit. iii. 5, 6. that which is signified by the laver of regeneration, is the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he *shed* on us. The

m 1 Tim. ii. 9.

n 1 Tim. iv. 8.

blood of Christ is called *the blood of sprinkling*, Heb. xii. 24. If immersion is so proper, as some conceive, to represent our being buried with Christ, (though to me it seems far fetched,) I am sure sprinkling doth much more plainly represent the sprinkling of the blood, and the pouring forth of the Spirit of Christ upon the soul: and if one scripture alludes to one manner of washing, and another to another, it intimates to us, that the mode is in itself indifferent, and that Christians are left to choose that, which, upon other accounts, is most convenient and edifying.

On the whole then it appears, that the dust which has been raised about the mode of baptism, is nothing else but a device of Satan, to perplex ignorant, and to delude unstable, souls. I shall say but very little,

II. Concerning the persons by whom baptism is to be administered: concluding, that gospel ministers, and they only, have authority to administer this ordinance; for they only are *the stewards of the mysteries of God*. To them only the commission is given, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. *Go ye and disciple all nations, baptizing them, teaching them to observe*, &c. The same persons who are to teach, by office, are to baptize; and *no man should take this honour to himself, but he that is called of God*. I proceed therefore to consider,

III. The time when baptism is to be administered. And,

1. As to the adult, who are baptized upon a personal profession, it is plain, that in Scripture times, it was administered presently, and without delay, upon their profession of Christianity: *the same day there were added* (i. e. by baptism) *three thousand souls*, (Acts ii. 41.) the same day that they believed. The eunuch was baptized immediately upon his believing, (Acts viii. 38.) and Paul, as soon as ever he came to himself, and the scales fell from his eyes, *arose, and was baptized*, Acts ix. 18. And once more, the jailer was baptized, *he and all his, straightway*, Acts xvi. 23.

This was the method the apostles took: but afterwards the church generally required more time; and deferred the baptism of the adult, till they had long been in the state of catechumens, and given ample testimony of their proficiency in knowledge, and of a blameless conversation. The apostolic constitutions appoint three years for the catechumens to be instructed, yet allowing an admission sooner in case of a manifest maturity: but was not this an excess of strictness, and making the door of the church straiter than Christ and the apostles made it? And certainly, the practice which afterwards prevailed, of restraining the administration of baptism to certain days, and of deferring it till the point of death, from a notion that sin committed after baptism was unpardonable, are to be imputed only to ignorance and superstition.

2. When is it to be administered to infants?

In Cyprian's time, (about the middle of the third century,) it seems that there was a controversy about the baptizing of infants; not whether they ought to be baptized, (that had never been disputed,) but concerning the time when; whether on the second or third day, or (as circumcision of old) on the eighth day? For the determination of which, Cyprian, with the advice of sixty-six pastors, wrote a synodical letter, to prove, that it was not necessary to defer it till the eighth day, as the mercy and grace of God are not to be denied to new-born children: and in this, saith Austin, he did not make a new decree, but preserved the ancient faith of the church.

As to the time of baptizing infants then, the mean is to be kept between two extremes.

(1.) It should not be causelessly deferred, as if it were a thing indifferent whether it be done or not. It argues a contempt of the ordinance, and a slight regard to our children's covenant right, to delay the administration, perhaps because the feast cannot yet be provided, or such or such a fine friend procured to stand gossip. Thus a solemn and important institution of Christ is often made to truckle to mean and inconsiderable respects. Moses's deferring to circumcise his child, had like to have cost him dear. On the other hand,

(2.) It should not be superstitiously hastened and precipitated. There are many, who are most negligent about it while their children are well, who, if they are sick, and likely to die, will be very solicitous to get it done with all speed; and will call up a minister at midnight rather than fail. But where there hath not been a culpable delay, i. e. where no convenient opportunity hath been let slip, if it please God to visit the child with threatening sickness, I see no reason for thus precipitating the ordinance. Baptism is the appointed door into the church militant, which supposeth the child likely to live; not into the church triumphant, which supposeth the child dying. The administration of baptism is a solemn thing, and ought to be attended with all the natural circumstances of solemnity; and therefore, to hurry the administration, while the child is dying in the arms of the minister, is by no means agreeable. Besides, that this practice is grounded upon a great mistake, viz. that baptism is absolutely necessary to the salvation of the child. Let people be taught, that baptism doth not confer, but recognize, their children's covenant-right; and that, where there is no wilful neglect, God accepts the will for the deed, and will not lay to the charge of us, or ours, the want of that, which, by his own wise providence, we were prevented having in a regular way, and with due solemnity; and they will not be so eager to precipitate the administration.

IV. It will be proper to say a little concerning the place where baptism is to be administered.

In the first ages of the church, it was usual to baptize any where, where there was water, but always (as Dr. Cave observes) as near as might be to the place of their public assemblies; for it was seldom done without the presence of the congregation. In process of time, they erected *baptisteria* (fonts we call them) near the church doors, to signify, that baptism is the door of admission into the church.

All that I have to observe upon this head, is, that it is most fitting and convenient, that the ordinance of baptism be administered publicly, in the face of the congregation. And this is the judgment of the best ordered churches, even of those in which baptism is most commonly administered in private; in which it is rather tolerated as a corruption, than countenanced by the constitution. The church of England allows not of private baptism, except in cases of necessity; and even then, appoints the public recognition and ratification of it. The church of Scotland, by a late act of General Assembly, has strictly forbidden the administration of either of the sacraments in private. And the reformed church in France likewise appoints, that baptism should be administered in the presence of the congregation. And there are good reasons why it should be performed publicly: for,

1. It is an act of solemn religious worship, and therefore should be attended with all due circumstances of solemnity; and the more public the more solemn. Huddling it up in a corner is no way agreeable to the state and grandeur of the ordinance; it should be performed in a *holy convocation.*

2. It is the initiating ordinance; the matriculation of visible church members; and therefore ought to be public, that the congregation may be witnesses *for* the church membership of the person baptized, and *against* his apostasy. In covenanting with God, as in other contracts, it is good, for the strengthening of the obligation, to have witnesses. Thus, Josh. xxiv. 22. *You are witnesses against yourselves,* &c. nay, (*v.* 27.) *this stone shall be a witness to you.*

3. It is an edifying ordinance.

It is of great use to all, to be frequently reminded of their original corruption, and of their baptismal covenant; which is best done by the public administration of this ordinance: and we should consult, not only what makes for peace, but what makes for edification: and therefore ministers ought not to refuse their hearers the benefit they might derive from being spectators of this solemnity. The sacred mysteries of God covet not obscurity, like the profane mysteries of the pagan religion. Truth seeks no corners. Though this institution has not any gaudy attire to recommend it, yet it hath so much true native beauty and excellency, that it needs not decline public administration.

I would not indeed drive this point further than it will fairly go. I do not question but that in many cases, baptism may be administered in private. The jailer was baptized in his own house. And how far ministers should herein comply with the inclinations of their people, I cannot say. Paul preached *privately to them who were of reputation*;[o] and, perhaps, we may from thence take a direction in this case. Some may be *led* to public baptism by degrees, who would not be *driven* to it all at once. I see no reason indeed why any Christians should be ashamed of their profession: it is a culpable bashfulness when we blush to own our covenant relation to God, for ourselves, and for our seed.

The public administration of baptism would be of good use to establish people in the truth concerning it, and would therefore help us to keep our ground against those who oppose it. Many waver about infant baptism, because they were never duly affected by it; as they might have been by the solemn administration of it in public. On all these accounts, I recommend baptizing in public as very convenient, though I would not have it imposed as absolutely necessary.

V. I shall just mention the rites and ceremonies attending the administration of baptism: and as to these, Dr. Cave well observes, that in the apostolic age baptism was administered with great plainness and simplicity; and the apostles' age was certainly the best and purest age of the church. Strict conformity to the Scripture rule, without the superadded inventions of men, is the true beauty of Christian ordinances.

1. Every thing is *sanctified by the word and prayer*,[p] and particularly sacraments.

The *word* is our warrant for what we do; and therefore should be read, as our commission, *Go ye and disciple all nations, baptizing them.* The nature of the ordinance should be opened, and of the covenant of which it is the seal, and care taken to fix a right notion of the institution, and to raise the affections of the congregation.

Prayer must accompany the word: for it is not from any virtue in the administration, or in him who administers, that sacraments become effectual means of salvation, but only by the blessing of Christ; which blessing is to be sought by prayer. Anciently, saith Dr. Cave, all the formality of baptism was a short prayer, and repeating the words of the institution: and it appears, that for several ages, this baptismal prayer was not any set prescribed form, but, as Justin Martyr saith of their other prayers, (οση δυναμις,) according to the minister's ability.

This prayer ought to be suited to the ordinance: acknowledging the goodness of God to us in making a new covenant, when the first covenant was so irre-

o Gal. ii. 2.

p 1 Tim. iv. 5.

parably broken, and in appointing sacraments to be the seals of that covenant. *that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation*: giving him thanks, that the covenant of grace is herein so well ordered, that not only we, but our seed, are taken into it; dedicating the child to God accordingly; begging that he would honour his own ordinance with his presence, and sanctify and bless it to the child; that the washing of the child with water, in the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, may effectually signify, and seal, his ingrafting into Christ; and that he may thereby partake of the privileges of the new covenant, and be engaged to be the Lord's.

2. For as much as it is the parents' profession of faith in Christ, and obedience to him, that entitles the child to baptism, according to the tenor of the new covenant, it is requisite that at least one of the parents do publicly make that profession, in the presence of the congregation, at the demand of the minister; and likewise declare a desire to have the child brought, by baptism, into the bond of the gospel covenant; and a full purpose and resolution to bring it up (if spared in life) in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; i. e. as a Christian. But if the parents are dead, or cannot possibly be present, the minister may doubtless go upon the known profession of the parents, or the proof of it, by the attestation of those who knew them. Only (as was observed before) in this case it is requisite that the children's guardians, or next relations or those who have the care of them, do undertake for their pious and Christian education.

3. Our Master hath prescribed the words of dedication. *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: this therefore should be constantly and devoutly pronounced, as the water is applied; and immediately before, or after, the doing of this, it may not be amiss to declare, that, according to the institution and command of our Lord Jesus Christ, "I do admit this child a visible church member."

4. After the administration, it is proper that the minister should be a remembrancer to the parents of their duty in bringing up their child as a Christian. The people likewise have need, upon such occasions, to be directed in, and excited to, the practical improvement of their own baptism. After which, it is fit to conclude with suitable prayers and praises.

But before we close this chapter, it will be proper just to mention a few appendages to the administration of baptism: as,

1. Naming the child. And this is a laudable custom, against which I know of no objection. It was borrowed from the Jewish custom of naming children at their circumcision: and as baptism is the enrolment of the person baptized among professing Christians, it is not improper then to fix the name; (or *notamen*;) though too many ignorant people consider the giving of the name as the main matter; against which they should therefore be cautioned.

2. Godfathers and godmothers. And concerning these we have spoken before; and showed how unreasonable and unscriptural a practice it is, to deprive the parents of the right of dedicating their own children, to devolve it upon those who have no part nor lot in them. Early footsteps indeed there are of this sponsorship in the primitive times, but quite of another nature.

3. Rites and ceremonies which have been used in the administration of this ordinance.

And in sacraments, where there is appointed something of an outward sign, the inventions of men have been too fruitful of additions; for which they have pleaded a great deal of decency and significancy; while the ordinance itself hath been thereby miserably obscured and corrupted. I shall only mention the most considerable of those used very anciently in the church; (of those now practised in the church of Rome, see the ritual;) e. g. 1. A kind of exorcism and insufflation; which signified the expelling of the evil spirit, and the breathing in of the good spirit. 2. An unction, or anointing the person baptized upon the breast, and between the shoulders; which they fancied very proper to signify the sanctification of the heart to receive the law of God, and the preparation of the shoulders to bear the yoke of Christ; and that Christians were *kings and priests unto God*. 3. Dr. Cave thinks, that with this unction they used the sign of the cross, made upon the forehead; which they did to show, that they were not to be ashamed of the cross of Christ. 4. Trine immersion, or putting the person baptized three times under water, once at the mention of each of the persons of the Trinity, to signify their distinct dedication to each. And, 5. After a second anointing, when the person was taken out of the water, they put on him a white garment, to signify, that *those who were baptized into Christ, had put on Christ*, and were to walk with him in white.*

And, besides all these, many countries had particular customs of their own. But setting aside the word, and prayer, and the circumstances of natural decency, I see no need of any of these additions. The spouse of Christ looks most glorious in her native beauty, and needs not the paint and tawdry attire of a harlot. Purity is the true glory of gospel ordinances; and all these appendages, instead of adorning the institutions of Christ, have really deformed and injured them. And those who plead for the continuance of some of these ceremonies

* From the wearing of this white garment, *Whitsunday* took its name, that being a great day of baptism.

open a door for the admission of the rest. The chrism, or anointing with oil, is as significant, and as ancient, and has as much foundation in Scripture, as the sign of the cross; and if we must be governed so much by the practice of antiquity, while the other is retained, why must this be exploded? or rather, when this is so decently laid aside, why should the other be so strictly imposed; especially when it is become such a stone of stumbling, and such a rock of offence?

CHAPTER V.

OF THE PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF OUR OWN BAPTISM.

It hath been the accursed policy of the great enemy of souls, by raising disputes about Christ's truths and ordinances, to rob the church of the benefit of those truths and ordinances. While the field lies in suit, what should be spent in improving the ground, is thrown away in maintaining the suit, and the land lies fallow. There would not be so much quarrelling about infant baptism, if there were but more care to make that practical improvement of it which is required. It is owing to a carnal heart, that the benefit of it is not obtained, and then the thing itself is disputed. In this circle many a poor soul hath been made giddy: infant baptism is questioned, because it is not improved; and then it is not improved, because it is questioned. *If any man* set himself seriously to *do his will* in this matter, by a diligent and conscientious improvement of his baptism, *he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether we speak of ourselves.*[a] We should labour to find, by experience, the moral influence of our baptism, both upon our comfort and our holiness.

When I say we must improve our baptism, I mean, that we must carry it in every thing as a baptized people; and our whole conversation must be under the influence of our baptism. Would you have all our Christian duty in one word, it is, to behave in every respect as those who are baptized; that is, *to have our conversation as becomes the gospel of Jesus Christ.*[b]

In opening this, I shall endeavour,

I. To show that it is our great concernment to improve our baptism.

II. To give some general rules for the improvement of our baptism. And,

III. To point out some particular instances in which we should improve our baptism.

I. It is the great concernment of those who are by baptism admitted members of the visible church, practically to improve their baptism, and to live accordingly.

In dealing with many people, it is much easier to direct them than to persuade them; to inform them what is to be done, than to prevail with them to do it. And of the many who lie under the baptismal vow, how few are there who are at all sensible of the engagement! as if their baptism were only the giving of them a name. The profane Lucian said, in derision of his baptism, that he got nothing by it but the change of his name: and multitudes there are who get no more.

The improvement of our baptism is very much our concernment, if we have any regard to honour, honesty, or interest.

1. In point of honour.

By our baptism, we assume the Christian name; and is it not a shame to profess one thing, and practise another? to own the *name*, and deny the *thing? Either change your name, or your manners,* was the reprimand which the great Alexander gave to his namesake, who was a coward. By baptism we engaged ourselves to be the Lord's; and bound ourselves, by the strongest ties imaginable, *against* all *sin*, and *to* all *duty;* and is it not a shame to say and unsay? The great ones of the earth, whose names are raised a degree or two above their neighbours, stand much upon the punctilios of their honour, and scorn to do any thing base, to disparage their families, or forfeit their ensigns of honour, or incur the disgrace of a broken sword, or a reversed escutcheon; and shall not one who professeth himself a citizen of the New Jerusalem, have so much of a generous and noble sense of true honour, as to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called, and the dignity to which he is advanced? *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine,*[c] was part of the lesson that Solomon's mother taught him. Brutal excesses profane a crown, and defile the horn in the dust: and are not Christians advanced to be kings and priests? It is not then for Christians, who are baptized, it is not for Christians, who wear so honourable a name, to walk as other Gentiles walk. We shame ourselves before God and the world, if we, who by baptism are made members of that family which is *named of Jesus Christ,*[d] its illustrious head, do that which is unbecoming the family.

2. In point of *honesty.*

An honest man will be as good as his word. Having sworn, we must perform it; and having given up our names, we must not withdraw them. It is the character of a citizen of Zion, that *he sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not;* much less when he sweareth so much to his own good.

Jephthah argues himself into a very hard piece

a John vii. 17. b Phil. i. 27. c Prov. xxxi. 4. d Eph. iii. 15.

of self-denial from this topic, (Judg. xi. 35.) *I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and cannot go back. How shall we?* Rom. vi. 2.

3. In point of interest.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked. He will not be put off with shows and shadows. Baptism not improved, is no baptism, any more than the carcass is the man. Nominal Christianity is but real hypocrisy; the form without the power; the name without the thing. *He is not a Jew* (nor he a Christian) *that is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision* (nor that baptism) *which is outward in the flesh.*[e] The gospel is preached, either *for a witness to us,*[f] or (if that witness be not received) for *a witness against us:*[g] and so our baptism, instead of being a witness *to us*, if we neglect it, will be a witness *against us*. In the day of vengeance, Judah and Israel, become uncircumcised in heart, are set abreast with the rest of the uncircumcised nations, Jer. ix. 25, 26. Our baptism, if it be not improved, will be so far from saving us, that it will aggravate our condemnation. It is not *the putting away the filth of the flesh* that saves us, but *the answer of a good conscience towards God;* i. e. our conformity to our baptismal engagements. In early times, it was usual, in some churches, to lay up the white garment of the baptized, that it might be produced as an evidence against them, if they violated or denied that faith which they had owned in baptism.

A little further to illustrate this, let us consider,

1. That baptism is a *trust*, to which we must be faithful. The *profit of baptism* is answerable to the *profit of circumcision. To them were committed the oracles of God:*[h] we are entrusted with the *lively oracles;* the sacred laws of the kingdom of heaven; which if we misuse by an unsuitable conversation, we betray a trust.

2. Baptism is a *talent*, which must be traded with, and accounted for. It is a price put into the hand to get wisdom; and with this, as with other talents, the charge is, *Occupy till I come.* By working upon our souls a sense of the obligations we are laid under by our baptism, we put this talent into the *bank*, and, if we were not wanting to ourselves, might receive from it the blessed *usury*, of a great deal of comfort and holiness. I refer to Matt. xxv. 27.

3. Baptism is a *privilege*, which must be improved. It takes us into the visible church; makes us denizens of that ancient and honourable corporation; and entitles us to its external privileges; *the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises,* (Rom. ix. 4.) privileges capable of a great improvement.

4. Baptism is a *profession*, which must be lived up to. By baptism we profess relation to Christ, as *scholars* to our *teacher*, *servants* to our *master*, *soldiers* to our *captain*, *subjects* to our *sovereign;* all which relations call for duty which must be done. The law of nature, and the common sense of mankind, require, that we *be* and *do* according to our profession; and not profess one thing and practise another.

5. Baptism is an *obligation*, which must be performed. It is the seal of a bond. We are in bonds to God; penal bonds, to be the Lord's; which if we break, we expose ourselves to the penalty.

6. Baptism is an *oath*, which must be made good. A *sacrament* is a military oath; an oath of allegiance, to be true and faithful to the Lord Jesus; and having *sworn*, we must *perform it.*[i] An oath is a tie upon conscience: and this is an oath, to which God is not only a witness, (as to every oath,) but a party principally concerned: for to him are we sworn.

So then, if we do not make use of our baptism, we falsify a trust, we bury a talent, we abuse a privilege, we contradict a profession, we break a sacred bond in sunder, despise an oath, and cast away from us the cords of an everlasting covenant.

II. I am to give some general rules for the improvement of our baptism. And,

1. We must rightly apprehend the perpetual obligation of our baptismal covenant. That time doth not wear out the strength of it: though it was administered long ago, yet (being a *specialty*, a bond sealed) it binds as firmly as if we had been baptized but yesterday. God was highly provoked by the breach of a covenant made with the Gideonites many ages before, 2 Sam. xxi. 2.

Baptism is an oath of allegiance, which no power on earth can absolve us from. It is a *perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten.*[k] God *will not* forget it, and we *must not* forget it: the former may comfort us, the latter quicken us. Compare two parallel scriptures, viz. 1 Chron. xvi. 15. *Be ye mindful always of his covenant, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations,* borrowed from Ps. cv. 8. but there it is, *He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;* both put together, speak the perpetuity of the covenant. God doth remember it for ever, and we must be always mindful of it. It is a covenant of salt, (2 Chron. xiii. 5.) an incorruptible, inviolable covenant, that is not, must not, cannot be disannulled. God is said to remember his covenant, when he brought his first-begotten into the world; it was to perform the oath, (Luke i. 72, 73.) though that oath was sworn many ages before. So what we do in religion we should do with a regard to our baptismal oath; in remembrance of the holy covenant, and in compliance with the purport and de-

e Rom. ii. 25, 28, 29. f Matt. xxiv. 14. g Mark xiii. 9.

h Rom. iii. 2. i Ps. cxix. 106. k Jer. l. 5.

sign of it. Upon some special occasions, God remembers his covenant; as when, after a controversy, he returns in ways of mercy, Lev. xxvi. 42. So upon special occasions, of trouble or temptation, or after we have fallen into sin, we should remember the covenant; which still stands in full force, power, and virtue. The superadding of repeated engagements to the same purpose, at the Lord's table, or upon other occasions, doth not supersede, but strengthen and confirm, that first and great engagement; and the design of those renewed covenantings, is to revive the sense of that early bond. God remembers *the kindness of our youth, and the love of our espousals*,[l] and we must not forget the covenant of our youth, and the vow of our espousals.

2. It is very good, when we grow up to years of understanding, solemnly to renew our baptismal covenant; and to make that our own act and deed, which our parents, as the trustees of our wills, to act for our good, (appointed so by God and nature,) then did for us. This will help to make the engagement more sensible, and consequently give it a greater and stronger influence.

This should be done (I think) by a solemn personal profession of *assent* to the gospel revelation, and *consent* to the gospel covenant; with a serious promise of a suitable and agreeable conversation: and this to be approved by the minister, or such others as are fit to judge of the seriousness of it. This is to be looked upon as a transition from the state of *infant* church membership, to that of *adult*; and as a solemn investiture in the privileges of the adult: which (according to the practice of the primitive church) may not unfitly be done by the imposition of hands. This is what is commonly called *confirmation*; the revival of which, and its restoration to its original use, Mr. Baxter, in his book on that subject, with learnedly and convincingly plead for. The corruptions and abuses of an ordinance are no reasons for its total abolition. But this is one of those things which are much desired, but little practised; for, in the usual administration of confirmation by the bishops, so little is done to answer the intention, (and how should it be otherwise, when the confirmation of so many thousands is put into the hands of one man?) that it is too apparent, that the substance is lost in the shadow, and the thing in the name. While every deacon hath authority to administer the great ordinance of baptism, and is thought fit to judge of the capable subjects of it, it is a riddle to me, why the subordinate constitution of confirmation should be so strictly appropriated to bishops. The recognition of the baptismal covenant, and the profession of faith, repentance, and a holy life, are fit to be made in the presence of those to whom the right hand of fellowship is to be given in settled stated communion, or their representatives: and the investiture were most properly received from that pastor, who is to administer other ordinances, and through whose hands those external privileges of adult church membership are to be communicated.*

Where this is neglected, or negligently performed by the congregation, it is yet the duty of every one to do it, as far as possible, for himself in private; in the most solemn manner, as in the presence of God: the more expressly, the better; and it may add some strength to the engagement, to *subscribe with the hand unto the Lord*.[m]

Our law requires, that he who is *(subditus natus)* born within the king's allegiance, and consequently to all intents and purposes the king's subject, shall, when he is of the age of twelve years, take an oath of allegiance, and promise that, to which he was bound before, viz. to be true and faithful to the king, (Co. Inst. i. 68. b. 172. b.) and this oath to be taken among the neighbours in the leet, or in the sheriff's town. I would compare the confirmation I am pleading for to this. It is the solemn profession of that allegiance which was before due to Christ, and an advancement to a higher rank in his kingdom.

The sooner this recognition is made, the better. Youth is quickly capable of impressions; and the more early the impressions are, usually they are the more deep and durable.

3. We must rightly understand the nature of the ordinance, and acquaint ourselves with it.

It is a seal of the covenant of grace: we should therefore know the promises and privileges which God seals to us, and the conditions which we seal back to him. How many baptized persons are there, who are altogether *strangers to the* covenant of promise! who look upon baptism only as a thing of course; nothing more than the custom of the country! No wonder they do not improve that which they do not understand. Baptism being the badge of our profession, to understand that, is to understand our holy religion; the nature, duties, privileges, and designs of it; to all of which our baptism doth some way or other refer. It is sad to consider what ignorance of these reigns, even in the Christian world; and how many are little better than baptized heathens.

The apostle Paul several times presseth holiness and sanctification, from the consideration of the design and tendency of our baptism. Let us examine two or three particular passages, and make some improvement of them.

The first is, Rom. vi. 3. *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?* This he urgeth as a known confessed truth. The nature of our baptism, and the engagement it lays upon us, is a thing which it is a shame

[l] Jer. ii. 2. [m] Isa. xliv. 5.

* See an instance of this confirmation in its primitive simplicity, in the life of Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston.

for Christians to be ignorant of. As if a soldier should not know the meaning of his being enlisted. We were baptized *into Jesus Christ*—εις Χριστον, as εις Μωσην—unto Moses, 1 Cor. x. 2.

But how are we baptized *into the death* of Jesus Christ? I answer, we may be said to be baptized into Christ's *death*, upon a threefold account.

1. As baptism is a professing ordinance; a sign and token of our Christianity. *By* and *in* baptism we profess,

(1.) To believe the death of Christ as a fact. It is one of the main hinges upon which the door of salvation turns, one great article of our creed, that he was *crucified* and *dead*. We profess to believe, (and it is no small matter to believe it,) that he *could* die. It was not possible that he should be holden by the pains of death; how then was it possible that he should be seized, and taken by them? It implies the belief of his incarnation; for if he had not been man, he could not have died. And that he *did* die; was willing to make his soul an offering for sin. And certainly, that the Lord of life should die for the children of death, the offended Prince for the unnatural rebel, the just for the unjust, is such a mystery, as requires a great faith to receive: which we do in baptism accordingly profess. And there is no need of the sign of the cross in token of that profession; the instituted ordinance is sufficiently expressive of our being baptized into Christ's death, without the invented ceremony.

(2.) To depend upon the death of Christ as our righteousness. In baptism we profess our expectation to be saved by the blood of a crucified Jesus; and to hope for heaven, in, and by, that new and living way, which is laid open for us through the veil of his flesh. We entertain the gospel revelation concerning Christ's death, not only as a *faithful saying*, but as *worthy of all acceptation*. We profess an approbation of, and a complacency in, the method which infinite wisdom took, of saving a guilty world, by the cross of Christ. It was the cross of Christ which was *to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness*;[n] and therefore an owning of that, is justly made so material a point in Christianity.

2. As baptism is a receiving ordinance.

We are baptized into Christ's *death*; i. e. God doth in that ordinance seal, confirm, and make over to us, all the benefits of the death of Christ. All our privileges, both those of our way, and those of our home, are the fruits of his cross; the purchase of his blood; and in baptism are conferred upon us, on the terms of the gospel: so that if we fulfil the condition, we may expect the privileges; e. g. pardon of sin, access with boldness to a throne of grace, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the heavenly inheritance.

3. As baptism is an engaging ordinance.

We are baptized into Christ's *death*: i. e. we are obliged by our baptism,

(1.) To comply with the design of his death; and this in gratitude for the privileges purchased by it. Christ died *to save us from sin*,[o] *to redeem us from all iniquity*,[p] *from our vain conversation*;[q] the intention of his death was not only to *justify*, but to *sanctify*:[r] now, by baptism, we oblige ourselves to join in with this design of Christ; to set ourselves against that which he died to kill, and that is sin, and to press after that which he died to advance, and that is holiness.

(2.) To conform to the pattern of his death.

Christ's dying *for* sin, was intended to be the pattern of our dying *to* sin: so the apostle explains it in the following words (*v.* 4—6.) *We are planted together* (τω ομοιωματι) *in the likeness*; it notes not merely a similitude, but a conformity; and that procured, and wrought, by the virtue and efficacy of Christ's death. Hence the mortifying of sin is called, *crucifying it*; (Gal. v. 24.) a slow but a sure death; and we are said to be *crucified with Christ*, (Gal. ii. 20.) because of the influence which his death hath upon the mortification of sin. Christ rose to die no more, rose and left his grave-clothes behind him; that is the pattern of our living to righteousness, as his death is the pattern of our dying to sin: see both together, Phil. iii. 10. *The power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings.* We should from hence take instruction how to improve our baptism: *as we have received Christ, so we must walk in him.* We have received *Christ crucified*, and so we must walk in him: being *baptized into his death*, we must *bear about with us continually the dying of the Lord Jesus*.[s] If ministers must preach, people must live, as those who know nothing but *Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* Think for what end Christ died, and you were baptized into his death; and use it as an aggravation of sin, as an answer to temptation, and as an assistant to faith; use it for the crucifying of corruption, for the constraining of you to holiness and for your comfort in all your sorrows. Again,

That of the apostle in the next words, and Col ii. 12. are to the same purpose; *we are buried with him by baptism.* In which, whether there be an allusion to the custom of dipping or plunging, in baptism, is not at all material; (if there be, it is but an allusion;) the meaning is plainly this: that by our baptism we are obliged to conform to the burial and resurrection of Christ, in our sanctification, dying to sin, and living to righteousness; putting off the old man, and putting on the new man. We are by baptism buried with Christ,

[1.] As baptism signifies and seals our ingrafting into Christ, and our union with him. We are, in Christ our head, buried by baptism, and raised

n 1 Cor. i. 22. o Matt. i. 21. p Tit. ii. 14. q 1 Pet. i. 15. r Eph. v. 25, 26. s 2 Cor. iv. 10.

again; he the first-fruits, and we the lump. Our sins are said to have been *laid upon Christ*, and he to have *borne them in his own body*, (1 Pet. ii. 24.) so that when he was buried, our sins were put into the same grave, and buried with him. Therefore they are not imputed to us, being dead and buried with Christ. Thus was sin, by Christ's sacrifice, *condemned*.[t] But he rose again, not *in the likeness of sinful flesh*; he did not bear our sins in his glorified body. Now baptism signifies, and seals, our fellowship with Christ, in his sufferings and resurrection; viz. our freedom from the condemning and commanding power of sin. He is our second Adam, the common father, agent, root, and representative of all true believers. Baptism, therefore, being the sign of our union with him, we are said therein to die, and be buried, and rise again, with Christ.

[2.] As baptism signifies and seals our engagement to be the Lord's.

We are, by our baptismal covenant, obliged to mortify sin, and in baptism receive the promise of the Holy Ghost for that purpose. *We are buried by baptism*; i. e. we are, in profession, and obligation, quite separated and cut off from sin; as those who are not only dead, but buried, are quite parted from the living, and have no more any intercourse, correspondence, or fellowship, with them. We are likewise *risen again* to another sort of life; a divine and heavenly life. Not as the widow's son and Lazarus were raised, to live just such a life as they lived before; but as Christ was raised, who, though he continued on earth forty days after his resurrection, did not show himself openly, nor converse with this world as he had done; but his life was altogether heavenly, and no more in the world: thus, our baptism, obliging us to die to sin, and live to righteousness, we may be said therein to be buried and risen with Jesus Christ.

A Christian, therefore, who is by baptism buried with Christ, and yet lives in sin, is like a walking ghost; or the frightful motion of a dead body. We should often remember, that we are *buried*, i. e. cut off from a life of sin, and *risen*, i. e. entered upon a life of holiness. We should therefore see to it, (saith the excellent Davenant,) that what is done once sacramentally, in baptism, should be always done really, in the life.

I shall only produce one passage more, viz. Gal. iii. 27. *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.* The design of the apostle's discourse there, is to bring them nearer, and bind them faster, to Jesus Christ. The two great rivals to Christ were, the works of sin, and the works of the law: the former, his rival as the Lord their *Ruler*; the latter, as the Lord their *Righteousness*. From both these, he is here industriously dissuading them; and he argues from their baptism, *being baptized into Christ, ye have put on Christ*; ye *have* done it; i. e. you have professed to do it, and consequently are obliged to do it. *Put on Christ*, that is,

1. The righteousness of Christ for justification. Put it on, as Jacob put on the garments of his elder brother, when he came for the blessing; as the high priest put on the appointed robes, when he went in to make atonement. To put on the righteousness of Christ is,

(1.) To consent to it; willing and glad to be saved by that righteousness, which he, by dying, hath brought in. This is to *receive the atonement*.[u] The garment is already prepared; made up of Christ's merits, dyed with his blood: glorious apparel! it is our consent that puts it on. This is called, *buying the white raiment*, Rev. iii. 18. Upon our believing submission to the methods of gospel grace, and entertaining that faithful saying as worthy of all acceptation, Jesus Christ is made of God unto us *righteousness*,[v] and we are made *the righteousness of God in him*.[w]

(2.) To confide in it. We must be putting it on every day, in all our approaches to God, making mention of Christ's *righteousness, even of that only*;[x] abiding by it as our plea; casting anchor there; laying the stress of our souls upon this foundation. The most of men are putting on other things; some righteousness of their own; at best *a covering too narrow to wrap themselves in*;[y] but we who are baptized into Christ, profess to put on Christ; that *Sun* with which the church is *clothed*;[z] that *best robe*;[a] that *broidered work*.[b]

2. The spirit and grace of Christ, for sanctification. Grace is often compared to clothing. This is that *fine linen*, clean and white, Rev. xix. 8. With this we must be clothed, as the earth with grass and corn; which are not only *adherent*, but *inherent*. Thus we must *put on charity*, (Col. iii. 14.) *mercies*, (Col. iii. 12.) *humility*, (1 Pet. v. 5.) and in general, *the new man*, (Eph. iv. 24.) the same with putting on Christ, Rom. xiii. 14. compare v. 13. To put on the grace of Christ, is to get the habit of it planted in our souls, and the acts of it quickened and invigorated: to have grace, and to use grace. To have the disposition, and not to exercise it, is like having clothes lying by us, and not wearing them.

In baptism we have put on Christ; i. e. have professed and promised it. Whether the custom of putting a white garment upon the person baptized, was so ancient, as that we may suppose an allusion to that, is not material; I suppose rather, that this custom might, in after ages, take rise from this scripture.

Christ is here compared to clothing; for,

t Rom. viii 3. u Rom. v. 11. v 1 Cor. i. 30.
w 2 Cor. v. 21. x Ps. lxxi. 16. y Is. xxviii. 20. z Rev. xii. 1.
a Luke xv. 22. b Ezek. xvi. 10.

1. Clothes are for decency. Sin made us *naked*, Christ covers our *shame*.[c] Again, clothes are for distinction.[d] Christians are distinguished from other men by their putting on Christ. Hereby it is known what country they belong to; grace is their livery, their badge, their cognizance. Further, clothes are for *dignity*. And this is honourable clothing; recommends us to God; (which no other clothing doth;) it is clothing of *wrought gold*,[e] in the sight of God of great price. And once more, clothes are for *defence*. We must put on Christ, not only as attire, but as armour; nothing else will keep us safe from the *wind and the tempest*,[f] and *the fiery darts of the wicked one*.[g]

Having thus put on Christ in profession, let us do it in truth and sincerity; having begun to put him on, let us be doing it daily more and more; for that is to improve our baptism.

Baptism doth not work as a spell, or charm, or by any physical influence; but it acts as a motive, or argument, by moral agency; and we then make use of our baptism, when we improve that argument with ourselves, for our quickening, caution, and encouragement, as there is occasion. That which shakes many in the doctrine of infant baptism, is the uselessness (as they apprehend) of the administration, and the mighty advantages which they fancy in adult baptism. But before they conclude thus, they would do well to answer Dr. Ford's proof of this truth, "That there is much more advantage to be made, in order to sanctification, consolation, and several other ways, of the doctrine and practice of infant baptism, than of that doctrine and practice, which limits baptism to personal profession at years of discretion." And it is to be feared, that the neglect of the improvement of infant baptism hath very much conduced to the opposition that hath been made to it.

Baptism is a good motive to be improved,

1. By ministers, in preaching to their people. By this we have some hold of them. It is especially to be improved in dealing with young people. We have this to say to them, that being baptized, they are of the fold; lambs of the flock which we are to feed. We have this to say, against their youthful lusts, and for their early piety, that they are baptized, and are thereby laid under special obligations to be the Lord's. This is to be much insisted upon in training up children in the way wherein they should go. It is improvable, in our dealing with them, about their first conversion and return to God, and their after growth and progress in holiness. In treating with souls, we generally find it easier to direct than to persuade, to tell people what they should do than to prevail with them to do it; we have need to choose out words to reason with them: therefore those are poor friends to the success of the word, who rob us of that argument which infant baptism puts into our hands.

2. By people in preaching to themselves. The apostle saith, (παρακαλειτε εαυτους, Heb. iii. 13.) *Exhort yourselves*, reason the case with yourselves, press things upon your own hearts; and, among the rest, we should press upon ourselves the consideration of our infant baptism, and be ever mindful of the covenant, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. I am now,

III. To mention some particular instances wherein it is our duty to improve our baptism: and under each, I shall endeavour to urge the consideration of our baptism, especially as administered in infancy.

We ought to improve our baptism several ways.

1. Baptism, especially infant baptism, is to be improved, as a restraint from all manner of sin. While we are in an insnaring world, we lie continually exposed to temptation. A malicious spirit lays the plot, and a deceitful heart closes in with it; and thus the poor soul is drawn away, and enticed. These temptations are to be opposed, and resisted; all the powers of the soul must be summoned in to the resistance; and the consideration of our baptism, especially our infant baptism, would very much engage us to that resistance, and make it both vigorous and victorious. I say the consideration,

1. Of our baptism.

When we are tempted to be proud, or passionate, or intemperate, or unjust, or the like, then to remember that we were baptized, would be of excellent use, to silence and repel the temptation. Considering,

(1.) That sin is a contradiction to our profession. In baptism, we were solemnly admitted visible church members, and so took upon us the profession of Christ's holy and excellent religion: by wilful sin we give the lie to that profession, and run counter to it. We then put on Christ; and shall we put on our filthy rags again? Is this to walk as becomes the gospel? Is this to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and to answer that worthy name by which we are called? By baptism, we profess ourselves *dead unto sin*; cut off, and separated, from that life; and *how then shall we live any longer therein?*[h] *How shall we?* how *can we* for shame, so far contradict our profession, and walk contrary to the vocation wherewith we are called?

(2.) That sin is a reproach to our relation.

In baptism, we were admitted into that *family*, which is *named from Christ*,[i] its illustrious head; taken to be his *servants*; nay, (because *the servant abideth not* in the house *for ever*,) we have received

c Gen. iii. 7. d Rev. iii. 18.
e Ps. xlv. 13. f Isa. xxxii. 2.
g Eph. vi. 16. h Rom. vi. 2.
i Eph. iii. 15.

the adoption of sons; we are enlisted under Christ's banner, and become his soldiers; are entered into his school, and call him Master (διδασκαλος) and Lord; and doth it become those who stand in such relations, to maintain a friendly intercourse with Christ's avowed enemy? How unbecoming is it for those who profess such a friendship for Christ, to have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness! *for what communion is there between Christ and Belial? Holiness becomes God's house,*[k] and household; his servants, and service: how unbecoming then is unholiness? If, indeed, we had never been put into such relations, it had been another matter; there had been at least not *that* evil in our sin: but after we have engaged to follow Christ as his servants and soldiers, shall we run our colours, and return to our old master? When we are tempted to sin, let us think we hear Christ saying to us, as to the twelve, *Will ye also go away?*[l] you, my friends, and followers? (Και συ τεκνον;) What thou, my son? as Cæsar to Brutus. *Thou, a man mine equal, mine acquaintance?* as the Psalmist, Ps. lv. 13.

(3.) That sin is an ill requital of our privileges. They were precious privileges which were sealed to us in baptism; the privileges of the gospel charter, the heavenly corporation; all the inestimable benefits of the covenant of grace; protection from arrests, an interest in the promises, free access to God, and the special tokens of his favour: *and do we thus requite the Lord?*[m] Shall we sin against so much love, preventing love, distinguishing love? Shall we *despise* such *riches of grace?*[n] The least spark of true generosity would abhor such ingratitude.

(4.) That sin is a breach of our baptismal engagements. We were then sealed, and bound, to be the Lord's; and shall we be so prodigiously unruly, as to break such sacred bonds in sunder, and cast away such cords of love from us? When a temptation to sin comes, answer it with that of the psalmist, *thy vows are upon me, O God!*[o] not upon me as a burthen, which I am weary of, but upon me as a bond, which I am obliged by. The covenant we were entered into, was most reasonable; the engagement just; it was but a confirmation of our former ties: and shall we falsify such engagements? Be not deceived, God is not mocked: therefore *vow* and *pay.*[p]

2. Of our infant baptism.

There is something in baptism, as administered in infancy, the consideration whereof would furnish us with a particular answer to temptation. The argument taken from our baptism, is so far from being less cogent for its infant administration, that it is really more so. Baptism engageth us in a quarrel with sin, but infant baptism with the grounds of it, doth hugely strengthen the engagement. For,

1. Infant baptism speaks our engagement in an *early* quarrel with sin.

We were betimes enlisted under Christ's banner; were from the cradle *buried with him in baptism;* and thereby engaged, that *sin should not have dominion over us.*[q] The early date of our covenants should very much strengthen the obligation of them. Shall I love that enemy, and lay it in my bosom, which I did so soon declare war against? When God would stir up himself to show kindness to Israel, he makes mention of his early friendship to them; *remembers the kindness of their youth,*[r] *his love to Israel when a child.*[s] When we would stir up ourselves to strive against sin, we should remember our early quarrel with it, our infant covenants against it. The strongest antipathies are those conceived from infancy; usually not afterwards removable; but taking rise so soon, become rooted in our nature. Such should our antipathy to sin be; and having been so early engaged against it, we should *early destroy it.*[t] This is a good argument for children to use against sin; that young as they are, they have long been bound in a bond against sin. We who plead with God *his loving-kindnesses of old*[u] to us, should plead with ourselves our engagements of old to him. This early engagement against sin should especially curb and cure that vanity, to which childhood and youth are subject. Austin observes it as a very ill consequence of the careless deferring of children's baptism till they grow up, that in youth the reins were the more let loose.*

2. Infant baptism speaks our engagement in an *hereditary* quarrel with sin.

It is not only a personal quarrel, espoused by ourselves, and no older than our own day, but it is an enmity entailed upon us by our ancestors; a hostility which came to us by descent. When our parents brought us to baptism, they did by us, as Hannibal's father did by him: when he was but a child of nine years old, he made him solemnly swear, with his hand upon the altar, to pursue the Romans with immortal hatred, and to do them all the mischief he could. Which, however justly reckoned inhuman and barbarous, in a quarrel between man and man, is a project truly pious between man and sin: to bequeath a hatred as by legacy. Our godly parents, who found sin such an enemy to themselves, did thereby lay an obligation upon us, to prosecute an eternal war against it, without thought of reconciliation or truce. Let us think then, when we are tempted to sin, was sin my father's enemy as well as my own? Is the quarrel with it of so long a standing, and shall I submit to it? Was the covenant of my ancestors against it, and shall I make a league with it; or ever entertain a good thought of that, which my parents did so much to set me against?

k Ps. xciii. 4. l John vi. 67. m Deut. xxxii. 6.
n Rom. ii. 4. o Ps. lvi. 12. p Eccl. v. 4, 5.
q Rom. vi. 4, 12. r Jer. ii. 2. s Hos. xi. 1.
t Ps. ci. 8. u Ps. xxv. 6. * Confes. lib. i. cap. 11.

Infant baptism implies such a war with sin, as Israel, by divine appointment, was engaged in against Amalek, a war *from generation to generation*;[v] and therefore *no peace with it*;[x] *no pity to be showed it; nothing that belongs to it spared.*[y] An hereditary quarrel must needs be inveterate.

3. Infant baptism speaks our engagement in a quarrel with *original sin*; which is the unhappy root and source of all the rest.

Baptism, at riper age, doth indeed bear a testimony against sin, but it gives no particular evidence, as infant baptism doth, against original corruption. Baptism tells us, indeed, that we are filthy; but infant baptism tells us that we are polluted from the beginning, *conceived in sin.*[z] Baptism in infancy particularly obligeth us to lay the axe to the root; that carnal mind, which is enmity against God. It leads us to the spring-head of these polluted streams, and directs us to employ all our care for the drying up of that. Would we see our own faces by nature?[a] they are best seen in the waters of baptism: in them we behold ourselves *transgressors from the womb*;[b] and are thereby obliged to employ our forces against that sin that dwelleth in us; to put off *the old man, which is corrupt*; to curb the vicious propensity, and *to crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts.*

Let us therefore make this use of our baptism, our infant baptism; having in profession put on *the armour of light, let us put off the works of darkness. My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not.*[c]

2. Baptism, especially infant baptism, is to be improved as an incentive to duty.

As we are Christians, we have not only temptations to be resisted, and sins to be avoided, but work to be done; great and necessary work, for God and our souls, and eternity. We were not sent into the world to be idle, or (like leviathan into the deep) to play therein. All the creatures were *created to work*; (as some understand Gen. ii. 3. עשות) much more Christians, who are *created anew*, and that *to good works.*[c] We must *work the works of him that sent us.* Now nothing can more quicken us to that work, than a lively sense of our relation to the Lord Jesus Christ as his servants; *truly, I am thy servant.*[d] To maintain that sense, and to excite us to an answerable diligence in our duty, we should frequently consider our baptism; especially our infant baptism.*

1. Our baptism: which was the rite of admission into the relation of servants.

(1.) In baptism we were taken into our Master's family, and owned as members of it. It was the solemn recognition of our rights, as born in our Master's house. Our Lord Jesus, by that right of investiture, duly administered according to his appointment, did declare, that he took us into the number of his menial servants; and do you think we were taken into the relation for no purpose? Our Master (who was himself so very busy when he took upon him the form of a servant) keeps no servants in his family to be idle: the glorious angels, that attend immediately upon his person, have work to do.

(2.) In baptism, we put on our Master's livery: it is the badge of our profession. We have put on Christ; i. e. we have done it in profession; are called Christians (a name full both of honour and obligation) from Christ our head. Now, shall we wear our Master's livery, and neglect our Master's work? This livery is our honour; we need not be ashamed of it; let us not, by our slothfulness, be a shame to it.

(3.) In baptism we obliged ourselves to do our Master's work. It is a bond upon the soul. A covenant like that of Josiah's, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31. *To walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies.* When we begin to loiter, and spiritual sloth takes off our chariot wheels, let this help to quicken us, that in baptism we took the yoke of Christ upon us, and that we were not yoked to play, but to work.

4.) In baptism we accepted our Master's wages. We had in that ordinance the privileges of the new covenant sealed to us; and we took them as our recompence, and earnests of more. We consented to trust God for a happiness out of sight, as the full reward of all our services, according to the tenor of the new covenant. Seeing then we have thus signified, and acknowledged, our expectation of *a kingdom that cannot be moved*, shall we not *serve God with reverence and godly fear?*

2. Our baptism, as administered in infancy, doth very much strengthen the engagement; and may help to quicken our dulness, and put us forward, when we begin to loiter. Our infant baptism doth bespeak our Master to be,

(1.) Our rightful Master. We are his by the first title, prior to all Satan's claims and pretensions; *truly his servants*,[e] for we were born in his house. If our engagements to him had been only the result of our own choice, we might have been tempted to think, that a recantation would dissolve the obligation: but we are the Lord's by a former dedication; and if afterwards we join ourselves to the citizen of

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v Ex. xvii. 16. x Deut. xxv. 19. y 1 Sam. xv. 3. z Psal. li. 5. a Isa. xlviii. 8. b Ephes. ii. 1. c Ephes. ii. 10. d Ps. cxvi. 16.

* See 2 Pet. i. 9. *He that lacketh these things*, viz. the graces before mentioned, that is barren and unfruitful, v. 8. *is blind and cannot see afar off*, i. e. is ignorant, &c. *and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins*: whereby note, that forgetfulness of our baptism is at the bottom of all our barrenness and unfruitfulness, and deadness, in that which is good.

e Ps. cxvi. 16.

the country, it is our own fault. The first conveyance stands, and cannot be invalidated by a subsequent deed; for there was no clause to reserve a power of revocation

(2.) Our kind Master. Kind indeed, who would take us into his family, and admit us to the protection, provision, and privileges of his family, when we were incapable of doing him any actual service. Being now grown up, this consideration should quicken us to a double diligence: that we may redeem the time lost when we were children, and make some grateful returns to our generous Master, for the early tokens of his good will. *When Israel was a child, then I loved him;*[f] and shall not we then study what we shall render for that love? It was our Landlord's kindness then to put our lives into the lease, and we are basely ungrateful if we now refuse to do the services, or are dissatisfied with them.

(3.) Our old Master. We have been long in his service; from our very infancy: we were born in his service; and shall we now draw back from, or drive on heavily in, his work? Shall we begin to tire now, and lose the things we have obtained? David pleads with God, (Ps. lxxi. 17, 18.) *Thou hast taught me from my youth up;* and we should plead it with ourselves. Sober servants love an old service, which they have been long trained up in. Were not our ears bored to the door-post, to serve for ever? and shall we fly off from our work now?

(4.) Our father's Master: one whom our fathers served, and recommended to us for a Master. Infant baptism speaks an hereditary relation to God, that comes to us by descent: my God, and *my fathers' God.*[g] Our fathers found him a good Master, and consigned us over to him, and to his service: shall we then neglect our duty, or be negligent in it? It is Paul's profession, (Acts xxiv. 14.) *So worship I the God of my fathers. Thy own Friend, and thy fathers' Friend, forget not;* thy own Master, and thy fathers' Master, forsake not. The way of religion is the good old way, in which they walked who are gone before us. Idolaters, and evil-doers, are strengthened in their wicked way by this, that it was the way of their fathers. *We will do as we have done; we and our fathers.*[h] *A vain conversation is received by tradition from their fathers.*[i] For which reason it is, that the iniquity of the fathers is visited upon the children. And shall not we be much more confirmed in the ways of God, from the practice and resolution of our fathers; whose covenant was, that not they only, *but their houses, would serve the Lord?* Though that which is bad is never the better, yet I am sure, that which is good is never the worse, but the more inviting, for its being received from our ancestors. Let us not therefore be weary in well-doing, but always abide, and always abound, in the work of the Lord.

3. Baptism, especially infant baptism, is to be improved by us, as a strong inducement to repent of sin.

As we should improve our baptism to prevent our fall; so, when we are fallen, we should improve it to help us up again. Repentance is (as far as possible) the unsaying, and the undoing, of that which we have said and done amiss. It is a retraction. The law of repentance is a remedial law; a plank thrown out after shipwreck: and blessed be God, that the covenant of grace leaves room for repentance: the covenant of works did not.

In repentance, we should improve,

1. Our baptism. And we shall find in it,

(1.) A strong engagement to repent, in our part of the covenant.

John's baptism, which made way for Christ's, was *the baptism of repentance.*[k] The apostles were sent to preach *repentance*, and to *that* baptism was annexed; *Repent, and be baptized.*[l] Our baptism engageth us, not only to the first repentance from dead works, but to an after repentance, as there is occasion. Our first washing in the laver of baptism, obligeth us every day *to wash our feet*[m] from the pollutions we contract. Our covenant was, not to sin; but if we should sin, to repent. Impenitency is the most direct falsifying of our baptismal covenant that can be; it is against the prescribed method of cure.

(2.) A sweet encouragement to repent, in God's part of the covenant.

In this covenant both parties are engaged, God to us, and we to God. We have obliged ourselves (as in duty bound) to repent; God has been pleased to oblige himself (as in grace and mercy inclined) to forgive upon repentance. So that baptism is a continued seal of our pardon upon repentance: an assurance, that if we be truly sorry for what we have done, and will come and confess it, and do so no more, all shall be well; iniquity shall not be our ruin. *Repent, and be ye baptized, for the remission of sins:*[n] not for the purchase of remission; that is Christ's work, and was done before, when the *everlasting righteousness was brought in;* but for the possession and application of it, which are daily needed. *Let us therefore draw near with boldness, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*[o] Baptismal washing, as it assures us of the pardon of sin upon repentance, purgeth us from an evil conscience. *Repent therefore, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;*[p] i. e. the gospel dispensation, the promise of pardon upon repentance. While the hue and cry is out against the malefactor, he flies, but the proclamation of pardon brings him in. This *kingdom of God is come nigh unto us;* it was in baptism applied to us in particular, that the encouragement might be past dispute.

f Hos. xi. 1. g Exod. xv. 2. h Jer. xliv. 17. i 1 Pet. i. 18. k Luke iii. 3. l Acts ii. 38. m John xiii. 10. n Acts ii. 38. o Heb x. 22. p Matt. iv. 17.

2. Our infant baptism.

There is much in the consideration of our baptism as administered in infancy, to strengthen this inducement to repent. Can I do otherwise than melt into tears of godly sorrow, when I reflect that I was baptized in infancy? For if so, then,

(1.) By sin I have ill requited God's early kindness to me. I have offended my God, and the God of my fathers, who, upon my parents' account, dealt so favourably with me. It is often mentioned, as an aggravation of sin, that it is against the God of our fathers: thus, 2 Chron. vii. 22. *Because they have forsaken the God of their fathers;* so, 2 Chron. xxviii. 6. God hath been kind to my family, to my ancestors before me; how sinful then must my sin needs be, which hath put an affront upon such a friend? besides that I was then taken into covenant with God myself, and owned in a covenant relation. God aggravates the sin of Israel, from the consideration of his early kindness to them, Ezek. xvi. 8, &c. especially his early covenant with them. *Loved when a child, and yet revolting, and dealing treacherously!*[w] When we were polluted, and exposed, then regarded, pitied, taken up, washed, adorned, taken into covenant, adopted into a good family; and was not that a time of love? love sealed, love ensured, preventing love, unmerited love? What! and yet despise such rich love, spurn at such bowels! *Do ye thus requite the Lord?*[x] *Is this thy kindness to thy friend?* How should we charge this home upon our souls in our repentance, and blush for our ingratitude! *Nourished, and brought up, and yet rebelling!*[y]

(2.) By sin I have falsified my early engagements to him. Born in his house, brought up in his family, brought betimes under his law, and yet shaking off the yoke, and bursting the bonds! Did God take me into covenant with himself, when I was a child, and look upon me ever since as a covenanter; and yet, no sooner have I been able to go, than I have gone from him? to speak, than I have spoken to his dishonour? Aggravate sin from this topic; that there hath been in it, not only such base ingratitude, but such horrid perjury. This consideration is especially seasonable, when we are made to *possess the iniquities of our youth;*[z] and are praying with David, *O remember not those early sins.*[a] Those who are not baptized till years of discretion, have no such considerations to humble them for the sinful vanities of childhood and youth, as they have who were baptized in their infancy. Let this therefore break our hearts for the sins of our youth, that they were violations of our infant covenant; than which how can there be greater disingenuity?

4. We are to improve our baptism, especially our infant baptism, as a great support to our faith.

Unbelief is the sin that doth *most easily beset us:* there are remainders of it in the best; and it is at the bottom of our many sinful *departures from God.*[v] Even those who can say, *Lord, I believe,* have reason to add, *help my unbelief.*[w] Now, I say, it would be a special help against unbelief, to consider our baptism, especially our infant baptism.

1. Our baptism.

When we are tempted to distrust God, to question his good-will, and to think hardly of him, then let us recollect the covenant of grace, and our baptism, the seal thereof. Consider,

(1.) That by baptism we were admitted into covenant relations. God did then make over himself to us, to be our God; and take us to himself, to be his people; and shall we then ever distrust him? Relation is a great encouragement to dependence. See Ps. xxi. 2. *My refuge, my fortress, my God,* and then follows, *in him will I trust;* compare Ps. xviii. 2. As, by baptism, God hath hold of us when we depart from him, so, by baptism, we have hold of God when he seems to withdraw from us. It is an excellent support to faith, when we walk in darkness, and have no light, that we may stay ourselves upon *our God;*[x] *ours* in covenant; ours, for he hath made himself over to us to be our God. Be not *dismayed* then, for he is *thy God.*[y] Use this as an anchor of the soul in every storm; and whatever happens, keep hold of thy covenant relation to God: even then, when he seems to forsake, yet (as Christ upon the cross) maintain this post against all the assaults of Satan, that he is *my God; my God* for all this; and happy the people whose God is the Lord.

(2.) That by baptism we were interested in the promises of the covenant.

To visible church members now, as formerly, pertain the *covenants, and the promises;*[z] to which others are *strangers.*[a] When the evil heart of unbelief is doubting our immediate interest in the promises, faith may fetch in strength from the remoter interest; *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant;*[b] and that covenant, *ordered in all things, and sure.*

2. Our infant baptism. There is much in that to add to the encouragement; and to strengthen this prop, which faith finds in baptism to lean upon. Baptism seals the promise of God's being to me a God, and that is greatly encouraging; but infant baptism increaseth the encouragement, as it assures me of God's being the God of my fathers, and the God of my infancy.

(1.) The God of my fathers.

Shall I question the kindness of one who is my own friend, and my father's friend? the faithfulness of one, who was in covenant with my fathers, and always true to them? As it is an inducement to me to

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[v] Hos. xi. 1—2. [w] Deut. xxxii. 6. [x] Isa. i. 2, 3. [y] Jer. xiii. 25. [z] Ps. xxv. 7. [a] Heb. iii. 12.

[v] Mark ix. 24. [x] Isa. l. 10. [y] Isa. xli. 10. [z] Rom. ix. 4. [a] Eph. ii. 12. [b] 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

choose God to be my God, because he was my fathers' God; so having chosen him, it must be very pleasing to reflect upon that hereditary covenant. Nay, when our own interest may be clouded, and eclipsed, it may bring some support and revival to the soul, to think of our fathers' interest. Peter mentions it as a great inducement to his hearers to believe, *Ye are the children of the covenant which God made with our fathers*, Acts iii. 25. God himself invites us to take hold of this, by fetching his reasons of mercy to his people from the covenant made with their fathers, (Lev. xxvi. 42.) *Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob*, &c. *The seed of Abraham his friend*[c] must not be forsaken, cannot be forgotten. In the great work of our redemption, respect was had *unto the promise made unto our fathers.*[d] Infant baptism, in the parents' right, speaks covenant mercy *kept for thousands; the word commanded to a thousand generations*; which, if seriously considered, hath a great deal in it to encourage faith. The saints have often been kept from sinking by this thought, *O Lord God of our fathers;*[e] *our fathers trusted in thee.*[f]

(2.) The God of my infancy.

It is a great support to faith, to consider, not only that God is my God, but that he was so betimes. How favourable was he in the admission, to accept of me upon my father's interest! He who took me when I was brought, surely will not cast me off when I come myself, though weak, and trembling, and unworthy. He who called me his own, because I was born in his house, though I was then too little to serve him; who then washed me, and clothed me, and entered into covenant with me, surely will not now reject and disown me, though I am still weak, and what I do is next to nothing. Preventing mercies are not only in themselves very obliging, but very encouraging to hope, in reference to further mercy: he who began in ways of love and mercy to me so early, will not now be wanting to me, or backward to do me good. See how David strengthens his faith from hence, (Ps. lxxv. 5, 6.) *Thou art my trust from my youth, by thee I have been holden up from the womb.* Loving-kindnesses, which have been *ever of old*, must needs be very favourable to faith and hope. God *remembers the days of old*,[g] and we should remember those days.

5. We should improve our baptism, especially our infant baptism, as a special friend to prayer. God's people are, and should be, a praying people: *For this shall every one that is godly pray*, Ps. lxxii. 6. It is a duty to which we are naturally very backward; sinners plead the unprofitableness of it, (*What profit shall we have if we pray unto him?*[h]) but sensible souls are convinced, not only of the *profit*, but of the *necessity*, of it; not only that there is something to be gained by it, but that really there is no living without it. Prayer is the very breath of the new creature. Now, a due improvement of our baptism would greatly befriend us in this duty.

1. The consideration of our *baptism* would be of excellent use,

(1.) To bring us to the duty.

Baptism did signify and seal our dependence upon God, and our submission to him; both of which are in effect denied, and contradicted, if we live without prayer; either wholly neglect it, or frequently intermit it. *Restraining prayer*, is *casting off* that *fear* of God,[i] which, in baptism, we assumed. In baptism, we took God for our God; and *should not a people seek unto their God?*[k] natural light teacheth us to attend upon, with our prayers, that Being whom we call and own as a God.* Baptism put us into the relation of a people to God; which, while we live in the neglect of prayer, we refuse to stand to, and so forfeit its privileges. When we find our hearts backward to prayer; indifferent whether we pray or not, or degenerating into a lifeless formality, let us quicken them with this: Shall I give the lie to my baptism, and disown dependence upon that God, who then manifested such kindness? and whose I am by so solemn a covenant? David often excites praying graces by similar means; *Thou art my God, early will I seek thee.*[l] Baptism is particularly an engagement to family worship: by that, we and ours were taken into covenant with God; therefore, *we and our households should serve the Lord.*[m]

(2.) To imbolden us in the duty.

Slavish fear is a great enemy to prayer: takes off our chariot wheels; clips the wings of devotion. Baptism, if duly considered, will be a special remedy against that spirit of bondage, which stands in opposition to the spirit of adoption. It is a seal of our interest in God; and we may from thence, with the greater confidence, call God ours: and it is comfortable coming with an address to one in whom we have such an interest; one who is not *ashamed*[n] of his relation to us; but hath instituted an ordinance for the solemn avowal and recognizance of it. *Let us therefore come boldly;*[o] *draw near with a true heart, having our bodies washed.*[p] Baptism is one special qualification that fits us for a confident approach to God: (as circumcision under the law:) by that, we were admitted into the relation of children, which should encourage us to improve the relation, by crying, *Abba, Father.*[q] We were then enrolled among the seed of Jacob, to whom God never said, *Seek ye me in vain.*[r] We were interested in the Mediator, who ever lives to make

c Isa. xli. 8. d Luke i. 72, 73. e 2 Chron. xx. 6.
f Ps. xxii. 4. g Isa. lxiii. 13
h Job xxii. 15. i Job xv. 4. k Isa. viii. 14.

* *Deos qui rogat, ille facit.*
l Ps. lxiii. 1.
m Josh. xxiv. 14. n Heb. xi. 16. o Heb. iv. 26.
p Heb. x. 22. q Gal. iv. 6. r Isa. xlv. 19.

intercession, for we were baptized into his name. We may plead the promise of the Spirit's assistance, God's acceptance, and an answer of peace: and may we not then come with boldness? In prayer we stand in need of the Father's smiles, the Son's righteousness, and the Spirit's aid; in reference to each of which, we should consider, that we were baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Baptism is especially encouraging in reference to our joint addresses; our approaches to God in the solemn assemblies of his people. Our participation of the privileges of the communion of saints, should encourage us to abound in the duties of that communion. We belong to the praying body; and our spiritual communion with that body in prayers and praises, even with those with whom we cannot maintain a local communion,) is very comfortable, when we approach the throne of grace. To think, that that mystical body, into which we were baptized, is attending the same throne of grace, upon the same errands. Let this therefore lift up the hands that hang down, and confirm the feeble knees. But further,

2. The consideration of our *baptism, as administered in infancy*, will much more befriend prayer; both as an inducement to, and an encouragement in, that duty. Three comfortable inferences may be drawn from it, viz.

(1.) That God is ready to receive those who come to him, and will in no wise cast them out.

He who would have little children come to him, *infants*, such as cannot speak for themselves, surely will not reject and put away those, who, though still very weak, yet do, in some measure, lisp out their desires to him. Infant baptism discovers the goodness of God to be, preventing goodness, unmerited goodness, free in the communication of itself, and not strict in standing upon terms. Hard thoughts of God drive us *from*, and discourage us *in*, the duty of prayer; and are no less uncomfortable to ourselves, than they are dishonourable to God. Now, the serious consideration of the favours of our infant baptism, would cause the goodness of God to pass before us; and very much endear our Master, and his service, to us. And this would bring us with cheerfulness, and boldness, to the throne of grace, to ask, and receive, mercy and help.

(2.) That we were early brought into covenant with him: were betimes received into the number, and entitled to the privileges of children; which is a great engagement upon us to adhere to God, and a great encouragement to us to hope, that God will not forsake us. It is a good plea in prayer, (see how comfortably David pleads it, Ps. xxii. 9—11.) *Thou art he that took me out of the womb*; (and immediately into covenant;) *thou didst make me hope* (though incapable of the act of hope, didst lay a foundation for hope to build upon) *when I was upon my mother's breasts: thou art my God, for I was cast upon thee* (by my parents' dedication of me) *from the womb*; therefore, *be not far from me*. He pleads to the same purpose when old, (Ps. lxxi. 5. compare v. 17, 18.) for time doth not wear out the comfort of our infant covenants. How careful was God to get possession of us betimes! and can we find in our hearts now to cast him off? or can we fear that he should cast us off?

3.) That he was our fathers' God.

That we may with comfort take hold of, in the darkest seasons. Thus the saints of old used to do:[z] though they might have said, *my God*, they chose rather to insist upon the covenant relation of their parents. David presseth this in his plea for salvation, (Ps. lxxxvi. 16.) *Save the son of thy handmaid*; born in thy house, therefore obliged to serve thee, and therefore expecting to be saved by thee. We find God often showing kindness, as David to Mephibosheth, for the father's sake; which, perhaps, is therefore called the *kindness of God*;[a] such kindness as God was used to show, hereditary kindness. Plead then (as Asa with Benhadad) an ancient league between God and thy father; and take encouragement from thence.

Thus may we order our cause before God, and fill our mouths with arguments; not to move God, (for he is of one mind, and who can turn him?) but to move ourselves; to strengthen our faith, and to quicken our fervency.

6. We should improve our baptism, especially our infant baptism, as a powerful engagement to brotherly love.

This is the *new commandment*; though an old commandment, enforced by new motives, built upon a new foundation. It is peculiarly the law of Christ's kingdom, the lesson of his school, the livery of his family; an essential branch of our holy and excellent religion. Now there is that in baptism, which should mightily induce us to love one another with a pure heart, fervently: and would (if used aright) eradicate all love-killing principles and practices; and overcome all our feuds and animosities; and readily and powerfully suggest, to all Christians, that necessary caution, *See that ye fall not out by the way*.

1. The consideration of our *baptism* would be a great inducement to brotherly love.

(1.) The oneness of our baptism. It is the apostle's argument for *unity of spirit*, that there is *one baptism*. As there is one faith, so there is one way of professing and owning that faith, viz. baptism; the common door of admission into the visible

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z 1 Chron. xii. 17. 2 Chron. xx. 6.

a 2 Sam. ix. 7.

b Eph. iv. 3, 5.

church. Those who, in lesser things, differ in their apprehensions, and are accordingly subdivided, yet in this agree, that they are baptized into the same great names of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Whatever dividing names we are known by, whether of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, whether of Luther, or Calvin, or the Church of England, we were not baptized into those names; (the great apostle disowns it, 1 Cor. i. 13. *Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?*) no, we were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, who hath instituted this ordinance, as a centre of unity to all Christians. The faith professed in baptism is a *common faith*;[v] (that in which all Christians are agreed; abstracted from all controverted opinions of lesser moment;) of which, what is commonly called the Apostle's Creed may be considered as a summary. Our Lord Jesus, in baptism, received us, not to *doubtful disputations*;[w] therefore we should so receive one another. All Christians who are duly baptized, however differing in other things, are interested in one and the same covenant, guided by one and the same rule, meet at one and the same throne of grace, are entitled to one and the same inheritance, and all this by one and the same baptism: and should they not then love one another, since the things wherein they agree are so many and so great, while the things wherein they differ are, comparatively, so few, at least, so small? How should this shame us out of our private piques and quarrels, distances and estrangements, that our Lord Jesus has not only put up a prayer, but instituted such an ordinance, *that we all might be one?*[x] As for those who enervate the force of this argument, and evade it, by appropriating baptism (like the Donatists of old) to their own way, whatever the monopolizing, excluding principle be, on the one hand or on the other, let not my soul come into their secret, unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united. To unchurch, unchristianize, unbaptize, all those who are not in every thing of our length, is a project so dishonourable to Christ, so destructive to the catholic church, and so directly opposite to the spirit of the gospel, that I cannot mention it without expressing my abhorrence of it. The Lord preserve his church from the mischievous consequences of pride and bigotry.

(2.) The operation of our baptism.

Though baptism doth not always produce a real change, yet it doth always effect a relative change: so that those who are duly baptized, are thereby admitted members of the visible church, and therefore stand in a near relation to all the members of it: for *by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles.*[y] By baptism we are all admitted into the family and kingdom of Jesus Christ, and so become related to one another, yea, are adopted to be the children of the same Father. All the saints, both in heaven and earth, make but one *family*, and that *named from Christ*,[z] the head of it, to whom they are all united. *Have we not all one Father?*[a] from whence it follows, *that all we are brethren.*[b] Now relation is a great inducement to love and affection: if we are brethren, we should love as brethren. No strife, *for we are brethren.*[c] It would be very unnatural for the children of the same father to fall out, and fight, because they are not all of the same stature, strength, or complexion. Baptized Christians are *members one of another*;[d] and it is very unbecoming, if there be not that love and sympathy among them, which there is between the members of the natural body. Though the members have not all the same place, strength, comeliness, and use in the body, yet they love one another, and have a concern one for another, because it is the same soul which actuates, and animates, and permeates, every member of the body; and should it not be so in the mystical body, forasmuch as we are *members in particular*, and have *need one of another?*[e] For though there be a *diversity of operations, and gifts, and administrations*, yet there is but one *spirit*,[f] which actuates all the members. For this reason, the strong must not despise the weak, nor the weak judge the strong. This should enlarge and extend our love to all Christians, however distinguished, dignified, or vilified.

(3.) The obligation of our baptism.

It binds us to obey: and this is the second great commandment to which we are to yield obedience, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:* and this, revived and confirmed by our Saviour, so often repeated, so much inculcated, so strongly ratified, and enforced by so many pressing motives and arguments, that we have precept upon precept, line upon line, to this purpose. Now our baptism is a bond upon our souls, *to walk according to this rule.* That which doth so richly assure us of God's love to us, doth, no doubt, firmly engage us to love one another. Envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness, are some of those devilish lusts, which in our baptism we renounced, and engaged to fight against. Shall we then harbour and embrace them? or be led, and actuated, and governed by them? It is the apostle's argument, (Col. iii. 8—10.) *Put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, seeing you have* (at least in profession and engagement) *put off the old man, and put on the new man.*

2. The consideration of our baptism, *as administered in infancy*, would very much strengthen the inducement to brotherly love.

(1.) As it is a signal discovery of God's love to us; preventing love, unmerited love.

If he loved us when we were infants, and had

v Tit. i. 4. w Rom. xiv. 1. x John xvii. 21.
y 1 Cor. xii. 13. z Eph. iii. 15. a Mal. ii. 10.
b Matt. xxiii. 8. c Gen. xiii. 8. d Eph. iv. 25.
e 1 Cor. xii. 25—27. f 1 Cor. xii. 4—6.

nothing in us to induce or encourage love, what can we object against loving our brother? The beloved disciple, who had leaned on Jesus' breast, was most loving himself, and did most press love upon others. The more sensible we are of God's love to us, the more will our hearts be drawn out in love to our brethren. All acceptable love in us is but the reflex of God's love to us. Are you to seek for proofs of the love of God to you? as they, Mal. i. 2. *Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?* Reflect upon your infant baptism, and you will see wherein: that was a time of love indeed; the love of espousals; and should not we then love one another, with a pure heart, fervently.

(2.) As it puts us into an *early* relation one to another.

Those relations which take rise with our birth, and into which we are led by nature itself, have usually the greatest influence, and lay the strongest ties upon us. Such is this. We are brethren from our infancy; were born in the same house; and having the same birth-right privileges, being interested in the same happiness and hopes, let us not fall out by the way. Especially, considering what was our state when we were put into that relation: we were *little children*, and therefore, *in malice, should be such still.*[g] Our infant baptism should teach us to *receive the kingdom of God as little children*;[h] with all humility, and lowliness of mind; which is a temper that would mightily promote our brotherly love. The consideration of our infant baptism would help to make us like *little children*;[i] peaceable and loving in all our carriage; plain and open, without design, or study of revenge.

Other particulars might be mentioned, wherein our baptism, our *infant baptism*, may be improved by us, to promote our comfort and holiness, and to build us up in our most holy faith; but these shall suffice.

CHAPTER VI.

DIRECTIONS TO PARENTS, CONCERNING THE BAPTISM OF THEIR CHILDREN.

Next to our own baptism, and the improvement of that, our concern is about our children's baptism; for they are parts of ourselves, and God and nature have constituted us feoffees, in trust for them, to act for their good, in their behalf. And I fear that much of the contempt which infant baptism is brought under with some, is owing to the ignorance, neglect, and mismanagement, which parents are guilty of in that matter; and nothing would be more effectual to revive and preserve the honour of it, than parents' conscientious and serious discharge of their duty with reference to it; for they are the persons concerned, and their carelessness is an error in the first concoction. And therefore, *I write unto you, fathers.*[a] The relation of a father, by the consent of nations, as well as by the law of nature, hath authority and honour, belonging to it. There were several dignities, and privileges, conferred by the Roman government upon the father of three children. Children are *a heritage of the Lord;* happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them. Those who are not quite divested of natural affection, value them accordingly. They are (saith Jacob) *the children which God hath graciously given thy servant.*[b] When they are multiplied, they are not to be accounted burthens, but blessings: Obed-Edom had eight sons, *for the Lord blessed him.* Our duty is to take care of them; especially of their better part. One of the first things we have to do for them, is to dedicate them to God in baptism. And concerning that, we shall endeavour to direct you that are parents,

I. In your preparation for it.

II. In your management of it.

III. In your improvement of it afterwards, in reference to your children. For the

I. Preparation for it. I observe in general, that before this, as before other solemn ordinances, there ought to be due preparation; (as much as before the Lord's supper;) and yet ordinarily how little is there! The more seldom we have occasion to attend upon the Lord in this service, the more need we have to prepare for it with all seriousness. More particularly,

1. Get a right understanding of the ordinance, and of your own concern and interest in it.

There are many who bring their children to be baptized, only because it is the fashion of the country, and they would be strangely looked upon if they did not do it; but they know nothing of the meaning of this service. And if we thus offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? Give diligence therefore, clearly and distinctly to understand what you do, and why you do it.

1. What you do.

You give up your children (which are parts of yourselves) to God. It is a peculiar interest which parents have in their children; founded upon the highest law, and the greatest love: it is undisputed, natural, and unalienable. Know then, that by virtue of this interest, you have a power to dispose of them, for their good, and God's glory. You do therefore accordingly give them up to God; and transfer all your right and title to them, and all your interest in them, to him, according to the tenor of the covenant. You resign them to God, to be taught,

g 1 Cor. xiv. 20. h Mark x. 15. i Matt. xviii. 3.

a John ii. 13, 14. b Gen. xxxiii. 5.

and ruled, and disposed of, and portioned by him; to be made holy and happy by him. You bring them to be laid at the feet of the Lord Jesus. Understand farther,

(1.) That you do hereby oblige your *children*; bind them to the Lord; to his word and to his law. As much as in you lies, you lay an obligation upon them, *against* all sin, and *to* all duty. Not an original, but an additional, bond. You bind them to a great deal; but to nothing to which they were not bound before. You do in baptism, as when you set your children apprentices; interposing your own authority to oblige them to the duties of the relation, from a sincere regard to their real advantage. And can you think this too much to do for God, who gave his Son, his only-begotten Son, for you? The Father *sanctified his Son, and sent him into the world*; i. e. set him apart for the work of our redemption: and should not we then sanctify our children, and set them apart for God and his glory? Which may afterwards operate, by a moral influence, as an argument with themselves (and all little enough) to fix them to God and duty.

(2.) You do hereby oblige *yourselves* to bring them up accordingly; in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is a great charge, which parents take upon themselves, when they bring their children to be baptized; and I fear the reason why so few perform it, is because they do so little understand and consider it. This obligation upon *you* also, is indeed to no more than you were before bound to, though it doth more bind you, and strengthen the natural obligation. Labour to understand this. In dealing with men, you would not put your hand to a bond, without knowing first what it meant, and what you took upon yourselves by it; and will you, in dealing with God, do such a thing rashly and inconsiderately?

2. Why you do it.

Understand upon what grounds you go, in bringing your children to baptism; else it is not in faith. I have endeavoured, at large, to show what Scripture grounds we go upon in baptizing children: understand them well. In short, (1.) You do it in compliance with the tenor of the covenant; which runs, *to us and to our children*, that God will be *a God to us and to our seed*. (2.) You do it, in conformity to the will of God revealed in the Old-Testament administration of the covenant; in that which was not ceremonial, viz. the admission of the children of the covenanters into the same covenant with their parents. (3.) You do it in obedience to the appointment of Christ; that *little children should be brought unto him*.[c] (4.) You do it in pursuance of your own covenant with God; wherein you gave up yourselves, and all near and dear to you, unto him; your children therefore especially, who are in a manner parts of yourselves. (5.) You do it out of a natural affection to your children; which prompts you to do all you can for their good. Labour thus to understand yourselves, and act with reason in what you do.

2. Be serious in examining yourselves, and your own covenant interest in God.

What title your children have to the ordinance, they have *by descent* from you: and there appears no reason to expect, that the streams should rise higher than the spring; that you should convey to your children a higher and greater title than you have yourselves. Therefore examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; for though your profession of faith (in nothing visibly contradicted) be sufficient, so far as the church can decide, to entitle your children to this ordinance, yet God is not to be mocked; he searcheth the heart, and will not be put off with shows and pretences; he knoweth where the heart *is not right*, but *unsteady in the* covenant. Therefore we should diligently commune with our own hearts in this matter, and take heed of deceiving ourselves. It is a thing in which multitudes are mistaken, and in which a mistake is extremely fatal. Therefore ask, *Is there not a lie in my right hand?* When we bring our children to be *ingrafted into Christ*, we should inquire, Am I myself ingrafted into him? Am I alive indeed, or have I only *a name to live?* Take this opportunity of driving the matter to an issue. Such a shaking of the tree, if it be indeed well rooted, will but make it take root the stronger.

3. Renew your repentance for the breach of your baptismal engagements.

Upon every renewal of our covenant with God, we should penitently reflect upon our violations of it: especially when, in effect, renewing that baptism which is the baptism of repentance. Those whom John baptized confessed their sins; and so should they who bring their children to be baptized. It is well the covenant we are under leaves room for repentance.

4. Be earnest with God in prayer, for a blessing upon his own ordinance.

The blessing of God is all in all to the comfort and benefit of it. Pray that the ordinance may be made effectual to the child, and not be an empty sign. How grace is wrought in the hearts of infants we know not: how should we, when the production of it in the adult is such a mystery? like the wind, which we cannot tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: it is like the forming of the bones in the womb of her that is with child. But this we know, that the God of the spirits of all flesh hath access to the souls of little infants, and can make them meet for heaven: and from thence we should take encouragement in our prayers for them. God is not tied

[c] Mark x. 14.

to means, for he needs them not: but we may, with more confidence, expect his manifestations of himself when we are in the use of the means. Pray then that God would grace his own ordinance with his special presence, and accept the dedication of the child to him. This is a promised mercy, but yet for this God will be sought unto, and *inquired of by the house of Israel.*

What I say to one I say to both the parents. The mother must consent to the dedication of the child, as well as the father, though commonly it is the father who makes the profession: and they should both together discourse before of these things, as *heirs together of the grace of life.*[1] They are generally both contriving about the outside, and the formality of the service; they would do well to help one another in the main matter. The dedication of Samuel[2] was his mother's act and deed; and David often pleads a relation to God as the son of his handmaid. The mothers, from the conception, should look upon the fruit of their bodies as belonging to God; and, in intention, devote it accordingly. It may minister some comfort and relief to a pious mother, in breeding-sicknesses, and bearing-pains, that they are in order to bring another member into Christ's visible body; and who would not encounter some difficulties to bear a child to the Lord? It was the peculiar honour of Mary, that she was the mother of Christ: and is not some ray of that honour put upon those who are the mothers of Christians? Is it not *a holy thing which shall be born of thee*, and that shall be called a child of God? This, indeed, was said of Christ, (Luke i. 35.) but it may, in some sense, be said of Christians. Be not cast down then, or disquieted: *blessed shall be the fruit of thy body.*[3] It is the Lord's, and God will look after his own. You should take care accordingly to preserve it, and to keep yourselves pure. Every Christian is a spiritual Nazarite; and if Samson must be *a Nazarite from the womb*, his mother must *eat no unclean things.*[4] Do nothing to destroy, or defile, that temple of God which is in the rearing. Have an eye to this, in your provision for your children, as soon as they come into the world. When the knees prevent them, and the breasts which they suck, say, This care I take of them, that they may be given up to the Lord. Nurse them for him. This would sanctify natural affection, and make those common cares peculiarly pleasing to God, and first abounding to a good account. While you love your children, and take care of them, and provide for them, and nurse them, (which those that are able ought to do,) only because they are your own offspring, what do ye more than others? more than even the brute creatures? But to do this with an eye to God, to take care of them as born in his house, children of the covenant, who belong to Christ's family; this is to do it *after a godly sort*, and as *becomes the gospel.* Where special privileges are enjoyed, even in common actions, there ought to be a special regard to those privileges.

II. As to the management of the ordinance when it comes, I would direct you,

1. As to the externals of it.

Be prudent in ordering the circumstances (so far as they fall within your management) in such a manner, as that the great ends of the institution may be promoted, and not hindered. For time, and place, we gave directions before. In general, consult the solemnity of an ordinance, and let it be managed with an agreeable seriousness. We see too commonly, that inviting and treating the guests is made the main matter at a christening, as they call it. All the care is to please their neighbours, while there is but little thought how to please God in it.

I condemn not the inviting of friends (Christian friends) on such an occasion, provided the ends be right: not to make *a fair show in the flesh*, but that our friends may be witnesses of our covenanting with God for our seed, and may join with us in prayer for a blessing upon the ordinance. When John was circumcised, Elizabeth had her neighbours and cousins with her, Luke i. 58, 59. And this may be a mean to preserve, and increase, that love which there should be amongst neighbours and relatives, and to knit families together.

Nor do I altogether condemn such moderate expressions of rejoicing, as do become Christians, and are consistent with the seriousness of the institution. But how rarely are they so regulated! Abraham made a great feast, not when Isaac was circumcised, but when he was *weaned*, Gen. xxi. 8. How prejudicial such entertainments usually are, not only to the health of the mother, but to the efficacy of the ordinance, is too evident. Meetings of friends upon that occasion, should be to edify, not to insnare, one another. And yet how often do we see one of the great institutions of the gospel managed much like the idolatrous worship of the golden calf, when, after a piece of blind devotion, *the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play:* thus gratifying that flesh which in baptism we renounce. Fashion is commonly pleaded as an excuse in this case: a poor excuse for a Christian. What is Christianity but a sober singularity! a non-conformity to this present world! We must inquire, what is right, not what is fashion: what is the way of Christ, not what is the way of the world.

Particular rules cannot here be given with any certainty, so as to fit all persons, places, and circumstances; only, in general, let not the shadow eat out the substance, nor the beauty of the ordi-

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1 1 Pet. iii. 7. 2 1 Sam. i. 11. 3 Deut. xxviii. 4. 4 Judg. xiii. 7.

nance be eclipsed by the pomp and gaiety of the feast.

2. As to the frame of your spirits, (which is the main matter, and what God especially looks at,) take these directions:

1. Do what you do, uprightly, and sincerely.

That good man was much in the right, who professed, *that he knew no religion but sincerity.* It is the prime condition of the new covenant; and our great privilege, and that wherein the covenant of grace is well ordered, that sincerity is our gospel perfection, (Gen. xvii. 1.) *Walk before me, and be thou perfect:* i. e. upright in the main matter of covenanting with God; sincere in the closing, consenting act, however, in many things, thou mayst come short.

(1.) Be upright in dedicating yourselves to God. Mean what you say, when you say you will be the Lord's. It is the comfort of all those who are Israelites indeed, that they are able to say, through grace, that though they have many ways dealt *foolishly* in the covenant, yet they *have not dealt falsely in the covenant.*[r] Take heed of that. Allowed guile in our federal transactions is the radical hypocrisy. Be not deceived, God is not mocked. We may possibly deceive one another, but God is too wise to be imposed upon. If we think to put a cheat upon him, we shall prove in the end to have put the worst cheat upon our own souls. Dread the thought of lying to the God of truth; as they did, (Ps. lxxviii. 36, 37.) who only *flattered him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with him.* Let there be no reserve for any known sin; no exception of any house of Rimmon: such a proviso would be the overthrow and defeasance of the deed.

(2.) Be upright in the dedication of your children to God.

You say they shall be the Lord's; but are you in good earnest? and do you mean as you say? Do you really intend your children to be taught, and ruled, and disposed of, and provided for, by the Lord Jesus? and this, with a single eye to the will of God as your rule, and the glory of God as your end?

You should examine your own souls, whether you are thus cordial and sincere, or not. He that is not sincere in covenanting for himself, can never be right hearty in covenanting for his children. And who knows what a wrong your hypocrisy may prove to your poor infants?

2. Do it in faith; especially faith in the great Mediator.

When Hannah came to dedicate her son Samuel to God, she brought a sacrifice, 1 Sam. i. 24, 25. Christ is the great sacrifice, in the virtue and value of which we must present ourselves and ours to God.

3. Do it thankfully.

It is our duty, in every thing, to give thanks; especially in such a thing as this, which is so very much to our comfort and advantage.

(1.) Bless God for your covenant interest; that God is, and will be, to you a God: and take this occasion to speak of it to his praise. Wonder at his condescending goodness. Whence is this to me, a worthless worm of the earth? So mean, so vile, and yet taken into covenant with God! interested in the Lord of glory; his attributes, his promises! *Who am I, O Lord God?*[s] That God should take any notice of me, should show me any token for good, is wonderful, considering how undeserving, how ill-deserving, I am; but that he should communicate his favours in a covenant way, interpose himself for security, make himself a debtor to his own truth, is such a paradox of love, as challengeth everlasting wonder and praise. That I should be made a friend and favourite, while so many continue *aliens and strangers to the covenant of promise! be astonished, O heavens, at this! Lord, how is it, that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?*[t] A heart to be duly thankful to God for the covenant of grace, is a good evidence of our interest in it. Upon this occasion, take a view of covenant privileges: observe how well ordered and how sure the covenant is; what you have in hope, and what you have in hand, by virtue of it; and let all this draw out your hearts in love and thankfulness. Trace up the streams of all your mercies to the inexhaustible spring; and let this be the burthen of every song of praise, *to perform the mercy promised, and to remember his holy covenant.*[u]

(2.) Bless God that the covenant of grace is so ordered, that not you only, but your offspring, are taken into that covenant: that God will be *a God*, not *to you* only, but *to your seed*,[v] and so entail his kindness, by a covenant commanded to a thousand generations. Thus richly doth free grace outdo all expectation. *I had not thought to see thy face*, (saith dying Jacob to his son Joseph,) *and lo, God hath showed me also thy seed.*[w] That God should signify his good will to us, is very wonderful; but lo, *as if this had been a small matter, he hath spoken concerning his servants' house, for a great while to come; and is this the manner of men, O Lord God?*[x] Admire the condescension of divine grace herein. Many great men think it beneath them to take notice of children; but our Lord Jesus will have little children brought to him, and by no means forbidden. Mention this to the glory of God's wisdom and goodness, and never forget this instance of his loving-kindness.

(3.) Bless God that you have a child to dedicate to him.

Much of the mercy of having children lies in

r Ps. xliv. 17. s 2 Sam. vii. 18. t John xiv. 22. u Luke ii. 72.

v Gen. xvii. 7. w Gen. xlviii. 11. x 2 Sam. vii. 19.

this, that we have them to devote to God: not only a seed to be accounted to *us*, but *to be accounted to the Lord, for a generation:*[y] not only to honour us, and to bear up our names, but to honour God, and to bear up his name in the world. What is an estate, or office, good for, but to glorify God with it, and that we may have something to lay out, and use, for his honour? Bless God, that he hath not only given you a child, but that he hath invited and encouraged you to give it to him again, and is pleased to accept of it. Be thankful that you have a child admitted, from its birth, into the bosom of the church, and under the wings of the Divine Majesty. How sad were it *to bring forth children to the murderer!*[z] but how comfortable to bring forth children to the Saviour! Hannah had been long barren, and it was her great grief; at length God gave her a Samuel; but it doth not appear that his birth was so much the matter of her praise, as his dedication to the Lord. When she had brought him, in his infancy, to the tabernacle, then it was that she said, *My soul rejoiceth in the Lord.*[a] You have more reason to be thankful that you have a child born to inherit the privileges of the covenant, than if you had a child born to inherit the largest estate.

(4.) Bless God that you have opportunity, and a heart, thus to dedicate your child to God.

That he hath given you to see, and claim, and use your privilege; and hath appointed his ministers, by baptism, solemnly to invest the children you dedicate to God, in the benefits of the covenant. Bless God that he hath erected his tabernacle, and sanctuary, in the midst of us; and hath not left *himself* without witness, nor *us* without the means of grace and salvation. He hath not dealt so with many other nations; (they and theirs are afar off;) and should not this make us very thankful? Preventing mercies, distinguishing mercies, spiritual mercies, are in a special manner obliging. Rightly understand the nature and intention of the ordinance, and you will say, with wonder and praise, *This is no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven: this gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter:* enter into it therefore with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.

4. Do it sorrowing for the corruption of nature, which needs cleansing.

The appointment of infant baptism is an evidence of original sin: if little children were not polluted, they would not need to be washed; and consider, that they derive their pollution from you. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*[b] *They were shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin.*[c] It is so even with the children of pious parents; the natural corruption, not the supernatural grace, is propagated. Methinks this should be a melancholy thought to parents, that while they cannot communicate their graces to their offspring, they cannot but communicate their corruptions. Adam was himself made in the image of God; but when he was fallen, *he begat a son in his own likeness.*[d] And the same corrupt likeness is still conveyed. Little children, therefore, need this sacramental regeneration: upon occasion of which you, who are parents, should humbly reflect upon your own corruption, which kindled theirs. It should be matter of grief to you, that your children bear *your* iniquity; and may blame you for the conveyance of that root of bitterness, which bears so much sin and misery.

5. Do it, rejoicing in the covenant of grace, which provides cleansing.

Thus, at the laying of a stone in the gospel temple, as at the laying of the first stone of Zerubbabel's temple, there is occasion for a mixture of joy and sorrow: and that sorrow for sin is so far from obstructing, that really it befriends, this joy. Your children are polluted, but bless God that there is *a fountain opened;* not only *for the house of David,* but *for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*[e] Draw water therefore with joy out of these *wells of salvation.* Rejoice that there is such a covenant, which you can through grace lay any claim to. The expressions of joy, and rejoicing, at the baptism of a child, should be turned into this channel; and should terminate in God, and in the new covenant.

Thus should you bring your children to baptism. And in order thereunto, it is requisite, in general, that you be very serious in it. It certainly is not a thing to be done rashly, and carelessly, but with great concern; and the more it lies out of the way of our usual meditations in other duties, the more need we have to engage all that is within us in this service. I come now,

III. To direct you what improvement to make of infant baptism, with reference to your children.

If you have not put off humanity, as well as Christianity, and divested yourselves of natural, as well as gracious, affections, you cannot but have a great concern for your children. I desire to adore the wisdom of God, in planting in the hearts of parents such love to their offspring. It is necessary to the preservation, both of the church, and of the world; and is therefore to be encouraged. It is the work of grace to improve, direct, and sanctify, natural affections. Christian parents, therefore, should do more and better than others, in their carriage towards their children.

I undertake not to direct, in general, to all the duties which parents owe to their children; but to instruct them how to improve the baptism of their children; in praying for them; in teaching them; in providing for them; and in parting with them: in

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y Ps. xxii. 30. z Hos. iv. 13. a 1 Sam. i. 28. and ii. 1.

b Job xiv. 4. c Ps. li. 5. d Gen. v. 3. e Zech. xiii. 1.

all which we should make use of their baptism, for direction, quickening, and encouragement.

Parents should improve the baptism of their children,

1. In praying for them.

It is the duty of parents to pray for their children, and to bless them in the name of the Lord. Children's asking their parents' blessing, for aught I see, is a very laudable practice, provided it do not degenerate (as the best duties too often do) into formality. It is good to teach children betimes how to value their interest in the prayers of their pious parents. In praying for children, it is proper sometimes to be particular, as Job for his, (*ch.* i. 5.) *according to the number of them all.*

As to the improvement of their baptism in praying for them,

(1.) Take direction from their baptism, what to beg of God for them; viz. covenant mercies.

God's promises are to be the rule of our prayers: we should seek from God, what God hath sealed to us. Remember, when you are praying for your children, to mind their spiritual and eternal state, more than their temporal. They were covenant blessings, which Abraham's heart was so much upon, when he prayed, (Gen. xvii. 18.) *O that Ishmael might live before thee;* though God heard him for Isaac. Seek not great things in the world for your children; but be earnest with God to give them knowledge and grace; that good part; the best portion you can desire for them. Help them by your prayers, against their lusts and corruptions. You were accessary to their spiritual distempers, and therefore you should do what you can to get them cured; and what can you do better, than bring them to Christ, the great Physician, in the arms of faith and prayer? as that poor woman, (Matt. xv. 22.) whose daughter was vexed with a devil.

(2.) Take encouragement from their baptism in your prayers for them.

Look upon their baptism, and you will see upon what grounds you go in praying for them. You pray for them as in covenant with God, interested in the promises, sealed to be the Lord's; and those are good pleas in prayer, to be used for the confirmation of your faith. Pray that God would treat them as his; tell him, and humbly insist upon it, that they *are* his; whom you gave to him, and of whom he accepted: and will he not take care of his own? How far the promise of the new heart is sealed in baptism, I do not now inquire; but the sealing of the covenant in general, as a token of God's good will to our seed, as a sufficient handle for faith to take hold on, in praying for our children. I see not how those parents can, with equal confidence, pray for their children, who deny them to be in covenant, and so set them upon even ground with the children of infidels. Isaac and Jacob blessed their children *by faith*, (Heb. xi. 20, 21.) and that faith respected the covenant which God had made with them, and with their seed.

In praying for children, it is our duty to resign and give them up to God, to be disposed of as he pleaseth; with a holy resolution quietly to acquiesce in those disposals. Now it is very comfortable thus to give them up in prayer, when we have already given them up in baptism. Having submitted them to such an ordinance, we may, with comfort, submit them to any providence which God shall order for them. With great comfort may you give them up, to one who hath already received them, and set his own stamp and superscription upon them. It was said of Austin, who was so often prayed for by his pious mother Monica, that surely a child of so many prayers could not miscarry. If you be most earnest for spiritual blessings for your children, God will give an answer of peace, some way or other, some time or other. In all your blessings of them, (as in the blessing of Jacob,) let the *dew of heaven*[e] be put before *the fatness of earth;* and let the blessings of the *nether springs* be still postponed to those of the *upper.*

2. Parents should improve the baptism of their children in teaching them.

I take it for granted, that it is the duty of parents to teach their children. The very light of nature dictates this: and many heathens have left, not only good rules to this purpose, but good examples. But it is more clearly enjoined by the Scripture law. And there, the duty of parents is summed up in this, (Eph. vi. 4.) bring them *up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* Take heed of the devil's nurture, rest not in the world's nurture, but let it be the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It was an Old-Testament precept, (Prov. xii. 6,) *Train up a child in the way he should go;* and this is equally a duty under the New Testament; and it may still be hoped that he will not afterwards *depart from it;* but that the well-seasoned vessel will retain the savour of life unto life. The first dispensation of the covenant, to the covenanters and their seed, that we have upon record, was to one who was famous for the religious education of children. *I know Abraham,* (saith God,) *that he will command his children and his household after him.*[f] And this was enjoined to the Jews, (Deut. vi. 7.) *Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children.*

It is very disengenuous, and a perfect mockery, to dedicate your children to God, and then to breed them up for the flesh and for the world, and for the devil. See Ezek. xvi. 20.

Now, in reference to this, parents may two ways improve their baptism:

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e Gen. xxvii. 28.

f Gen. xviii. 19.

(1.) As an argument with themselves to give them instruction.

Though this is so great and necessary a duty, yet how sadly is it neglected! Many, who are called Christians, are more solicitous to have their dogs taught, and their horses managed, than they are to have their children educated to the greatest advantage. Remember your dedication of them to God in baptism, as a motive to the utmost diligence in their education. Besides the tie of nature to do them all the good you can, especially to their better part, besides the command of God, which obligeth you to it, you have bound yourselves, by a solemn promise, in the presence of God. It was upon these terms that they were baptized; not only your profession of Christianity, but your promise to bring them up in that holy religion; and you break that promise if you neglect to do so. Your children are put out to you to be brought up for God. When God graciously gives a child to believing parents, he doth, in effect, say to them, as Pharaoh's daughter said to the mother of Moses. *Take this child, and nurse him for me*:[g] and if it be, indeed, done for God, *he will give thee thy wages*. Christian families are the church's nurseries, where the young plants are reared; and parents have, in a special manner, the charge of them; and must be called to account concerning that charge. But what a sad account will many parents have to give of this stewardship another day! who have not merely buried, but wasted this talent: who have not only neglected to improve their authority, and influence, for the good of their children's souls, but have abused both, to their unspeakable prejudice.

Besides the *promise* you break, and the *trust* you falsify, by your neglect of your children's education, consider likewise the *intention* you frustrate. You do, as much as in you lies, defeat the design of your children's baptism. It was to entitle them to church privileges: and to what purpose is that, if you do not teach them what use to make of those privileges? For want of educating your children aright, then, you receive the grace of God, manifested in their baptism, in vain.

Use their baptism as an argument with yourselves,

[1.] To begin teaching them betimes.

Children are capable of religious impressions sooner than we are commonly aware of; and it is good to season the vessel well at first. Even then, when the understanding is too weak fully to receive, and the memory to retain, truths and notions, the mind, by a prudent, pleasing management, may be formed to that which is good. Endeavour, by a reverend carriage in your religious exercises, and your sober deportment on the Lord's day, to possess them with an early apprehension that the worship of God is a serious thing. I think it is good to bring children betimes to the solemn assembly, where there is convenience for it; as soon as they are capable of being kept so quiet as not to give disturbance to others, (and with a little care and prudence they will quickly be brought to that,) though they are not able to understand what is said and done. My reasons are, that children may hereby be trained up to an observance of religion, and be ready to receive impressions as soon as ever they become capable. And there have been strange instances of the early notice which children have taken of good things. Besides, that the parents do hereby glorify God. And the Hosannas of even little children are not to be considered as a taking of the name of God in vain. Our Lord expressed his approbation of them.

The early dedication of our children to God, should excite us to an early care of them. If God's free grace was manifested to them, in such a preventing way, what an inducement should this be to us, to begin with them as soon as ever they are capable! They are therefore taken into the church so young, that (as we say) they may suck in religion with their milk, and, like Timothy, may (ἀπὸ βρέφους) *from* their very *infancy* become acquainted with the *Holy Scriptures*.[h]

[2.] To take pains with them in teaching them.

This is absolutely necessary. *Thou shalt teach them diligently*,[i] (Heb.) whet it upon them. In whetting, you turn the thing whetted on this side, and on that side, and often repeat the strokes. So, in teaching of children, the mind is affected (*non vi, sed sæpe cadendo*) not by the violence, but by the frequency, of the impression. The minds of children, like narrow-necked bottles, must be filled but slowly, drop by drop. The young must be driven with patience, as they can go, to allude to Gen. xxxiii. 14. Special care must be taken to make things plain to them; condescending to their capacities, and lisping to them in their own language; conveying instruction by things sensible, or otherwise affecting; and making it, as much as may be, not a task, or burthen, but easy and pleasant. Children are half taught when they are reconciled to instruction.

There is one thing, which parents should especially be induced to, by the baptism of their children, and that is, to introduce them early into adult communion; bringing them to own the covenant of their baptism, and to take it upon themselves, by an approved profession of personal faith and repentance, in order to their regular admission to the ordinance of the Lord's supper. The profession of the parents was accepted, when they were infants; but being grown up, they must be called upon to make it their

g Exod. ii. 9.

h 1 Tim. iii. 15. i Deut. vi. 7.

own act and deed. Hereby parents transfer much of their charge to the children themselves; who, becoming capable of acting for themselves, need not be in ward. God hath promised to pour out *his Spirit upon our seed*, and *his blessing upon our offspring*; and it follows, *they shall spring as willows by the water courses; and one shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and shall surname himself by the name of Israel.*[k] The blessing promised to our infant seed, is in order to hasten them personally to own their relation to God. Many parents, who would think themselves undone if they should not have their children baptized, take no care to bring them to the Lord's supper; as if that were not as necessary a recognition of their adult church membership, as baptism of their infant church membership.

Not that I would have children brought blindfold to confirmation, or the Lord's supper; nor brought by force; no, it must be a reasonable service; *(thy people shall be willing ;)* but I think that children, when they grow up to a competent understanding, should be first instructed concerning adult communion; the terms of it, the privileges of it, the duty of it, the desirableness of it; should be taught the nature and design of the Lord's supper, and of that covenant of which it is the seal; and then should be persuaded to it, and stirred up to desire it. If they are careless, and unmindful of their souls and eternity, they should be alarmed, and excited to look about them, and concern themselves about so great a salvation. If timorous, and fearful, (which is a much better extreme,) they should be encouraged and comforted. Parents commonly pretend, as an excuse, that they do not see their children fit for the Lord's supper, or desirous of it, when they do not take pains to make them fit, and to stir up their desires. I know that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong: we can but do our duty, and leave the success to the free grace of God; who will be sanctified in all that draw nigh unto him.

(2.) It is to be used, as an argument with the children, to receive the instructions that are given them. This will be of use, to open the ear to instruction, and to dispose the heart for learning. You may by this, take hold of them, and reason the case with them. Tell them what God promised *to* them, and what you promised *for* them; the one to *encourage*, and the other to *engage* them, to that which is good. When you are reproving them for sin, and warning them against it, argue from their baptism. Tell them how contradictory lying, and sabbath-breaking, and swearing, and taking God's name in vain, &c. are to their profession, and promise, in that ordinance. The sons of nobles are often reminded, that they must do nothing unbecoming their blood, nothing that would reflect upon their families; and should not the sons of Christians be, in like manner, exhorted not to disparage their Christianity. Remind them of their baptismal dedication and separation, when you are cautioning them to save themselves from an untoward generation; especially in the great turns of life.

3. Improve your children's baptism, in providing for them.

The light of nature, as well as Scripture precepts, make it your duty to supply them with things needful for them, as God gives you ability. If any man do otherwise, *he is worse than an infidel*;[l] no better than the unnatural *ostrich, that leaveth its eggs in the earth.*[m] Though our main care must be, to instruct them, our next must be, to make provision for their comfortable subsistence. And,

(1.) We may, from their baptism, take direction in providing for them.

Baptism was to them the seal of the covenant of grace. The provision God made for them, in that covenant, was of spiritual blessings in heavenly things: be chiefly solicitous about those things. But that care is not to exclude, but to govern and overrule, your other cares. You must provide callings and employments for them: be directed herein by their baptism; and make that provision which will be most likely to answer and secure the ends of their baptism. As far as you can determine, choose those callings for them, which are best for their souls; most free from temptations, and best subservient to the general calling; in which (according to their place and capacity) they may most glorify God, and be most serviceable to their generation. If there be a due fitness for the work of the Christian ministry, the consideration of their baptism may be a particular inducement to devote them to that.

In providing estates and portions for them, seek not great things, but good things. Account that to be best for them which will be best in the end, and provide accordingly; food convenient, bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that they may come at last to their Father's house in peace; and then God will provide.

Parents also should from hence take a caution, to provide for their children by lawful and honest means. There is no need of our sin to bring to the birth God's promises. Those parents do not understand, or do not consider, the baptism of their children, who destroy their own souls to make their children rich. Those who depend upon provision by the covenant, need not take any indirect courses to make that provision. If God be the God of Abraham, and hath promised to make him great, Abra-

k Isa. xliv 3—5

l 1 Tim. v. 8.

m Job xxxix. 14, 15.

ham will not reflect upon that covenant, by taking any thing of the king of Sodom, *lest he should say, I have made Abraham rich.*[n] Distrust of God, and of his promise, draws many into crooked paths, and puts them upon base and sinful measures, to enrich their children. You went to God for the promise, do not go to the devil for the performance; nor inquire of Baalzebub, the God of Ekron, while there is a God in Israel, who hath said, that he will be *a God to you, and to your seed.*

(2.) We may take encouragement from their baptism, in providing for them.

What can be more encouraging, in this respect, than that God hath engaged to provide for them? *The seed of the upright shall be blessed,*[o] even with temporal blessings, as far as is for God's glory, and their good. Have an eye to that promise, and plead it with God. Will he not provide for his own, especially those of his own house? If God be to them a God, they have enough. You are in care to lodge what you have for them in good hands; I know not how you can do better, than to lodge it by faith, and prayer, in the hands of God.

4. Improve your children's baptism, in reference to your parting with them.

We live in a parting world, and must provide accordingly. Those who are knit closest together, by love and nature, must expect to be separated. Parents and children are often parting,

(1.) In the world.

Parents are parting with their children from under their eye, and from under their wing. Sending them abroad for education, or into callings, or in marriage. Concerns which commonly lie much upon the hearts of parents: but so it must be: the young tree must not grow always in the nursery; but at length be transplanted into its proper place in the orchard. And when it comes to that, remember their baptism; and trust them in the arms of covenant love. If they are God's children, wherever they go they are not off their Father's ground, nor out of their Father's house. Though they seem the less *yours* when they are gone from you, yet they are not less *the Lord's;* which may be no less a comfort to *you*, than a caution to *them*. Are they the Lord's? Then send them no whither, but whither you can in faith desire God to go with them. When they go from under your eye, they do not go from under God's eye; neither the eye of his providence nor the eye of his observance. When you send them from you, remind them of their baptismal engagements, both to caution and to quicken them. Dismiss them with a covenant blessing; as Isaac sent away Jacob, (Gen. xxviii. 3, 4.) *God Almighty bless thee, and give thee the blessing of Abraham.* Tell them, and tell yourselves, that *the Lord watcheth between* you and *them, when you are absent the one from the other.*[p]

Parents and children are parting,

(2.) Out of the world.

The most solemn partings are those which death makes. Death parts those whom nothing else would part; and, particularly, parents and children. You have need to prepare for such parting providences.

You that are parents may take comfort from your children's baptism,

1. When your children are, by death, taken from *you.*

A common case. Death observes not the laws of seniority; but often takes the children before the parents. In such a case, think of their baptism,

(1.) To induce you cheerfully to resign, and give them up, to God.

When you brought them to be baptized, you devoted them to God; transferred your own interest in them to him; you told him that they should be his, to all intents and purposes; and may he not then do what he will with his own? It is a quieting consideration, (I know those who have found it so,) that they are the Lord's, by your own consent. He not only gave them to you, but (which is for ever an estoppel to all complaints) you gave them to him again. Make it appear that you did it in sincerity, by your silent submission to the will of God, in removing them from you. Do not say, as David, *Would God I had died for thee;*[q] but as Job, when he had buried all his children together in the ruins of their elder brother's house, *Blessed be the name of the Lord.*[r] Sense will suggest a great deal, at such a time, that is aggravating: it was a pretty child, very forward and engaging; it may be, an only child, a first-born; but let this answer all, that God doth but take his own. When your children were to be dedicated to God in baptism, forasmuch as they could not do it themselves, you acted as the trustees of their wills; do so when they come to die. As, if you were to die yourselves, you would commit yourselves into the hands of God; so, when your children are dying, who cannot do it for themselves, it lies upon you to do it for them. Say, Father, into thy hands I commend my child's spirit. In baptism you resigned them to be members of the church militant, and surely now you cannot, you will not, gainsay their removal to the church triumphant. It looks like a very contented word of good old Jacob, (Gen. xliii. 14.) *If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.* He doth not say, I am undone, I shall never see a good day again; but, I am bereaved, and the will of the Lord be done.

(2.) To encourage you concerning their eternal happiness.

What ground of hope there is concerning the sal-

[n] Gen. xiv. 23. [o] Ps. cxii. 2. [p] Gen. xxxi. 39.

[q] 2 Sam. xviii. 33. [r] Job i. 21.

salvation of children of believing parents, who die in infancy, was showed before; take comfort from it on such occasions. They were within the pale of the church; within the verge of the covenant; within reach of that promise, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed.* I ground not the hope of their salvation, merely, upon the external administration of the ordinance, as if there were no hope concerning those who die unbaptized; but I ground it upon their covenant right to the ordinance. David's child died on the seventh day; it is supposed the seventh day from its birth, and therefore uncircumcised, and yet David comforts himself with the hope of its salvation, *I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*[s] This must needs be very comfortable under such providences. They are taken out of your arms, but are removed to the embraces of a better father. Say not you have lost your child, you have but sent it before you. And it must needs be pleasing to think, that you have a part of yourselves in glory. Who are we, that we should help to people the New Jerusalem? Though your children are early removed from this world, surely there is no harm done, for the time they have lost on earth they have gained in heaven. If therefore it be asked, *Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child?* say, as the Shunammite woman did in a like case, *It is well.*[t]

2. When you are taken from *them;* and perhaps leave them young, and little, and shiftless, undisposed of, unprovided for. This is no uncommon case, and a very melancholy consideration to many a dying father; who is by this, more perhaps than by any thing else, made unwilling to die. But let this silence all disquieting cares and fears concerning them, that they are by baptism taken into covenant with God; a God with whom *the fatherless findeth mercy.*[u] God hath expressed a special concern for the fatherless, (Ps. lxviii. 4, 5.) He who *rides upon the heavens by his name Jah*, is, and will be, *a Father of the fatherless.* He hath *taken up, when father and mother have forsaken.*[v] This God is your God, and the God of your seed; and hath encouraged you to *leave them with him;* promising *to preserve them alive.*[w] Though you leave many, they are not too many for God to take care of. Though you have little to leave them, (Jehovah-jireh,) let the Lord provide; there is wealth enough in the promise. Though you have few or no friends to leave them to, God can raise up friends for them. He who can, out of stones, raise up children to Abraham, can and will, out of stones, raise up guardians for those children, rather than they should be deserted. You have never seen the seed of the righteous, *begging bread, forsaken.*[x] Give them your parting blessing in faith; the angel that has delivered you from all evil, will *bless the lads;* forasmuch as his name is named upon them. They were some of David's last words, and may be a great support and cordial to dying believers; *Although my house be not so with God,* (not so as I could wish it,) *yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant.*[y]

CHAPTER VII.

DIRECTIONS TO THOSE WHO ARE PRESENT WHEN THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM IS ADMINISTERED.

HERE I take it for granted, that it is most agreeable to the nature and design of the ordinance, that it be administered publicly; not huddled up in a corner, but owned in the face of the congregation, (if it may be,) the full congregation, that usually meets for other religious exercises; *in the presence of all his people.*[a] However, I think it requisite that, except in cases of necessity, there should be a competent number present, (such a number as may be called a congregation,) that the child may have the benefit of the more prayers, and that others may be benefited by the administration. And therefore, in the close, I would give some directions to the congregation.

1. Do not turn your backs upon the administration of this ordinance; but be present at it. Think not yourselves unconcerned in it. Though the sacrament be administered only to the child; yet the word and prayer, which accompany the sacrament, you are all interested in, and may reap benefit by, if you have but a *heart to it.* It is a great contempt of the ordinance, and argues a very low esteem of a divine institution, needlessly to absent ourselves. It is a very ill thing to think meanly of any divine appointment. He said very well, who acknowledged, that the greatest of men are less than the least of the ordinances of Jesus Christ. Besides that it is a contempt of the congregation; (as if we thought ourselves too good to bear them company;) and *despising the church of God,*[b] is an affront to God himself.

2. Carry yourselves with reverence and seriousness during the administration.

It is a very solemn ordinance, and should be attended upon in a solemn manner. That inward awe, which should possess us in divine worship, must put a gravity upon the outward deportment. Whispering, and laughing, and other irreverences of behaviour, at this ordinance, are a provocation to God, an affront to the institution, a disturbance to others, and a bad sign of a vain and carnal mind. And yet how common! Surely in this, as in other duties, God is to be *worshipped with reverence, and godly fear;* for *he is greatly to be feared, in the assemblies*

s 2 Sam. xii. 23. t 2 Kings iv. 26. u Hos. xiv. 3.
v Ps. xxvii. 10. w Jer. xlix. 10.
x Ps. xxxvii. 25. y 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.
a Ps. cxvi. 18. b 1 Cor. xi. 22.

of his saints. We have need, at this ordinance, to double our guard against such indecencies, because, sometimes, some little accident may happen, in the external administration, which may give occasion to a light and frothy spirit to express itself in such a carriage. But if we remember in whose presence we are, and what is doing, it will be a curb upon us, and keep us serious.

3. Apply your minds seriously to observe, and consider, that which is the substance, meaning, and end of the ordinance.

We are very apt, in positive institutions, *(hærere in cortice,)* to look no further than the shell, or outside, without penetrating into the substance of the ordinance, or considering what is the *meaning of the service.* The external signs which should direct us *to*, many times direct us *from*, the consideration of the things signified. Therefore lay a charge upon your souls, to consider diligently what is before you. Let not the circumstances of the ordinance, (as the manner of washing, or the naming of a child,) draw away your thoughts from the substance. Consider it as a seal of the covenant of grace, and be mindful of that covenant. Your thoughts have a wide field to range in, where (if so disposed) you might furnish them with sweet and profitable matter to work upon.

4. Make application of that matter to yourselves.

Let your thoughts work upon your affections. The case of the baptized infant is a common case: it was once your own, and therefore the business in hand still concerns you. As we should be affected at the burial of our neighbours, because their situation *will be*, so we should, at the baptism of our neighbours, because *it hath been*, our own. In *this*, therefore, as well as in *that*, we should *lay it to heart.* Dionysius Alexandrinus speaks of one of his congregation, who was mightily affected with the questions put to the baptized, and their answers, so that, throwing himself at the minister's feet, he sadly bewailed himself, with many tears, Euseb. Eccles. Hist. *l.* vii. *c.* 9.

(1.) Take this occasion to reflect upon the original corruption of your nature, which needed cleansing.

We have need to be often reminded of this, [1.] That we may be daily mourning over it. To an enlightened conscience, it is an aggravation of sin, rather than an extenuation, that it is in our nature. Considering this, as an habitual aversion to the chief good, and an habitual proneness to the greatest evil, the thoughts of it should melt and break our hearts, and keep up an habitual repentance, and self-abhorrence, all our days. [2.] That we may be daily mortifying it, and keeping it under. Every remembrance of natural corruption should excite our watchfulness and diligence to destroy this root of bitterness. Lay the axe therefore to it: keep a guard against the first motions of sin: get the vicious habit weakened. A sense of the difficulty there is in dealing with such enemies, should not be used as an excuse for our negligence, but rather as a spur to our diligence. Maintain the conflict, and, through the grace of Jesus Christ, the victory will be sure at last. *The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*

(2.) Take this occasion to acknowledge the mercy of your own infant baptism.

In our thanksgivings to God for his mercies, it is very good to begin early. If God remembers, I am sure we have no reason to forget, the *kindness of our youth.* Not that we loved him, but that he loved us. We should by no means forget his ancient favours: *(when Israel was a child, then I loved him:*[c] *)* we should be often thinking of God's goodness to us when we were children; especially his spiritual favours, relating to our better part. What is said of God's early kindness to an infant state, (Ezek. xvi. 3, &c.) is very applicable to our infant souls: when we lay exposed and polluted, *he said unto us live, he spread his skirt over us, and sware unto us, and entered into covenant with us, and we became his: then he washed us with water, and anointed us with oil, and clothed us with broidered work, and decked us with ornaments:* and was not the time a time of love? to be often mentioned to the glory of free, preventing grace? Was it he who *held us up from the womb, and took us* (took us into covenant) *from our mother's bowels?* surely then, *our praise should be continually of him.*[d]

[1.] Bless God for the honour of your infant baptism; that you were added to the visible body of Christ when you were young. To be ranked among the seed of saints, is surely more truly great, and honourable, than to be enrolled in the race of nobles. Ishmael shall beget twelve princes, that is but a small favour, *my covenant will I establish with Isaac.*[e] Surely herein the covenant of grace, in the external administration of it, was well ordered, and much in our favour, that the lambs are not turned out of the fold. Mention it therefore to the glory of God. Is it not an honour to be admitted into the school, the corporation, the family, of which Christ is the head? Hail! thou that art highly favoured. It is an honour not to be proud of, for we never merited it, but to be thankful for, and lived up to. [2.] Bless God for the opportunity of your baptism. That you were thereby put, as Zaccheus, into Christ's way; laid at the gate of the temple, ready to receive an alms, and a cure; placed by the pool-side, ready to step in, upon the stirring of the waters. If you have not improved this opportunity, it is your own fault; you cannot but own, that it was a favour to have

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c Hos. xi. 1. d Ps. lxxi. 6. e Gen. xvii. 20, 21.

had such a price put into your hands, by which you might have gotten wisdom, if you had not been wanting to yourselves.

(3.) Take this occasion to remember the obligations of your own infant baptism.

Though you were baptized long since, yet the tie is as strong as if you had been baptized this morning: for as time doth not wear out the guilt of our sins, so it doth not wear out the obligation of our vows. You know that it was an engagement against all sin, and to all duty; it was a bond upon your souls, to be the Lord's, and to walk and live accordingly. When you see others brought under the same bond, remember that these vows are upon *you*. And remember it,

[1.] With a renewed repentance for the breach of your baptismal covenants. Think now, and think with sorrow and shame, in how many things you have violated these engagements: (which were so very strong, and yet withal so reasonable:) though not in the essentials of the covenant, *(by stretching out the hand to a strange god,)* yet, in the several articles of the covenant, how wretchedly have we prevaricated! Though in the main we hold to the covenant, and would not disclaim it for all the world, yet in how many instances do we come short! It is well for us, that every transgression in the covenant, doth not put us out of covenant: but that there is a door of hope opened; room left for a reconciliation. Repent, therefore, of your manifold transgressions. Aggravate sin by this consideration, that it is ingratitude; that it is perfidiousness; that it is perjury; and reproach yourselves for it. [2.] With renewed resolution of closer walking for the future. Let the sight of the administration of the ordinance quicken your sense of the vows of God, which are upon you; and confirm your purpose, to *pay that which you have vowed*. We are witnesses against ourselves, if having so solemnly *sworn*, we do not *perform it*. They tell us of one in early times, who being present where a child was baptized, and being affected with the solemnity of the service, asked, Was I thus baptized? And being told he was, Why then, saith he, by the grace of God, I will not do as I have done. It is good to be often engaging ourselves afresh. *I said, I will take heed to my ways*, (Ps. xxxix. 1.) and many a thing we do, because we said, we will do it. Do this therefore, live *soberly, righteously, and piously, in this world, denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts*, because you have said that you will.

5. Join heartily in prayer to God for the child that is baptized.

Every thing is sanctified by the word and prayer; and particularly this ordinance. It is the minister's work to be the mouth of the congregation in that duty, but it is your business to join. To be where prayer is made, is not praying, if we do not concur in what is said. Pray heartily, that God would receive the child into the embraces of his love; would impress his own image upon it; so as to sanctify it from the womb; and make the ordinance effectual to this end. That which gives prayer its prevalency, is the exercise of grace in prayer. There are two graces to be especially exercised in this prayer:

(1.) Faith in Christ the head.

It is the prayer of faith that is the effectual prayer. Act faith upon the good will of Christ to little children; upon the constitution of the covenant; the promise which is to us and to our children; the encouragement Christ hath given us to expect his gracious acceptance: these things we should realize by faith.

(2.) Love to the mystical body, and to all the members of it; even the little ones, who cannot pray for themselves.

God hath expressed a great deal of good will to little children; and we should herein be followers of him. Children are therefore publicly presented to God in this ordinance, in the face of the congregation, that they may, the more sensibly, and affectionately, be taken into the compass of our prayers. It is indeed the special duty of parents to pray for their children, but it will be a kindness to them, to help them by your prayers. The best welcome you can give the child, on its admission into the church, is to put up a fervent prayer for it. It is now become one of your *brethren and companions*, for the sake of whom, you must *pray for the peace of Jerusalem*.[f] And who knows what influence the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man, put up in faith, may have upon the good, the spiritual good, of the child. If *a cup of cold water*, given to one of the *little ones, in the name of a disciple, shall have its reward*,[g] much more shall a serious believing prayer, put up for one of the little ones, in the name of a disciple, a fellow-disciple, be accepted, and taken kindly. The hearts of Christians are very much knit one to another in love, by their praying one for another. There are many expressions of Christian charity which children are not capable of receiving, but I am sure they are capable of being prayed for, and have need of our prayers. There would then be reason to hope, that the rising generation would be better than this, if we did but pray more and better for it. The children for whom you thus pray at their baptism, may be reaping the benefit of your prayers, when you are dead and gone; however, they will return into your own bosom, for true prayer is never altogether *in vain*.

6. Bless God for the addition of another member to the visible church of Christ.

f Ps. cxxii. 8.

g Matt. x. 42.

It is in our duty *in every thing to give thanks;* but the baptism of a child affords special matter for praise.

(1.) In that the Lord Jesus is hereby honoured, and his name glorified.

It is part of the exaltation of Christ, *that a seed shall serve him, and shall be accounted* for *to the Lord a generation.* The further his name goes, the more he is honoured. The preservation of the succession of Christians is, therefore, the propagation of the honour of Christ. The multitude of the people is the glory of the prince. Christ is pleased to reckon himself glorified by the increase of his kingdom. Now that should certainly be matter of rejoicing to us, which any way tends to advance the glory of the Lord Jesus. Additions to his church he placeth among the achievements of his crown: particularly the addition of little children. Christ had but one day of triumph in all his life, and the glory of that triumph consisted much in the acclamations and Hosannas of the little children:[b] nay, lest the acceptance should be limited to children who were of age properly to express themselves, it follows in the next verse, *out of the mouth of babes and sucklings,** *thou hast perfected praise;* as if it were the top of Christ's praises, that he is in covenant with little children. Mention this therefore to his praise.

(2.) In that there is a precious soul hereby put into the way of salvation: though not necessarily entitled to salvation, (that doth not follow,) yet put into the way; taken into the school of Christ; enrolled amongst those who stand fair for heaven, and are intrusted with the means of grace and salvation. This is a great benefit to the child; which we should rejoice in, and bless God for; giving thanks, not only for our own interest in the covenant, and the interest of our seed, but for the interest of our friends, and of their seed. Rejoice that there is one brought into the outward court, whom we are not without hopes of meeting shortly within the veil.

If it be objected, that this child may afterwards prove wicked and vile, notwithstanding; may be a scandal to the church, and ruin his own soul: and all this, aggravated by his visible church membership: I answer, it is very true; and that one baptized at mature age, may turn out in like manner: there is no remedy; sacraments do not confer grace (*ex opere operato*) by the mere administration; but till worse appears, we must rejoice, and be thankful, in hope of the best. We all agree to rejoice, when *a man is born into the world,* when an heir is born into the family; and yet, perhaps, he may prove a burthen and a blot to his family, and the curse and plague of his generation.

(3.) In that the church of God is hereby increased. There is one more brought into the family: and blessed be God, there is room enough in our Father's house, and bread enough and to spare. Rejoice that the interest of the church is hereby strengthened. The promise is, that the seed of the saints shall be *as the stars of heaven:* be thankful for the fulfilling of that promise; that the body of Christ is a growing body; that though the members of the church militant are daily removed by death, yet there are those who are baptized (ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν) *in the room of the dead,*[l] to bear up the name of Christ in the world, and to preserve a succession of professing Christians. Thus shall the seed of Christ *endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven:*[c] and they shall *fear him as long as the sun and the moon endure;*[k] which we should think and speak of, with a great deal of joy and thankfulness. We are not without hopes, that God hath great things in store for his church, in the latter days; that there are glorious promises to be fulfilled shortly: in reference to which, it is some encouragement, that there is a seed preserved; that the line is continued; that the entail is not quite cut off; but that a generation is rising, which may enter into that promised Canaan, though our carcasses may fall in the wilderness, for our unbelief and murmuring. And though all are not *Israel* who are of *Israel,* though all are not saints indeed who are baptized Christians, (would to God they were,) yet surely among them there is a remnant, according to the election of grace, which is thus invested in church privileges. And hereby the mystical body is filling up. Which should be matter of joy and praise to us. That the hour hastens on when the number of the elect shall be completed; when *the bride, the Lamb's wife,* shall have *made herself ready;*[m] and the *marriage of the Lamb shall come.* When, though there will be found virgins in profession, with lamps in their hands, who shall be excluded for their folly, yet the chosen remnant of Wisdom's children, the virgins who were so wise as to get oil in their vessels, such as were not only baptized with water but with the Holy Ghost, shall go in to the marriage. Then shall there be a general assembly of the church of the first-born, whose names were written in heaven.—The scattered members of the mystical body, that lived in distant places, from one end of heaven to the other, and in distant ages, from the beginning to the end of time, shall all be gathered together to Christ the head, in one pure, unmixed, glorious congregation, and so presented to the Father; and altogether be put in possession of the inheritance of sons. How should the believing prospect of this day raise our thoughts, inflame our joys, and excite our most earnest desires! Even so come, Lord Jesus; come quickly.

[b] Matt. xxi. 15.

* Νηπίων—children that cannot speak; καὶ θηλαζόντων—children that are at the breast.

[l] 1 Cor. xv. 29.

[c] Ps. lxxxix. 29.

[k] Ps. lxxii. 5.

[m] Rev. xix. 7.

PREFACE

TO THE

LIFE OF THE REV. THOMAS BEARD.

To the Reader.

Being favoured with the perusal of these papers in manuscript, by means of my acquaintance with that family of which this pious young man was a promising branch, I am willing to say with what pleasure I read them, and to recommend them to those of the rising generation among us, for whose real service and benefit they are designed.

It was an observable method, which both our blessed Lord and his apostles sometimes took, to preach a sermon first, and then work a miracle for the confirmation of it; or to work a miracle first, and then preach a sermon for the improvement of it. Miracles are now ceased, but (blessed be God) preaching is not, nor the power of the Spirit, *confirming the word by signs following*, of another nature. You have here a very pathetical, serious sermon; designed to engage all young people, and particularly the children of godly parents, to be betimes religious: and you have here joined with it a bright and eminent example of early piety, and that to a miracle of divine grace, which the sermon both gives the improvement of, and receives confirmation from.

How powerful the influence of bad examples is, to corrupt and debauch, we see daily: I am willing to hope, that this, and other the like good examples, may have a happy influence upon some, by the grace of God, to provoke them to a holy emulation; and may serve both as the plainest directions, and strongest persuasives, to all the instances of serious godliness; for it is not the interest of any party that this is intended to serve, but that of *pure religion* only, unmixed and *undefiled before God and the Father*.

The reflections which this thinking, praying youth made upon his own life, then when he had but few years to reflect upon, are here given you, as they ought to be, in their own native plainness and godly simplicity; and though, considered in themselves, there may be thought nothing extraordinary in them, that they should deserve to be published; yet looked upon as coming from one of sixteen or seventeen years of age, they are really uncommon, and upon that account, one may hope, will be the more taken notice of by those of that age: and to a good Christian, one truly *pious* thought is worth ten *fine* thoughts. And the publishing of them may help to make some little amends for the mighty loss we sustained by the death of one, that was so likely to have been serviceable to his generation. Nay, they may serve for a copy to the ripest and oldest Christians, and may shame many that have doubled and trebled his years, and yet are not so well acquainted as he was with their own spirits. The books which that learned and virtuous emperor, *Marcus Antoninus, wrote* εις εαυτον—*concerning himself*, and *to himself*, are very valuable pieces of antiquity. And we should all find our hearts better, if we did more frequently retire into them; and our lives better, if we did more frequently reflect upon them.

Perhaps, if there were such a collection of the most remarkable instances of devotion, in those that were about the age of this young man, both which have been published, and which might be gathered up from credible reports, as there is of those in the earlier age, by Mr. *White*, in his *Little Book for Little Children*, and Mr. *Janeway*, in his

Token for Children; it might be as useful in its kind, as these have been to the age for which they were calculated. St. *John* writes distinctly to *little children*, and to *young men*, 1 John ii. 12, 13.

That God, by his grace, would make the next generation wiser and better than this, and qualify many to be a seed to serve Christ, that *from the womb of the morning he may have the dew of their youth*, and the church the blessed fruits of that dew, through a long day, and that the *first-ripe fruits* which *our souls desire*, may not be *nipt*, as here they were, in the blossom, is the desire and prayer of,

A hearty wellwisher to the rising generation.

MATTH. HENRY.

Chester,
March 1, 1710-11.

PREFACE

TO

MURREY'S CLOSET DEVOTIONS.

TO THE READER.

IT is certain and evident that the power and prevalency of a spirit of true devotion, as it is very much the holiness and comfort of particular persons in whom it reigns, so it would go far towards the redressing of the general grievances of the church and nation; and both in the heart and in the world, would introduce a heaven upon earth. And even from secret devotions, as from a root or spring unseen, a great deal of public benefit may arise, through the grace of Him, who even in this world, in this way, rewards openly the good he sees in secret.

I must, therefore, always readily and gladly lend a hand, such a one as it is, to every thing that may contribute towards the keeping up, and carrying on, of a correspondence between heaven and earth, and to assist the breathings of humble pious souls towards God; which I think this composure of *Closet Devotions* hath a direct tendency to, among the many books for direction and help in prayer we are blessed with, in our language; which are a valuable treasury, capable of being added to.

And I cannot but take this occasion to say, with what pleasure I observed, that in the late act of parliament, which lays a duty upon all pamphlets, and particularly newspapers, there is an express proviso, that books of piety and devotion shall not be charged with the duty, that they might not be made dearer, and so the spreading of them hindered; wherein methinks, the law hath given a very useful hint or intimation to the inhabitants of our land, which I heartily wish they would take; and it is this, that they would employ themselves more as those primitive Christians did, who *continued with one accord in prayer and supplication*; and less as the *Athenians* did, who *spent their time in nothing else but in telling and hearing, in writing and reading, new things*.

The assistance here offered to pious and devout affections, is such as needs not my commendation. If I be not mistaken, it will commend itself to those, who in their judgment approve helps of this kind, and will with a serious disposition look into it. For the matter of the devotion is of common concern to all Christians, at all times, and in all conditions. The first and great principles of our religion are to be to us as our daily bread, by receiving and digesting of which, the spiritual life is strengthened and supported. They are things which we ought frequently to inculcate upon our own hearts, that they may become very familiar to us, and ready at our right hand upon all occasions; such a copiousness there is in them to the enlightened understanding, that they can never be drawn dry, and such a pleasantness there is in them to the sanctified affections, that they can never be worn thread-bare: They are

like the manna, which every faithful *Israelite* can live upon with abundant satisfaction, as long as he is here in this wilderness; and desires no varieties, no other dainties: and which none but the mixed multitude will grow weary of, and call light bread.

And as the matter here is such as every one is concerned in, so the expression is such as every one may intelligently make use of. It is, as I think the language of our devotions should be, plain, and easy, and natural, and (which is particularly aimed at, and more than any thing in this essay) it is throughout Scriptural: They are *words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*, and in those it is fittest to address to God. Some, perhaps, will despise it, because the language is not fine; for my part, I like it because it is not forced: The *enticing words of man's wisdom*, are no more the strength and beauty of praying and preaching now, than they were in St. *Paul's* time, but the commanding words of the oracles of God.

This matter is admirably well expressed, by a great and celebrated judge, both of sense and language, in a paper of the same date with this epistle, which coming into my hands so seasonably, just as this was going out of them, I beg leave to transcribe some lines: "It happens very well (saith our Spectator) that the *Hebrew* idioms run into the *English* tongue with a particular grace and beauty: our language has received innumerable elegances and improvements from that infusion of Hebraisms, which are derived to it out of the poetical (I will add, and other) passages in holy writ. They give a force and energy to our expressions, warm and animate our language, and convey our thoughts in more ardent and intense phrases, than any that are to be met with in our own tongue. There is something so pathetic in this kind of diction, that it often sets the mind in a flame, and makes our hearts burn within us. How cold and dead (saith he) doth a prayer appear, that is composed in the most elegant and polite forms of speech which are natural to our tongue, when it is not heightened by that solemnity of phrase, which may be drawn from the sacred writings. It has been said by some of the ancients, that, if the gods were to talk with men, they would certainly speak in *Plato's* style; but I think we may say, with justice, that when mortals converse with their Creator, they cannot do it in so proper a style, as that of the Holy Scriptures."

Those who find either need of, or advantage by, the words here made ready to their hands, may, no doubt, in their retirements, follow them with their pious affections, acceptably to God, and profitably to themselves, (as they do the prayers that are publicly offered up by their ministers in the congregation,) and make them their own; yet, with these needful cautions, that they double their guard against formality, and that they rest not herein, but press forward towards perfection. And those who, through divine grace, have obtained a good measure of the gift of prayer, by consulting and perusing these draughts of addresses to God, may be helped in using the gift they have, may be improved in it, and may have their *pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance.* Why may we not be taught to pray, as well as to meditate, from the performances of others? and why not from prayers in writing, as well as by word of mouth? The truth is, we need all the helps we can get to assist and further us in our work of this kind; and all little enough, nay, and all too little, unless the blessed Spirit himself *help our infirmities*, by *making intercession in us, with groanings, which after all cannot be uttered.*

But though this performance needs not my commendation, nor can my poor worthless name add any reputation to it, yet I think myself somewhat concerned to recommend it: partly, because the worthy author is one I have long known, and have an intimate acquaintance with, and a great value for; and I have reason to think him upon this account very fit to assist the devotions of others, because he is a devout good man himself, and of a piece with what you here see of him: and partly because the performance is somewhat corresponding with what I designed in the *Method for Prayer*, published about two years ago, as an example with the rule. The nail, as there directed, is here well driven: and O that, by a plentiful effusion of the Spirit of grace and supplication, the honest intentions of both may be answered, and it may be *a nail in a sure place;* and that this, and all other proper and pious endeavours to advance true devotion, may redound to the honour of God, and the spiritual and eternal welfare of the souls of men; to which I desire always to approve myself a hearty wellwisher.

MATT. HENRY.

June 14, 1712.

SERIES OF SERMONS,

BY THE

REVEREND MATTHEW HENRY.

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS.

THE

WORTH OF THE SOUL,

IN SIX SERMONS.

SERMON I.

MATTHEW xvi. 16.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

THIS great and serious word comes in here as an argument against apostasy from the truths and ways of Christ. The terms of discipleship are laid down, v. 24. and lower we cannot bring them. *Self-denial* and *patient suffering* are the conditions of our being owned by Christ as his disciples; and these lessons will never be learned if we consult with flesh and blood; let us therefore consult with our Lord Jesus Christ, and hear his awakening declaration, that whoever forsake and deny Christ will certainly be losers by it. The two great temptations to apostasy are, fear of suffering, and hope of advantage.

1. He that denies Christ for fear of suffering will certainly be a loser. This he shows, v. 25. *Whosoever will save his life shall lose it.* He that by sin saves it in this world, will lose it in another. There cannot be a fairer pretence for apostasy, than saving the life by it, so very powerful is the law of self-preservation, but that will prove in the end the greatest self-destruction. There is a life to be lost besides that of the body.—Nay,

2. He that denies Christ for hope of worldly profit, will certainly be a loser at last. This is plainly declared in the text. The apostate thinks he has gain in his apostasy; but he has deceived himself; yet were his imaginary gain far more than it really is, it would be but a miserable compensation for his final loss. Christ speaks of the soul as immortal, and intimates the possibility of its loss, by which he intends the destruction of its happiness after the death of the body; now this is a loss which cannot be balanced by the gain of the whole world; drawing back is to the perdition of the soul, Heb. x. 39. It has been recommended by some as a very likely means to make a man serious, that he should spend one quarter of an hour every day in serious thoughts of this Scripture. It is a Scripture well known. O that it might be well studied and improved.

There are Six Doctrines from this text.

1. That every man has a soul of his own.
2. It is possible this soul may be lost.
3. If the soul be lost it is of the sinner's own losing.
4. One soul is more worth than all the world.
5. The winning of the world is oft the losing of the soul.
6. The loss of the soul is so great a loss that the gain of all the world will not make it up.

For the 1st Doctrine, That every man has *a soul of his own—his own soul.* (1.) I need not prove this to you, you will all own it, for this is a truth discovered by the very light of nature, though the atheists deny it, and make all the actions of the soul to be nothing else but the products of matter and motion. The same fools that say there is no God, say there is no soul. If man has not a rational immortal soul, farewell all religion—our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain, 1 Cor. xv. 14. It is well for us daily to recollect the vast difference which exists between man and the brutes which perish. Man has a soul: this distinguishes him from all the inferior creatures, and gives him his dignity above them. And it becomes him ever to be upon his guard against every thing which might shake his faith in this fundamental truth; and as he has a soul, let him use it, which will be the best demonstration to others that he is indeed raised above the rest of God's creation.—My aim is, (2.) To explain the true doctrine as to the soul of man. We deal with souls, and about soul affairs, and therefore it concerns us duly to state that which is the great subject of our preaching.

I shall show, I. What the soul of man is. The brute creatures have a sensitive soul, we read of the spirit of a beast, Eccl. iii. 21. endued with the powers of sensation and imagination, and much of the power and wisdom of God is seen in them. But the soul of man is something above that, something distinct from the body. That faculty by which we correct the errors of imagination, and by which we reflect upon ourselves and carry on profound speculations about invisible things, must needs be a power above that of sense: and that is the rational soul. Not to trouble you with the curiosity of a definition, we shall consider the soul of man,

1. In its nature. We do not see it, any more than we see God, though he be not far from every one of us, Acts xvii. 27. We cannot find out to perfection either God or our own souls; yet something we know:

(1.) The soul is a vital principle; not matter, as the body, but a being that may and can subsist of itself, and be the subject of accidents. Man is said to be a living soul, Gen. ii. 7. 1 Cor. xv. 45. It is called the *light of men*, John i. 4. The soul is one of those things that *are;* it is not one of the appurtenances of the man, as the clothes are to the body, but it is a substance, to which other things are appendant.

(2.) It is a spiritual and immaterial principle. It is not matter, nor doth it depend upon matter, either in its being or operation. It is called a *spirit*. The manner of its working is immaterial and independent upon the body. Bodily powers have bodily organs, as the power of seeing has the eye; but the soul has no such organs by which it understands and reasons. The outward senses do but convey the object, and do not at all contribute to the immediate acts of the soul. The soul is capable of receiving the evidence of things not seen, Heb. xi. 1. and being a spirit, by it we are related to the world of spirits.

(3.) Consider the soul. It is immortal, because immaterial. In its faculties, which are two, Principally,

(1.) Understanding. This we properly call *reason*, by which we are made wiser than the fowls of heaven, Job xxxv. 11. The spirit of man is understanding, Job xxxii. 8. There is a receptive operation of the understanding, by which it takes in what is offered and discovered to it, and an active operation of it, by which it discourses with itself, and thereby makes discoveries and communicates them to others. The soul is capable of knowing God, of which the brute creatures are incapable. This is God's gift, Job xxxviii. 36. We read of the eyes of the understanding, Eph. i. 18. and the understanding being darkened, Eph. iv. 18. Memory also is connected with the understanding.

(2.) Will; that faculty of the soul by which it chooses or refuses, according to the dictates of the understanding. The object of the will is good, at least apprehended to be so. To will, is to choose the good and refuse the evil, Isa. vii. 16. The understanding having deliberated, the will resolves. Corrupt will is enslaved by the sensual lusts; but otherwise the will in itself is free. The affections of the soul are branches of the will, in which the soul is carried out towards objects as they appear; in desire towards an absent good, delight in a present good, hope of a probable good, and love in all. Also in hatred of that which is evil; aversion to it, fear of it, and sorrow for it. These are the feet of the soul; these are to the man as the wind to the ship. Thus is the soul constituted: understanding relates to objects as they are; will relates to them as they are to us. The soul of man has a faculty of reflection and a power of anticipation. It can *call to mind*, Isa. xlvi. 8. and can by rational deductions look forward and foresee what is to come. The spirit of a man is the *candle of the Lord*, Prov. xx. 27. The will has the dominion in the soul under God, and is certainly something much greater than sensitive appetite. View the soul,

3. In its relation to God.

(1.) It is the gift of God, Eccl. xii. 7. God who *gave it*—he breathed it, Gen. ii. 7. Job xxxiii. 4. It is a ray of light from him who is the Fountain of light. He is the Father of spirits, Heb. xii. 9. It is the soul that he has made, Isa. lvii. 16. He *formeth the spirit of man within him*, Zech. xii. 1. and a curious piece of workmanship it is. There was a consultation, as it were, when man was to be made, Gen. i. 26. *Let us make man.* We are not the authors of our own being; our fathers are the fathers of our flesh only, but our souls are created by God himself. Thus man differs from the irrational creatures, and is advanced above them.

(2.) It bears the image of God, Gen. v. 1. *In the likeness of God.* The nature of the soul is some resemblance of the divine nature, though a faint one. Where the moral rectitude is lost, yet there is something of resemblance in the nature; and therefore it is a reason why man must not be killed, Gen. ix. 6. and cursed, Jam. iii. 9. God is light and life; and so is the soul. There the image of God in man appears most. This puts a great honour upon the soul. How lamentable it is that the image of God should be defaced by sin! This is the great disgrace of man, and the source of all his unhappiness. O be in earnest in seeking that sanctification in which the image of God is restored, Col. iii. 10.

(3.) It is made for God; made not only for his glory, and to show forth his praise, but more immediately for his use and service. It is that being only in this lower world that actively praises God, the rest only objectively, Ps. ciii. 1. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.* The soul was made to be the habitation of God, the temple of Christ, who dwells in the heart.

It was to be God's part in man. The heart is God's peculiar, which he demands, and in which he sets up his throne, Prov. xxiii. 26. It had its noble powers and faculties for this end, that it might serve and enjoy God, Isa. xliii. 7—21. It is therefore accountable to him. The soul is also to be regarded,

4. In its relation to the body.

(1.) It is now united to the body, and directs the body. The soul of man was made and intended for the body, to be the principle of its life. The soul's union with the body is the result of an infusion; still God breathes the breath of life. The soul thus united to the body, ordinarily performs its operations by the ministry of the body. Paul once knew not whether he was in the body or out of the body, 2 Cor. xii. 3. The soul governs the motions of the body, and is set over the rest of the works of God's hands; and in its present actings has some dependence upon the temperament and state of the body. Bodily diseases weaken the habits and disturb the operations of the mind.

(2.) It will shortly be separated from the body, and will then act in a state of separation. It lives now in the body, but it will live when the body is dead, Eccl. xii. 7. When the tabernacle shall be dissolved, the inhabitants shall live in another region. The soul will not die with the body. We read of the soul's being in paradise when the body is dead, Luke xxii. 43.—of the soul's being with Christ when it is departed from the body, Phil. i. 23.—of the souls of them that are slain crying with a loud voice, Rev. vi. 10. The very heathen had some notion of the immortality of the soul, and of its departure to happiness or misery, according to what was done in the body. When we speak of the soul as distinct from the body now, it will much help us to think of the separation of the soul and body. The soul will live and act when the body is in the grave, though how and in what way we cannot easily conceive. The soul of the wicked will be required, Luke xii. 20. the soul of the godly resigned, Acts vii. 59. The soul does not sleep as the body sleeps.

Show, II. Why it is called *our own soul*—his *own soul*.

1. It is but *one* soul—it is *soul* in the singular number—not souls, as of many, but one—the soul is called the *only one*, Ps. xxii. 20. margin. Being but one, the greater is the shame if we neglect it, and the greater is the loss if we lose it. If we lose an eye or a hand, nature has provided another which may in part make up the loss; but nothing is appointed to make up the loss of a soul, for we have but one God to serve, and one soul to save—one God in the great world, one soul in the little world. Being our only one, it should be our *darling*, like the poor man's ewe-lamb. Make not that thy drudge which should be thy darling.

2. It is *his own*. How his own? not in respect of absolute propriety and dominion. It is not our own to do what we will with it, and to dispose of it as we please; not as they said, our tongues are *our own*, Ps. xii. 4. So God challenges a right to them, and can make good his claim. We are *not our own*, 1 Cor. vi. 19. being not our own creators, we are not our own proprietors. God has said, *All souls are mine*, Ezek. xviii. 4. He made us, and his we are, to be commanded and disposed of by him. He is the God of the spirits of all flesh, Numb. xvi. 22. But it is *our own* soul,

(1.) As it is near and dear to ourselves. So it is more our own than any thing we have. Houses and lands are but appurtenances; our souls are our demesne; the concernments of them are more our concern than any thing else. Other things have but slender relation to us, but our souls and our God are our own—so our own, that, unless by our own default, as no creature gave them, so no creature can take them away. In them our concern lies most, Deut. xiii. 6. *Thy friend which is as thy own soul*—nothing can be nearer than that, thy soul is thyself.

(2.) As it is distinguished from the souls of others. They talk of the soul of the world; but every man has a soul of his own, distinguished from all others. Job supposes his friends' souls in his soul's stead, Job xvi. 4. but it was but a supposition. We must partake of the joys and sorrows of others' souls by sympathy, as members one of another; but our souls are our own; so that the salvation of another man's soul will not be the salvation of mine. We must bear one another's burthens, and yet every man prove his own work: see Gal. vi. 2, 4, 5.

(3.) As we are intrusted with it, and have it committed to our care, by him whose all souls are. It is our talent which we are to trade with, our vineyard which we are to keep, Cant. i. 6. Let this be your care. The charge we have received concerning these souls of ours, is to see to it,

[1.] That they be *employed* in the service of God in this world. We have our souls given us to be used in serving God. We have a power of knowing, that we may know God, and a power of loving, that we may love God. We were intrusted with these noble faculties, that we might glorify our Creator, serving him *with our spirits*, Rom. i. 9. We have our souls in vain, if we put God off with bodily exercise, which profits little, 1 Tim. iv. 8. We have souls to be engaged in approaching to God, Jer. xxx. 21. This cannot be if they be enslaved to the flesh, and polluted with fleshly lusts. How can a soul plunged in the things of sense, be fit to serve and have communion with the holy God. God will be worshipped in the spirit, John iv. 23. for he is a Spirit. Therefore God put some of his image upon us, that we might reflect glory to him; that we might glorify God with our spirits, 1 Cor. vi. 20. The body is good for nothing without the soul.

[2.] That they be *prepared* for the enjoyment of God in the other world. This charge is committed to every one of us, to get our souls in a readiness for the appearance of Christ, and for a future state. None shall partake of the blessedness of heaven but those that are first made ready for it. See that your souls be refined from that which is inconsistent with this blessedness, and previously disposed and inclined to that in which it consists. This is sanctification, making ready a people prepared for the Lord, Luke i. 17. and no little is required to prepare a soul for eternal glory. The people of God are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, Col. i. 12. This is, and ought to be, the chief and continual care of every man in this life.

Use 1. If every man has a soul of his own, then every man has reason to be thankful to his Creator. Let us bless God for our rational souls, that we were endued with those noble powers which distinguish them. A soul is a jewel of value, for which we ought to give thanks to the Father of spirits. If all his works do praise him, much more should we. We were in God's hand as the clay in the hand of the potter, to be made vessels of honour or dishonour as pleased him, Jer. xviii. 6. Rom. ix. 20. And has he made us vessels of honour, how much are we indebted! Let us bless God, that we are made capable of blessing him. We are fearfully and wonderfully made, Ps. cxxxix. 14. *this my soul knoweth*—knoweth by experience. When man had made himself in respect of corruption like the beasts that perish, how justly might God have made him so in his constitution, Ps. xlix. 20. Let us praise God for an understanding, and beg of him that gave us the faculty, to give us grace in that faculty, that it may ever be employed in his service, and be blessed with the rich enjoyment of himself.

2. Then every man has reason to be thankful for his Redeemer, who is the best friend to souls that ever was, and has abundantly commended his love to souls. Well may the soul and spirit rejoice in him as the God of our salvation, Luke i. 46, 47. Through him the salvation of the soul is wrought out, and spiritual blessings for spiritual beings purchased, Eph. i. 3. To have a soul, had been but to have a capacity of being eternally miserable, if Christ had not interposed. He delivers the soul from the pit of destruction, Job xxxiii. 28. Every man that has a soul is concerned in that great salvation which he has wrought out.

3. There is good reason why we should honour all men. It is the law of Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 17. *Esteem* all men, because every man has a soul, is thus far favoured of God, thus far equal with us. This is one thing wherein rich and poor meet together, Prov. xxii. 2. their hearts are fashioned alike, Ps. xxxiii. 15. Let none be treated with scorn, as unworthy to be set with the dogs of our flock, that has an immortal soul, as valuable in itself, and as precious in the sight of God, as our own. If he has not wealth he has a soul; therefore, let us not trample upon any, nor curse any, Jam. iii. 9. They do very ill that are more tender of a dog, or a horse, than of a man, or a woman, or a child, that has an immortal soul. Those that are poor and despised, may comfort themselves with this, that they have souls.

4. There is good reason why we should seek the spiritual welfare of all men. He that has a soul, has a soul to save, and if every man has so, then we should pray for all men, 1 Tim. ii. 1. for all men have souls that are capable of serving and enjoying God. Think, here is a poor neighbour that has a soul of his own; can I do nothing for the welfare of that soul; nothing to *save a soul from death*, Jam. v. 20. nothing to win a soul, Prov. xi. 30. How should this quicken ministers to travail in birth again; and quicken all, in their places, to lay out themselves for the good of souls to the utmost. Say not, Why should we concern ourselves, whether these come to Christ's ordinances, or be taken notice of, or not? Have they not souls? Christ preached to publicans; they had souls as well as Pharisees. Poor, and maimed, and halt, had souls, and thus it is now. All souls were precious to Christ, and so they must to us, or we have not his Spirit.

5. It concerns every man to be busy. If every man has a soul of his own, he has enough to do to look after it. He has a talent to trade with—if but that one, it is enough to fill him with care. He has a vineyard to dress and to keep, which will find him with constant employment, or else it will soon become like the field of the slothful, Prov. xxiv. 30, &c. He that has a soul of his own, has somewhat to do to keep it, Prov. iv. 23. Deut. iv. 9.—to keep out spiritual wickedness, and to keep up spiritual duties. He that has a soul of his own, had need look about him, for he has a jewel of value in his hand, which he is in danger of losing,—is in the midst of enemies. He has much to set in order, and he has no time to be idle.

6. It concerns every man to prove his own work, Gal. vi. 4. If every man has a soul of his own, a separate interest of his own to mind, then it is ill to venture his soul, and the interests of it, in the same way that others venture theirs. If we have souls of our own, we must not follow the multitude to do evil, Exod. xxiii. 2. Do not say, Others venture upon sin, others neglect duty, and have not so much concern about religion, and therefore why should I be concerned? but remember, thou hast a soul of thy own, and shalt give account of thyself, Rom. xiv. 12. If others hazard their souls, it does not follow that I may hazard mine. I must follow God's directions, rather than the evil examples of men.

7. It is the unspeakable folly of most men, that they live as if they thought they had no souls, or knew not what the nature of their souls is. The world is full of such fools, who profess to know that they have precious and immortal souls, but in works deny it. They are guilty of this folly,

(1.) Who are careful to avoid that which is hurtful to the body, but take no care to avoid that which is prejudicial to the soul. Those live as if they had no souls, who are doing that every day without regret, that defiles the soul, Tit. i. 14. and wrongs the soul, Prov. viii. 36. and hazards the eternal happiness of the soul. Dost thou think thou hast a soul, and yet art so unconcerned at spiritual miseries?

(2.) Those who are labouring for the meat that perishes, and take no pains for that which is meat for the soul; that are busy laying up treasure for their bodies, but make no provision for the soul. Dost thou think thou hast a soul; and makest so light of Christ, and art careless in praying and hearing; seekest corn and wine, and any good, more than the favour of God, which is the life of the soul?

(3.) Those whose souls *take their ease* in the profits and pleasures of this world. The rich man, Luke xii. 19. knew he had a soul, but knew not the nature of his soul, else he would not have talked to it as he did. Those that bless their souls in the abundance of their worldly possessions, which perish in the using, know not that their souls are spiritual and immortal, and so perish with a lie in their right hand.

SERMON II.

MATTHEW xvi. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

DOCTRINE 2. That it is possible the soul may be *lost*. There is great danger of a man's *losing his own soul*. The word of God is a word of *warning*, Ps. xix. 11.—it tells us what we are in danger of while we go on in sin. The work of ministers is to give warning, Ezek. xxxiii. 7.—according to the word, to show people not only sin in its colours, but sin in its consequences; what hazards they run, while they abide by the choice of their own delusions. Therefore when the prophets prophesy falsely, it is no marvel if the people know not what will be in the end of it, Jer. v. 31. The text gives us warning of the danger we are in of losing our own souls. It is spoken of as a thing very possible, and it is good to know our danger. I shall

Show, I. What the *loss of the soul* is. And,

1. The metaphor must be opened. Interpreters agree not from what it is borrowed, but a metaphor it is. It stands opposed here to *gaining*. Profit and loss use to be considered together, as *v.* 25.—losing stands opposed to saving. In the consideration of peril only, it is enough to save; but in the consideration of profit, it is desirable to gain: and so it is to be considered here, not excluding the other, for Luke uses both words. The soul may be said to be lost,

(1.) *Recoverably* in this world.

[1.] As a wandering *sheep* is lost: and thus we are all by nature *lost*, Ps. cxix. 176. compare Isa. liii. 6. Thus a sinful condition is a lost condition, and they who continue in this condition, are for ever lost: see Matt. xviii. 12. Luke xv. 4. But this is a loss that is recoverable, Matt. xviii. 11. Luke xv. 32; xix. 10. A man loses his soul, while it goes astray from God; and a sad loss it is. Those that deny Christ to gain worldly preferment, by so doing, immediately *lose their souls*. They thus go astray like wandering sheep. As long as we are in any sinful way, so long we are wandering like sheep, which, while they wander, are from under the eye and care of the shepherd, and want the green pastures and the still waters. They are without the society of the flock, and are exposed to be worried by the dogs that seek to devour. This is the condition of backsliders. Let us bless God that there is a return from this lost state.

[2.] As a jewel of value is lost; a piece of silver, that is the comparison, Luke xv. 8, 9. The soul is a piece of silver, more valuable than thousands of gold and silver. It is capable of improvement by trading; it is stamped with God's image and superscription, though many esteem it as the dirt of the earth. This jewel is lost when we are put out of the possession of it. The devil has robbed man of it; that great destroyer of souls. Sensual pleasures take away the heart, and rob men for the present of their own souls, Hos. iv. 11. A man that is drunk, or is carried on by the violence of unbridled passions, has for the present lost his own soul, that precious jewel. The soul is also lost that is drowned in worldly pursuits. How lamentable, that such a precious jewel should be thus trampled upon! But this is recoverable by repentance and regeneration.

[3.] As a bewildered traveller is *lost*. A man is lost when he is out of his way—so is the soul. He that denies Christ, thus loses his soul, *i. e.* he wanders out of the way of understanding, Prov. xxi. 16. Thus a sinful state, especially a state of backsliding and apostasy, is a lost state, Ps. xiv. 3. *All gone out of the way.* We are lost, when we go out of the right and good way that leads to heaven, and turn aside to crooked paths, and are lost as a man in a wood, or labyrinth, which he cannot get out of. The right way is one, and though it be strait and narrow, yet it is a way of pleasantness, and we may find it, if our eyes look not aside. But by-paths are many, and

the sinner has no satisfaction in them. A man loses his soul when he plunges himself in the depths of Satan, and entangles himself in the snares of this world, those thorns that are in the way of the froward, traversing their way. Such are called upon to return, Jer. iii. 22. and to ask for the old way, Jer. vi. 16.

[4.] As a city or strong hold is *lost* to the enemy. He that turns away from Christ, delivers his soul into the hands of Satan, who gets the command of it, and keeps it as his palace. It should pay tribute to Christ: the strength of it should be employed for Christ; but it is *lost*. Satan has got possession of it, lusts rule, and the powers of the soul are engaged in the devil's cause, and are his armour wherein he trusts, Luke xi. 21, 22. When we yield to the assaults of Satan's temptations, and surrender to him, there is a soul lost. Rest not till it be retrieved. Let Christ come and lead captivity captive; submit to the conduct of Christ the Captain of salvation, yield to him, and he will get it, and take it—he whose right it is. Thus the soul may be lost, and it is possible it may be recovered. Be concerned that you may see yourselves to be in a lost condition. Seek after your own souls. Endeavour to gain possession of them. A man is never master of his own soul till Christ is master of it. Come to him as the great Shepherd, 1 Pet. ii. 25. the great guide to poor travellers. Rest not in a lost condition. Blessed be God, there is hope for lost souls, a remedy is provided. You are lost, but you may be found, if you do as the prodigal son did, return to your father. Aim also to keep possession of your souls. We are in danger of losing our souls every day, in particular temptations; therefore, double your guard. Let your eye be continually upon your souls; keep them with all diligence, and commit the keeping of them to God. 1 Pet. iv. 19. Luke xxi. 19.

(2.) The soul may be lost *irrecoverably* in the other world: and this is especially meant here. They that lose their souls in the by-paths of sin, and do not recover themselves by repentance *out of the snare of the devil*, 2 Tim. ii. 26. will be *lost* to all eternity; so lost as not to be sought for nor saved any more. Thus those that persist in unbelief are said to be *lost*, 2 Cor. iv. 3. *To them that are lost*, *i. e.* that wilfully shut their eyes against the gospel, and will not receive it. They are *lost*, *i. e.* not chosen in the counsels of divine love, left to be vessels of wrath, Rom. ix. 22. to them the gospel is hidden, Matt. xiii. 14. *Lost*, *i. e.* hastening inevitably to destruction. To be lost is to *perish*, perish eternally. Judas is called a *son of perdition*, John xvii. 12. not only actively, as far as was in his power destroying Christ, but passively, to be destroyed. He went to *his own place*, Acts i. 25. compare Ps. cix. 8. &c. which is referred to, and see what it is to be a son of perdition; that is more than to be lost; so the prodigal was, and yet found; but doomed to perdition, as Eph. ii. 3. children of wrath. The antichrist is called the son of perdition, 2 Thess. ii. 3. and see what that is, v. 12. and Rev. xiv. 9, 10. To perish eternally, is to *lose our souls*.

[1.] As the sinking ship is lost at sea. Lose his soul as the owner and merchant lose the ship and cargo, whatever the value is, when she splits upon a rock, or founders at sea: and many a man's all for this world is lost by the miscarrying of a ship at sea, it is lost without possibility of recovery. We are every one of us, in profession, making a voyage for heaven, are richly laden; the soul is exceedingly precious, it is our all; if that perish, the ship is sunk, it is *cast away*; that is the word in the parallel place, Luke ix. 25. Those that make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, make shipwreck of their own souls, 1 Tim. i. 19. The damnation of hell is compared to a man's sinking into the bottom of the sea, Matt. xviii. 6. Rev. xviii. 21. it is an irrecoverable ruin. Many a hypocrite spreads a large sail, and seems to make way apace for heaven; but there is some secret leak of corruption unstopped, and so he sinks of a sudden, and perishes perhaps within sight of the haven. The storm of persecution sinks many a soul that seemed fair, Matt. vii. 27. Some are sunk by being overloaded with this world, having much of it, and much to do in it, and letting it into their hearts, see 1 Tim. vi. 10.

[2.] As the stakes are lost when a man is beaten in his game; or rather, the money lost, when a man is cheated in his bargain. A good man stakes the world to heaven, hazards his temporal interests for the obtaining of an eternal happiness; and he wins abundantly:—see Paul staking his all for Christ, Phil. iii. 7, 8. A wicked, worldly man, stakes his soul to the world, to secure what he has, and to get more of it, and the devil plays against him, who lies in wait to deceive and destroy souls. The wicked man hazards his soul, and runs a great venture, and saith of the world, as Paul doth there of Christ, I count every thing but loss, even God and Christ, and my soul, and heaven, that I may win the world. Satan is a subtle gamester, and wins the prize by deluding the soul.

[3.] As the cause is lost when a man is cast in it. The life of the soul is the inheritance we are in suit for. Let my soul live, is the demand; it is the inheritance of our fathers, which we are fools if we alienate. A wicked man when he comes to die would commit his soul to God, to be saved. Now here is a double cause to be tried. You demand the life of your soul—what title have you to your own souls, and the happiness of them? what evidences can you produce? were you marked for God? You expect a spiritual happiness from God—what work have you done for him? There is a debt, a great debt, upon your soul—had you an interest in Christ's satisfac-

tion? what evidence of that interest have you? Was Christ redemption to you? was he sanctification? 1 Cor. i. 30. Again, you would give your souls up to God. Satan comes, and saith they are his—you gave him your hearts. These causes will be tried at the great day, and if we be cast, our souls are lost; no writ of error lies from that tribunal: see the verse after the text.

[4.] As the condemned malefactor is lost. He lies not at the mercy of the court, he has no reason to expect that his sentence will be reversed, but that it will be strictly executed: and thus the soul that is lost is in a hopeless state, its eternal condemnation is sealed. Mercy will then have done its work. When a man has forfeited his life, and is convicted, his life is lost, he is a lost man; the forfeiture will surely be taken, for God is righteous. Hence he is said to *take away* the soul, Job xxvii. 8. as forfeited. It is the description of the death of a wicked man, and perhaps of his damnation too, Luke xii. 20. Thy *soul shall be required of thee.* There is a soul lost, required for the satisfaction of wronged justice; since the sinner had no interest in Christ's satisfaction, and God will abide by what he has said, that the soul that sins shall die. *Required of* thee as unworthy of it—what should he do with a soul that used it no better than that fool did? *v.* 19. That soul is lost that is under the curse of God, is convicted and condemned in the judgment of the great day. This is to lose the soul. A man may be a a loser in a thing, and yet not absolutely lose it; but this is the absolute losing of the soul.

Having illustrated the metaphor, I will show,

2. What is principally intended by this expression of *losing the soul.* It is not the annihilation of the soul, its losing of its being: no; it is a loss (I think) greater than that, even the loss of its well-being, while its existence and faculties shall remain to make it capable of misery: see Matt. xxvi. 24. It is the eternal misery of the soul, under that sentence, Depart from me ye cursed, Matt. xxv. 41. The soul is lost, when it is irrecoverably separated from all the good, and to all the evil, of which it is capable. It is the death of the soul. The text speaks of a misery which will seize the immortal soul—which will reach its nature, and run parallel with its duration. It is hard to conceive of this; as *eye has not seen*, so it is known only to God, Job xxvi. 6. Let us take a view of that misery, and see what it is.

(1.) The lost soul will be for ever separated from the love and favour of God, in which alone the happiness of the soul consists. Hell is the loss of God, and of all good—Depart *from me*; here they said to God, Depart, Job xxi. 14. then he will say so to them. The favour of God is the life of a soul, Ps. xxx. 5. Lost sinners shall be cast out of that favour, and therefore excluded from all good. The state of lost sinners is darkness, not the least glimpse of the divine favour, to eternity. God drove out the man from the garden of Eden, Gen. iii. 24. Sinners will then be driven out with an expulsion much worse than that of Adam, which will easily appear if you compare them. Adam was driven out to till the ground, to eat bread; the ground only was cursed for his sake; coats of skins were provided for him, and intimations given of a Saviour, &c. But sinners are driven out at last, and no gleam of favour shall ever be manifested towards them. This is suffering exceeding *damage.* While the sinner lives he has tokens of God's good will, the comforts of this life, a place and a name in the visible church, and the offers of grace. This is the day of God's patience; they have sparing mercy; but then it will be *judgment without mercy*, James ii. 13. Every thing is denied in hell, Luke xvi. 25. The lost soul has lost every thing but its existence.

(2.) The lost soul will lie for ever under the *wrath of God.* Hell is the divine wrath resting upon a soul prepared by sin to be a vessel of that wrath. The soul is lost when those billows and waves go over it. The body will eventually have its share of woe; but the soul being the subject of sin, is to be the subject of wrath, Rom. ii. 8, 9. It is a destruction flowing immediately from God's glorious power, 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. He that knows how to prepare a fire for devils, knows how to prepare it for souls. Who knows the power of God's anger, when it shall appear without any mercy to interpose? Rom. ix. 22. If one drop of this wrath get into the conscience at any time, what work does it make there, Job vi. 2, 3, &c. Ps. lxxxviii. 7, &c. even there, where there are principles of grace. O how dreadful will it be, when it shall be experienced in its full extent! Think what a being the soul is, and what a being God is, and you will say it must needs be a destruction past conception or expression. It must be thus, for the soul is an *intelligent* being, and therefore the more capable of misery. The soul stripped of the body, will understand its own misery, and the faculties will be enlarged to receive the pourings in of divine wrath. The soul is endued with a power of reflection, and that will add greatly to the torment: see Luke xvi. 25. *Son, remember.* There are many things, the remembrance of which will add to the misery, especially the remembrance of sin, of mercy, and of opportunity. The soul is also an *immortal* being, and therefore the greater will be its misery. The soul's immortality will be the perpetuity of its woe. The soul once lost is lost for ever, and its redemption ceaseth for ever. The fire is an everlasting fire; the worm dies not, because the soul dies not, Mark ix. 44. It is the crown of heaven's happiness, that its inhabitants cannot die any more; and the same is the complement of hell's misery. This makes it easeless, that it is endless, and remediless. Man is a living soul, and God the avenger

is a *living God*, and therefore there can be no period of the misery.

Show, II. What danger there is of this loss of the soul. Is it possible that such a noble being as the soul, should ever be thus miserable? Some calamities appear so dreadful as that we can hardly think them credible. Many people have such an excess of good nature, (as they call it,) that they cannot believe this concerning any of the children of men, that ever their souls should be lost; but the thing is no such foreign supposition. A lost soul is not a prodigy, one in an age; no, it is the case of multitudes that are gone down to the congregation of the dead, Prov. xxi. 16. and the danger of multitudes that are yet alive, and careless at the pit's brink.

1. It is possible that those who spend their days in mirth and wealth, may lose their souls, and be for ever miserable. It is possible for one that is clothed in purple and scarlet, to be in such an abyss of misery, as not to have a drop of water to cool his tongue, Luke xvi. 19, &c. It is possible for one that thinks he has goods laid up for many years, to have his soul required by devils, Luke xii. 19, 20. Riches profit neither in nor after the day of death. Those that were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living, may be thus brought down: see Isa. xiv. 9.

2. It is possible that those who live within the pale of the visible church, may lose their souls. A man that is called a disciple, and called a Christian, may be lost. It is possible that a man may be found among the wedding guests, and yet perish eternally for want of a wedding garment. It is possible for virgins to be found foolish, and to be excluded, Matt. xxv. 1.—for those that eat bread with Christ, and prophesied in his name, to be dismissed, Matt. vii. 22, 23. It is possible for Capernaum, that had been lifted up to heaven in means and mercies, to be cast down, Matt. xi. 23.

3. It is possible that those who were not far from the kingdom of God, yet may lose their souls: and that those who have promised fair, set out well, and have seemed to begin in the spirit, yet to end in the flesh, and to draw back unto perdition, Mark xii. 34. There were many who came out of Egypt, and yet came short of Canaan—Remember Lot's wife, Gen. xix. 26.

4. It is possible that those may lose their souls, who are very confident of the salvation of them. A man may think himself rich, Rev. iii. 17.—may step up to heaven's gate with that confidence, Matt. xxv. 11. and yet be disappointed. The hypocrite may have a hope that never perishes till it comes to the giving up of the ghost; a house that may stand till the storm comes, and he may lean on it. But what is the danger? Truly, great, if we consider,

(1.) That we are sinful, and deserve to be lost. We are sinners by nature, children of disobedience, and therefore children of wrath, Eph. ii. 3.—sinners by practice, and every sin has a tendency to the ruin of the soul. The guilt of committed sin merits this wrath; the power of indwelling sin prepares the soul for this destruction. There is a proneness in us to that which is evil. The way to hell is a broad way, and very agreeable to the corrupt nature. If the criminal be really guilty, you will say he is in danger. They know not themselves that think they are in no danger. The way to hell is downhill, Matt. vii. 13.

(2.) That God is righteous, and is engaged in honour to punish sin. We are ready to think, that because God is merciful no souls should perish; but is not his holiness, his beauty, as much as his goodness? If God were altogether such an one as ourselves, we might think there is no danger, Ps. l. 21.—but he is not so; he will by no means clear the impenitently guilty, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. Better all should perish, than that there should be unrighteousness with God: see Josh. xxiv. 19, 20.

(3.) That the devil is very busy to deceive and destroy souls. He is a subtle enemy, Gen. iii. 1. a sworn enemy, an industrious enemy, 1 Pet. v. 8. not *what*, but *whom*. Give him the souls, and let who will take the goods. See what kind of enemies we have to grapple with, Eph. vi. 12. My soul is among lions, Ps. lvii. 4. Alas, master, (saith the prophet's servant,) what shall we do?

(4.) That Jesus Christ is very strict in his terms of saving souls. It is true there is a sufficiency both of merit and grace in Christ, for the preventing of this loss of the soul; he came to save souls, but they must be repenting and believing souls. He came to save souls from their sins, not in them, Matt. i. 21. He came to purify, and so to save. Salvation itself will not save those that neglect their souls; even the word of Christ will judge the disobedient, and he himself will have those slain that would not have him to reign over them, Luke xix. 27.

Use 1. If it be possible that souls may be lost, then we have reason to take it as a favour, that we have warning given to us. Where there is a real danger, it is good to be told of it, that we may escape it. We should reckon those our friends that would tell us of any danger to our bodies, much more, to our souls. Why then should we desire still to have smooth things prophesied to us, when smooth things are commonly deceitful, Isa. xxx. 10. Blame not ministers, then, who are earnest with you about your souls. We do it, knowing the terror of the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 11.—we do it out of a tender regard to souls, and to deliver our own souls, Ezek. xxxiii. 9. Count us not enemies then.

2. Then let us fear, Heb. iv. 1. It is possible our souls may be lost; and have we not reason then to be jealous over ourselves? This fear will be awakening to us, to make sure work in this matter, lest we perish with a lie in our right hand. You see there

is danger, it is a matter of consequence, and in which many have been deceived; let us therefore try ourselves and fear always, Prov. xxviii. 14. Many will lose their souls; many will come short of eternal life: *Lord, is it I?* If multitudes miscarry, it is good to insure an interest in Christ. Be ruled by Christ, and he will insure your all to you, Heb. xi. 7.

3. As it is possible that souls may be lost, so, blessed be God, it is possible that souls may be saved; and that is it which we should therefore make sure. The capacities of souls are such, that either they will be eternally happy, or they will be eternally miserable—and it should be our great concern to make sure to ourselves that happiness, and to flee from that misery. It is possible our souls may be lost; but blessed be God, they are not lost yet—we have yet a cast to throw for eternity. O let us make sure work for our souls; and let this be our care, and desire, and prayer, Ps. xxxv. 3. *Say unto my soul, thou art my salvation.*

SERMON III.

MATTHEW xvi. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

DOCTRINE 3. That if the soul be lost, it is of the sinner's own losing—*he loseth his own soul.* This is but implied here, that it is according to the sinner's own choice, to hazard his own soul, and expose himself to all this loss for the gaining of the world. But though it be only implied here, it is expressed elsewhere, and is a great truth, that the ruin of those that perish is of themselves—wilful sinners are self-destroyers, Hos. xiii. 9. These losses must lie at our own door.

1. The damage of the soul in this world, is from sinners themselves. Many that are delivered from eternal ruin, yet are very much damaged in their souls, and it is their own fault. Which of us is there whose spiritual interests have not been injured, and we may thank ourselves.

(1.) It is a loss to the soul to be deprived of the favour of God, and that arises from ourselves, because we do that which forfeits it, Isa. lix. 1, 2. Sin is a wall of partition between us and God, and it is we ourselves that build up that wall. Hence sin is compared to a cloud, a *thick cloud*, Isa. xliv. 22. The cloud that separates between the earth and the sun, is made of vapours rising out of the earth—such is the cloud of sin, Jer. v. 25. We prefer other things before the favour of God, and do not seek it as we should, and so we come to want it. God *waits to be gracious* to us, but we are in the pursuit of *any good*, and so neglect him. He says, Seek ye my face, seek and ye shall find;—so that it is our own fault if we have it not.

(2.) It is an injury to the soul to be disquieted with the cares of this life, and that is of ourselves. The soul suffers damage by the inordinate pursuits of the things of this world; it is careful and troubled about many things, Luke x. 40, 41. it is divided by opposite objects, and it is often overwhelmed with grief for disappointments; and all this is of ourselves, because we are so foolish as to set our hearts upon these things. Men *pierce themselves through* with many sorrows, 1 Tim. vi. 10. It is of ourselves if we be disquieted with care, for we are invited to *cast our care* upon God, 1 Pet. v. 7. so that if we burthen ourselves with it, it is our own fault, we perplex ourselves.

(3.) It is a prejudice to the soul to be wounded and defiled by sin; and that is of ourselves. If the mind and conscience be wasted and defiled, it is our own doing—*Because of my foolishness*, saith David, Ps. xxxviii. 5. Sense of guilt cannot but be a terror to the soul, and cast a damp upon it. We are polluted in our own ways; see Ps. cvi. 39. Whatever present damage the soul sustains by reason of sin, we bring it on ourselves, and gain the harm and loss: see Jer. ii. 19; iv. 18. The soul is a great loser by every sin: it was sin that broke David's bones, and brought him into straits; and he might thank himself. What enemies are we to our own present peace, by the false steps we take!

(4.) It is hurtful to the soul to be unfitted for holy duties; and that is of ourselves. We have strength sufficient offered us, but we do not make use of it; we do not stir up the gift that is in us, and so we become weak and unstable as water, and cannot excel. We are deluded by this world; and so we are robbed of our strength ere we are aware. We live too far from Christ, and are confident in ourselves, and think we stand; and so we become weak, are foiled by temptation, and fail in every duty.

2. The damnation of the soul in the other world, is from sinners themselves. You have heard what a noble being the soul is, and what a deplorable loss the loss of the soul is; now whence is it that such an excellent being should be thus made miserable? It was once said of the English nation, that it could never be destroyed, unless it destroyed itself by its own intestine broils and animosities: and what is sin, but a broil in the soul itself, which becomes its own destroyer? The reason why sinners die, is because they will die, Ezek. xxxiii. 11. This is an awakening word; the Lord make it so to every one of us. There are great disputes about free-will, and how far that extends. The springs and motions of man's will are secret; but this is an undoubted truth concerning this matter, which we are to hold fast, That they that perish must take

all the blame to themselves, and they that are saved must give all the glory to God. That which I am to prove is, That those who perish, must take all the blame to themselves; for,

(1.) It can be laid upon no other. It is not any other that loses thy soul for thee. We are very apt to lay it upon others. It is an extenuation both of sin and ruin, to have some one upon whom to lay the blame, as Gen. iii. Adam laid it upon Eve, and Eve upon the serpent; but God said to each of them, What is this that thou hast done?

[1.] God is not at all chargeable with the damnation of those that perish; you cannot lay it upon him.

He has no hand in the sin of sinners. It is not God that tempts—Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, Jam. i. 13. It cannot be charged upon the *decree* of God; that doth not necessitate any man's sin. There is a decree that sinners shall die, but no decree that sinners shall sin. The vessels of mercy *he has prepared* for glory, but vessels of wrath are *fitted* to destruction, Rom. ix. 22, 23. fitted by their own sin. It cannot be charged upon any defect in the soul, as it comes out of God's hand: see Eccl. vii. 29. The soul is made capable of serving, and glorifying, and enjoying God. God doth not incline the will to sin; his hardening the hearts of sinners, is but his letting them alone, Hos. iv. 17. his giving them up to their own hearts' lusts, Ps. lxxxi. 12. his suffering all nations to walk in their own ways, Acts xiv. 16. is but his leaving them to themselves. His grace is his own, he is not debtor to any man, Rom. xi. 35. If the providence of God do concur to the action that is sinful, yet it doth not at all concur to the sinfulness of an action. It is true God made man's mouth, and in his hand our breath is; but if that mouth be set against the heavens, and that breath be threatening and slaughter, that is not God's work. He that speaketh a lie, like his father the devil, speaketh of his own. God permits sin, *i. e.* doth not hinder it by his sovereign power; but he has done all that became a good and righteous governor to prevent it. The king is not to be blamed if he promulge good and wholesome laws against treason, though he do not set a guard upon every man to keep him from committing it.

Nor has God any pleasure in the ruin of sinners. It is true, as a just governor, he has a hand in it; they fall immediately into his hand, but he has no pleasure in it, he doth not desire it; he has said this, Ezek. xviii. 32. He appeals to them who said his ways were not equal; they could not but know that he had no delight in the death of sinners, comparable to what he had in their salvation, Ezek. xviii. 23; xxxiii. 11. The ever-living God has even sworn this, that we might have strong consolation. He is not willing that any should perish, 2 Pet. iii. 9. It is no pleasure to the Almighty that he should afflict, much less that he should destroy. As a righteous governor, he will punish sin; but as a good God, he will not delight in the infliction of punishment. It is plain he has used all means to prevent the ruin; has exercised a great deal of patience and forbearance, and given fair warning.

[2.] The devil is not altogether chargeable with man's ruin. It is true he seeks our destruction, seeks whom he may devour, 1 Pet. v. 8. but it is as true that he can but seek it, if we do not give him advantage, and betray ourselves to him. He wars against the soul, but he cannot take it, unless we surrender it to him.

He is an adversary, but he is an adversary that may be conquered. Multitudes have, by the grace of God, overcome the wicked one, 1 John ii. 14. If we put on the whole armour of God, though he fight against our souls, he cannot overcome them. He is an accuser, but we may have an advocate to answer his accusations. Christ has vanquished him, and it is our own fault if we do not pursue the victory.

He is a tempter, but he is a tempter that may be resisted, and he will flee, Jam. iv. 7. He may sift when God gives him leave, but it is our own chaff that then comes uppermost. He may say, Cast thyself down, Matt. iv. 6. but he cannot cast us down. He may do us a great deal of mischief by his access to our fancies, and his influence upon our imaginations, but he cannot force our wills. It is no sin to be tempted, and therefore not ruining. Get thee behind me Satan, repels his motions, and the shield of faith not only shelters us from, but quenches, his fiery darts—so that it is our own fault if we be overcome. The devil deceives, Rev. xx. 10. but it is because men are willing to be deceived.

(2.) It must therefore be laid upon the sinner himself—*Thou alone shalt bear it*, Prov. ix. 12. bear the loss, and bear the blame. If the soul be lost, it is of the sinner's own losing; for,

[1.] He does that which is destroying to the soul. The sin is from ourselves, and therefore the loss is. There is nothing we can truly call our own but sin; this is that which we brought into the world, and it is certain (if we continue in an unrenewed state) we shall carry it out; and it is not so with any thing else we have;—it is thy own iniquity.

Sin is the choice of the sinner's own will, his wicked will—We will walk *every one in his own way*, *i. e.* the way of his own choosing, Isa. lxv. 12. Sinners choose to walk in the way of lying and drunkenness, &c.—I have loved strangers, and after them I will go. Take away will, the wicked will, and you take away both guilt and hell. Good and evil are set before us, the good way of holiness on the one hand, the evil way of sin on the other hand; and we are told how much it is our own concern to choose the good; but we choose the evil, and so it comes to be our own act. We deceive ourselves, for the matter

is laid very plain before us. You were called upon many a time not to do this abominable thing which the Lord hates, but ye would not hear—you chose the way of sinners, rather than the way of good men.

Sin is the product of the sinner's own lust, the fruit of the corrupt nature: see Jam. i. 14, 15. where you have the origin of sin. That which defiles and destroys the man, proceedeth from within, out of the heart, Matt. xv. 19, 20. it is a disease of which we brought the seed into the world with us; it comes out of the evil treasure of the heart, Matt. xii. 35. and it is this that is the loss of the soul. It is our own iniquity that lays us under the wrath of God, and makes us obnoxious to his curse. The wages of sin is death. We ourselves sow to the flesh, and thus we reap corruption. It is sin that makes the sinner fuel to God's anger, and kindles the fire which shall burn to the lowest hell. It is that bitter root which should have been plucked up, that bears all this gall and wormwood. It is sin that has the direct tendency to ruin, and has been the destruction of thousands and ten thousands of the children of Adam; that is the way which though it seem right, yet the end thereof is the ways of death.

[2.] Man does not that which would be saving to the soul, and would prevent this ruin; and to this neglect his misery must be attributed. The sinner loses his own soul by preferring the world before Christ, and the good things that are seen that are temporal, before the great salvation. This is the ruin of souls, that the salvation of the soul is not duly minded. The neglect of the soul is infallibly the losing of it. We are all by nature in a lost condition, and if something be not done towards our recovery, we are eternally lost. Thus sinners lose their souls, they spend those thoughts and cares in the pursuit of the world, which should be bestowed on the soul, and so lose it.

And this through mere carelessness and neglect. Many things are lost by carelessness, and so are many souls. Multitudes lose their souls for want of taking some thought about them; they know not the things that belong to their everlasting peace, till it is too late, Luke xix. 42. They are careful about many things, but forget the one thing needful. Diligent in the oversight of trifles, and at the same time overlooking the most serious matters. There is no escape for those that *neglect* the great salvation, Heb. ii. 3. neglect it as needless, or as small. Inconsideration is the ruin of thousands; they know not, neither do they understand, (Ps. lxxxii. 5.) and so they walk on in the darkness of sin, to the darkness of ruin. They know and believe that which, if duly considered and applied, would save them; but they have other things that they mind more: this is a very common case. O that you would hear my voice, ye careless ones. Is there any thing that either needs or deserves your care more than the salvation of your souls? have you not reason to keep them with all diligence? and will not your carelessness certainly speak you self-destroyers? Is not the eye of God upon you, an awful eternity before you, which depends on the present time?

Men also lose their souls through an obstinate refusal of the Saviour. As the wicked will chooseth the evil of sin, so the same wicked will refuseth the good of the Saviour;—it is refusing him that speaketh from heaven, Heb. xii. 25. Those that refuse Christ ruin themselves.

They lose their own souls, for they turn a deaf ear to gospel calls; they are *willingly ignorant*, love darkness rather than light; they might, but will not, understand their need of Christ, and the way of salvation by him; they shut their eyes against the gospel discoveries of life and immortality. They study to drown the voice of the word with the noise of other things. They *sit in darkness*, a contented posture. This affected ignorance will aggravate, and not excuse. They *stop their ears*, and this is often punished with a judicial deafness, Isa. vi. 10. Many are resolved to know as little as they can of Christ, lest the light disturb them.

Men also hold fast the deceit of sin. The wilful holding of the sin, is undoubtedly the wilful losing of the soul. They who retain sin are self-destroyers. Christ died to save us from sin, Matt. i. 21. from all iniquity, Tit. ii. 14. but they cannot find in their hearts to leave it. The gospel redemption is from a vain conversation, and this many like and love too well to quit. They nourish this serpent in their bosoms, and it leaves an eternal sting. They would be glad to keep Christ and their lusts too; but if one must be parted with, it shall be the Saviour, not their sins.

Nor will sinners come to Christ for life and salvation; he would save them, but they are not willing to be saved. He is come that men might have life, John x. 10. but sinners will not come to him for it—here the blame lies, John v. 40. They do not like the life that is offered to them—a spiritual life, a life of holiness, and love, and communion with God; they do not relish it; they see no beauty in Christ. There are other things that they like better, and are taken up with—their farms and their merchandise, Matt. xx. 5.—and they desire to be excused.

They will not use the means prescribed and appointed for the salvation of the soul, and so they lose their souls. They will not read the Scriptures, nor pray, nor sanctify the sabbath, nor join themselves with the Lord's people. They lose their souls because they will not save themselves from an ungodly course. They are not for troubling themselves with these things; they look upon them as mean, or hard, or needless. They are bid, as Naaman was, to wash in Jordan, but they prefer the rivers of Damascus; and think all this anxiety unnecessary.

They will not have Christ to reign over them, and so they lose their souls; for Christ will not save, nay, he will destroy, those that he shall not rule, Luke xix. 27. They like Christ and his crown well enough, but they do not like Christ and his yoke. They will not submit to be his subjects, and so they are treated as his enemies. There is in many who profess religion, a secret dislike of the power of religion; close and strict walking with God, they cannot approve.

Nor will they part with this world and their portion in it, and so they lose their souls: that is the case supposed in the text. The soul lost for the gaining, or perhaps the keeping, of the world. They refuse to part with the world for Christ, as he that had *great possessions*, Matt. xix. 22. Ps. xvii. 14. They cannot persuade themselves to leave, lay out, or lose, that which they have set their hearts upon;—it is the piece of ground, and the yoke of oxen, that lose the soul. They will be rich, and thus they are ruined.

Use 1. This will for ever justify God in the condemnation of those that perish. Believe this, and say, The Lord is righteous, and let this tend to reconcile the ruin of so many souls with the goodness of God; let this stop every mouth, Rom. iii. 19. and convince and silence all that are ungodly, Jude 14. See Matt. xxii. 12. he was *speechless*. The heavens will then declare God's righteousness, and all the world will say, that just and true are his ways: for sinners die, only because they will die; they choose their own delusions. Would you have them saved against their wills? The present day of divine patience will justify God in the approaching day of his wrath. The justice of God in the whole proceeding will be manifested in the great day, Ps. li. 4. See this insisted upon, Prov. i. 24, &c. Isa. lxvi. 4. And that which justifies God, will satisfy the saints, who will have nothing to say against it. If after all the means used, the barren tree continue such, *cut it down*—not a word more to say for it, Luke xiii. 9.

2. This will for ever aggravate the destruction of sinners, and will make it so much the more intolerable. Son, remember, Luke xvi. 25.—remember that you brought this upon yourselves; this you may thank yourselves for. The remembrance of the sin will be the aggravation of the misery, especially the recollection, that when time was, it might have been prevented. There was a fair offer made of life and salvation, but it was rejected for a trifle: thou wilt *mourn at the last*, and say, how have I hated instruction. This will sharpen the teeth of the never-dying worm, Mark ix. 44. Listen to the complaints of poor lost sinners, and let that frighten you from that way which leads down to the chambers of death. The greater advantages any had to escape this ruin, the more intolerable will it be, Matt. xi. 21, &c. I speak these things to warn you.

3. Pity and pray for those that you see thus destroying their own souls, and if you can do any thing, have compassion upon them, and help them. See their condition to be very painful, but not yet desperate; while there is life there is hope. If you saw a distracted man ready to drown himself, you would do what you could to hinder him;—and can you do nothing to save a soul *from death*, Jam. v. 20. to snatch a soul as a brand out of everlasting burnings. Say to sinners, as Paul did to the jailer, *Do thyself no harm*, Acts xvi. 28. pray earnestly for such. However, take heed of doing that which might further any in this self-destruction. If you cannot help to save their souls, beware of aiding their ruin by hardening them in sin, or tempting them to it; or having fellowship with them, lest you bear sin for them, Lev. xix. 17. and be found partakers of other men's sins, and then of their plagues. It concerns every one, as well as ministers, to keep themselves clear from the blood of all men, Acts xx. 26.

4. Admire the patience and forbearance of God, that we who have been so long destroying ourselves, are not yet destroyed—especially if we be in a hopeful way to salvation. It is no thanks to us, but it is merely *of the Lord's mercies*. If God had not been better to us than we have been to ourselves, we had been in hell long ago, Lam. iii. 32. There are riches of goodness and forbearance in God's dealing with those that *treasure up wrath*, Rom. ii. 4, 5. especially if God has not only spared thee, but saved thee with a great salvation. This magnifies the riches of free grace; when we were hastening to destruction, we were then stopped. God had pity on us when we had no pity on ourselves; in him was our help found, when we were destroying ourselves, Hos. xiii. 19. Not unto us, therefore, not unto us, but to the grace of God be all the glory. This does for ever exclude boasting, for we could destroy ourselves, but we could not save ourselves. How much are we indebted, and what shall we render?

5. Then let every one of us be *wise for ourselves*, and not lose our own souls. My errand to you is, to bring you this serious caution, Men and brethren, do not ruin yourselves; you act rationally in other things, and do not run yourselves upon danger, and why so foolish in this great affair? *Why will ye die?* This is used as the great argument why we should repent, and turn, Ezek. xviii. 31; xxxiii. 11. Thus does God condescend to reason the case with us; and what argument can be more powerful? Be not self-destroyers; be not such enemies to yourselves and to your eternal interests. Consider what the losing of the soul is, and what the salvation of it is; what that death is which you make so light of, and what that life is which is proposed to you. Surely, in dealing with sinners, we have all the reason that can be on our side. Let reason rule you, and show yourselves men.

If you would not lose your souls, have an eye upon

them, be deeply concerned about them; watch over your souls, and take good heed to them. There then begins to be some hope of salvation, when men begin to be thoughtful about their souls.

If you would not lose your souls, you must leave your sins, for sin will be the ruin of the soul. Cast away from you all your transgressions, Ezek. xviii. 31. Hate sin, and abandon it as an enemy to your souls, from a principle of right self-love, though it be a beloved sin: see Matt. v. 29, 30.

If you would not lose your souls, you must commit them to God, through the Mediator. Give your hearts to God, who is the rightful sovereign of the heart, Prov. xxiii. 26. Give them up to God, to be ruled by his laws, sanctified by his Spirit, and renewed according to his image. Finally,

If you would not suffer the loss of your souls, you must be willing to suffer the loss of all things, that you may win Christ, Phil. iii. 8. Make sure your interest in him; accept of him; live looking unto Jesus, and you shall be with him for ever.

SERMON IV.

MATTHEW xvi. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

DOCTRINE 4. That the soul is more worth than all the world. The soul of man is a jewel of inestimable value. This is plainly intimated here, where the loss of the soul is represented as such a loss that the gain of all the world will not be a compensation for it. Observe here,

1. What those things are that are here compared—*the whole world*, and *thy own soul*; these are here put into the scales against one another. The world here means not the universe, or the whole creation, that is more excellent than any one part, but the things that are seen that are temporal, 2 Cor. iv. 18. the riches, honours, and pleasures, of this present time. See a map of this world, 1 John ii. 16. Now the *whole world* is here set in the balance against one soul, if that one be thy one. It is not a small estate, or a lordship, that is here supposed to be of less value than the soul, but the world, the whole world. Our temporal concernments are compared with our spiritual, the *life that now is, and that which is to come*, 1 Tim. iv. 8.

2. What judgment is here passed upon them—That our own souls are of infinitely more value than the whole world. The value of a thing is reckoned partly by its nature and intrinsic dignity, and partly by its use. That is most valuable, that is most delightful, most profitable, and most necessary. We reckon that is most worth, that is most worth to us. Now our own souls are more to us than all the world is or can be. The design of this is to show of what little worth the world is, and the things of the world: they are weighed in the balance, and found wanting; not worthy to be compared, or to be named, with the soul: see Rom. viii. 18.

3. Who it is that passeth this judgment. It is our Lord Jesus himself, one who had reason to know the worth of souls, for he made them, and bought them; and who (we may be sure) would not underrate the world, for by him *the worlds were made*, Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 2. This doctrine I shall endeavour,

I. To prove—That our own souls are more to us than all the world. How insufficient all the world will be to make up the loss of the soul, we shall have occasion to show under the 6th doctrine, (if the Lord will,) at present, I shall endeavour to show the true worth of the soul. To prove this, consider,

1. The *production* of the soul. Trace it up to its original; and it is breathed into us by the breath of God; it is a spark of heaven; it is that part of man by which he is allied to the world of spirits; it is the masterpiece of God's workmanship in this lower world: see Gen. ii. 7. The image of God is stamped upon it, Gen. i. 26, 27. When it returns to God, it doth but as all the waters do, return to the place from whence it came. It is of a noble extraction. That which makes up the world, that men covet so much, is but of the earth, earthy:—honour is a shadow; the pleasures of the world and the wealth of the world are of the earth; gold and silver are but refined earth—Man found thee poor and dirty in a mine, *Herbert.* But man was made last of all the creatures, as the chief of the works of God. It is good for us often to ask whence we came; and being so nobly descended, disdain to serve the base and sordid lusts of the flesh, and to prostitute an immortal soul to the drudgery of this world.

2. The *powers* of the soul. These are very great; its apprehensions are not confined by the horizon of sense, but rove far beyond it. The faculties of the human soul are such as (above any other creature) prove the eternal power and wisdom of the Creator. It is *the soul* that knows right well how marvellous God's works are, Ps. cxxxix. 14. by reflection upon itself. Think what the soul of man is capable of, and you will say that it is of inestimable value.

(1.) It is capable of glorifying God in this world. It has a power of knowing God, as he has been pleased to reveal himself. It is that which is within us, that renders us capable of blessing and praising God, Ps. ciii. 1, 2. It is capable of *knowledge*, in which, especially, the image of God consists, Col. iii. 10. It is capable of reasoning and *bringing to mind*, Isa. xlvi. 8. It is capable of receiving a divine revelation to this purpose, and in the use of instituted ordinances is capable of *having fellowship*

with God—of being wrought upon, and witnessed with, by the Holy Spirit of God, Rom. viii. 16. It is capable of being *sanctified*.

(2.) It is capable of being glorified with God in the other world; of seeing and enjoying him within the veil; of conversing with angels and glorified spirits, and drinking in the sweet and glorious rays of divine grace and love; things which are above, out of the sight of sense. It has a power of doing that, which the body, till it is refined and become a spiritual body, is not able to attain. It is capable of seeing God face to face, which an embodied soul, till stripped of this veil, cannot possibly do, Exod. xxxiii. 20.

(3.) The *perpetuity* of the soul. This is one great thing which speaks the worth of the soul—that it is to last for ever, it is an immortal spirit. It is a flame that can never be extinguished. It will survive the body, and will live and act in a state of separation from it. It is one of those things which are not seen, but are eternal, 2 Cor. iv. 18. It is an awful consideration, when a child is born, to think, here is the beginning of a being that will outlive all the ages of time. The world is but for a moment, Prov. xxiii. 5. the fashion of it, the scheme, the outside of it, (for it is but a superficies,) *passeth away*, 1 Cor. vii. 31. 1 John ii. 17. But the soul is perpetual; the things themselves towards which its desires extend, and those desires that are so formed, are eternal. The brute creatures are mortal, but man will be immortal. This makes it such a serious thing for a man to die, above what it is for a beast to die, Eccl. iii. 21. Things are reckoned valuable according to their duration. Gold therefore is the most precious metal, because it will not rust nor waste; but the utmost of the duration of this world's goods is within time.

(4.) The *propriety* of our souls—*thy own soul*. In order to ascertain the right value of a thing, it must be considered, not only what the thing is in itself, but what interest we have in it. The loan of a thing is nothing so valuable as the possession of it. Now the world is but lent us; whatever we have in it, it is not to be called our own; but our souls are our own. We brought them into the world, and we shall carry them out—they are our own, they are, in fact, ourselves. The soul is the man. What is man but a *living soul?* Gen. ii. 7. Abstract the soul as living, and the body is a lump of clay; abstract the soul as rational, and the man is as the beasts that perish. It is a certain truth, that the soul is the man. *Persons*, in Scripture, are often reckoned by souls, as Acts ii. 41. What we are, is more to us than what we have. It is the spirit that is the substance of the man; and what is the chaff to the wheat, the shell to the kernel, the clothes to the body? This is one of the first things that the convinced sinner is made sensible of—that the soul is the man; and if he would do well for himself, he must do well for his soul.

(5.) The *projects* that are laid about souls. There is great work about souls, more than you think of. That is valuable which those that are intelligent are concerned about. This speaks the soul of man to be of very great value. Consider,

[1.] What projects the love of God has to save souls. The God of infinite wisdom, whose the worlds are, has been pleased to concern himself with a peculiar care about the world of mankind, the world of souls. Some observe, that in Scripture, God is never brought in consulting with himself, but when man is concerned. God has thoughts *to us-ward*, Ps. xl. 5. Infinite Wisdom was from eternity, devising means that poor banished souls might not be for ever expelled, Eph. i. 11. compare *v.* 9. God had thoughts of love to the sons of men, *i. e.* the souls of men, before the worlds were.

[2.] What projects the malice of Satan has to destroy souls. It is a sign the soul of man is very precious, when God and Satan, those two adverse powers, are as it were contending for it. He seeks to get and keep possession of the soul, that he may devour it, 1 Pet. v. 8. The great dispute between Michael and the dragon is, who shall rule the souls of men. The devil's agents trade in the *souls of men*, Rev. xviii. 13. The devil saith, as the king of Sodom, Gen. xiv. 21. *Give me the souls*. There is great striving about the soul.

(6.) The *price* that was paid to redeem souls. We reckon the value of a thing by that which a wise man will give for it, who is not ignorant of it, nor under necessity. Christ, the wisdom of God, gave himself, his own precious blood, to redeem souls, and he knew what they were, and had no need of them. The redemption of the *soul is precious*, Ps. xlix. 8. Corruptible things, as silver and gold, would not do: then did Christ, for us men and for our salvation, make his soul an offering, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. *His soul was an offering* for ours, his life a *ransom* for many, Matt. xx. 28. See here the worth of souls—nothing could be a ransom for forfeited souls, but the blood of the Son of God. Lo I come, saith he—for us men and for our salvation, saith the Nicene creed. Neither the fruit of the body, nor the fruit of the estate, would atone for the *sin of the soul*, Mic. vi. 7. but Christ gave himself. Blood of bulls and goats would not do. God proves the excellency of his people by this, Isa. xliii. 4. *I will give men for thee;*—much more doth it demonstrate the excellency of souls, when God gave his Son for them. The blood of Christ is precious blood, of immense value.

(7.) The *pains* that are taken to renew souls. God hath manifested his favour to man in the provision made for his body, that that might be put into, and kept in, a capacity to answer the end of its creation. See the first instance of this care, Gen. i. 29. and

afterwards, Gen. ix. 3. But there is a great deal more done to provide for the soul, and to put that into, and keep that in, a capacity to answer the ends of its creation. The power of God is wonderfully exerted in this important work, to sanctify a soul, to recover it from its degenerate state, to reduce it to its integrity, and to prepare it for glory. The word of God is given for these ends, that mighty word, which is so quick and powerful, Heb. iv. 12. The Spirit of God is at work for the good of the soul—the arm of the Lord is revealed—and the work of faith fulfilled with power. These things show what a value God puts upon souls. A word made us, but far more is required to new-make us.

(8.) The *preparations* that are made to receive souls. There is much in progress for them in the other world. Souls being immortal, have immortal things provided for them.

There are preparations of wrath for sinful souls, to which they are *reserved*, 2 Pet. ii. 9. There is a Tophet that is ordained of old, Isa. xxx. 33. an everlasting fire, that is prepared for the devil and his angels, is reserved for wicked men, Matt. xxv. 41. It is sealed up among his treasures, treasures of wrath, after the long season of his patience.

And there are preparations of glory for sanctified souls. These must needs be of great value, when there is so much laid out to make them great and happy. They have a glory proportioned to their capacities. Knowledge and love are the principal faculties of the soul; and these are sources of bliss in heaven.

II. I shall improve this subject. The serious consideration of the worth of our souls should have a mighty influence upon us to make us religious; for what is religion but a concern about the present and the future state of our souls? The practice of serious godliness is that, and that only, which befriends the soul both in its present and its eternal interests. What is it that we are persuading you to in all our preaching, but to mind your souls and do well for your souls?

Be convinced that you have souls, every one of you. Consider thyself. Thou hast a mortal body and an immortal soul. Most men live as if they had no souls, no souls by which to be *governed*, and no souls for which to *provide*. They discover nothing truly rational, they have no concern for what is immortal. But I hope better things of you, or else I shall never hope any good of you. It is not enough to gainsay this truth, but you must *consider* it.

Be convinced of the worth of your souls. It is no breach of the law of humility to put a value upon our own souls, and to think so well of ourselves as to think ourselves too good to serve sin. Value the body less and the soul more, and it would be better for you. There are some important inferences which may be drawn from these things.

1. *If the soul* be so precious, then those are our best friends that are *friends to our souls*, and we should look upon them as such. The best friend to souls that ever was, is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the soul. Look upon him as a good friend, and prize him accordingly. Study what you shall render for his love. The good Shepherd is the *Shepherd of our souls*, 1 Pet. ii. 25. He laid down his life for our souls, and has provided food, and healing, and rest for them: let our souls love him. Faithful ministers are friends to your souls, Heb. xiii. 17. Their work is to watch for them. Look upon reprovers as friends to your souls, and reckon friendly rebukes as kindness. They are so, Ps. cxlv. 5. They help to prevent sin, and save the soul from death. Let them find more favour now, for they will afterwards appear more kind than flatterers. Those that instruct you and comfort you are friends to your souls. Show yourselves to be friends to the souls of others. Do all the good you can to the souls of those with whom you are connected. Be concerned for the souls of your children and servants; gain their souls, by guiding them to God.

2. If the soul be so precious, then those are our worst enemies that are enemies to our souls. The devil is the great enemy to our souls; he is the tempter, and so is the *destroyer*, and he has his agents, that are busy to ruin souls. There are persons and things that war against the soul, 1 Pet. ii. 11. the worst war that can be: those that seduce the soul and beguile it, 2 Pet. ii. 14. that tempt us to sin; that lay stumbling blocks before us; that entice us secretly, though they pretend love;—look upon them as enemies to your souls. David complains often of those that did persecute his soul. Wicked companions are real enemies to the soul; therefore say to such, *Depart*, Ps. cxix. 115. Enemies to the soul are very subtle, Eph. vi. 12. Therefore we have the more need to stand upon our guard. Consider how precious that soul is which they would injure and destroy.

3. If the soul be so precious, then mercies to the soul are the choicest mercies, for which we should pray most earnestly. This is the favour that God bears unto his chosen. The hallowing of God's name by us, and the coming of his kingdom into us, are mercies to the soul which are to be desired above all others,—that is the order in the Lord's prayer: see Matt. v. 33. The renewing of the soul, and the saving of the soul, are things that must have the pre-eminence in our desires and prayers. Other mercies must be begged with a proviso, but mercies to the soul absolutely. Be more earnest for these than for corn, and wine, and oil, Psal. iv. 6, 7. wrestle with God for these, as Jacob did. Be more concerned in prayer about your sins than your afflictions. So likewise we must be most thankful to God for spiritual mercies, Eph. i. 3.—redeeming love, gospel grace, see Ps. ciii. 3, *&c.* Value every mercy by the reference that it has to the soul, and be

thankful for it accordingly: see Isa. xxxviii. 17. *In love to my soul.* Go by this rule in your valuation of public mercies;—reckon those the *best times* that are opportunities for the soul, in which there are plenty of the means of grace.

4. If the soul be so precious, then judgments upon the soul are the sorest judgments. Spiritual plagues are of all others the worst, and to be most dreaded, as *leanness in the soul*, Ps. cvi. 15. when the mind is blinded, the conscience seared, the heart hardened, and the reins laid on the neck of sinful passions. These are spiritual judgments, Isa. vi. 9, 10. Ps. lxxxi. 12. the worst condition a man can be on this side hell. How sad would our condition be, if we were deprived of both the bodily senses of seeing and hearing, (such instances have rarely been heard of,) but much worse to have the soul blind and deaf. Do not provoke God to deny and withdraw his grace. There are judgments upon the soul too, that sometimes befall God's own children, and they are very painful; as—when the terrors of God set themselves in array against them, Job vi. 4. Ps. lxxxviii. 3. &c. and he wounds the spirit, Prov. xviii. 14. If God has kept us from these terrors, we must be thankful, but not secure. Our Lord Jesus suffered in his soul, that he might have compassion, Matt. xxvi. 38.

5. If the soul be so precious, then the prosperity of the soul is the best prosperity. There is such a thing as soul prosperity, 3 John 2. and it is that which we should most earnestly desire of God, both for ourselves and for our friends. The soul prospers when it is in a good state, and in a good frame, when it is in the right way, and when it grows in grace; as the body prospers that is in health, and as the estate prospers that increases. That is a prosperous soul that is adding grace to grace, and securing not only an entrance, but an abundant entrance, into the kingdom of God, 2 Pet. i. 5. The soul prospers when its holy dispositions are lively, its comforts strong, and its evidences clear—when it is walking in the light, and singing in the ways, of the Lord. Seek this as the best prosperity. Soul prosperity either brings outward prosperity along with it, Matt. vi. 33. or sweetens the want of it; and it is that which all the malice of hell and earth cannot disturb or take away.

6. If the soul be so precious, then we are to look upon that condition as best for us which is best for our souls. That is best for us that is most free from temptations, and that gives us the greatest advantages for spiritual things. That relation is best for us that is best for our souls. Look upon this as a reason why we should be content under afflictions, because they tend to the good of our souls. Though the flesh be destroyed, yet if the spirit be thereby saved, it is well enough, 1 Cor. v. 5. see Heb. xii. 9. Sanctified afflictions are the soul's promotions;—the chastening is bad for the body, but the teaching that attends it is good for the soul, Ps. xciv. 12; cxix. 71. Submit willingly to that which is for the good of the soul, though it be displeasing to flesh and blood.

7. If the soul be so precious, then they are fools that *despise their own souls.* There are those that do so, Prov. xv. 32. This is the fundamental error of sinners,—they despise this jewel of value, which Christ put such a value upon. Let us see who they are that despise their own souls:

(1.) Those that make a light matter of sin despise their own souls, Prov. xiv. 9. It is certain that sin is a wrong to the soul, Prov. viii. 36. How do people regard their souls that abuse them thus every day? Those that expose their precious souls to the wrath and curse of the eternal God, every day, by wilful sin, do not value them as they should. Those despise their souls that continue in unbelief and impenitency, and will not be awakened to see the misery in which their souls are; they feel nothing from sin, the sins of so many years; they are not concerned, though their souls be ready to drop into everlasting burnings. They despise their souls that rush into sin, Jer. viii. 6. that run upon God, Job xv. 25, 26. There are some so daring as to challenge God himself to damn them. They despise their souls that, when they have fallen into sin, make no haste to repent and turn from it.

(2.) Those that take up with a cheap and easy religion despise their own souls; that are afraid of doing too much for their own souls. Did we put a right value upon our souls, we should object to no pains or care for the securing of their welfare. We should go from strength to strength; we should give diligence to add to our graces, and thus make our calling and election sure, 2 Pet. i. 5—10. But those that only inquire, will not less serve? manifest that they despise their souls: they labour at the world, and sleep at an ordinance; they crowd their religion into a corner, and make not a business, but a by-business, of it. What account do such make of their souls, who will scarce go over the threshold to hear a sermon; they *refuse instruction.* He that is slothful in work for his soul, is brother to him that is a great waster.

(3.) Those that are prodigal of their time despise their own souls. Time is an opportunity of doing something for the soul, and is to be redeemed accordingly, Eph. v. 16. because there is an eternity depends upon it. Time may be well spent, either in doing something for God with the soul, or in getting something from God for the soul; yet with many their time is a drug. What value do those put upon their souls, that fill up their time with mere recreation, and all this while neglect their souls? Every day might be a harvest day for the soul, but it is idled away; the time of the morning and evening sacrifice stolen away by one idle companion or other. Value your souls, and you will value your time.

(4.) Those that make themselves drudges to the world despise their own souls. The soul should be our darling, but many make it a slave, and send it to feed swine, Luke xv. 15. and to provide for the flesh, Rom. xiii. 14. Those that are eager in pursuit of worldly wealth despise their souls, not only because the soul is neglected and the body preferred before it, but because it is employed in these pursuits, Ps. cxxvii. 2. Care about the world fills the soul and disquiets it. It is a great disparagement to an immortal soul, to be thus wholly employed.

(5.) Those that by sin unfit their bodies to aid their souls in the service of God despise them. Drunkenness especially does this, it *overcharges* the heart, Luke xxi. 34. Those put a great slight upon their souls that drown them in wine and strong drink, and suffer their hearts thus to be taken away, and themselves to be put out of possession of them. They make beasts of themselves, only to please a sensual appetite. They are not their own masters—to govern themselves, and by degrees come to be not their own men—to understand themselves.

(6.) Those that venture their souls upon a false and deceitful foundation despise them. What we value we shall be sure to lay up in a safe place, and that which we despise we shall venture any where. Those that build their hopes upon the sand, Matt. vii. 26. that presume upon their visible profession, and are willing to take it for granted, without any strict scrutiny, that all is well with them, Rev. iii. 17. Such have a low opinion of their own souls, and must necessarily end in a painful manner; their hope must perish.

(7.) Those that take up with a portion in this life, despise their own souls—who think that will serve them for a happiness which neither suits the nature of a soul, nor will last so long as the soul will last; that take up with that for a portion which doth but fill the belly, Ps. xvii. 14. And when they have a great deal of the world say, Soul, take thine ease, Luke xii. 19. And take these for their good things, Luke xvi. 25. Let not us despise our own souls, let us desire a better portion for them than the world, even an interest in his love, whose favour is the safety and the felicity of all who truly seek him.

SERMON V.

MATTHEW xvi. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

DOCTRINE 5. That the *gaining of the world* is oftentimes the *losing of the soul.* This is plainly implied here, that the methods men take for the gaining of the world, are the things which commonly prove destructive to the soul: many precious souls are ruined for ever by the love of this world. This is that which has slain its *thousands* and its *ten thousands.* Hence it is that so many precious souls are irrecoverably lost. The world was the rock they split upon; the world was the enemy that conquered them. We are told what the world is that is so pernicious to souls, 1 John ii. 16. In the things of the world three things are included:

1. The *pomp* of the world—honour, preferment, making a figure in the world, a fair show in the flesh, Gal. vi. 12. The gaining of this poor reputation is often the losing of the soul. To be looked upon as some great one, is a thing very much affected by many, and I am apt to think that more young people are ruined both here and hereafter by pride, than by any one thing in this world. It is thought a desirable thing to look fine, and to be in the way of preferment. Many lose the weight of glory in the other world, by and for the dream and shadow of this world's glory. This was it that Moses by faith conquered, Heb. xi. 24.

2. The *pleasures* of the world the lusts of the flesh, that in the world which gratifies the sensual appetite. This is that which many love more than God, 2 Tim. iii. 4. and live in, 1 Tim. v. 6. The gaining of the world is the *finding* of our *own pleasure* in it, as Luke xvi. 19. and Luke xii. 19. We reckon those the darlings of the world, that spend their days in mirth and their years in pleasure, and know not what care and sorrow mean; that lie upon beds of ivory, &c. Amos vi. 4—6. to be able to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the desires of it. This is *the world*, the smiles and indulgences of it; this is that, the love of which is oft the ruin of the soul. When men cannot deny the sensual appetite, but will walk in the way of their heart, this defiles and this destroys the soul.

3. The *profits* of the world. These are desired usually for the sake of the two former, though there are some that love wealth only for its own sake, and it is a sore evil, Eccl. vi. 1, 2. The world men are in love with, is an increasing estate. It is the *love of money* that is put for the love of this world, 1 Tim. vi. 10. for that is said to *answer all things*, Eccl. x. 19. that is, all temporal things; it will not answer the needs of the soul. He that had goods laid up for many years, promised himself a full stream of carnal delights—to eat, and drink, and be merry.

This is *the world.* Now I am to show how the gaining of the world is oft the losing of the soul—how these worldly things undo us; and the opening of this will be of use for caution, that being warned of the danger, we may be armed against it.

I. I shall show how the gaining of the world is often the losing of the soul.

1. Many lose their souls in endeavouring to obtain the world. There is an endeavour about the world, that is very well consistent with the saving of the soul,

even honest diligence in a lawful calling, Prov. xxvii. 23, &c. Every one must mind his own business, and labour that he may have to give, Eph. iv. 28. And in this our eyes must be towards God, and our common actions done after a godly sort, with a single eye to the will and glory of God. But there is a pursuit after the world which is destructive to the soul: see that full scripture in general, 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

(1.) The inordinacy of the desire after the world is fatal. When men pursue the world from a principle of love to it, and value for it, as the best and chief good, and the highest end of man, this will certainly lose the soul. When present things are made our good things, Luke xvi. 25. our consolation, our reward, our portion, Ps. xvii. 14. this sinks the soul. When the principle of our worldly pursuits is, that we may honour God, and do good, this sanctifies them; but when it is because we look upon them as glory, Gen. xxxi. 1. and as that in which the happiness of the soul consists, this is altogether inconsistent with grace, and a regard to God. It is idolatry, Col. iii. 5. Eph. v. 5. it is having another God before him; it is adultery, Jam. iv. 4. it is enmity against God and the cross of Christ, Phil. iii. 18, 19. God and mammon are opposite masters, Matt. vi. 24. Many souls have been lost that have never run into an excess of riot, by an habitual delight in this world as the best good, Ps. iv. 6. We have all reason here to suspect ourselves: see Rom. viii. 6. The man is as his mind is.

(2.) The irregularity of the pursuits of the world is often fatal. Where the heart is set upon the things of the world, as the best things, they will be sought and laboured for accordingly, Ps. cxxvii. 2. And in these pursuits,

Christ and gospel grace are slighted. Men are too busy making other bargains, and have no heart nor time to attend to Christ. They do not find that repentance and faith, the love of God, and the promises of the covenant, will secure their worldly wealth and glory; and therefore, (whatever others do,) for their parts they will not trouble themselves with such things. These are things far above out of their sight, Ps. x. 5. they have nothing to say against these things; but with them other things preponderate. Time enough to think of these things upon a sick bed: see this set forth in two parables, Matt. xxii. 5. and Luke xiv. 16, &c. They have no thoughts to spare for another world, they are so much taken up with this: careful and troubled about many things, while the one thing needful is postponed, Luke x. 41, 42. The vigour of the soul is quite exhausted in the pursuit of the world, that in the service of God it is become but a dry tree.

Necessary duties also are neglected through worldly pursuits. Many for the gaining of the world omit the doing of that, which their own consciences tell them they ought to do. Prayer is a needful duty, the soul is certainly lost without it; but those that are eager upon the world, cannot find time to pray—they say to the Almighty, Depart: see Job xxi. 11, 15. They are not for those duties which produce no earthly gain. Their books of trade take up their time and thoughts so much, that God's book is laid aside. Those that are eager in pursuit of the world, cannot find in their hearts to lose one day in seven.

Destroying sins are in the same way ventured upon. Many, to get something of the world, make bold with sin, to the dishonour and ruin of the soul. Foolish and hurtful lusts, wealth gotten by vanity, riches gotten and not by right, Jer. xvii. 11. and treasures of wickedness, attend these persons, and bring them to destruction. Many a man damns his soul, to make himself what the world terms a gentleman. What is more destructive than the commission of sin as the means of increasing wealth? Many men, to get some little of the world, oppress the poor, and defraud their neighbours. Many people are tempted to think that it is no sin, or next none, to tell a lie in the way of their trade, when there is something to be gotten by it, and they know nobody can contradict them. The common excuse is, there is no driving a trade without it; but if it be sin, it is destroying to the soul, and will be found so at last. Many that are eager upon the world, make no conscience what they say, nor what they do, nor who they abuse or trample upon. How injurious to the soul are many of the conditions of getting gain! When the favour of great men is to be had clogged with sinful conditions, and these are complied with, conscience being bribed to say nothing against it; this is dear bought gain, Matt. xxvi. 15. *What will ye give me?* was the question of Judas to Christ's enemies. Micah's Levite will become priest to an idol for preferment, Judg. xvii. 10. Many have been hired to forswear themselves, to murder, to commit adultery; and what evil is it of which the love of money has not been the root. Many have sold the truth, and with it their souls, for the world, Prov. xxiii. 23.

2. Many lose their souls for the keeping of the world. This must come into the consideration of the gaining of the world. The gaining of the world is much the same with the *saving of the life*, v. 25. This is a pernicious branch of covetousness, and fatal to the soul. As grasping at the world is dangerous, so is inordinate attachment to it when we have got it.

The complacency men take in worldly objects, becomes a principle of action fatal to the interests of the soul. To be rich and great upon earth, they consider as the most desirable of all things. The soul rests in this poor advancement, as its portion and happiness too; it is at home in the world, and takes its ease in the world. Why do men so solicitously

save what they have gathered, and hold it so fast, but because they say, *Blessed is the people that is in such a case?* Ps. cxliv. 15. It is a sign of prevailing distrust of the Creator, and of prevailing delight in, and dependence upon, the creature. What is this but laying up our *treasure* in these things? Matt. vi. 19. A man will not spend his treasure, but keep it up. What is this but *setting* our *affections* on things beneath? Col. iii. 2. it is reposing the soul in them.

The practice arising from this principle is fatal. Many ruin their own souls,

Because they cannot find in their hearts to *lose* the things of the world for God. When these two come in competition, that either they must deny Christ or forego pleasure or worldly wealth, they choose rather to deny Christ. Here is the world won and the soul lost, see an instance in Demas, 2 Tim. iv. 10. When the receiving the mark of the beast becomes the condition of buying and selling and getting gain, as sometimes it is, Rev. xiii. 17. and then men comply with their condition, they forsake the truths and ways of Christ, which formerly they professed. This has been the case of many that have wofully apostatized: they could not endure to see the spoiling of their goods. Christ was dear, but the world was dearer, and therefore, farewell Christ. Christ and his truths must be cast overboard rather than they would make shipwreck of an estate: see John xii. 42, 43. they cannot endure hardness and disgrace. These persons also injure their souls,

Because they cannot *lay out* the things of the world for God. He will not have us to hoard what others want. We are commanded to be charitable, to give alms of such things as we have. Many souls are ruined by uncharitableness: see Matt. xxv. 41, 42. People think what they do in charity is not of necessity, but a work of supererogation; whereas it is our rent to God. So likewise in works of piety; many cannot submit to charges for the encouragement of religion: they like the law of Christ well enough, if their obedience to it will cost them nothing, but if it prove chargeable, they desire to be excused. This was the case of that rich man, Matt. xix. 21, 22. and of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts v. We thus lose what we save, and this withholding that which is meet tends to a spiritual poverty, which comes upon the soul like an armed man. This is the worst husbandry that can be; it is like grudging seed to the ground.

3. Many lose their souls in the using, or rather the abusing, of what they have in this world. The winning of the world is oftentimes, when it is won in abundance, the losing of the soul. When it is got, and men have what they would have in it, it proves a sad occasion of their ruin: the *prosperity of fools* destroys them, Prov. i. 32. Many a man had been happy in the other world if he had not prospered in this. The possession of much in the world, is often the losing of the soul; not in and of itself, for outward prosperity is a good gift of God, and is so to be accounted by us. It is the fruit of his blessing, Deut. xxviii. 2, &c. Godliness has the promise of the life that now is, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Matt. vi. 33. The good things of this world, if wisely managed and improved, may be furtherances to us in our way to heaven. If kept in its due place, worldly prosperity may be an opportunity of being useful to others, and of honouring God. All this, and heaven too—then we serve a good master. Those that are rich in the world, may be the more rich in good works; but then it is not the world that is *gained*, it is only *used*. That is not the point to be *gained*, the prize run for; it is not the ultimate end, but the subordinate means. Worldly prosperity is injurious through the badness of men's hearts. Gaining the world is not in itself a sin, but it is the occasion of sin. Thus the gaining of the world is the losing of the soul, it is such a snare to the soul as does greatly hazard it. The danger is of *abusing* the world, 1 Cor. vii. 31. The world is abused, when it is used for the purposes for which it was never intended. The world, when we have it, is very apt,

(1.) To *estrange* the soul from God; and so it is lost. If it do not, as it should, endear him to us, it will but make us the more forgetful of him. When men have gained much of the world, they are apt to think they have no need of God, as they had when they were poor, and lived immediately upon Providence: they have something else to support them, and they rest upon this too much. God is often lost in a crowd of worldly enjoyments, and commonly those that are familiar with the world are but strangers to God. See what danger there is of this, Deut. vi. 11, 12. and an instance of it, Deut. xxxii. 16, 18. Job xxi. 14. If an ungodly man prosper in the world, it does but make him the more profane and atheistical, Ps. lxxiii. 11, 12. This estrangement from God is gradual and insensible. Multiplicity of business is thought a good excuse from prayer and reading the word, and by degrees the intercourse with him is quite suspended. They that sought God when he slew them, slighted him when the danger was over. That worldly business, or worldly comfort, that steals the heart away from God, is an enemy to it.

(2.) It is apt to *elevate* the soul, and to fill it with pride and so it is lost. The pride of the soul is the ruin of the soul, for it is the preface to destruction. It is that which God resists, and which he will for ever abhor. They that are lifted up with pride, fall into the condemnation of the devil, 1 Tim. iii. 6. The heart is lifted up to destruction, 2 Chron. xxvi. 16. Now this is the effect of gaining the world. There are indeed those who are poor and proud, but generally the rich in this world have need to be charged in the first place, not to be high-minded; so hard is it to keep the mind low when the estate rises. They that

are at ease are *the proud*, Ps. cxxiii. 4. This pride makes people contentious with their brethren, Prov. xiii. 10. When Abram and Lot grew rich they could not agree, Gen. xiii. 2, 7. It makes them oppressive and scornful to their inferiors, Job xii. 5. deaf to the reproofs of the word, Jer. xxii. 21. When Alexander had (he thought) conquered the world, he was ruined by pride; he would be deemed a god, and never prospered after.

(3.) It is apt to *rack* the soul asunder with worldly cares; and so it is lost. It thus becomes unfit for the service of God. The more men have of the world, the more trouble they have with it; which, if suffered to take possession of the soul, hurries it into greater disquietude, and exhausts its life and vigour; pierces it through with many sorrows, 1 Tim. vi. 10. The cares of this life choke the word of God, as thorns do the good seed, Matt. xiii. 22. as a ship may be lost for want of ballast, so it may by being overloaden. Having too much to do in the world, overwhelms many souls. That which chokes the word chokes the soul. When these cares fill us sleeping and waking, there is danger lest they follow us living and dying; and it is to be feared that is a lost soul whose dying care is only or mainly for the world.

(4.) It is apt to *rock* the soul asleep in carnal security; and so it is lost. Those that have gained the world, are ready upon that to build their hopes for heaven, and to think it must needs be well with them in the other world, because it is so well with them in this, Hos. xii. 7, 8. Prospering worldlings are ready to bless themselves in their successes, Ps. x. 3. and to say, To-morrow must needs be as this day, Isa. lvi. 12. That rich fool that had gotten his barns full, began to set his heart at rest; he had what he would, and said, *Soul, take thine ease*, Luke xii. 19. They that prosper are apt to put far from them the evil day, and so it comes upon them as a snare. Some good people have been almost overcome with this temptation, and it has been to the damage of their souls, Job xxix. 18. Ps. xxx. 6.

(5.) It is apt to make the soul a *drudge* to the body; and so it is lost. When men have gained the world, the soul and all its faculties must presently be engaged to *make provision* for the flesh, Rom. xiii. 14. It is hard to put a knife to the throat, and to check the sensitive appetite, when we have that which tends to the gratifying of it. Here is occasion for self-denial, not temperance through necessity, but of choice. When Solomon had gained the world, he withheld nothing from himself that his eyes desired, Eccl. ii. 9, 10. but if God had not given him repentance, it had been his ruin. The indulging of ourselves in sensual pleasures, is destructive to all the powers of the soul. It is the perverting of the order of nature, when the sensitive appetite must have the command of the rational powers.

(6.) It is apt to make the world a *darling* to the soul; and so it is lost. When the world smiles, we are very apt to be taken in its charms, till we be betrayed to our spiritual enemies. The winning gamester loves the play, and is the more eager upon it. He that gains the world, is in danger of loving it more than God; and then how unwilling to part with it. Now the world seems to have purchased the uppermost room in the soul, and to have merited its best respects; and if once men prefer this world before the other, the soul is undone.

II. *Use* 1. If the gaining of the world be so often the losing of the soul, then *wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction*, and it is no marvel that there be so many that *go in thereat*, Matt. vii. 13. Every body is for gaining the world, and few consider that they court their own temptation. It is no wonder the devil prevails against so many, when he has such hold of them by the world. It is a fawning, flattering enemy, that kisses, betrays, and kills. What need then have we to be jealous over ourselves. If our danger be so great, let us therefore fear, Heb. iv. 1. The way to hell is down-hill, an easy descent, strewed with the world's roses to deceive unwary souls.

2. Then we have little reason to envy the prosperity of evil doers. If bold and daring sinners gain the world by their impieties, alas, they do but treasure up unto themselves wrath. They grasp at a shadow, and let go the substance—therefore fret not thyself because of such, Ps. xxxvii. 1, &c. They are but fed as a lamb in a large place to fatten them for the slaughter, Hos. iv. 16. If the wine be red, and give its colour, yet never grudge it them, nor wish for a draught of it; there is death in the cup, there is poison in it. It is like to cost them dear; but what will be the end of these things? Be not desirous of the world's dainties. Dread them, and deprecate them, as Ps. cxli. 4. See a remedy against this envy, Prov. xxiii. 17. Go into the sanctuary, and see the precious soul sinking while the perishing estate is rising, and that will silence all your envy, Ps. lxxiii. 2—18.

3. Then see the reason why God often denies the abundance of this world to good people, and gives them but a little of it; it is because it would be a snare to them. He intends the saving of the soul, and therefore often keeps them low. He crosses them in their worldly pursuits, strips them of their worldly possessions, puts wormwood into their earthly joys, and thus weans them from earth. He does not intend this world for their portion, and a small matter will suffice for their passage. As God often gives, and sends leanness into the soul, Ps. cvi. 15. so he often denies the fatness of the earth, and yet with the dews of heaven makes the soul like a watered garden. Many good people are kept humble, and serious, and close to God, by their crosses

and disappointments in the world, these being sanctified to them, Ps. cxix. 67, 71.

4. Then pity and help those that are launching out into the world, and want a living principle of grace in their hearts to secure them from the danger of it. Those that are entering into the world are entering into temptation, and have need to be well armed. They hope to gain the world, but are not apprehensive of the danger of losing their souls:—see what ought to be the care of parents in disposing of their children. Be more solicitous to make them good, than to make them great. You must be thoughtful for something more than teaching them to live in this world, which they may gain and yet be eternally undone.

5. Then let us not seek great things to ourselves in this world. What a folly is it for us to covet to spread so large a sail, when we are but exposed thereby so much the more to the storm! A little will serve to bear our charges to heaven, and why should we wish for more, John vi. 27. Prov. xxiii. 5. Be not ambitious of honour, nor covetous of wealth. Let us value our souls aright, and esteem other things as they stand in relation to the soul. Godliness with contentment is all the wealth in the world. Subscribe to Agur's prayer, Prov. xxx. 8, 9. and to Jacob's vow, Gen. xxviii. 20. It is not the largeness, but the fitness, of a garment that makes it easy. God knows what we can bear, what is fit for us.

6. Then in all our gainings of the world, let it be our greatest care and endeavour to gain a victory over it. If God succeed honest diligence in worldly business, and bring into your hands plentifully, take heed lest it be to the losing of the soul, 1 John v. 4. If you would not have the gaining of the world the losing of the soul,

Let your souls be loose to the gain of this world. Manage all your worldly concerns with a holy indifference; and while you do so the world will never do you much hurt, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30. Value not the gain of the world as the best gain. Think what these things are, what is the best use that can be made of them, to whom they must be left, and how little they will serve a man in a dying hour.

Let your souls be carried out towards the gain of another world. Our care about this world will not be inordinate, if it be kept subordinate to the things which belong to our everlasting peace. Gain spiritually by your gains in temporal things. Gain also by your losses; you may do so if you be wise. That is true gain which is gain when we come to die; and that nothing is but Christ.

SERMON VI.

MATTHEW xvi. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

DOCTRINE 6. That the gain of all the world will not profit him that loseth his soul. He that hazards his soul to gain the world, makes a losing bargain; this is the full scope of the verse, *What is a man profited?* It is taken for granted that interest rules the world of mankind. We see every day what pains men take, what hazards they run, and what hardships they undergo, for profit. They that buy and sell hope to *get gain*, James iv. 13. This is aimed at in every bargain—that profit may be attained. But the misery of it is, that men mistake their true interest, and see things by a false light, and go upon a wrong foundation. They think they are profited by that which is really prejudicial, and fancy that they gain when it is only *loss*. Now the design of the Scriptures is to rectify this mistake; and allowing us to consult our own interest, they make it manifest, that when we prefer the things of the world before the concerns of our souls, we are really enemies to our own *profit*. The account is here balanced, profit and loss compared. See Paul's balancing a believer's account, the produce of which was great gain, Phil. iii. 7, 8.—he wins Christ and loses all he had in the world, and reckons himself an unspeakable gainer, as Matt. xiii. 45, 46. Christ here balances the worldling's account, and the result of that is great loss.

1. The gain supposed, is that of the *whole world*. That is more than ever any body did gain, though some have grasped at it. Gain the *whole world, i. e.* gain that which gratifies the world in their hearts, 1 John ii. 16. Those gain the whole world, or think they do so, that have more than heart could wish, Ps. lxxiii. 7. that spend their days in mirth and wealth. Such have the richest returns of this world's trading, they possess a full stream of outward prosperity, without any eclipse.

2. The loss supposed is that of *the soul*—the better, the immortal, part of us. The soul lost by grasping at the world, gaining the point of worldly advantages, and at the same time making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, 1 Tim. i. 19. The soul losing the favour of God, and so losing itself in this world, as to any real consolation, and in the other world experiencing destruction.

3. The balance of the account is, *What is a man profited?* The proposing of it by way of question implies a strong negation; he is in nothing *profited*. It is to be taken as a challenge to the children of this world, like that, Rom. vi. 21. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?

That is a poor bargain which nobody gets by;—such is the bargain of the covetous that lose their souls to *get*, the apostates that lose their souls to *keep*, and the epicures that lose their souls to *enjoy*, the good things of this world. It is explained in the next words, *What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* Some think it is borrowed from Job ii. 4. alluding to that obvious remark, that a man will give any thing to save his life; for what good will any thing we have in the world do us if our lives be gone? So it is with the soul, and its life in the future state. This doctrine I shall endeavour to prove and apply.

I. To prove it—That he that loses his soul to gain the world, makes but a poor bargain—he is so far from being a saver, that he is a loser. Now this I shall endeavour to show,

1. By comparing what is gained and what is lost together;—this is necessary in order to the balancing of an account.

(1.) He that gains the world and its happiness, and loses his soul and its happiness, gains *that which is not*, and *loses that which is;* he gains a shadow, and loses a reality. The things of the world are things that *are not*, Prov. xxiii. 5. are not what they pretend to be, and what we consider them to be. They are lying *vanities*, John ii. 8. It is but the *fashion of this world*, the scheme, 1 Cor. vii. 31. it *passeth away*. Spiritual and eternal things are the only real and substantial things. We call the things of this world *substance*, but they are *dissolving substance*, Job xxx. 22. The existence of them as good, is more in our fancy that in the things themselves, Prov. xviii. 11. But the happiness of the soul is a real thing, it is *substance*, Prov. viii. 21. that *which is;* it is enduring substance, Heb. x. 34. If a man part with that which is a substantial happiness for that which is but pretended, what is he profited? Some think it was only a picture of the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, that the devil showed to Christ, Matt. iv. 8. and it is little better than such which multitudes grasp at, to their own ruin.

(2.) He gains that *which is another's*, and loses that *which is his own*. I refer to Luke xvi. 12. He that gains the whole world, can himself enjoy but a small share of it; it is taken from others, it is possessed for others, it is enjoyed with others, and it is left to others. What joy we have in the world, strangers intermeddle with it, and participate of it. He that increases his estate, increases his charge, Eccl. v. 11. If Job's substance was great, his household was in proportion. But the happiness of thy soul is thy own; the joys of that a stranger doth not intermeddle with. Then and then only we do well for ourselves, when we do well for our souls, though it be commonly taken otherwise, Ps. xlix. 18.

(3.) He gains that in which his *happiness doth not consist*, and loseth *that in which it doth*, gains that which, when he has it, will not make a portion for him, and loseth that which, if he had it, would: see Luke xii. 15. a man's *life consisteth not* in these things. He may be happy that has but a little of the world. Even the heathen could see this, and spoke much of the comfort of those that were contentedly poor. Jacob desired but food and raiment, that was the inventory of his wishes, Gen. xxviii. 20. and yet, *chap.* xxxiii. 11. he says to Esau, *I have all*, my brother: see Ps. xxxvii. 16. Prov. xv. 16. But the happiness of the man doth consist in the welfare and salvation of the soul. Happy is the people whose God is the Lord. The saving of the soul in the day of the Lord Jesus is great gain, though by the destruction of the flesh, 1 Cor. v. 5.

(4.) He gains that which is but *for a time*, and loseth that *which is for ever*. The world passeth away, the things of it perish in the using, witness Job; however, we shall be taken from them, Luke xii. 20. death will strip us. It is certain we can carry nothing out of the world, 1 Tim. vi. 7. our relation to all earthly things terminates with life. Death is a final farewell to honours, pleasures, and wealth. But the soul must be for ever either in happiness or misery. The good things of the soul are everlasting, they are durable riches, Prov. viii. 18. You would reckon him a fool, that would part with the inheritance of a great estate, for the term of a few years in a small tenement. Such, and much greater, is the folly of those that quit an eternal happiness for the momentary enjoyment of the pleasures of sin. That which is the most durable is the most desirable. Man is a creature made for eternity.

2. By considering the consequences of this bargain. Suppose a man, for the gaining of this world's goods, to abandon all thoughts and cares of his soul, and to expose and hazard it to the highest degree; suppose him to succeed in his attempts of gaining the world, and let us see,

(1.) What is his seeming profit. Look upon what appears the fair side of his bargain, and make the best of it. Produce your cause, ye worldlings, bring forth your strong reasons—let us hear what you are profited. He that gains the world, and abandons his soul,

[1.] He has the *pleasures* of sense; he is filled with them. He that lays aside all thoughts of his soul, and has enough of the world—that is neither under the check of conscience, nor the check of poverty—may take a great liberty in indulging the sensual appetite; he may spend his days in mirth; he may be profited, as Solomon was when he withheld not his heart from any joy, Eccl. ii. 10. What is a man profited? why, he may eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and fare deliciously every day, as Luke xvi. 19. He that will abandon his soul, perplexes not himself with self-denying duties;—a fine life, if this world were to last always, and if we had bodies only, and

no souls. See the utmost profit that the worldling promised himself, Luke xii. 19. *eat, drink, and be merry.* And is not this poor profit? Yet this is the utmost.—Alas, there is pain in this pleasure; the heart sad, Eccl. vii. 6. This profit is but like the apples of Sodom, or as painted sepulchres.

[2.] He has the *praise* of the world. He that gains the world, shall have the world's good word; he has the honour to be caressed by those that walk after the course of this world, Ps. xlix. 13, 18. They that gain the world, and care not for their souls, may have a name like the names of the great men, and make a fair show in the flesh. There are those whose blessings attend the covetous, Ps. x. 3. Thus he that gains the world is profited. Poor profit! but it gratifies a base disposition, as long as it lasts. It is no profit to be applauded of men and condemned of the Lord.

(2.) What is the want of real profit for all this. We may say, *What is he profited?*—it is *unrighteous mammon* which he possesses, Luke xvi. 11. the deceivableness of unrighteousness, deceitful riches. He that *gains the world*, and *abandons his soul*, is,

[1.] A loser in this world. Even here, where he enjoys his gain, and makes his best of it, what is he now profited? Even when he has the most of it,

He is not profited, for he hath nothing to recommend him to the favour of God. His gains of the world will not do it. God loves no man the better for being rich; he beholds the proud afar off. He that abandons his soul, chooses those things in which God delights not. Those that are for *any good* seek not God's favour, Ps. iv. 6. Wanting that favour he has no security nor sweetness of his possessions: see Job xx. 23. A dinner of herbs, with the love of God, is better than a stalled ox, and his hatred therewith.

The worldly man is not profited, for he is often in straits in the fulness of his sufficiency, Job xx. 22. He that gains the world, yet such is its insufficiency to make us happy, that oftentimes some one defect, some one *but*, spoils the sweetness of all his possessions. While Ahab wanted Naboth's vineyard, his kingdom did dot profit him, because he had not a contented mind, 1 Kings xxi. 4. While Haman wanted Mordecai's cap and knee, his preferments did not profit him, because he had not a meek and humble spirit, Esth. v. 11—13.

Men of this description are not profited, for they have no solid comfort in their souls, especially when they are in affliction. You think those live joyfully that have the world at will, but you know not what stripes they have from their own consciences, and what a terror they are to themselves many times; they have the bitter with the sweet in the day, and they have no relief of visitation, Isa. x. 3. Many gain the world, and yet are themselves like the troubled sea when it cannot rest. They have nothing upon which they can repose their souls with any assurance: see Job xx. 12—14. If what they have were gotten by injustice, what comfort have they in it, when conscience is once awake? Thus they who are so eager upon the world, and at the same time careless about their souls, are losers by it even in this world; for the truth of it is, it is godliness with contentment that is the great gain, 1 Tim. vi. 6.—that is all the wealth in the world. He that gains the world, and parts with his soul, is,

[2.] Much more a loser in the other world. Brethren, there is such a world, future indeed, and out of sight, but not the less real. Thoughts of the world to come should make us all serious. Then the gains of the hypocrite are gone, when God *takes away his soul*, Job xxvii. 8. compare the verse after the text; then he will appear a loser when the *Son of man shall come.* He that gained the world will be never the better for it in the other world, for

He shall not have what he gained of the world. What is a man profited by it, when he shall leave it behind him? Money has no currency in the other world. It was only an appurtenance to the body, and therefore, when that was dissolved, all its appurtenances went with it, Job xx. 20. Riches are not for ever; he may have, but he cannot hold. Whose shall these things be? None of thine, to be sure, Luke xii. 20. The great day will burn up all those things which now men set their hearts so much upon, 2 Pet. iii. 10.

It shall not profit a man that he has had the world. If the popish doctrine of purgatory be true, a man may be profited that has gained the world, though he do lose his soul, for he may purchase a recovery; but we have not so learned Christ, who said, What *is a man profited*, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? More is implied than is expressed; not only he is not profited, but he is greatly hurt by it. You shall see it so in three cases. He that loses and abandons his soul, whatever he has gained of this world, whether profit, pleasure, or preferment,

First, He is not profited but prejudiced by it in the hour of death. He is not profited, Prov. x. 2; xi. 4. When a wealthy, worldly man comes to die, what advantage is it to him then to have been rich and great. Death will not be bribed to adjourn the execution of his commission for one moment, Ps. xlix. 6—9. The gain of the world will not mitigate the extremity of dying pangs. If there be bands in the death, the wealth of the world will be no relief. Much less will it remove the sting of death, or quiet the conscience; nay, the worldling is prejudiced by it, for it is so much the harder to part. The more a man has gained of the world, the more terror it is to him to think of parting with it. These are the things that make us loth to die. What is a man profited then by his *great possessions?* but that he *goes away* the more *sorrowful.* That which was always vanity, is then vexation; he parts with the

world as Micah did with his gods—What have I more?

Secondly, He is not profited, but prejudiced, by worldly gain, in the day of judgment. He that has gained the whole world, but abandoned all thoughts of his soul, what is he profited by it when he must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ? All his gains will do him no good, for the Judge is too just to be bribed. Nay, it will make against him; for the more men had of this world, the more they will have to account for in that day of reckoning. The things of the world are talents to be traded with, and we must give account of our stewardship, Luke xvi. 2. What we had under our hand in the world must come into the account then; both how we got it, and what we did with it. It is good for us to be often calling ourselves to an account of these two things now. All that carnal mirth and sensual pleasure, which worldlings are so taken up with, will make against them then, Eccl. xi. 9. For *all these things*, God will bring them into judgment.—Hence we find the *rich men* seeking shelter under the rocks, Rev. vi. 15—17.

Thirdly, He is not profited, but prejudiced, by it, in his eternal punishment;—so the punishment of sin in hell is called, Matt. xxv. 46. What is a man profited by all the wealth of this world, when he comes into that lake which burns eternally with fire and brimstone? The gain of the world will not recover a lost soul, it will not open the gate when once shut, and it will not remove that great gulf, when once fixed;—the gates of the shadow of death cannot be unlocked by a golden key, nor will it give any relief or abatement to the misery. He that had fared sumptuously every day, and drunk wine in bowls, could not there get a drop of water to cool his tongue; nay, he is prejudiced by it. Hell is hell indeed, misery with an emphasis, to those that go thither from the midst of this world's abundance.—Son, remember, Luke xvi. 25. How art thou fallen! Isa. xiv. 12. 16. What *pleasure has he in his house?* Job xxi. 21; xiv. 21, 22. Hell flames will show what a bad bargain they have made for themselves, that to gain the world lost their souls.

II. I shall improve this truth, and very instructive it is, if God give us wisdom and grace to consider it.—Mix faith with this word of Christ, meditate upon it, and digest it. We have reason to take his word in these things, and to rely upon it; and let us from hence learn three good lessons:

1. A holy contempt of this world, especially when it comes in competition with our souls. Our Lord Jesus is here weighing the world and the soul, and on the world, he writes, *Tekel*, Dan. v. 27. See the insufficiency of the world to make you happy if you had never so much of it, and do not overvalue it. Let not that be upon the throne in your hearts, which God has put under your feet. A contempt of the world is a good step towards our victory over it. We must be thankful for what we have in the world, and diligent about what we have to do in the world, but we must not place our happiness in it.

(1.) In *pursuing* the world, we must not *overvalue* it. It rectifies and sanctifies our worldly pursuits, when we put a right estimate upon the things of the world.—Seek them not as your end, but as the means; not as precious stones to be laid up in your cabinets, but as stepping-stones, to help you through this land of your pilgrimage. Look upon this world's goods as good in their place, but bad out of it; good servants, but bad masters; good things, but not the best things. Do not pursue the world as your portion, Ps. xvii. 14. neither as your reward, Matt. vi. 2. nor as your consolation, Luke vi. 24. Value them as good things, but not as *your* good things, your chief good. Those overvalue the world, that seek it for itself, and that seek it inordinately, and that seek *much* of it. The same divine penman that says, The hand of the diligent makes rich, says, Labour not to *be rich*, Prov. xxiii. 4. In valuing the world, go according to God's book of rates. Other things are valued according as they are more or less profitable to us. Think whether the world be profitable to our souls or no.

(2.) In *possessing* the world, we must not *value ourselves by it*. Every man has something of a value for himself, and most men measure themselves by the standard of the world—value themselves according to the smiles or frowns of the world. We must not value ourselves as high, because so advanced, nor as safe, because so guarded. When the world flows in plentifully upon you, think, Alas what good will this do me, if my soul should be lost after all? What a base and miserable wretch am I, if in the midst of all, I be a bond-slave to sin and Satan! We must take heed what that is which we bless ourselves in, whether in the deceitful world. Ps. xlix. 18. or in the God of truth, Isa lxv. 16. Reckon yourselves happy in the favour of God, rather than in the smiles of the world. See by what measures we are to value ourselves, Jam. i. 9—11. Nothing conduceth more to the peace and the purity of our own souls, than this contempt of the world.

Learn, 2. A holy concern about our souls. You see where your great interest is not bound up; see then where it is; and since you cannot make the world sure, nor a happiness for yourselves in the world, make that sure that will be made sure—the welfare of your souls. You see what an irreparable loss the loss of the soul is. Men and brethren, look well to your souls. A man would, if it were but to please his fancy, run the hazard of losing some small matter, but this that is your care is not a small thing, for it is your life, Deut. xxxii. 47. Be *concerned* about them, that is, be desirous of their welfare, diligent in the use of means for the further-

ance of their welfare. *Keep thy soul*, Deut. iv. 9. What shall I do for my precious soul? Two things should be our concern about our souls:

(1.) Their *serviceableness* to God in this world. That soul is in a manner lost that God has no honour and glory from. Be more solicitous how to honour God with your spirits, than how to honour yourselves with your estates. True religion is inward work, the work of the heart, Rom. ii. 29. The soul rules the body, and guides all the actions.—O see that the tree be made good—see it to be much more for your true advantage to worship God in the Spirit, than to follow after the things of this world. Be solicitous to keep yourselves clean from sinful pollutions, fixed for gracious exercises, Prov. iv. 23. Learn to honour God with your spirits, and then you will know how to honour him with your substance.

(2.) Their *salvation* with God in the other world. Be concerned what is likely to become of you to eternity. Let your future unchangeable state be much upon your hearts—the salvation *of the soul*, Heb. x. 39. 1 Pet. i. 9. Look upon this as the great and most desirable good, and pursue it accordingly: prefer this before all other cares. Is there any thing which more deserves or more needs your care than this? It is your great business in this world, that for which you were sent into the world. It is your great interest as to the other world. Is not this the one thing needful? Had we but a powerful belief of the reality of invisible things, how would that drown all other concerns, in our prayers, in our cares, and in our endeavours.

3. A holy conduct of ourselves according to these principles. Let this word of Christ, that has come to us so fully, dwell in us richly; let this truth reside in our hearts, and rule there. Abide by this principle, that the gain of the world is nothing if the soul be lost; that our worldly interests, how near soever, are not worthy to be compared, not fit to be named the same day, with the great interests of our souls.—Be delivered into the mould of this truth. Remember this truth, and make use of it,

(1.) When you are *tempted* to sin for worldly profit's sake—tempted to tell a lie, or defraud, or oppress, or do any wrong, for mammon, think, What will this gain be at last? That gain is dear bought that is purchased by sin;—the *gain* will soon be gone, Prov. xiii. 11. Jer. xvii. 11. but the *guilt* will remain, and we must repent of it, or do worse. Those who lose more than they get, will soon become bankrupt. Impress this upon your hearts in an hour of such temptation.

(2.) When you are *tried* by persecution for righteousness' sake—when the world is not to be gotten, but saved, (and there is a fairer pretence for that,) when we must either deny Christ or lose our worldly possessions, then remember this text;—see the verse before the text. If I should lose my soul to save my preferment, I should make but an ill bargain;—this consideration carried the martyrs through the fiery trial. Life is sweet, but eternal life is more sweet, said Bishop Hooper in the prospect of martyrdom: see Acts xx. 24. 2 Cor. iv. 16, 18.

(3.) In the great *turns* of your lives. Let this Scripture prevent all worldly, sensual choices, which prove so fatal to many. Do not, to get or save in the world, go out of the way of opportunities for your souls: see Ps. cxix. 72. Lot chose for the fat land, but what did it profit him, when in the enjoyment of his choice he had like to have lost his own soul? Postpone the world to the soul. When these interests part, remember this text.

(4.) In the constant *tenor* of your conversation. Go by this principle, That the saving of the soul is of much greater consequence to you than the gaining of the world, and let your cares be engaged accordingly—much more for your eternal happiness, than for your temporal convenience. Let this govern your aims and intentions, your actions and endeavours, your thoughts about your children, and all other things. Let this moderate worldly pursuits, and invigorate spiritual pursuits. Let Christ be your gain living and dying, Phil. i. 21. and then all is well, and well for ever.

[*These sermons were preached in* 1696.]

SERMONS AND CHARGES.

[*It does not appear upon what occasion the following Sermon was delivered, though probably it was connected with some ordination service.*]

NUMBERS XV. 39.

And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them.

OLD-TESTAMENT institutions are New-Testament instructions, though, thanks be to God, not New-Testament impositions. Those carnal ordinances are capable of a spiritual improvement; particularly this appointment of the fringes which they were ordered to make on the borders of their garments. Observe,

1. The sign appointed, a *fringe* upon the borders of their garments, and a riband of blue upon it. This was a law agreeable enough to their peculiarity; they were not to be reckoned among the nations; they were to be distinguished in garb as well as diet. Some think Christ wore these fringes, Matt. ix. 20; xiv. 36. In this as in other things he was made under the law. These fringes the Pharisees enlarged, Matt. xxiii. 5. that they might seem more holy than their neighbours.—See another law, Deut. xxii. 12.

2. The thing signified by it. It was to be a memorandum to them that they were a peculiar people, and that God had given them laws by which to be governed. We need all possible helps to stir up our obedience, 2 Pet. iii. 1. The phylacteries were distinct from the fringes. They must *look upon the fringe*. Many look upon their ornaments, and are proud: this is a sin to be carefully watched against. This was to be looked upon as a memorial. The Lord's supper is an ordinance of commemoration, that we may look upon it and *remember*—in sight, in mind.

DOCT. That we ought always to remember the commandments of the Lord our God, that we may do them. God's will concerning our duty ought to be had in remembrance by us.

1. That which is to be remembered is the commandments of the Lord. God is our ruler, his will revealed a law to us, and he has laid his commands upon us, both negative and affirmative precepts; those we must remember: see Mal. iv. 4.

(1.) We must not only remember divine histories to talk of, but divine commands; not only Scripture stories, but Scripture statutes, see Heb. xii. 17. *Ye know* the story, and yet, *v.* 5. *ye have forgotten the exhortation.*

(2.) Not only divine truths to dispute of, but divine commands; not only doctrines, to fill our heads with notions, but plain precepts, to direct our hearts and lives. These we are to hold fast in faith and love, 2 Tim. i. 13.

(3.) Not only divine promises, to take comfort from, but divine commands. Many love to hear of comfort that do not care to hear of duty. They must have smooth things prophesied to them.

2. Our duty concerning the commandments is, to *remember* them, keep them always in view, and bring them on every occasion to mind.

(1.) It is implied that God has *made known* his commandments to us; we cannot plead ignorance, if we *forget* it is our own fault. They are revealed, they are revealed to us, Mic. vi. 8. revealed by natural conscience, and much more clearly by the written word. He has not left himself without witness.

(2.) That though we have known the commandments of God, yet we are apt to forget them, and lose their power, Heb. ii. 1. If God's truths be forgotten, and the duties he has commanded be out of sight, their practical influence and solid consolation cannot be enjoyed. The forgetful mind will be accompanied by the unsanctified heart, and by the unholy walk.

(3.) That therefore we must endeavour always to remember them, that is,

Our memories must retain the remembrance of God's commandments, as—what the will of God is in such and such cases, what is the evil that God has forbidden, and the good that he has commanded. We must make them familiar to us, Prov. iii. 3; vii. 3, 4. They must be much the objects of our meditation.

Our consciences must be ready to apply the commands of God to particular cases, we must have those precepts at hand that are suited to our present duty, opportunity, and temptation.

When tempted to sin, we must remember the command that forbids that particular sin, Jer. xliv. 4. It is written so and so.

When duty is to be done, according as the work of the day is, we must remember the command that requires that duty; whether it be daily prayer, sabbath sanctification, or any other duty.

When an opportunity of good offers itself, then remember the general command of improving all opportunities.

We are to remember *all* God's commandments, we must not select one and reject another.

3. The intention of this remembrance is in order to obedience to God's will, Josh. i. 8. James i. 25.

(1.) That the frame of our hearts may be according to the commandments, a copy and counterpart of the law in our hearts.

(2.) That the course of our lives may be according to them, that we may steer our course by this compass, and that we may walk by this rule.

Use. Thus remember all the commandments of the Lord, the commandments of the law and gospel. Consider,

1. You were taught them betimes. We are to remember what we learned when we were children.—You were taught these with your first lessons; let not time wear out what you learned when you were children; see Prov. i. 8; iv. 1. You were taught them by those that loved you, 2 Tim. iii. 14. and let this have weight with you.

2. They are great things and worth remembering, they are called the *great things* of the law. They are the things of God, things that concern the soul and eternity. The servant is concerned to remember his master's orders, and every subject, to remember the laws of the realm to which he belongs.

3. They are not grievous, nor such as will burden our memories, 1 John v. 3. God has not made us slaves—all his will is comprised in one word, *Love.*

4. We have many remembrancers—ministers, sacraments, dispensations of providence, and conscience, are designed to fix these things in our minds, and make them ready to us. We receive God's grace in vain, if we forget them.

5. It will be much to our advantage to remember these commands, God will remember all those who remember him, and treasure up his commands.

CHARGE I.

[*The following memorandum connected with the ensuing Charge, appears in Mr. Henry's MS. Diary.*

Aug. 6th, 1706. An ordination fast at Knutsford, ordained Mr. Leolin Edwards, of Tinsel, Mr. Thomas Perrot, of Newmarket, and Mr. Silas Sidebottom, of Whelock.—We had a very comfortable day. I hope many were edified. Mr. Angier prayed, Mr. Lawrence preached, 2 Tim. ii. 2. *The same commit thou to faithful men.* I took the confession, and gave the exhortation.—We had much comfort together—were about eighteen ministers—at night went to Winslow; many of my friends with me.]

Having now, my brethren, by prayer, solemnly recommended you to God, and to the word of his grace, we are in the close, to speak from God to you, and to give you a charge, as Moses gave to Joshua in the people's sight.

1. We heartily bid you welcome into our number, and bless God there are some coming in, for a great many are gone off of late. We are threatened with the making of a full end, but this is a token for good, and gives us ground to hope that God will not make a full end with us, and will not depart from us—For if he had been pleased to kill us, he would not have showed us such things as these. We rejoice that God has a seed to serve him, that the church has guides, and that we have fellow-labourers; for we need help, our hands are this day weak, and if you be faithful you will strengthen them.

2. We bid you be of good courage. Take your Master's word for it, and our experience to confirm it, that the work you are engaged in is good work. There is a present reward in it, and an eternal reward at the end, 1 Pet. v. 4. We must tell you, that you must count upon discouragements; but be faithful, and then be of good courage. If your hearts be not right with God, you have reason to be discouraged, nothing will be such a damp to you as hypocrisy, but if you be sincere, you must not be discouraged.

(1.) Be not discouraged by your own weakness and infirmities; let them humble you, but not dishearten you, for God's grace is sufficient for you. Where you are weak in yourselves, if sensible of your weakness, and relying on Christ, you shall find yourselves strong. Encourage yourselves to use means for your improvement. God's blessing can do wonders by weak endeavours.

(2.) Be not cast down by the reproaches and in-

juries you may meet with. You set out with the wind in your faces, and perhaps may hear of hard things said of you; but let none of these move you, Acts xx. 24. You are not to stand or fall by men's judgment. Approve yourselves to God, and you may be easy; the smile of our Father will balance the anger of all our foes, and his *well done*, all their unkind censures.

(3.) Be not discouraged by the little success of your ministry; it is the case of many. Some that we have taken pains with, and of whom we said, These shall comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, are the source of grief to us. But our recompence will be according to our faithfulness, not according to our success;—Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the sight of the Lord. But recollect, it is possible that the want of success may arise from our neglect of duty, Jer. xxiii. 22.

3. We bid you God speed, and it seems in the primitive times that was a great matter, 2 John 10, 11. You have our hearty good wishes. God prosper his work in your hands! We hope we have not sent you to gather the grass on the house-top, which men think not worth giving their blessing with, Ps. cxxix. 6—8. but that you will gather in a harvest of souls. Though you enter into the labour of others, yet he that reapeth receiveth wages, John iv. 36—38. We trust you will thus be rewarded, and therefore we bid you God speed.

4. We direct you to mind your work, and be true to the trusts reposed in you. You are sworn to no other canonical obedience, but to the Scriptures; so that I need only point out the rules to you.

(1.) *That good thing which is committed to you, keep*, 2 Tim. i. 14. the form of sound words, *v.* 13. the gospel truths, the knowledge of which you have signified, and in which you professed your belief, 1 Tim. vi. 12, 20. This is the true grace of God, wherein you stand. Stand to it then, and never let it go. We see you have bought the truth. Sell it not at any rate; you can never lose by the purchase, nor get by the sale. You are intrusted with the charge of the sanctuary, Numb. iii. 25. to preside in solemn assemblies, and to administer holy ordinances. Keep the charge, though you be called as they were, to war a warfare in it.

(2.) *Give attendance to reading*, 1 Tim. iv. 13. You must be laying in, or you cannot lay out. Be still furnishing yourselves with useful knowledge. Read the Scriptures, and other books to help you to understand the Scriptures. It is expected that you excel in knowledge, and a shame if others, whose study and business is about the world, should excel you. Every evening ask, What have I learned today? Get good books, borrow them, collect out of them; in all labour there is profit, and I hope there will be pleasure. Be in study as in your element. If it be a weariness to the flesh, the delight of the spirit will make amends.

(3.) *Take heed to yourselves, and to your doctrine*, 1 Tim. iv. 16.—*to yourselves*, that you may save yourselves. Look well to the state of your own souls, that you may experience in them what you preach to others, may digest that yourselves, with which you would affect others. Keep a strict watch over your own hearts. *To your doctrine*—that it be sound, and according to the Scriptures, suited to the capacities and necessities of your hearers. Offer not that which cost you nothing. Take pains in all you do, that you may find out acceptable words. Let all your performances smell of the lamp; it will engage the attention of your people; they will be careless if you are so. *Take heed to your doctrine*, that it oppose neither God's grace nor man's duty, but take both together.

4. *Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves*, Matt. x. 16.—these two must go together. *Prudence*, not fleshly wisdom, but that which is by the grace of God. It will be your prudence to meddle as little as may be in secular affairs, not to entangle yourselves in the affairs of this life—Who made me a judge or divider? Also to take heed what you say of other people. There is a time when the prudent shall keep silence. With this prudence unite *innocency*. A dove-like spirit without gall will well become you. If others be any way injurious to you, do not meditate revenge, for that is not *dove-like*. Your business is to do good to all, therefore your care must be to do hurt to none.

5. *Give no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed*, 2 Cor. vi. 3. Preserve the reputation of your ministry. Get and keep a good name, Phil. iv. 8. avoid the very appearance of evil. The most circumspect cannot escape censure, but you should endeavour to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Let it never be said of you, that you are proud and haughty, that you are vain and trifling, that you are covetous or worldly. Deny yourselves in many things which otherwise are lawful, that you may save the credit of your ministry; it is an honour to you, be not you a reproach to it. If that be blamed, we are blamed who have set you apart to it. You have many eyes upon you, and some that watch for your halting, therefore walk accurately.

6. *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof*, 1 Pet. v. 2. Acts xx. 28. You are charged with souls, precious souls, the purchase of Christ's blood. Every Christian that has but one soul to look after, finds enough to do; if all had but one, it would find them work enough; but you have many, *feed* them, and do not poison them. Do not make the offering of the Lord to be abhorred; feed them and do not starve them. Have a concern for souls, for *theirs* in particular;—feed the ignorant with knowledge, the careless with admonition, the

wandering with direction, and the mourning with comfort. As the master of a family has a constant care of his family, so you of your flocks. They are volunteers, therefore you may be the more encouraged in dealing with them.

7. *Be instant in season, and out of season.* This is charged with great solemnity, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. Take all occasions for the pulpit, and make it to appear that your work is your delight, and not a drudgery; use all opportunities for instructing and exhorting in personal converse. Never reckon it *out of season* to do good to poor souls. Seek opportunity; it is in season when they are in affliction; then an interpreter will be one of a thousand; fail not to visit the sick. *Be instant* also in visiting those that are in health. Wherever you come, leave a good word behind you.

8. *Show yourselves patterns of good works*, Tit. ii. 7. Christ began to do and teach, Acts i. 1. and so must you, else you pull down with one hand what you build up with the other.—Your voice is Jacob's; let your hands be his too. You would have others to be serious and humble; be you so. You must put others in mind as directed, Tit. iii. 1, 2. set them an example then: see 1 Tim. iv. 12. Though you are young in age, you are elders in office, and therefore it becomes you to be serious. If any variance happen, be patterns of peace-making, yielding to others, and bearing with them. You will hardly reconcile those to Christ, whom you cannot reconcile to yourselves. Win upon all by love and meekness.

9. *Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. ii. 1. See that you have true grace yourselves, and then that you be stronger and stronger. Let all your strength be in the grace of Christ; derive aid from him daily. Depend always upon him. Do all in his name and for his glory; without this, the youths will faint and be weary, Ps. lxxi. 16. Never rely upon your own strength. When you study, or preach, go in the strength of Christ; you are not sufficient of yourselves, but he will be sufficient for you, and if trying times should come, depend upon his grace to enable you to persevere.

10. *Hold fast till Christ comes*—This is all the burthen that is laid upon the presbyters of Thyatira, Rev. ii. 24, 25. There are many that are seeking to wrest your good things from you. That which is committed to you, hold it fast; never let it go. Christ comes to own you and crown you; persevere to the end, that you lose not your crown. You cannot go back; go forward then, go on to the end, then shall he appear to your joy. I hope you are satisfied in what you have done here to-day; do not undo it again, but hold it fast. To conclude, now, in the close of the day,

1. Remember the vows you have this day made, they are upon you; you have sworn, see that you perform it. Be not irresolute; you are in Christ's bonds, and they are good, let these bonds hold you.

2. Remember the prayers that have been this day made for you, for your encouragement. Paul often tells his friends for what he prayed for them, that they might be encouraged. Many earnest prayers have been put up for you, which you will reap the benefit of, if it be not your own fault. Defeat not our prayers.

3. Remember the charge that has now been given you, the trust committed to you, and set your hearts to it. It is to Timothy that Paul writes, Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

CHARGE II.

[*Extract from Mr. Henry's MS. Diary.*

May 13th, 1707. Ordination fast at Knutsford, Mr. Low, Dr. Holland, and Mr. Angier prayed. Mr. Lawrence preached, Ps. xvi. 13. *Show me the path of life.* Mr. Twemlow and Mr. Garsyde were set apart, by imposition of hands. We were minded of our ordination vows. O that the obligations of them may abide always upon me! We were refreshed with the society of our brethren.]

The charge we have now to give you, now you are sworn on this grand inquest, between our Sovereign Lord, the King of kings, and his church on earth, is not a light thing, for it is your life. Let me tell you,

I. In general, what sort of charge it is.

1. It is a divine charge. We have not the appointment of your work, we only are to tell it you; you have your charge from the same hand that gives you your commission, and that puts you into the ministry, even Christ, whose ministers and stewards you are. He commanded the twelve, Matt. x. 5; xi. 1. and afterward, Acts i. 2. and from him you are to expect the blessing, Luke xxiv. 50. and strength to fulfil your trust.

2. It is a solemn charge, enough to strike an awe upon the lightest mind. See with what solemnity Paul gives Timothy a charge again and again: though he was a man of a serious spirit, Paul saw he needed it, 1 Tim. v. 21; vi. 13, 14. 2 Tim. iv. 1. That the sense of it may remain upon you, receive it with solemnity. God's eye is upon you, and the eye of Christ, and the holy angels see you.

3. It is a charge which requires the whole man for the fulfilling of it, all that is within you. If a man had ten souls, the ministry is work enough for them all; therefore the charge of the sanctuary was committed to men in the prime of their time, between twenty-five and fifty years of age. You have

always something to do, either fishing or mending the nets.

4. It is a charge for life. While God gives you ability and opportunity, you are to continue labour. You are laying your hand to a plough, from which there is no looking back; a charge from which you must not think of being *discharged* till your life shall end. In case of sickness, God will have mercy and not sacrifice; and if restrained by men, you will find the same mercy; but you must not expect a life of idleness, and if you be Christ's servants you will not desire it.

5. It is a charge upon which you will be called to an account in the great day. Ministers must be judged—your office will not exempt you. If you profane the holy things of God, remember Nadab and Abihu, in the day when they were consecrated.

II. In particular we give you charge,

1. Concerning the oracles of God, the Holy Scriptures. They are a sacred deposit; you are intrusted with the custody of them. They may easier be kept now in writing, than when by tradition. You are the stewards that are intrusted with this treasure.

(1.) Let these oracles be your *study*. Converse with them daily. Make the Scriptures familiar to you. Learn the Scriptures by heart. Be ready and mighty in the Scriptures, as Apollos was, Acts xviii. 24.

(2.) Let them be your *standard*, your touchstone. By these try yourselves first,—your own hearts and lives, your spiritual state, and your ministry—whether you answer the Scripture characters. By these try the spirits, 1 John iv. 1. and try doctrines and practices, Isa. viii. 20.

(3.) Let them be your *store-house*. Fetch your prayers and sermons out of the Scriptures: it will make the man of God perfect, 2 Tim. iii. 17. Matt. xiii. 52. And let them be the magazine of your spiritual warfare.

(4.) Let them be your *stay*. Establish yourselves from the Scriptures, and encourage yourselves. This is the word on which you are caused to hope, even the word of truth, 2 Cor. vi. 7. Hope in the word, when other encouragements fails. We give you charge,

2. Concerning the *ordinances of Christ*. These are the mysteries you are stewards of, 1 Cor. iv. 1. see Numb. iii. 6, 10. These are a trust, a dispensation committed to us, 1 Cor. ix. 17. Be very careful then,

(1.) In your *admission* to special ordinances. You are intrusted with the keys, Matt. xvi. 19. be very cautious to avoid the extremes. Let not those that are grossly ignorant, or scandalous, be suffered to profane the holy things of the Lord; yet let not those be rejected, that are weak in the faith, or in small matters differ from you, Rom. xiv. 1.

(2.) In your *administration* of all the ordinances. Seeing you are not obliged to forms, you have the more need to furnish yourselves for every good word and work. Let not that liberty be turned into licentiousness. Improve in your praying gifts. Offer not any thing unbecoming the seriousness of that ordinance. Use Scripture expressions; they are most unexceptionable to all, and the most agreeable to them that are serious: see Eccl. v. 2. Pray for the spirit of prayer, Rom. viii. 26. In preaching, be studious; offer not that which costs you nothing, 1 Tim. iv. 13, &c. Keep to the proportion of faith, Rom. xii. 6. Speak with the words which the Holy Ghost teaches, 1 Cor. ii. 13. 1 Pet. iv. 11. Choose for your subjects the plainest and most needful truths: endeavour to make them plainer, and be serious in the delivery. In administering sacraments prepare somewhat beforehand, and keep up a reverence for those seals of the covenant. We exhort you,

3. Concerning the *case of your own souls*. Take heed *to thyself*, to save thyself in the first place, 1 Tim. iv. 16.

(1.) Make sure your own interest in Christ, and a work of grace in your hearts, that you may speak by experience. Be not as Noah's workmen, that built an ark for others, and perished themselves. Your work will be a task and burthen to you, if you do not relish divine things; and you cannot expect God's blessing.

(2.) Keep up an *intimacy* with your own hearts. Be much in communing with them. Keep your own vineyards; else how can you keep others. Feel what you speak; it will be quite another thing when it comes from the heart. Make that clear to yourselves which you would make clear to others, and be affected with that yourselves with which you would affect others. Look well to your principles and aims. Let your eye be single. Take heed of pride, it will spoil all. There is no greater ornament to a young minister than humility, Ps. lxxi. 16. We address you,

4. Concerning the course of your conversation. If your lives be not of a piece with your preaching, you pull down with one hand what you build up with the other. See to it, that in your conversation,

(1.) You preserve the credit of your ministry. We charge you with this, because the glory and honour of God is concerned in it, which will suffer if you miscarry yourselves: see Rom. ii. 21, 24. Keep at a distance from all evil, from all appearances of it. Many eyes are upon you; let your conversation be grave, sober, and pure. Ministers should be mortified men, 1 Cor. ix. 27. see 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 22.

(2.) That you promote the ends of your ministry. Preach in your lives. Good discourse will be expected from you, and better taken from you than from others. Be examples to believers, 1 Tim. iv. 12.

Let them see that you yourselves believe what you tell them of the evil of sin. They will do as you do sooner than as you say. Make your converse edifying, that every company you come into may be the better for you. We charge you,

5. Concerning the welfare of the church in general. You are the messengers of the churches, as well as the *glory of Christ*, 2 Cor. viii. 23. Be serviceable to the church,

(1.) By your prayers. You are watchmen upon the walls, Isa. lxii. 6, 7. be intercessors for the church. Prophets prayed for the public peace. Stand in the gap, as Moses. Who should if you do not? Acquaint yourselves with the state of the churches, that you may be particular in your requests.

(2.) By your peaceableness. Condemn not those that differ from you. Be not censorious; widen not our differences; and judge charitably of all. Praise that which is good, and make the best of what you dislike. We speak to you,

6. Concerning the welfare of those congregations that are particularly committed to your charge. They must in a special manner be your care. You are their choice, and are not thrust upon them, and therefore you have in some respects a greater advantage in dealing with them, Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. v. 2.

(1.) In your public ministrations, study their good, what they most need—as the physician studies the case of his patient; avoid personal reflections, and apply those words of God which you think will reach their case, and pray they may reach their consciences.

(2.) In your private applications, when they apply themselves to you especially; and though they do not, seek opportunity to apply yourselves to them.

Be familiar with them, never shy nor haughty. Show yourselves glad of an occasion to talk with them about their souls. Be so well furnished, that you need not fear betraying ignorance. Be so humble, as not to think it a disparagement to converse with the meanest saint, but rather a disparagement to be in company with the haughtiest sinner.

Be faithful to them, tell them with meekness of their faults,—and then you may hope to see the great ends of your ministry attained.

CHARGE III.

[*Extract from Mr. Henry's MS. diary.*

October 20, 1707. Went by Wrenbury Wood to Nantwich, to an ordination. The evening spent in examining the candidates at Mr. Lawrence's,—Mr. Richard Lessingham, of Grantham in Lincolnshire, who brought very good testimonials, Mr. William Bryan, of Newcastle, Mr. John King, of Stone, and Mr. John Kenrick, of Wrexham.

21st. An ordination fast. Mr. Lawrence began; Mr. Irham prayed; Dr. Holland preached; I took the confession, and gave the exhortation. We were in all about twenty ministers. The candidates discovered much seriousness, and we hope they are all likely to serve the cause of God. Dr. Holland preached, Acts xxvi. 17, 18. We were much refreshed, and there were none to make us afraid.]

The question God put to Elijah, we desire to put to ourselves—What do we here? and the question Christ put to the people concerning John, we would put to you—What come ye out for to see?

1. We that are ministers, should be able to give a good account what we do here. We are not here to strive or cry, or to have our voice heard in the streets; not to revile the government or the national establishment. We desire to be found of the quiet in the land; not to contend with our brethren, or condemn those from whom we differ. To the same Master they and we must stand or fall. We hope we take not too much upon us; but as ministers we are to give ourselves to the word and prayer. As in other things, so in this, by prayer to recommend to God, and by the word to recommend to you, some that are here, to give up themselves to the service of Christ in the work of the ministry. We pretend not to *commission* them; they have their commission from Christ; nor to *consecrate* them; they have their consecration from the Holy Ghost. We pretend not to give them the Holy Ghost, it is not in our power, but solemnly to set them apart, or rather to recognize their setting of themselves apart, to this great work, and to bless them in the name of the Lord. We hope the ordination of Timothy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, will bear us out before God in what we do, 1 Tim. iv. 14. and there is a promise to two or three that agree to ask any blessing of God, Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

2. You that are the candidates, are concerned to consider what you do here. You are here to dedicate yourselves to Christ. You have made some trial of his work, and you are now to be bound, as those that like it well, and would not go out from it. You have counted the cost, and have resolved to make the ministry your business, and give yourselves to it.

3. The people are to consider what they come hither *to see*. We are to give them a charge *in your sight*, that you may see what obligations your ministers are under to their work, and may esteem them highly, and help them with your prayers; may value the privilege of a standing ministry, and be thankful for the gifts and powers given to men. For your full satisfaction we are to tell you,

(1.) What has been done concerning those that are now to be offered to God. They have been educated in learning; the schools of the prophets have

given proof of their abilities. Every scholar is not fit to be made a minister. They have been tried, and found apt to teach. They have been tried by the people to whom they are to minister, and found fit for them, and of a good conversation. They are not only blameless, but exemplary. They have showed themselves able not only to preach the truth but defend it.

(2.) What is now to be done. They are to make a confession of their faith. We leave them to do it in their own words, that you may understand their knowledge in the mystery of Christ, Eph. iii. 4. and that ye may be satisfied in their soundness in the faith. They are to make their vows to the Lord, and they shall be their free-will offerings. Remember you are in the presence of God.

EXHORTATION.

When Solomon by a long prayer had dedicated the temple, blessed God, and blessed the congregation, he concluded with an exhortation, 1 Kings viii. 61.—so do we.

I. By way of *charge*. There are five things we have to give you in charge, according to what has been done this day.

1. The confessions of faith you have this day made. Hold fast those sound words. The doctrines of Christ are called *traditions*, 2 Thess. ii. 15. because delivered to you to keep. Keep them safe, keep them pure. Contend earnestly for the faith; it is worth contending for. You have bought it; it is a good bargain; sell it not. Keep them in faith and love. We take you to be faithful men, and therefore commit the deposit to you, 2 Tim. ii. 2.

2. The covenants with which you have this day bound your souls. The vows of God are upon you; do not complain of the weight of them as a burthen, but feel the strength of them as a bond. You have opened your mouth to the Lord, and cannot go back. Oft call to mind your ordination vows, those sacred things:—Did I not say, I would be diligent and faithful? I did, and dare not unsay it.

3. The credit of the office to which you have this day been admitted. It is a very high and honourable calling. You are called to be ambassadors for Christ, to be masters of religious assemblies, and stewards in God's house. If you in any thing carry yourselves amiss, you bring disgrace upon your profession. Take heed that the ministry be not blamed. It is not your credit only, but the credit of the gospel, that lies at stake. You have many eyes upon you, and have much for which to answer. Beware lest you should grieve the good, and harden the bad.

4. You have this day been intrusted with the custody of the ordinances,—the word, sacraments, and prayer. Keep them pure and entire. Take heed that none of them be debased, and so suffer damage, through you. Corruptions are apt to creep in; let your eye be to the institution; be faithful as the people's mouth to God, and God's to them. Remember from whom you are speaking, and whom you address. Teach what Christ has commanded, pray according to the direction of the word, attend properly to baptism and the Lord's supper, and carefully maintain discipline.

5. The care of the people to whom you are this day recommended. Feed the lambs and the sheep. We hope you love Christ; if you do, take care of those you have purchased. Remember you are watchmen, you are shepherds,—if you neglect your duty, blood will be required at your hands. Though I think not the union between ministers and people inseparable, yet I think the relation very near. Bear them upon your hearts before the Lord.

II. By way of *caution*. You are in danger. As soon as ever Nadab and Abihu were consecrated they fell into that sin which cost them so dear. Be not high-minded, but jealous over yourselves with godly jealousy.

1. Take heed of affecting novelties in religion, lest you fall into vanities, or worse. Ask for the old way. Keep to the faith once delivered to the saints. Be still building upon the old foundation, in which it is good to be established, Heb. xiii. 9.

2. Take heed of spiritual pride. This is spoken of as the temptation of young ministers, 1 Tim. iii. 6. Think not you have already attained, but forget the things that are behind. Magnify your office, but do not magnify yourselves. It is not outward honour at which we must aim. Let evil report help to lay us low, and let not good report help to lift us up. Boasting is for ever excluded, 1 Cor. iv. 7. Pray much against this sin; pray for grace sufficient.

3. Take heed of the indulgence of the flesh. Paul minds himself of it. Take it not ill that I remind you of it, 1 Cor. ix. 27. Prophets are spiritual men; but the prophet is a fool, and the spiritual man is mad, if he submit to the dominion of carnal lusts. Be sober in the use of creature comforts. That liberty which may be decent in another may be culpable in a minister.

4. Take heed of worldliness. The love of money in a minister, is the root of more evil than in any other person. Regard not present things if the heavenly Canaan be your possession; let them that know no better take their portion in these things, but the Christian may not call earth his all.

5. Take heed of growing remiss in your work. You now take pains; do so while you live. Think not after a while you may relieve yourselves, and go over your old stock. The Scriptures still afford new things to them that search them. Continue searching.

How can you expect God's blessing, or your people's attention, if you be careless in your work.

III. By way of *counsel.* I know you will take the advice of a friend that wishes well to you and your work. The Lord give you counsel, and enable you to receive it.

1. Be well acquainted with your own hearts. Converse with them, and take pains with them. See that the good work be wrought and going on there. Fetch your applications from thence, that you may speak with feeling—such a thing affected me. One heart answers another; therefore employ those methods of which you yourselves have found the benefit. We speak that we have seen. He that ruleth not himself, how shall he rule the church? Speak from the heart.

2. Study closely; especially make the Bible your study. There is no knowledge in which I am more desirous to increase, than the knowledge of the Scriptures. Give attendance to reading, 1 Tim. iv, 13. As long as you live, be still gathering, and increasing your stock. Take pleasure in your study, and be in it as in your element.

3. Let all your performances be plain and scriptural. Affect not fine words, but words which the Holy Ghost teaches; that is sound speech which cannot be condemned. Enticing words of man's wisdom debase your matter; gold needs not be painted. Study plainness. Scripture expressions are what people are used to, and will remember. Consider the lambs of the flock you must take along with you, and do not over-drive them, by being over-long, or over-fine.

4. Be familiar with your people, not high or strange in your behaviour. Converse with them for the good of their souls, and let your common converse with them tend to that, and be seasoned with it. Acquaint yourselves with the state of their souls, their temptations, and their infirmities, and you will know the better how to preach to them, and pray with them. Encourage them to ask you questions about their souls. It will become you to promote good discourse on all occasions.

5. Let Jesus Christ be all in all with you. Study Christ, preach Christ, and live Christ. Remember you are his ministers, the friends of the Bridegroom, and must not preach yourselves, nor live yourselves. How full is Paul of Jesus Christ! It is Christ that will call you to account. Be not full of controversies, but full of Christ. Love the image of Christ wherever you see it, even in those from whom you differ.

IV. By way of *comfort and encouragement.* You must expect to meet with difficulties from the oppositions of Satan and the frowns of the world. You must expect reproach and contempt; it is our present trial. You may be tempted to think all this had been prevented, if you had been of some other employment. You see little success of your ministry, and that is a discouragement—you labour in vain, Jer. xx. 9. but the greatest discouragement is from within, our own weakness; we do not profit ourselves; we fear we shall not hold out. But we have several things to encourage us:

1. The goodness of our work. We are despised, but our work is not despicable. It is work for Christ and the souls of men. It is work that will be successful, though we see not and feel not the success we desire. Can we ever employ ourselves better, than in that which is the proper business of our office?

2. The kindness of our Master. He accepts of our sincere endeavours; he has promised to own us, to be with us to the end of the world, and with each rising generation.

3. The promise of the Spirit to help our infirmities, to assist us in our work, and to make it successful. The promise of the Spirit relates especially to ministers, John xiv. and xvi.

4. The experiences of your predecessors. They have found God all-sufficient to them. They did not, nor do we, repent of entering upon this good work.

5. The prospect of the recompence. Bear contempt; if you be faithful, there is honour before you, and the best preferment.——As to the people that stand related to you,—I would exhort that you report to your company what you have seen and heard, and make one another sensible of the obligations you lie under to love one another, to communicate mutual aid and consolation, and to fear every root of bitterness.

CHARGE IV.

[*Extract from Mr. Henry's MS. diary.*

April 13, 1708. This day was spent in ordaining Mr. Beynon, at Whitchurch. Mr. Lawrence began, Mr. David Jones, of Salop, preached, 2 Tim. ii. 15. Mr. Doughty prayed. I took his confession, prayed over him, and gave the exhortation. He performed with great seriousness, and gave universal satisfaction.]

My brethren, God is our record, whom we desire to serve with our spirits in the gospel of his Son, that we address ourselves now to this solemn work of ordaining a minister, not in any contempt of, or opposition to, the national establishment; not with design to support a faction, to make a party, or to advance any secular interest of our own, much less do we aim to disturb the public repose. We desire always to be found among the quiet in the land, and to be subject to principalities. We would ren-

der to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's.

With the allowance, and under the protection, of the government that is over us, we are here, by the word and prayer to set apart one to the service of Christ and his church—to recommend him to God by prayer, and to the word of his grace, and then to recommend him to you, to be received and owned as a minister of Christ. The principle we go upon is, that all societies for religious worship ought to have guides and overseers, whose office it is to preach, &c. that to this work men ought to be regularly called, and that those are so which "*be called and chosen to this work by men, who have public authority given them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard.*"—Article 23. This authority must be had from Christ. Why they that in other things are employed in the word and prayer, and are stewards, should not be in this, we do not yet see.

But the great thing we are to mind, is the frame of our own hearts. O that we may be sincere and serious in what we do, that we that are ministers may do it with a due sense of the weight of our work, our unworthiness of it, and our unfitness for it.

That you that are now to be set apart may offer yourself to God, a living sacrifice in faith and love, consider what you are going about, whether you give yourself willingly. We have reason to bless those that willingly offer themselves, Neh. xi. 2.

You that attend this work, we desire to give you all just satisfaction. The minister of Christ we are to recommend to you has been well educated, has made trial of his gifts, and met with approbation You have had some trial of him; it is your desire he should be set apart; and he is now to give an account of his faith.

When our Lord Jesus sent forth his disciples with his blessing and Spirit, he gave them commandments, Matt. x. 5. Acts i. 2. The ministry is an honour, a great honour, but it is also a work, a good work, and as such we commit it to you; not giving you any other commandments than what our Master has given, which are not grievous; no, the yoke of the ministry, as well as of Christianity, is easy and light. We lay no other burthen but *necessary things*; none but what Christ has laid, and what we desire ourselves by the grace of God to receive.

I. Let me desire you always to keep in remembrance what you have been doing to-day. 2 Tim. i. 6. Pause a while. I hope you did not do it rashly, and that now you do not wish it undone; bear it in mind then, *Know ye not what I have done to you*, John xiii. 12. I hope this day's work will leave upon you a truly indelible character, which you will never forget.

1. Think oft of the confession of faith you have made; hold it fast, 2 Tim. i. 14. cleave to the truths of God, and contend earnestly for them. Your foundation is good, keep to it, and take care what you build upon it, 1 Cor. iii. 12.

2. Think oft of the solemn vows with which you have now bound your souls. Keep what you delivered, and peruse it sometimes. Thy vows are upon me, O God. Remember these bonds, examine yourselves by them, and excite yourselves with them.

3. Think oft of the prayers that have been put up for you. Do nothing to frustrate those prayers. If our prayers return into our own bosoms, Ps. xxxv. 13. we are no losers; but we would be gainers.

4. Think of the place you are in, and those that are gone before you here. See what Christ says of his disciples, John iv. 37, 38. yet compare *v.* 36. Here has been a good foundation laid: you come among a people that I hope retain something of what they have heard and received; let that encourage you. Yet I hope you will break up the fallow ground.

5. Think of the time of your entrance, when death has been busy among us, and let it awaken you to diligence. They being dead, yet speak to us that survive.

6. Think of the expectations of your people from you. If that will open you a wide door, you have it. They promise themselves much from God through you. Let them have joy of you, and you shall have joy in them. I desire to bless God that I see this day; it is an answer to prayer.

II. Let me beg of you to keep the charge of the Lord your God. That good thing which is committed to you, keep.

1. That which God has committed to you by our ordination. God is to be glorified; the kingdom of Christ is to be supported; religious assemblies are to be kept up in order to the maintaining of religion. You are intrusted with the vessels of the sanctuary; you are to be messengers to keep up the correspondence between God and his people; see 1 Cor. x. 31; xiv. 26; xiv. 4. Col. iii. 17. walk according to these rules. You will be called to account of this trust; receive it with that charge, Ezra viii. 28, 29. and that which refers to it, Isa. lii. 11.

2. That which the people have committed to you by their choice. Expect not that they should follow you with an implicit faith; but they have intrusted you to search the Scriptures for them. They have taken you not to have dominion over their faith, but to be a helper of their holiness and joy. Feed the sheep, feed the lambs; you are their guide. Be true to the trust committed to you. Watch for their souls,

Heb. xiii. 17. save them from death, do what you can. In order to the keeping of this charge, suffer a word of exhortation, a word which I would faithfully address to myself, as well as to you, as our duties are similar. God expects much from me, and he expects much from you. May we hear his will, and render to it the fullest obedience.

(1.) Let us keep close to the word of God as our rule. You are to minister the gospel of the grace of God. Keep to that gospel as a gospel of grace. They that went to teach had the book of the law with them, 2 Chron. xvii. 9. Fetch your knowledge from the Scriptures, all your arguments, your language, your examples, and your illustrations. Scriptural preaching is the best, and a Scripture conversation.

(2.) Let us keep up our communion with God, both in secret and in all our public performances. Let us endeavour to realize eternal objects. Let us feel the power of those truths, and the obligation of those laws, of which we speak to others. God gives his prophets leave to be free with him; let us use our freedom; let us not be strangers to our Master. It is our privilege that we are oft called to prayer; let our souls be with God in every prayer.

(3.) Let us keep conscience void of offence. How else can we expect God's presence, and strength, and blessing? This was Paul's care, Acts xxiv. 16. We profess to have a tenderness of conscience, and let this be manifested upon every occasion. Let it be daily seen that we cannot satisfy ourselves in the commission of any sin, nor in the neglect of any duty. If we walk not in God's counsels, how can we expect to profit his people. Take heed of sin; you spoil your ministry if you suffer that worm at the root.

4. Let us ever be active. We have constant work, we must either be bringing into our treasuries or be distributing from them. Fill up your time: a minister's time should especially be precious. Let us gather as we spend; let us love our studies; let us give attendance to reading; and fear every thing which has the appearance of negligence.

(5.) Let us keep humble, having low thoughts of ourselves, of what we do, and what we are capable of doing. The clothing of humility is the best distinguishing habit of a minister. Let us be distrustful of ourselves, that we may depend upon Christ. Let us be conscious of our own unworthiness, that we may stoop to the meanest. Servants must stoop, and become all things.

(6.) Let us keep the peace. We are in Christ's kingdom, appointed to be preservers of the peace. Let us study to live peaceably with those of opposite sentiments to ourselves. Let us be offensive to none, and obliging to all. Let not the gospel of peace be preached contentiously.

(7.) Let us keep Christ upon our hearts. In this let us be followers of blessed Paul, who was so full of Christ. Every sermon must contain Christ. Every action must be performed in his strength, and every trial endured in his name. Let men have opportunity of taking knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

(8.) Let us keep heaven in our eye, and be encouraged in the difficulties of our work. Heaven will make amends for all. The faithful labourer can never be a loser; he shall find his reward at last.

I would address the members of this congregation:

How earnestly do I desire your welfare, to hear that your souls prosper, and that your conversation is as becomes the gospel! I have reason to bear you much upon my heart; I have done so, and I hope shall while I live. I often call to remembrance the days of old, the years I spent in communion with you, and now desire,

1. You would not forget the ministers you have had with you. You have been as a field that the Lord has blessed. God has sown plentifully among you. You have had the good word of your ministers. I remember my father, in a sermon in 1673, say, there were three things for which he praised the people of Whitchurch: "That they were sound in their judgments, not carried about with the wind of opinions; that they were of one mind and way; and that they had none of those merely worldly clubs and fellowships that are in some other towns, among professors, whereby a great deal of harm is done both to themselves and to their profession." Is it so still? May it ever be so!

2. That you would encourage your present minister. I rejoice in the general satisfaction you have in your choice. I trust he is come among you in the fulness of the gospel of Christ. He has himself desired, and I second it in your presence, your prayers and your practice. Let me add, be free with him, not strange to him. Inquire the law at his mouth; ask good questions, and you will have good answers. Love him, think all little enough you can do for him, and especially adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. Bear contempt and reproach with meekness, and do not return either the one or the other. That which honours your profession and minister, will be your own honour. Live so that he that sows and they that reap may rejoice together for ever.

CHARGE VI.

[*Mr. Henry's MSS. contain no information respecting the person to whom this charge was given, nor the time of its delivery.*]

THAT which now remains, is to address an exhortation to you, my brother, now solemnly set apart to the

work of the ministry. Think you hear Christ saying to you, as to his disciples, *Know ye what I have done to you*, John xiii. 12. I say, What Christ has done, for it is he that has called you into your ministry, 1 Tim. i. 13. I hope you have such a sense of what Christ has done to you, what he has wrought upon your soul, as that your impression of it will abide upon you, so that nothing would induce you to leave the master you have chosen, nor to abandon that good work which he has appointed for you. You have received a commission from the Lord Jesus, to be an officer in his kingdom, the apostles were extraordinary ambassadors, 2 Cor. v. 20. Ministers are his servants to carry on his gracious designs. You have bound your soul with a bond, faithfully to do the work of a minister. Now it is requisite you should rightly understand what the trust is that is committed to you, and that you have accepted: see 1 Tim. ii. 6. It is a great trust, and you must shortly give account.

I. There is that which is committed to us ministers in common with all Christians, our precious souls. Let me charge this upon every one of you, Prov. iv. 23. Keep a watchful jealous eye upon your own hearts. We that are ministers especially, that it may not be said, we have kept the vineyards of others, but our own vineyard we have not kept, Cant. i. 6. Take heed to thyself in the first place, 1 Tim. iv. 16. Acts xx. 28. Look well to the state of your soul, that you may be able to speak experimentally. Look well to the frame of your spirit. Be concerned that you gain spiritual advantage from the sermons you preach to others. We have an advantage above others, in frequent praying and meditation.

II. There is that which is committed to us as ministers. There are things we solemnly charge you with. The Levites had their particular trust, and the Christian minister also has his work. He that enters into a service has various things committed as trusts to him.—I would remind you of your duty.

1. You must faithfully explain and apply the oracles of God. The book of the law was in the custody of the priests. Some churches put the Bible into the hands of ministers when they ordain them, and very significantly. Search the Scriptures; take heed of misinterpreting them, of wresting them, 2 Pet. iii. 16. and of handling them deceitfully. You have a gospel to preach, not to make. Compare spiritual things with spiritual. In plain texts keep to the plain sense, and in difficult ones be modest.

2. You must faithfully administer the ordinances of Christ. The preaching of the word is his appointment, 2 Tim. iv. 2. Prepare for it; manage it as an ordinance of Christ, for your advancing of his honour and the interest of his kingdom, 2 Cor. iv. 5. Prayer is an ordinance of Christ; observe the intentions of it; to that, as well as to the word, you are to give yourselves, Acts vi. 4. You are the people's mouth to God, and must declare to God all their concerns, as you must declare to them all God's counsel. The Lord's day is an ordinance of Christ; keep up the honour of it, that you may keep up the power of it. The sacraments are peculiarly ordinances of Christ; regard the institution, and adhere to it.

3. You must faithfully maintain the truths of the gospel: you are trusted with the custody of them, and must be able to convince gainsayers, and to give a reason for the hope which is in you, 1 Pet. iii. 15. Handle the truths of the gospel in your preaching as if they were not controverted, yet be furnished with answers to them that contradict. Betray not any truth of Christ by deserting it. Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, Jude 3. Christ's advocates shall never want instructions. Put on resolution. Set your face as a flint. You may speak as one having authority. Be jealous for the honour of the truth.

4. You must faithfully preside in religious assemblies. You must hold Christ's courts in his name, and not in your own; for his honour, and not for your own, Zech. iii. 7. Let every thing be done decently and in order, that an unbeliever may see God is with you, 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. The holy convocation is a divine appointment; do your part in it according as it is appointed for the glory of God's name, the keeping up the appearance of religion, and the promoting of Christian love; all which are earnests of heaven.

5. You must faithfully witness against sin, for it is God's enemy; you are his advocates. Bear your testimony against it, and against all appearances of it, and approaches towards it. In this manifest zeal, John ii. 17. and witness against evil wherever you see it. There are some that must be rebuked sharply. Suffer not sin upon them, lest you bear sin for them, Lev. xix. 17. Be bold for God, and not afraid of the face of man.

6. You must faithfully separate between the precious and the vile. You must distinguish in your preaching, that you may not strengthen the hands of the wicked, nor make the hearts of the righteous sad, Ezek. xiii. 22. In administering special ordinances, you must pay great attention to personal character. You must impart holy things to holy persons. You are a steward of these mysteries, 1 Cor. iv. 1. and you must consider what men really are.

7. You must faithfully comfort afflicted consciences. We give you a special charge of them, for Christ has a special care of them, Isa. xl. 1, 2. Use them tenderly, study how to speak a word in season to them, to heal their wounds, and yet not to heal them slightly. Teach them to fetch their comfort from Jesus Christ. Direct them to him, as their city of refuge. Show them the way. If they hearken not to you for anguish of spirit, yet continue.

8. You must faithfully intercede for the church and people of God. You are intrusted with this care, Isa. lxii. 6, 7. You are to bear Zion's interests much upon your heart. Public persons must be of public spirits. The priests, the Lord's ministers, Joel ii. 17. Mal. i. 9. stand between the living and the dead. If they be prophets, let them pray, Jer. xxvii. 18. It is every one's work, but yours especially. In religious assemblies, pray for all Christian congregations. Prize the communion of saints.

9. You must faithfully transmit that which is committed to you, to the rising generation. We charge you with the lambs of the flock; feed them, lead them into the green pastures. Christ has care of them, Isa. xl. 11. and expects you should. There is milk for babes, in preaching, in visiting the families under your charge; you must be a teacher of babes, for Christ is, and he is one full of meekness and compassion.

And now, brother, you see what is committed to you. I hope these things do not make you repent your choice, or despair of going through with it. You know who can render you sufficient for these things, 2 Cor. ii. 16. Be animated by the greatness of the undertaking, and not disheartened.

III. Let me say something to quicken you; and this also give me leave to transfer to myself, for I need it. Let me consider,

1. The things are of vast importance that I am employed about; dealing for an eternal God, with immortal souls, about their everlasting state. Those that are concerned about the lives and estates of their patients and clients, have need to be careful; much more those that are concerned about precious souls.

2. My Master's eye is always upon me. He sees me when I trifle, or do his work deceitfully and carelessly. If I be slothful, and vain, and remiss, he knows it, or if I bury my talent. O that I could set him always before me.

3. My time is very precious, and my day hastening to a period, 2 Pet. i. 13. John ix. 4. I have lost a great deal of time, which I am concerned to redeem. I know not how little may be before me. I may die, or be silenced. Look into the grave, and be more diligent.

4. I have a great opportunity of doing good, if I be faithful, and of serving Christ, being a worker together with God. I may be the instrument of saving a soul from death, and of bringing sinners from darkness to light. It is good work I am about, more honourable than any other. I magnify my office, though ashamed of myself.

5. I must shortly give account, either with joy or grief, according as I am, or am not, faithful, Heb. xiii. 17. I am a watchman, and it will be awful if the blood of them that perish be required at my hand. How have I traded with my talent? and what will my doom be?

IV. Let me say something to encourage you.

1. You are employed in work in which God is working with you,—you do not fight uncertainly, 1 Cor. ix. 26. Mark xvi. 20. The word of God in your mouth shall accomplish that for which it is sent, Isa. lv. 11. it shall have the designed success, though not the desired success.

2. You shall find his grace sufficient for you, 2 Cor. xii. 9. If you go about your work in his strength, you shall receive strength, 2 Cor. iii. 5. 1 Cor. xiv. 10. Christ has said to his ministers, Lo I am with you always. The Spirit was particularly promised to the disciples or ministers, to lead them into all truth, Phil. iv. 13.

3. We serve a Master, that if we be faithful to him, makes the best of us, and is not extreme to mark what we do amiss. Christ bore with his disciples, because they continued with him. We are under grace, and not under the law.

4. You have many encouraging examples before you. Our fathers bore their testimony to the grace of God. As God was with them, he will be with us. They were no better than his grace made them. We that have had our hands long at this work, will speak well of our Master and his work, though we have reason to be ashamed of ourselves.

5. Great will be your reward in heaven if you be faithful. You may meet with difficulties; you set out in a discouraging time; but let none of these things move you, 2 Tim. iv. 6—8. The souls you win, and the sufferings you bear, will be pearls in your crown.

FUNERAL SERMONS.

SERMON I.

[*Preached July 7th*, 1693, *at the Funeral of Elizabeth Young, after an illness of fourteen weeks.*]

ISAIAH xxxviii. 12.

He will cut me off with pining sickness.

HEZEKIAH having recovered his health, is here reflecting upon his sick-bed thoughts. It is good to do so when God has delivered us *from our fears*, Ps. xxxiv. 4. to make us so much the more thankful.

1. Observe in general, that that which Hezekiah expected when he sickened, was to die of this sickness. It is good for us to take all occasions to think and speak of death approaching, not for frightening, but for quickening, us. We are apt to put far from us the evil day. We must be dying daily, 1 Cor. xiii. 31. but every fit of sickness is a warning, and it is good to be ready for the worst. We are apt in such a case to flatter ourselves.

2. That it is particularly expressed by God's cutting of him off with pining sickness: Cut me off, as the cloth, when the web is finished, is cut off from the loom. Our life is weaving, our days pass like the shuttle, Job vii. 6. every day brings us so much nearer our end, and then death comes and cuts off the thread. While we live we are weaving; the question is, what kind of web it is, whether it be not the spider's web, Isa. lix. 5, 6. It must all be looked over again. Think, how will this look in the piece when I must give up the account?—We read it, Cut me off with pining sickness.

DOCTRINE I. That death when it comes, cuts us off, as a flower or branch is cut off when it is in the midst of its flourishing, Job xiv. 2. as a thread is cut off, or as a criminal is *cut off* by the sword of justice.

1. It cuts off our days, *v.* 10. puts an end to them, a full period,—time shall be no more. Whether they have been pleasant or unpleasant days, busy days or idle days, death cuts them off; there is an end of them, often in the midst of them, Job xxi. 21. when we were counting upon many years to come.

2. It cuts off our opportunities. Sabbath days and sacrament days close; harvest days for our souls are no more. It is good to improve them while we have them, for we know not how soon they may be gone.

3. It cuts off our work. It puts a period to the wickedness of the wicked, and makes them cease, Job iii. 17. It also closes the good works of the godly. Many are cut off in the beginning or midst of their usefulness, as we think; yet none of God's witnesses die till they have finished their testimony. There is no working in the grave, Eccl. ix. 10.

4. It cuts off our purposes. In that very day the thoughts perish. We are laying our projects, and death comes and overturns them all, Ps. cxlvi. 4.—his thoughts perish. It is thus with good thoughts, and also bad thoughts. We must therefore make all our purposes with a submission to God's providence, Jam. iv. 14, 15.

5. It cuts off our relations, and puts an end to them. It separates the wife from the husband, and the child from the parent. It parts those that nothing else would part; the place and family that knew us will then know us no more. It separates us from the living.

6. It cuts off all our creature comforts. Though the stream of sensitive delights run never so plentifully, death dries it up, and puts a full stop to it. What pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst, Job xxi. 21.

Use I. It concerns us all to sit loose to that from which death will remove us. Die to the world, and to every thing that is in it, 1 Cor. vii. 29. It will be hard cutting off when the affections have been cen-

tred in these things, We must not live as those that are to live here always. Expect and prepare for a cutting off. Work as those whose work must shortly cease.

2. It concerns us all to secure to ourselves something from which death will not cut us off. Death cannot cut off an interest in Christ, Rom. viii. 38, 39. It cannot deprive us of our communion with God, but will perfect and complete that. Especially secure a hope that death will not cut off, even a hope that enters into that within the veil.

Doctrine II. That when we or our friends are cut off by death, it is God that doth it, *He will cut me off*. Death is his servant, and acts by warrant from him. Our times are in his hand, Ps. xxxi. 15. He kills and makes alive. We are apt to impute it to this or that second cause, but it is the Lord's doing. Christ has the keys of death and the grave, Rev. i. 18. Those that cut off themselves, snatch those keys out of his hand. We must not go before we are called.

1. This should satisfy us as to our own death, that we shall not die till God cuts us off, and if he be our friend, he will be sure to order it in the best way and time; therefore if God be ours, death is ours. Our time is an appointed time. Those that belong to God, shall be cut off as the corn in its season, Job v. 26. It is not in man's power to cut off till he shall receive permission.

2. As to the death of our friends, see Job xi. 10. it is the Lord, and to murmur at it is to strive with our Maker. David was not like himself, when he was displeased because the Lord had made a breach. This quieted Job when all his children were cut off, Job i. 21.

Doctrine III. That some are cut off with pining sickness. Many are cut off suddenly by accidents or distempers, there are no bands in their death, Ps. lxxiii. 4. but others die by lingering diseases. There are many ways out of the world; see Job xxi. 23, 26.

1. Death by pining sickness has in it something of advantage, as it not only gives warning, but time and space to set the house and heart in order. We are commonly so unready,—even those that are habitually ready, yet actually unready,—they need time to get the loins girt, and the lamps trimmed. We cannot promise ourselves this opportunity, therefore we had need be always ready.

2. It has in it a great deal of trouble. It is a sore trial to the faith and patience, gives advantage to Satan, and weakness to the spirits. It is well we have to do with a good master in such a case, else we were undone.

3. However it be, it is of God's ordering; for not only the death itself, but all the circumstance of it, come within his counsel. It is he that *brings us* to death, Job xxx. 23. and he appoints the messenger that shall fetch us. Diseases are his servants, Matt. viii. 8, 9.

Use 1. Were I now to speak to those that are under pining sicknesses, I should desire them to observe,—that it is no strange thing,—that it has been the lot of the best;—to set the house and heart in order,—to be patient, and let patience have its perfect work, Jam. i. 4. But one great inconvenience attending pining sickness is, that it restrains from public ordinances; this troubled Hezekiah when he was sick, Isa. xxxviii. 11, 12.

2. Do I speak to any that have been graciously recovered from pining sickness, as Hezekiah; not *cut off*, though the sentence of death was received, 2 Cor. i. 9. You have special reason to say, It is of the Lord's mercy. You were brought very low, and yet helped. Others were cut off by the like sickness, and yet you were spared. It is to try you, what you will do to get ready for the next encounter. Let not such recoveries make you secure.

3. I speak to those that are in health.

(1.) Pity and pray for those that are under pining sickness. We should weep with those that weep; thus we may do something towards the easing of their burthen. Christ had a particular concern for one that he knew had been long ill, John v. 6. Look with great compassion upon those whose afflictions have been long continued, and carefully shun all impatience.

(2.) Prepare for pining sickness, and to be cut off by it. The same afflictions abide us. Lay in a stock of evidences, of experiences, and of promises; such as Isa. xxxiii. 24. Ps. lxxiii. 26; xli. 3. 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17. Take heed of doing any thing which will make a sick bed uneasy. Make sure a place in your Father's house; and then the matter is not great though the way be tedious. Heaven will make amends for all.

SERMON II.

[*Preached at the funeral of William Bolland, September 2nd,* 1698.]

Job xiv. 10.

But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

Holy Job, now a sick man, looks upon himself as a dying man. Thoughts of death are not unseasonable when we are in health, but it is an inexcusable thoughtlessness when we are sick, to put far from us the arrests of death; and it is a blessed thing to be in such a condition, that the thoughts of death may not be a terror to us when we are sick, nor make a sick-bed uneasy to us. Our deceased friend in

his illness, fixed upon this scripture as the subject of his thoughts, and which he desired might be the subject of mine and yours this day. The text excellently illustrates a plain truth.

DOCTRINE. That man is a dying creature.

1. It is spoken of *man* twice in the text. In the original two different words are used, one meaning the strong man, and the other the weak man; for the grave is one of the places in which the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, meet together.

(1.) Man dies *though* he be *(Geber)* a mighty man. All his might will not secure him: death reaches the highest, conquers the strongest, and humbles the proudest. No man's honour is a discharge from that war, no man's strength is victory in that combat, Eccl. viii. 8. Ps. xlix. 6, &c.

(2.) Man dies *because* he is *(Adam)* a man of the earth, Gen. ii. 7; iii. 19. his original from the earth, his constitution earthy—his foundation in the dust. That which is earthy, is mouldering and crumbling. Man dies because he is the son of Adam, sinful fallen man. By Adam death came into the world, Rom. v. 12.

2. That which is here said of man is, that he is a dying creature. *Man dieth*, dies daily, some or other going off every day. Man is dying: think much of this.—Our Creator lives for ever, and cannot die; he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; not subject to any change, much less to that great change. This is matter of comfort in reference to man's mortality, that God is immortal, Ps. xc. 2, 3; cii. 26. Angels die not.—Now the mortality of man is here elegantly described—*Man dieth;* that is the truth descanted upon, and is described by what happens to man.

(1.) Before death, he *wasteth away*, he is weakened, so the word is; this is the harbinger of death, to tell it is coming; nay, it helps it forward.

Even in health we are wasting away. Life is like a candle, as long as it burns it wastes away, and is hastening down to its socket. The oil of natural life is still wasting, so that man dies daily, *i. e.* he is daily going down to death, 1 Cor. xv. 31. the natural heat is still declining, so that as soon as we are born we begin to die, and in the midst of life we are in death. God has graciously provided recruits by food, but we still are wasting, our time lessening.

In old age especially we are wasting away. The strength then wastes so fast that it is no better than labour and sorrow, Ps. xc. 10. The nearer life comes to its period, the quicker is its motion. The decay in old age is very sensible; the strength wastes, the senses waste, and grow less able to perform their functions: see a description of this waste, Eccl. xii. Defer not repentance to old age.

In sickness we waste away. The waste by distempers is sometimes quicker, sometimes slower, but all diseases tend to the destruction of the frame, they waste the beauty, waste the strength, Ps. xxxix. 11. weaken it in the way, Ps. cii. 23. How soon doth a fever or other acute distemper waste man away, and by degrees a consumption doth it.

Inference 1. See how vain man is: every man, at his best estate, wasting away from time to time.—What little reason have we to be proud, or to be confident of any thing for the future, while we are in a constant decay!

2. See how foolish they are who waste any part of that upon their lusts, which wastes so fast of itself; who hasten these decays by their intemperance, and sacrifice their lives to their lusts.

(2.) In death, *man giveth up the ghost.* It is but one word in the original—man *expires* by a sudden stroke. Some indeed are long in dying, others die suddenly, but both dying, or having wasted away, at length, *give up the ghost, or spirit.*

At death the soul leaves the body. Man then expires, *i. e.* breathes out his last. His breath *goes forth*, and returns not again. Think what those bodies are, when the breath, the spirit, the soul, are gone; clods of clay. What an immediate change there is in them! how the countenance alters, the strength and motion gone! There is no way of retaining the spirit, Eccl. viii. 8.

At death, the soul returns to God who gave it.—We must then give up the spirit, *i. e.* resign it to the Father of spirits. The soul will then be required, Luke xii. 20. and whether we will or no, we must yield. We see the deserted body; but we know not the way of the departing soul. It is *given* up as a trust.

Inference. Give up your spirits to God now, to be sanctified, that you may with comfort give them up to him at death, Ps. xxxi. 5.

(3.) After death, *where is he?* Zech. i. 5.

1. He is not where he was; there he is seen no more; his place knows him no more, Job vii. 10. compare *v.* 21. Thou shalt seek me, but I shall not be. Where is he? Go into his house, and he is not there,—into his shop, and into the solemn assemblies. While he lived he was here, but now where is he? He is not where, perhaps, he was busy, and made a figure; he is not where he was useful, and could ill have been spared. Think of this in reference to the place where you now are, and let it engage you to fill it up with duty. Yet a little while, and you shall be here no more—your place will be empty.

2. He is somewhere, so some read it. *Is he now?* Yes, he is. When we die, there is not an end of us; when we cease to be here, we do not cease to be. Death is the separation of soul and body, but not the annihilation of either. Those that live like brutes surely expect to die like brutes.

3. It is a very awful consideration, to think where they are that have given up the ghost, and where we shall be when we give it up.

Think where the body is. It lies in the cold, and

dark, and silent grave—the house appointed for all, Job xxx. 23. Where is it? Why, it is with the worms, Job xvii. 13, 14. It is buried out of our sight. It is in the land of darkness. That body that was pampered, and provided for with so much care, is now a neglected carcass. Let me look into the grave, and think it will be my bed shortly.

Think where the soul is,—*where is that?*

It is gone into that world of spirits to which we are so much strangers. It is a mystery to us where it is. Destruction and death have a covering which we cannot see through. Death is an awful change, a way that we have not gone heretofore.

It is gone into an unchangeable state; it is gone into eternity. Its state of trial and probation is at an end, and it is fixed immovably in a state of recompence. After death the judgment takes place, Heb. ix. 27.

If it were a wicked, unsanctified soul, it is gone down to the congregation of the dead and damned: if a gracious, sanctified soul, it is gone into the regions of light and bliss. As Christ has showed this distribution at the last day, in the parable, Matt. xxiv. 31. so the same at death, in the parable, Luke xvi. 19, &c. Sinners' souls are required: the souls of saints are received into the bosom of Abraham, Phil. i. 23. Consider what has been said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

SERMON III.

[*Preached February 2nd, 1702, at the Funeral of my cousin Madocks, aged about* 53.]

GENESIS xlix. 18.

I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.

THESE dying words of aged Israel are very expressive of the dying thoughts of many an honest Israelite indeed, and may be of use to us both for our direction and comfort, that whether we live or die, we may live and die waiting for the salvation of the Lord. Good old Jacob is here making his will, leaving to his children his dying charge, and dying blessing; and in the midst of all, these words come in a little before he gathered up his feet into the bed, and gave up the ghost.

1. Some interpreters undertake to find out a connexion between these words, and what goes before. The text follows upon the blessing of *Dan*, which is double, *v.* 16, 17. He foresaw, and foretold, that there should be a famous judge of that tribe, viz. Samson, who should be a scourge to the enemies of Israel, and this salvation David waited for; yet looking through this to Christ, of whom Samson was a type, and to the complete salvation wrought out by him; for Joshua did but *begin* the deliverance, Judg. xiii. 5.

2. I rather think it has no dependence upon the context. I suppose Jacob spent with speaking, and ready to faint, and die away, and with these words he recovers himself; or, if he must break off here, with these words he pours out his soul into the bosom of his God. This was like taking a cordial; this puts new life into him. A pious breathing after God is never impertinent. That may be uttered very affectionately, which doth not come in methodically. But what is the salvation dying Jacob waits for?

1. Christ, whom he had spoken of, *v.* 10. He saw his day at a distance, as Abraham did. The Old-Testament saints were expectants of the promised seed, waited for the dawning of that day, more than they that wait for the morning.

2. The better country, that is, the heavenly. Jacob had confessed himself a pilgrim, *ch.* xlvii. 9. and see what construction the apostle makes of that confession, Heb. xi. 13, 14.—the salvation of the soul. Though Jacob dies in a strange place, to which he was but lately removed, yet he comforts himself with the end of his faith, 1 Pet. i. 9. compare *v.* 10. When he is going to enjoy the salvation, he comforts himself with this, *I have waited.* This occurred to my thoughts on this occasion, when we have parted with one whom I have long known to be a humble, quiet, cheerful Christian, who bore with great evenness the affliction of her pilgrimage; the loss of a loving husband, twenty years ago; and all the cares of a sorrowful widowhood ever since; and at last the fatigues of a long weakness, quieting herself with this, *God is all-sufficient for me and mine.* Unless this had been her delight, she would have perished in her affliction, Ps. cxix. 92. She was one that *waited for the salvation of the Lord.*

DOCTRINE I. It is the character of a living saint to *wait for the salvation of the Lord*, Lam. iii. 26.

1. *Christ* as our *way to heaven* is to be *waited on.* Faith in him, is a waiting on him, confiding in him, relying on him, with a resolution to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes. The great salvation which multitudes *neglect*, we must regard, being led by the conduct of the Captain of our salvation, Ps. xxvii. 14. All our expectation must be from Christ; see Ps. lxii. 1, 5. neither is there salvation in any other, Acts iv. 12. We must wait for his law: we must attend Christ as our physician, to save us from our disease; and as our advocate, to save us from the sentence of the law.

2. *Heaven* as our *rest in Christ*, is to be waited for. Eternal salvation has Christ for its author, nay, Christ himself is the matter of that happiness, John xvii. 24. Phil. i. 21, 23. It is the salvation of the Lord, Ps. l. 23; xci. 16. Heaven is salvation completed, when the saved of the Lord shall return with songs. To *wait for this salvation*, is,

are taken away in the midst of their days, and we yet spared. O despise not the riches of this forbearance, but improve it. If now flourishing and growing up, let us consult our true interests. It is morning with you, *you are strong;* learn some good lessons from this funeral. If this be so,

(1.) Be not *vain.* Let thoughts of dying make you serious now, and then death itself when it comes will not be so apt to make you melancholy. It is a serious thing to die; be serious in your thoughts of it. Let this give check to the laughter of the fool, Eccl. xi. 9. Use yourselves to serious work, and serious company, and learn to be serious.

(2.) Be not *proud.* This is a humbling consideration: You know not how soon death may come, and change your countenances, and lay your honour in the dust. Where is thy beauty, and where thy ornaments, in the grave?

(3.) Be not *secure.* Flatter not yourselves with the expectation of a long continuance here, when you see so many withered in the midst of their growing up. Often think and speak of changes. Say not, To-morrow shall be as this day, or that your mountain stands strong, Prov. xxvii. 1. Jam. iv. 13.

(4.) Be not *dilatory* in the great business of religion. Put not off the great work, but do it now, lest death come and find it undone. This young man said to those about him on his death-bed, I have found praying hours the sweetest hours, and so will you.

FAST SERMONS.

SERMON I.

[*Preached on occasion of a Public Fast, May* 11*th*, 1692.]

ISAIAH viii. 12, 13.

Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

THESE words are part of a sermon preached at a time when the people of Israel were under the prevailing apprehensions of a foreign invasion from Syria, in confederacy with Ephraim, the ten tribes; see *chap.* vii. 1, 2. and after that, an inroad made with a mighty force by Sennacherib, *chap.* viii. 7, 8. It is with reference to both these that the prophet does here comfort and direct the people of God. The work of ministers is not to direct the affairs of states, it is out of their sphere; but to direct the graces of God's people, according to the various outgoings of God's providence. They are so to understand the times, as to know what Israel ought to do, 1 Chron. xii. 32. Observe,

1. His challenge to God's enemies, *v.* 9, 10. He does, as it were, throw down the gauntlet, and bid defiance to them and all their power: Come do your worst, with might or multitude; be your confederacies never so well formed, your plots never so deeply laid; though you bring into the field an army never so numerous, so well armed, so well disciplined, and so well paid; though you be never so confident of success; all this conduct, all this courage, will be so far from preventing, that it will but accelerate and aggravate your ruin. Thus with a holy bravery does he address the enemies, and teach the virgin, the daughter of Sion, to despise them, and to laugh them to scorn, Isa. xxxvii. 22. It is a fruitless attempt, and will appear so at last. Now this assurance is grounded not upon the countenance of second causes, but the presence and presidency of the Almighty: *God is with us*, i. e. the cause is God's, and he will own it. It notes not only his presence with us, but his taking part with us, as captain and leader, and one interested. Where truth, righteousness, and love are, there God is. Encourage yourselves with this: *More are they that be with us, than they that be with them*, 2 Kings vi. 16. If God be with us, infinite wisdom, power, and goodness are with us; and then what can finite powers and policies do, 2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 8. Rom. viii. 31.

2. His counsel to God's people, in the text. It was generally a time of prevailing fear, and those fears dishonourable to God, disquieting to themselves; and therefore he is here sent to help them against these fears. He speaks experimentally, having been himself *instructed with a strong hand.* Those are likely to teach others effectually, that are themselves thus instructed. That word that comes from the heart will reach to the heart. That which he does here deliver to them, he says he had received from the Lord: see Isa. xxi. 10.

1. He dissuades them from a sinful fear, *v.* 12.

2. He directs them to a gracious fear, *v.* 13.

For the 1st. A dissuasion from sinful fear, which it seems was the *way of this people*, *v* 11. It was an epidemical disease, and men are apt to be carried down the stream. *Say ye not, A confederacy.* These words may be understood two ways:

1. Be not associated in their confederacies. Do not join with those that, for the securing of themselves, enter into confederacy with the Assyrians, or any other foreign force; to which it seems many among them, through unbelief and distrust of God and their cause, were inclined. Now, do not thou join with them; *say not, A confederacy*, i. e. think not

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of a confederacy, do not go about to secure yourselves by any sinful leagues. We must take heed of joining ourselves in confederacy with any of the disturbers of the peace, and betrayers of the land, either out of restlessness of spirit, as those that are given to change, or out of particular discontents, or fear of the enemies prevailing, or from any other base principle. Though sinners entice thee, consent thou not, Prov. i. 10. Meddle not with them that are given to change, Prov. xxiv. 21. Approve yourselves the quiet in the land. Seek the peace of the nation. This is a caution of which I hope none of you stand in need. It is very hard to have any charity for those, who (whatever their pretences be) at such a day as this talk of making a captain to return into Egypt. Let not my soul come into their secret.

2. Be not afraid of their confederacies. Do not say, A confederacy, to or of every thing that this people say, A confederacy. It is an expression of their fear; they are generally seized with a panic, and talk of nothing but a *confederacy*,—A plot, a plot; dismal news,—Syria is joined with Ephraim. What will become of us?—Must we fight, or must we fly, or must we yield? Thus *their hearts were moved, ch.* vii. 2. Do not you say as they say, *neither fear ye their fear, i. e.* that fear with which they fear, or objectively, that of which they are afraid. We must not be conformed to the fears of this world, Jer. x. 2. Fear not that with which they would terrify you, 1 Pet. iii. 14. Let neither the reports that are abroad, nor the common apprehensions that people have upon them, fasten any terrible impression upon you. *Nor be afraid:* the word signifies such a fright as causes a shaking and trembling, as *ch.* vii. 2. Neither fear you their fear; *much less be so affrighted*, so some read it. The caution is thus doubled the more to encourage them: compare Isa. vii. 4.

Doctrine. That when the enemies of the church have sinful confederacies on foot, its friends should watch against the sinful fears of those confederacies.

1. It is no new thing for the enemies of the church to have their confederacies on foot. Hand joins in hand, and wicked leagues are made. Though the enemies be many, yet their name is *Legion*, incorporated in prosecution of the same cursed designs, Ps. lxxxiii. 3, 5, 7. The dragon and his angels are of one mind to give their honour to the beast, Rev. xvii. 13.

2. There is a lawful fear of these confederacies, which is to be allowed besides that which is natural, for Christianity is not stoicism. There is also a prudential fear; a fear of diligence, such as quickens to the use of lawful means; thus Jehoshaphat feared, 2 Chron. xx. 3. Just and rational fears are of use to sharpen endeavours.

3. But there is a sinful fear of these confederacies, which is to be striven against.

Show I. When is this fear of these confederacies sinful.

1. When it comes from an ill cause—as distrust of God, and of his power and faithfulness. Examine if that be not at the bottom of it;—over-credulity of reports: believing every word; hearkening to every groundless surmise; mistaking the shadow of the mountains for men, and the sunshine upon the waters for blood. Or it proceeds from a conformity to the world, that *wonders after the beast*, Rev. xiii. 4. subscribing to their admiration,—*Who is like the beast?* When our fears arise from hence, they turn into sin: and there is nothing more subtle than the cause of our fears, and which is more commonly palliated with pretences; therefore search them to the bottom.

2. When it produces ill effects; when our fear gets the mastery of us, and plays the tyrant, not only over reason, but over grace; when it fills us, Isa. xxxiii. 14.

(1.) It is sinful when it confounds our spirits, when it puts the soul into disorder, and so disfits it for any duty; when we live in careful suspense, Luke xii. 29. When these fears unhinge our spirits, discompose our souls; when they fill us lying down and rising up; when they deprive us of all self-possession; then they are sinful, Luke xxi. 19.

(2.) When fear clouds our joy, it is evil. We should be always rejoicing in the Lord, and seek consolation in his promises; but when joy is damped by our fears of the confederacies of enemies against us, those fears are excessive. Jehoshaphat feared the invading enemy, and yet went singing to the battle, 2 Chron. xx. 21. It should not be in the power of any creature to hinder our delight in God, Hab. iii. 17.

(3.) When fear conquers our faith, and prevails to its discouragement, it is unseasonable. Faith is our shield, and fears are sinful when they snatch our shield out of our hand. Faith is our cordial, and fears are sinful when they render the cordial useless, as the fear of Peter when he was sinking, Matt. xiv. 30, 31.

(4.) When it clogs our prayers and endeavours; when it diverts us from our duty, draws us from God, deadens and distracts us in our duty; so that we have no heart to stir a step to help ourselves, or to run any hazards, or with any courage to encounter any difficulty;—as Israel in Egypt, Exod. vi. 9. —much more when it puts us upon the use of sinful and irregular means; it is highly exceptionable.

Show II. Why the friends of the church should not be afraid of the confederacies of the enemies of the church.

This fear is contrary to the will of Christ, John xiv. 27. It is opposed to the character of the saints, Ps. cxii. 7. It is against the law of faith and love, 1 John iv. 18. It is displeasing to God, who takes no pleasure in his people's torment. It weakens ourselves, discourages others, dishonours religion, and

gives Satan great advantage. Such are the evil effects of all prevailing fears. I would only suggest, that in this case it is very unreasonable, all things considered, that we should fear the confederacies of the enemies of the church.

1. We are sure of a good God, that can baffle their designs, and turn their counsels headlong; infatuate all their politics, and blast their devices. If we speak of strength and wisdom, these belong to the Most High. *God is with us*, therefore fear not their fear. God sees not as man sees. Prevailing fear of man, evidences a prevailing forgetfulness of God, Isa. li. 12, 13.

2. We are sure of a good cause. If the cause of religion and of truth, the rights of kingdoms and the peace of nations, be a good cause, surely ours is so. Fear argues a distrust of our cause. The providence of God hath by amazing steps led us into the cause, and led us thus far in it; and he that has begun is concerned in honour to finish.

3. We are sure of a good issue at last. Though there may be some difficulty and struggle in the birth, yet there will be joy when the man-child is born. Though it may be long before the top-stone be brought forth, yet it will be produced at last. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church.

For the 2nd. We are here directed to a gracious religious fear—*Sanctify the Lord of hosts*. Having showed us whom we should not fear, he here shows us whom we should fear. Fear is a stream that will have its course. The best way to keep it from overflowing and doing mischief, is to direct it into, and keep it in, the right channel. Such is our Saviour's advice, Luke xii. 5. This is to prevent their walking in the way of the ungodly, as Prov. xxiii. 17. The remedy against imitating sinners, is to be continually in the fear of the Lord.

Doctrine. That the gracious fear of God is a special preservative against the prevailing fear of man. The way to be delivered from the fear of the people of the world, is to be governed by the fear by which the people of God are influenced.

Show, I. What this religious fear of God is. It is often put in Scripture for all religion. The fear of the Lord *is the beginning of wisdom*, Prov. ix. 10. the first step towards wisdom, Job xxviii. 28. I shall understand it of that religious fear which has regard to God in reference to his church. When enemies are confederate, dangers great, and mighty things upon the wheel, then,

1. *Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself.* God is here styled the Lord of hosts, for the comfort of his people, who had many and mighty hosts against them, and few or none for them. It is an encouraging title, as Ps. xlvi. 7, 11. Luther's Psalm. *Sanctify*;—as we are said to magnify him, not to make him holy or great, but to esteem him so. Behave towards him as a holy God. His holiness is his most glorious attribute, Isa. vi. 3. *The Lord of hosts.*

2. *Let him be your fear, i. e.* the object of your fear. Do not fear these two kings, but fear God. God is called the *fear of Isaac*, Gen. xxxi. 53.

3. *Let him be your dread.* It is repeated for the more emphasis, the word answers to that other, *v.* 12. and signifies properly, one that terrifies. Fear God more, and then you would fear man less. Now at such a time, when multitudes are saying, A confederacy, a confederacy,—to sanctify God, and to make him our fear and our dread, has these things in it.

(1.) To own his sovereignty. Acknowledge him as the director of all second causes, giving life and law to all their motions. See the most powerful instruments, when they appear most formidable, under his check. Acknowledge the Lord of hosts himself, without dependence upon any creature, nay, upon whom all creatures do depend. See what it is to sanctify God at such a time, Ps. xlvi. 10. *Know that I am God*, the sovereign ruler of all the creatures. Enemies are but the rod in his hand, Isa. x. 5. Every creature is what he makes it.—*Know that the Lord is greater than all gods*, Exod. xviii. 11.

(2.) To observe his outgoings. Take notice of him; his wisdom, power, and goodness in all his motions. To sanctify God, is not only to acknowledge his universal sovereignty, but his particular agency in all events. This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, Isa. xxviii. 29. not only the events themselves, but all the circumstances of events. He expects we should consider the operation of his hands, see the outgoings of our God, our King, Ps. lxviii. 24; cvii. 43. God is sanctified when he is taken notice of, Hos. xiv. 9. Stand still and see the salvation of God, Exod. xiv. 13.

(3.) To dread his wrath. To *sanctify* him, and make him our fear, is to stand continually in awe of him, filled with an apprehension of his terrible majesty displayed in his providences. If the power and anger of a mortal worm be so formidable, and his resentments threatening, what then is the power and anger of the great Jehovah, the God to whom vengeance belongs? Ps. lxviii. 35. When God answers in terrible things, it is in righteousness, Ps. lxv. 5. see Ps. lxxvi. 7, 8. The providences of God are compared to the giving of the law upon Mount Sinai, Hab. iii. 3, &c. When Sennacherib invaded Judah, this was the lesson to be learned, Isa. xxxiii. 14. *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?*

(4.) To depend upon his mercy. The fear required, is not to drive us from him, but to draw us to him. God is sanctified when he is trusted by our confidence in him. We declare that we believe he is a holy God, for his holiness is the foundation of his covenant, Ps. lxxxix. 35. Those that fear God,

and those that hope in his mercy, are joined, Ps. cxlvii. 11. At such a time rely upon God for preservation and deliverance. Cast your cares and fears upon him; leave all in his hands; faith glorifies God, Rom. iv. 20.

(5.) To admire his counsels. *Sanctify the Lord*, i. e. praise and magnify him; speak of his glorious outgoings with wonder, especially in your praises fasten upon his *holiness*, as Exod. xv. 11. give him the glory of that attribute, his purity and freedom from sin, giving no countenance to iniquity, pleading a righteous cause, performing his promise. This is sanctifying God; and this must be done with a very awful reverence of that God with whom we have to do; convinced that our praises are no additions to his glory.

(6.) To acquiesce in his disposals. To sanctify God at such a time, is to submit to him without objecting: *Be silent, O all flesh*, Zech. ii. 13. Not disputing against, but silently submitting to, the methods of God's government. We then make him our fear, when we dare not except against any thing that he does: see Hab. ii. 20. It is not for us to prescribe to God, or to arraign the methods he takes, Zeph. i. 7.

Show, II. How this would preserve us from sinful fears of the confederacies of the enemies of the church. To see and be affected with the greatness of God, would help to discover to us,

1. The enemies' pomp eclipsed. Man appears great, till he comes to be compared with God, and then all his glory vanishes as the twinkling of the glow-worm before the noon-day sun. They have then no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth. An awful sight of God in his greatness would dazzle the eyes to all sublunary glory, and then that great pomp which is apt to strike such a terror appears but vain show, Acts xxv. 23.

2. The enemies' power restrained. The more we stand in awe of God the less we shall fear men, because men are but the staff in his hand. God has them in a chain, he has a hook in their nose, Isa. xxxvii. 29. their power is a limited power: see Neh. iv. 14. When we are enlarging the occasions of our fears, and representing them dreadful, then keep up great thoughts of God. Think not so much what enemies can do, as what they *cannot do*, Luke xii. 4, 5. Why shouldst thou be afraid of a man that shall die, Isa. li. 12, 13. Enemies are high, but there is one higher than they are. The more God is sanctified by us, the more we shall be satisfied in God.

For application. Let us apply this,

1. To our particular interests, especially the concerns of our souls. It is the sum of all practical religion, to sanctify the name of God, and to make him our fear. Learn this lesson, and put it in practice every day in every thing. Keep up a holy filial fear of God continually; a godly fear. Let this rule you. Maintain an awe of God upon your spirits. Be frequent and serious in holy adorations of God, and let your affections and actions be answerable. Devote yourselves to the fear of God, Ps. cxix. 38. Walk in the fear of the Lord, Acts ix. 31. God is sanctified by the spiritual and holy worship and conversation of those that profess to be near to him. You pray that God's name may be sanctified, act accordingly. God must be sanctified in every prayer, Lev. x. 3. Making God our fear would restrain us from sin, Ps. iv. 4. Neh. v. 15. it would constrain us to duty, 1 Sam. xii. 24. In reference to all your personal affairs, set the Lord still before you. Make God your fear, and you would not be so apt to fear losses, crosses, and the wrath of man.

2. To the public concerns of the church, and to those the occasion of the day does especially call our thoughts. I hope you do concern yourselves in these things. It is not all one to you whether Christ's kingdom and interest sink or prosper. Your hearts are trembling for the ark; are they not? Let not that trembling prevail too far. My errand to you to-day, is to say, Fear not. You hear great talk of the power of France, and their designs against us of this nation, to bring us again into slavery, to re-enthrone popery and tyranny, Isa. vii. 6, &c. Well, *be not afraid of the Assyrian*, Isa. x. 24. *Be strong and courageous*, 2 Chron. xxxii. 7. Though you see others afraid, tell them you know better things, and do not walk in the way of this people.

Direction 1. Keep in with God. Fear came in with guilt, Gen. iii. 10. The sinners in Sion are afraid, Isa. xxxiii. 14, afraid where no fear is, Ps. liv. 5, Guilt puts an edge upon our fears. Make your peace with God every day. When foul weather and an evil conscience meet together it goes hard. It is the pardoned upright soul that can look danger in the face without change of countenance, Isa. xxxiii. 15, 16. He that walks uprightly walks with a holy humble confidence, Prov. x. 9.

2. Keep out false reports. If we hearken to every story that is brought us, we shall soon see the ruin of our hopes. The most credulous are the most fearful. It has been the cursed policy of France, by lying stories to propagate fears, and by them to betray the succours that reason offers: compare Neh. vi. 5—13. Those that are naturally fearful, are apt to catch at any thing that will gratify their distemper.

3. Keep down the workings of an unsanctified fancy. When we allow our hearts the liberty of meditating terror, we create bugbears to ourselves, and then frighten ourselves at the view of them; and therefore learn to correct the extravagances of your fancies. Keep thy heart with all diligence,

4. Keep hold of the promise. Do not build your hopes upon the smiles of second causes, but upon the word of promise. Live upon that, even then

when subsequent events seem to cross it. Against hope believe in hope, Rom. iv. 18. that is God's way of trying faith.

5. Keep up prayer. Prayer is the great remedy for fear. Abide and abound in that duty. Do not think your praying work is done, when the public work of a fasting day is over. Continue praying for the peace of Jerusalem. Let fear strengthen prayer, Gen. xxxii. 11. and prayer will weaken fear. Give God no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth, Isa. lxii. 6, 7.

SERMON II.

[*Preached July 12th, 1693, on occasion of a Public Fast.*]

ISAIAH xlii. 21, latter part.

—He will magnify the law, and make it honourable.

THE whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer; and we have great need of such direction; for the truth is, we know not what to pray for as we ought, nor could we expect to succeed, did not the Spirit in the word, as well as the Spirit in the heart, thus help our praying infirmities. But one special rule of direction in the word is the promises, from which we must derive matter for prayer, both in reference to public and personal concerns. Promises are not designed to supersede, but to regulate, excite, and encourage, prayer: see Ezek. xxxvi. 37. It is good for us to know what to expect. God has in his word told us, not only what he expects from us, but what we may expect from him, and to this, faith in prayer is to have a regard. As to public affairs, would you know what God will do, and consequently what we are to desire, it is this,—*he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.* Some notice of the various readings and senses of the words may not be unprofitable.

1. Some read and understand it as an account of what God had done; the favours he had bestowed upon the people of Israel, whom the prophet had been reproving and threatening for their idolatry, blindness, and obstinacy; an aggravation of which, was the distinguishing kindness of God to them. And thus they read it as setting forth,

(1.) The root of that favour. *The Lord was well pleased for his righteousness' sake, i. e.* God had a respect and favour for them, not for the sake of any merit of their own, but for the sake of his own righteousness, *i. e.* his faithfulness to his promise made to their fathers; see Deut. vii. 7, 8. because he would approve himself a covenant-keeping God. Into this we must resolve all the divine favours; all the pleasure God takes in his people, their persons, and their performances, which is otherwise unaccountable. It is *for his righteousness' sake*, for the sake of his goodness and his promise. He is pleased with them because he has said he would be so; loves them, because he said he would love them. Or, for the sake of Christ's righteousness, which is called the righteousness of God. That is the foundation of all our acceptance with God, and therefore of that only we must make mention, Ps. lxxi. 16. Eph. i. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 5. God is not well pleased with sinners, but for the sake of some righteousness, something to satisfy divine justice, and to answer the demands of a broken law.

(2.) The fruit of that favour, in what particular instance it appeared, even in giving him the law. Some understand it thus; *The Lord was pleased for the making of him*, i. e. that people, *righteous, to give him a great law, to make him illustrious:*—and so we have

The great design of God in giving him the law; it was to *make him righteous.* Though we cannot be justified by the law, yet we may and must be sanctified by it. The design of the law is to destroy our sins, and to produce in us a conformity to the will and likeness of God.

We are also led to observe the excellency of the law. It is a *great law.* It is full of precepts and rules. It is a law about great things, Hos. viii. 12.—the love of God and our neighbour, the ordinances of worship, the preservation of peace, the reformation of the heart and life: these are great things, no trifling matters. It is a great law, for great things depend upon it,—our everlasting condition. Others take this view of the passage, *God delighted in him for his righteousness' sake, he magnified him with his law, and dignified him.* God did the people of Israel this great honour, to give them his law. Considering whose law, what kind of law, and how given, it was a distinguished honour to them to have it: see Deut. iv. 7, 8. Note, It is a great honour and dignity to have the law. When God would magnify and dignify his people Israel, he gave them his law.

It is an honour to a people to have the law in their books, to have it among them. He has not dealt so with other nations, Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. This was one of the peculiar privileges of Israel, Rom. iii. 2. Where ordinances are, there the glory dwells, Ps. lxxxv. 9. When they are parted with, the glory is departed, 1 Sam. iv. 22. God promised Abraham to make his name great, and he did it by giving the law to his seed, so making them a peculiar treasure, and a kingdom of priests to himself, Exod. xix. 5, 6. This is the honour of England, that we have Bibles, and have them in a language we understand: see Deut. xxxiii. 2—5.

It is an honour to a person to have the law in his heart. God dignifies a soul when he puts his law into it. The yoke of Christ is an honourable yoke.

The greatest of men need not be ashamed to wear it. The greatest preferment is to be Christ's humble servant. This honour have all his saints, they are magnified and dignified with his law. His secret is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. Take up with nothing short of this honour; be ambitious of this preferment. It is the greatest shame to be without the law of God, as it is the greatest honour to be under the law to Christ. *Receive his law*, with the whole heart.

2. We read it as an account of what God would do for the future. The people of Israel are described, *v.* 20. as a provoking people, and, *v.* 22. as a miserable, oppressed, ruined people. They might think, surely in all this God will be very much a loser; what will become of his honour? Let them leave this to God; *he is well pleased for his righteousness' sake.* Their ruin is the manifestation of his justice and righteousness, therefore he is well pleased; he is comforted in it, Ezek. v. 13. Not for their ruin' sake; for it is no pleasure to the Almighty to afflict, much less to destroy; but for his righteousness' sake; that all the world may observe the impartiality of his justice, Amos iii. 2. And he will be no loser in his glory at last; he *will magnify the law.* If they will not magnify the law by their obedience to it, God will magnify it himself, by punishing them for their disobedience. One way or other, sooner or later, God will have honour, he will be sanctified, Lev. x. 3. This may be understood,

(1.) As the counsel and purpose of God. This is that which he has determined, in which all providences centre.

(2.) As the comfortable expectation of the saints. It may be taken as spoken by the prophet, pleasing himself with the thought, however things go, he will *magnify the law:* this is that in which the Lord is well pleased; and if he be pleased, we have no reason to be displeased.

Doctrine. That that which is the purpose and design of God, with which the desires and hopes of all the saints do concur, is some way or other to magnify the law, and to make that honourable.

I. *Explication* 1. By the *law* here, I understand the whole revealed will of God concerning man's duty and happiness; the prohibitions and precepts, with those promises and threatenings which are the sanctions of the law. The law is taken for all the Scripture. It is a law-book. It is given by inspiration of God, as the great Lawgiver. The gospel is called *a law*, Isa. ii. 3. *the law of faith*, Rom. iii. 27. *the law of the spirit of life*, Rom. viii. 2. *the law of liberty*, James ii. 12. and concerning that many understand the text. Look upon the gospel as intended, not only to save us, but in order to that, to rule us. We must *obey* the gospel.

2. By the magnifying of this law, I understand God's doing of that in his providence, which declares and proves the greatness of the law. The law is a great law, but he magnifies it when he makes it to appear great; as God himself, who is infinitely great, is yet said to be magnified, Mal. i. 5. He is said to magnify his word above all his name, Ps. cxxxviii. 2. above all other things by which he has made himself known. He magnifies the authority and truth of the law, its power and efficacy, and its righteousness. The honour of the law is, to be obeyed, to command and direct: when it is so, then he makes it honourable. It is the honour of the law to be clear and plain, to be so reasonable, as to be above dispute or objection. When God's law appears thus, and is accepted and submitted to, then it is made honourable.

3. I say, this is the purpose and design of God. We know not the purposes and designs of God, further than as he is pleased to make them known to us. They are secret in their particular movements, but clear from the word in their general tendency.

(1.) This he will do at last. Shortly he will magnify the law, when he will make it the rule of judgment at the great day. This book shall be opened, Rev. xx. 12. not only the books of men's consciences and God's omniscience, as records of fact, but the books of the Old and New Testaments, as records of law: see Rom. ii. 16. James ii. 12. However now the law is despised by the atheists and profane ones of the world, as an antiquated statute, the day is coming, when it will be magnified in the eyes of all the world, and by it the doom will be passed concerning the eternal state of those that now despise it. The book of the law seems now to be lost with many, they live as if there were no such book, but then it will be found. The great rule of judgment you have in the gospel law: see Mark xvi. 15, 16. These words shall judge us, see John xii. 48. Then this despised gospel will be honourable. When heaven and earth shall be dissolved, this word shall abide, Luke xvi. 17. Matt. xxiv. 35. and then it will appear great. It will then be the honour of this evangelical law, that it will be strictly executed. It cannot be evaded, escaped, contradicted, or charged with injustice, as men's laws often are,—weak, or defective, or unjust, which make them dishonourable. Every sinner's mouth will be stopped with the acknowledgment, and every saint's mouth opened with the admiration, of the equity of the law, and of all the proceedings upon it.

(2.) This he is doing every day. This is the tendency of all events; so I understand the text. He will in the course of his providence magnify the law. Would you resolve the difficulties of providence, and know what God is doing? It is this, he is honouring his law. The great things that God has in store for his church in the latter days, are all summed up in this.

4. With this the desires and hopes of all the saints

concur. This is that which God will do, and this is that which the saints would have done; for the expectations of the saints are grounded upon and guided by the word which God has spoken. I come, saith Christ;—Come, saith the church, Rev. xxii. 20. All that are sanctified and renewed after God's image, will and refuse as God does. They are *well pleased* with that which he is well pleased with. God's glory is the great comfort of God's people. It is special comfort to ministers that are complaining, as the prophet here, that people do not observe what they say, that God will magnify the law for all this, Isa. lv. 10, 11.

II. I would show more particularly, in what instances the great God does, and will, magnify the law and make it honourable; bring credit to the gospel, 2 Cor. iii. 10, 11. and to the Scriptures.

1. In the convincing of gainsayers. When the ignorance of foolish men is put to silence by the power of the word, then the law is magnified: see 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. Acts vi. 10; xviii. 28. It is silenced by the plain and powerful efficacy and energy of the word. When those that have espoused and set up errors against truth, are convinced in their consciences that they are in the wrong, then the word is made honourable. Many instances there have been of this, and more will be, when thousands shall be slain, *i. e.* a multitude of prevailing errors, baffled and borne down by the sword, out of the mouth of Christ, Rev. xix. 21. When truth gets ground, and error loses, by the plain preaching of the word without secular force, here is the law magnified.

2. In the conversion of souls, and much more of nations, the law is made honourable. When it is mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.—when a great harvest of souls is gathered in to Jesus Christ,—when many are turned from darkness to light, Acts xxvi. 18.—when great sinners are changed, the strong man armed dispossessed,—when the word of God grows and prevails mightily, Acts xix. 20.—when it appears quick and powerful, Heb. iv. 12.—then is it magnified. This is work that God is carrying on in the world, and will while any of the elect remain uncalled, though sometimes it seems to pause. God has a remnant among Jews and Gentiles, he has other sheep that must be brought in, and in this he magnifies the law. We know not what tendency present events may have towards honouring the divine word.

3. In the carrying on of the work of national reformation. As far as truth gets ground against error; the purity of ordinances against idolatry, superstition, and corruption in ordinances; and a gospel way of worship is established; so far the law is magnified: the word being the rule of faith, worship, and practice. This is work that God will do, though there be difficulty in the way of it, and great opposition given to it, and it may seem sometimes to stand still, or to go back. When it is carried on by the powers, and policies, and laws of nations, then the law is magnified. When kings are nursing fathers, the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour to the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 24. When it is carried on by unlikely instruments, as by Luther, in Germany, and here in England, by Edward VI. and queen Elizabeth. Not by might nor by power, Zech. iv. 6, 7. Here is the law magnified. The more of God the less of man.

4. In the composing of the divisions and breaches of his churches. Nothing does more reflect upon the law of Christ, and make it dishonourable, than the divisions that are among Christians. God will find out some way or other for healing; he will pour oil into these wounds, Isa. xi. 6, 13. they all shall be one; and that will magnify the law, and retrieve the credit of Christianity. As far as formality, and bigotry, and imposition go out of request, so far there is a direct tendency towards this healing work. He has said it, and he will do it, that the Lord shall be one, and his name one, Zech. xiv. 9. There shall be one heart, Jer. xxxii. 39. Ezek. xi. 19. It must be done by the law of love, which will thus be magnified, not by compulsion.

5. In the correcting of his own people when they offend him. This God will do for the honour of his law, lest it should savour of partiality. Those that are near to him, must not go altogether unpunished. Judgment begins at the house of God, 1 Pet. iv. 17. The tokens of God's displeasure against those that profess relation to him, make the word honourable. Never was the law so magnified, as it was in the death of Christ: see Numb. xiv. 20, 21.

6. In the confounding of all his implacable enemies. The man of sin is to be consumed by the breath of Christ's mouth, *i. e.* the preaching of the gospel, 2 Thess. ii. 8. When the everlasting gospel is preached, Rev. xiv. 6. presently Babylon is fallen, is fallen, *v.* 8. This is for the honour of the law; when the walls of Jericho are thrown down with the sound of rams' horns, and the Midianites defeated with lamps and earthen pitchers. This God will do: the law shall be honoured with the victory, over all those that fight against it and oppose it; it will be a burthensome stone, as the ark to the Philistines.

7. In the comforting of all the Lord's people under their greatest trials. The law of Christ has been, and will be, greatly honoured by these experiences of the saints, Ps. cxix. 54, 92. This has borne them up under great sufferings, has been their stay, their cordial, their song, and it will be so more and more. God will magnify the law, by bringing his people to rest themselves upon that, to seek their comforts and hopes from the Scriptures.

8. In the concurrence of all events to the fulfilling of the Scripture, especially the prophecies and pro-

mises that relate to the state of the church in the latter days. This will be to the honour of the Scriptures, that no word there shall fall to the ground. Providence is the transcript of the word; as we have heard, so have we seen, Ps. xlviii. 8. God will make good every word that he has spoken, he will be known by his name Jehovah. David has it often, Ps. cxix. *According to thy word.* All that God does is that the Scriptures may be fulfilled.

Use 1. If this be so, that God will magnify the law and make it honourable, then what are we to think will become of those that vilify the law, and make it contemptible?

(1.) In doctrine: as the papists, that set up another guide, another rule, in opposition to it. They vilify the law by making its authority to depend upon the authority of the church, without which, they will tell you, they regard it no more that Æsop's fables. They set up human traditions to be received with equal veneration. The very soul of popery consists in a vilifying of the Scriptures.

(2.) In practice. Those careless and profane persons, by whom the great things of the law are counted as a strange thing, that slight their Bibles, despise the commandment of the Lord. The language of every wilful sin is against the law, 2 Sam. xii. 9. They who speak contemptuously of prayer, Job xxi. 14, 15. and of the table of the Lord, Mal. i. 12—14. despise his word. The world is full of atheism. Religion is made a matter of ridicule, and the professors of it are trampled upon with the greatest scorn, Lam. iv. 2. Those that do thus you see are walking contrary to God, Lev. xxvi. 21. fighting against God, Acts v. 39. You may read what they are doing, Ps. ii. 1—3. and you may see there what will become of them.

They will be defeated. It is a vain thing, *v.* 1. God shall laugh at them, *v.* 4. It is to no purpose to vilify that which God will magnify, for sooner or later God will bring all the world to be of his mind. The truth is great, and it will prevail.

They will be destroyed if they continue in it. He will speak to them in wrath, *v.* 5. The attempt will be to their own ruin. They shall be lightly esteemed, 1 Sam. ii. 30. They shall have their faces filled with everlasting shame and contempt, Dan. xii. 2. 2 Thess. ii. 10—12.

2. If this be so, it speaks comfort and encouragement in reference to public affairs. This is good news to all the Lord's people, that God will magnify the law. Let us believe this word,

(1.) When we are grieved at the abounding of sin, and the great contempt of God's law. All that love the law cannot but be so, Ps. cxix. 53, 136, 158. It is comfortable to think, that for all this God will magnify it, whether you and I live to see it or no. I do not doubt but the Scriptures will be more in credit than they now are; and then the wickedness of the wicked will come to an end. Those that side with the law are certainly on that side that will prevail at last, in spite of all opposition. Who shall live when God doth this?

(2.) When we are perplexed with dark and intricate providences, wheels within wheels, sometimes moving backward, we know not what to make of things, and are perfectly at a loss what God is about to do with us. Let this comfort us, that all these events are tending towards the magnifying of the law. The Scripture is in a course of fulfilment, the kingdom of Christ is in its establishment, and his conquests in their progress, Rev. vi. 2. When the mystery of God shall be finished, we shall see an agreement between the providence and the prophecy: see Rev. x. 7. The remembrance of the security of the church of God, may comfort his people while reflecting upon the power and malice of their foes, Isa. xiv. 32.

(3.) When our expectations are disappointed, as to temporal deliverances, we may be satisfied that God will magnify the law and make that honourable; and then it is no matter what becomes of us, though we be trampled upon, and be as nothing; see Isa. xxx. 20, 21. The glory of God, and the honour of his law, should be preferred before any other concern whatsoever: see Zeph. iii, 12, 13. God is magnifying the law by this; teaching us to magnify that more, and other guides and confidences less. God will be sanctified in those that are about him.

3. Let us endeavour as far as we can to magnify the law, and to make it honourable; let us concur with God in this good design.

(1.) Put a high esteem upon the law of God. Place it among your chief privileges. Esteem it more than riches, Ps. cxix. 72. than pleasure, Ps. xix. 10. than necessary food, Job xxiii. 12. Buy the truth; part with any thing for it. King Edward VI. would not tread upon a Bible. Know whose law it is, and what kind of law, Rom. vii. 12, 14. Do not think meanly of the Scripture, or of any part of it.

(2.) Attend to the reading and hearing of it, with all reverence and readiness of mind. Look upon the Scripture as no ordinary book; receive it as the word of God, 1 Thess. ii. 13. Acts x. 34. What saith my Lord unto his servant? Speak, for thy servant hears. Make it to appear that you do indeed magnify the law; not sleeping, gazing, or whispering while it is preached. See how reverently the law was to be received, Exod. xix. 10, 12.

(3.) Let the law of God have a place in you, the innermost and the uppermost place. The greatest honour you can do the law, is to let it dwell in you richly, Col. iii. 16. Get it written in your hearts. Set it as a seal there. Hide it there, Ps. cxix. 11. in your understandings, memories, and affections. Love it dearly; meditate in it, Ps. i. 3.

(4.) Let all your words and actions be kept in a constant conformity to the law of God. Be ruled by it in every thing. Let the law of God command your thoughts, your tongues, your time, and your estate. Make it your counsellor, and your commander.

(5.) Do what you can to advance the credit of the law with others. Aim at this in your respective places in your families, and among your neighbours. Take all occasions to speak in honour of the Scriptures. Bear your testimony against sin, and for serious godliness. Lead others to love the law of God.

(6.) Since we can do but little towards the magnifying the law, let us be earnest with God in prayer, that he will do it himself. It is the scope of the first three petitions of the Lord's prayer. He can make his law honourable, and he will do it. Father, glorify thy name, is an answered prayer, John xii. 28.

SERMON III.

[*Preached June* 10, 1702, *on occasion of the Public Fast upon the declaration of war against France and Spain.*]

JEREMIAH xiv. 7.

O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake.

THE prophet is here praying for those against whom he prophesied, and yet not guilty of any inconsistency with himself. As God's messenger he prophesied against them, but as their friend he interceded for them. Thus God himself reveals his wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and yet has no pleasure in the death of sinners. God had told him before, it was to no purpose to pray for them, *ch.* vii. 16; xi. 14. The decree was gone forth. And yet he does pray for them; not in disobedience to God, for that, though expressed as a prohibition, was only intended to show the deplorableness of their case; that they by their sins had both *forfeited* their interest in his prayers, and did likewise *defeat* the success of them. But Moses interceded for Israel, even after God had said *Let me alone*, Exod. xxxii. 10, 11. The case of a people is very sad, when the prayers of God's prophets for them are restrained. But as he continued to prophesy to them, who would not hear him speaking from God to them, so he continued to pray for them, who by their sins hindered the success of his speaking to God for them. Thus he made good two of his appeals which he had occasion afterwards to make; one, *ch.* xvii. 16. *Neither have I desired the woful day;* the other, *ch.* xviii. 20. *I stood before thee to speak good for them.* This prayer has reference to a double distress, which the people were now in; two of God's sore judgments were with them.

1. They were engaged in a war with a potent enemy, so that abroad in the field the *sword devoured*, *v.* 18.

2. They were threatened with famine, *v.* 1. God had withheld the rain from them. With this also God has threatened us; but his remembering mercy in the midst of wrath in this matter, is an encouragement to us to hope that, in the other, he will not deal with us as our sins have deserved. In the midst of the melancholy description of the judgment, he thus turns to God: and well it is for us that we have a God to go to in every exigence. In the text here is,

1. A penitent confession of sin, *Our iniquities testify against us; i. e.* they come in as undeniable evidence against us, which we cannot gainsay. The matter is plain, for *our backslidings are many* and plain. He includes the iniquities of their ancestors, *v.* 20. *though it* be so; intimating that this was a thing that made against them, and that discouraged their prayers and hopes.

2. A pleading prayer for mercy, *Do thou it*, even that of which we have need; that for which we are waiting upon thee. Lord, *do thou it for thy name's sake.* This reaches both the designs of the appointment of this fast, which is, to *humble ourselves for our sins*, and to implore *God's blessing on our arms, &c.* And I would willingly speak what is apposite, not only to the work, but to the whole work, of the day, in its day.

I. I shall observe some things from the text,

1. For our assistance in repentance and humiliation. This is the first work in our conversion to God, and ought to be our daily work in our walking with God. The life of a Christian ought to be a life of repentance, as well as a life of faith; for the best saints, while in this world, must own themselves sinners. Here is a concise confession, *Our iniquities testify against us.* The prophet puts himself into the number, being one of them: and who can say, I have contributed nothing to national guilt? when we know we have all sinned.

DOCTRINE. True penitents see their iniquities testifying against them. Our sins are witnesses against us.

1. They *testify*, for they are plain and evident; what they say against us is not whispered in a corner, but is *testified;* not found *by secret search*, Jer. ii. 34. but graven upon the horns of our altars, Jer. xvii. 1. Sin has a voice crying in God's ears, and testifies what it has to say. Conscience, by which it gives in its evidence, is instead of a thousand witnesses; hence we read of the testimony of conscience.

2. They testify *against us*, as a witness against a man in a cause. Our sins are witnesses against us

in many cases. Sin is *against us*, as well as God. Every sin in the guilt of it is *Satan*, an adversary to us. It is called in as a witness, to *answer* against us, to disprove and overthrow our pleas.

(1.) If we boast of ourselves and our own excellences, our *iniquities testify against us.* They are witnesses against our pride and self-conceitedness, and disprove the high opinion we are apt to have of ourselves, and lay us low. Conviction of sin does for ever exclude boasting. Do we value ourselves upon our wisdom? Our iniquities are evidence against us, and prove us fools. Never let the wise man glory in his wisdom for the world, since the wisest know how foolishly they have done for their own souls. Are we proud of parentage or clothes? Our sins prove us vile in our birth, and naked to our shame, Rev. iii. 17. This is a humbling testimony against us—what have we to be proud of, that are convicted lepers, and convicted rebels?

(2.) If we trust to our own righteousness, and insist upon innocency as our plea, our iniquities testify against us. If we plead Not guilty, and say we have not sinned, behold clouds of witnesses appear against us, and confront us. Does not thy own heart know that *thou art the man?* Is not the matter of fact plain against thee? see Jer. ii. 23, 25. Hence sin is said to be set in order, Ps. l. 21. as witnesses set in order before the prisoner.

(3.) If we build our hopes for heaven upon our privileges and performances, our iniquities testify against us. Do we claim heaven as a debt? Our sins show the vanity of our claim, for they are a forfeiture for which none of our good works can atone, or take away. Our iniquities are as the cherubim with the flaming sword, Hos. vii. 1. Our sins are as a partition-wall, and keep good things from us. Do you cry, The temple of the Lord? What means then our disobedience?

(4.) If we quarrel with God, as dealing unjustly or unkindly with us in our afflictions, our iniquities will testify against us, and will witness to our face, that we deserve what is laid upon us, and a thousand times more. These are witnesses that *justify God* in all that is brought upon us, and prove that he has done right, Neh. ix. 33. If we accuse God, these are witnesses that will answer us, and will tell us we are punished less than our iniquities deserve.

Inference 1. If our iniquities testify against us, let us then by true repentance testify against them, and against ourselves because of them. This becomes us upon a fast day, to judge and condemn ourselves; to take shame to ourselves; and own that we are no more worthy to be called God's children.

2. Let us fly to Christ and the Spirit to testify for us. Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me. The blood of Christ speaks for us as our sins speak against us, and it speaks better things than that of Abel: this purges and pacifies the conscience. Christ is an advocate against the accusations of sin, to take off the force of the evidence; the Spirit is a witness for us, a witness in us.—I shall observe some things,

2. For our assistance in prayer and supplication. *Though* our sins testify against us, yet we are encouraged and imboldened to pray, Ps. lxv. 3. Though we have provoked thee to do nothing for us, but all against us, *yet do thou it;* give the mercies for which we are waiting upon thee. We are here taught,

(1.) To refer ourselves to God in prayer; *Do thou it, i. e.* do with us as thou thinkest fit. It is not fit for us to prescribe to infinite wisdom and sovereignty, but as David, *Here I am*, 2 Sam. xv. 25. Do thou *it*, methinks, is like that, Isa. xlvi. 4. *I am he.* Not, Do thou it in this way, at this time, by this instrument; but, Do thou it: see Judg. x. 15.

(2.) To take our encouragement in prayer from God only—For *thy name's sake.* God's name is all that by which he has made himself known. And we know him by his name, not by his nature. We have leave to plead, and this is the best plea—Not *for our sake.*

Doctrine. In pleading with God for mercy, the best plea is, for his name's sake. This is urged not to move God, but to encourage ourselves and one another. This plea is insisted on, *v.* 21.

Do thou that which will be most for thy glory; do as thou seest will tend most to thy own honour; or

Do this For thine own glory's sake. But what is this name of God which we may insist upon?

1. For thy mercy's sake; for when God would proclaim his name, by that attribute he proclaimed it, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. We have no merit of our own, or our land's, to plead, but it will be for the glory of thy mercy to save by prerogative. God's reasons of favour are fetched from within himself, Hos. ii. 14.

2. For thy promise' sake: see *v.* 21. *Do not break thy covenant.* God has given us his word, on which he has caused us to hope, and as far as the promise goes, our faith and prayer may go. This may be pleaded as to personal and public mercies, the word on which he has caused us to hope, Ps. cxix. 49. See 2 Chron. xx. 9.

3. For thy interest's sake in the world. The honour of his name is the great concern he has upon earth. Do it to prevent the reproaches of the enemy, that will reflect on thy name: see Exod. xxxii. 12. Num. xiv. 13. Deut. xxxii. 27. Joshua vii. 9.—to promote thy kingdom, and that thou mayst be attended with the praises of Israel.

4. For thy Son's sake. In him especially he has made himself known, and we are to pray for his name's sake, the sake of the Anointed, Ps. lxxxiv. 9. Dan. ix. 17.

II. I shall endeavour to apply the text to our work this day, and the occasion of this solemnity,—*Though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake.*

Show, 1. What it is we would have done. What is it for which we come together this day? I hope we do not cry, as froward children, for we know not what: we should have a clear and distinct knowledge of the mercies we ask.—*Do thou it.* What would we have God to do? We must not come to him with covetous and ambitious prayers, nor have we any warrant to pray that our land may be the head of a universal monarchy, and all kings and nations be tributaries. When the Most High separated the sons of Adam, he designed no other universal monarchy but his own. Nor do we come with cruel and revengeful prayers: we do not say, Do thou make the nations that are against us fields of blood and ruinous heaps. We wish not the misery of any part of mankind, nor hurt to any man. But what then?

(1.) We pray that the just rights of nations may be vindicated and maintained. In these things our eyes are to God as the *King of nations*, the God that doth righteously. Do thou this, appear against the bold and threatening power which transcribes the measures of the king of Babylon, Isa. xiv. 16, 17. The sword is drawn in Europe for the securing of the ancient landmarks, and the preventing of further encroachments; for the enslaving of nations has a manifest tendency to the ruin of religion and virtue. Lord, do this.

(2.) We pray that the suffering churches abroad may be delivered; for they are our brethren, that join with us in protestations against popery, and suffer for doing so. Lord, let not the rod lie always upon them, nor the enemy insult for ever. Though this be not the ground of the war, yet if God give success, we would hope this might be one good effect of it, and that it would strengthen the protestant interest.

(3.) We pray for the peace, safety, and prosperity of our own land. We engage in a war abroad to prevent the bringing of it into our own borders. *Do thou it*, give success to our forces abroad, and be a guard upon our own land. This must be God's doing, or it will not be done. Fleets and armies, statesmen and counsellors, generals and admirals, are what he makes them, Ps. cxxvii. 1. Unless God take our part, and come into the alliance, we can expect no success.

(4.) We pray for the flourishing of true religion and godliness among us, by the suppression of vice and profaneness, the preservation of liberty, the abounding of ministers, for our unity and strength, victory over atheism, error, and all other evils.

(5.) We pray for the entail of the gospel, and the peaceable enjoyment thereof, upon our posterity after us. What benefit we enjoy by our predecessors contracts a debt to our successors. What is committed to us we should transmit to them, as a treasure. *Lord, do thou this;* thy mercy is from generation to generation, let this fruit of thy mercy be so too. This is one of the cares of the present day,—to preserve the succession in the protestant line; for we have found the danger of a popish prince. Lord, do thou these things, in thine own way.

Show, 2. What is our great discouragement as to these things,—that *our iniquities testify against us.* This is the great discouragement—we are a sinful people. This is a day proper for the searching out of the accursed thing in our camp; the matter is plain.

(1.) We feel the effects of our iniquities; the Lord's voice would not cry to us as it doth, if the voice of our sins did not cry to him. God has begun a controversy with us in the death of the king, now, when the nation stood in need of the most accomplished martial conduct. We are not healed, not eased, not settled without fear. Our anger one towards another is the fruit of God's anger against us all. Sin makes the breach.

(2.) We see the evidences of our iniquities. They are too plain to be hid, too many and gross to be hid under the mantle of charity itself, Isa. i. 4. Jer. v. 31. Three sorts of iniquities testify against us.

[1.] The boldness of the atheists and unbelievers. This is an iniquity that testifies against us, and goes barefaced. Open defiance of God and religion; the Scriptures and sacred things ridiculed; the truths of God contradicted and exposed to contempt. How many are there in our age, in our land, of the scoffers of the latter days, 2 Pet. iii. 3. Though, thanks be to God, wholesome provision is made for the preserving of the honour of religion by some laws in the last glorious reign, yet who concern themselves to punish the dishonours done to God's name, as they do to be revenged for the indignities done to their own names.

[2.] The debaucheries of the profane. These are iniquities that testify against us, though the national testimonies borne against vice, both in this and the last reign, I would hope, lessen the guilt as national, yet they aggravate it as popular. It is an evidence men hate to be reformed. Drunkenness still abounds, Isa. xxviii. 8. and still it passes for an honour, which is the shame of men and Christians, to be mighty to drink wine. The arts of propagating vice are improved, uncleanness, swearing, sabbath-breaking: because of these the land mourns. They shame and threaten us.

[3.] The declinings, and divisions, and disagreeable walkings of those that profess religion. I mean not those of any particular party; but such as run not with the profane to an excess of riot, even they, are wretchedly degenerated from the pious zeal and strictness of their predecessors. Their love waxeth cold, and their differences are mismanaged. Diversity of apprehensions causeth alienation of affections, and we do not see that disposition to union and accommodation that we could wish; the breach is yet wide as the sea. The worldliness and

pride of professors, their private feuds and quarrels, are too apparent; and that which aggravates these sins is, that the light of the gospel still shines so clearly, and we have great peace and liberty. God has done much for us, but we have been unthankful and ungrateful, murmuring and distrustful. And now what may we expect? Shall not God visit for these things, saith the Lord? Jer. v. 29. Shall not a camp be troubled in which there are so many *Achans?* May we not expect the execution of that fearful doom, Isa. v. 5, 6. I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up: and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. And may we not fear that God should swear in his wrath that we should never enter into Canaan. I am not for propagating fears and jealousies, but repentance. Our iniquities are the most threatening symptoms, and give us the greatest cause to fear.

Show, 3. What encouragement we have as to these things,—*for thy name's sake.* If any thing be done to purpose, for our land, it must be the Lord's doing. The queen has declared that she puts her trust in Almighty God for success; and that way we must look. It is not the strength of our navy, the extent of our alliances, the prudence of our statesmen, or the valour of our generals, upon which we can depend. An arm of flesh is but a broken reed. We relied much upon the king, while we had him to fight our battles, and God would show us our folly in thinking all bound up in the life of a man. We hope God will *do it*, at least do *something* for us, grant us *some* deliverance, 2 Chron. xii. 7. that he will not abandon us quite to ruin, *for his name's sake.*

(1.) Because it will be an opportunity of magnifying himself, and his own wisdom, power, and goodness. When proud tyrants, that have been the terror of the mighty, are humbled and brought down, and the poor raised out of the dust; when great things are brought to pass by unlikely instruments, God is the more glorified. When the earth helps the woman, and the sons of the alien become ploughmen and vinedressers to the church, as is promised, Isa. lxi. 5. this is much for the glory of God's name.

(2.) Because the concerns of his gospel and kingdom among men, are so nearly interested in our affairs. We may plead for his name's sake, for we have the true religion on our side, and our share of the war is very much upon the score of religion. It is to support popery that the Prince of Wales is set up; it is to support the protestant religion that the succession is settled as it is: and this is a thing in which God's glory is concerned, as well as our comfort. We may plead as Isa. lxiii. 19. and 2 Chron. xiii. 8, 9, &c. It will be for the honour of God's name, if religion flourish at home and extend abroad; if the bulwarks of it be fortified, and the entail of it corroborated. But will it be for God's glory, that Satan's seat should again be erected there where Christ has had his throne? We may be sure that God will glorify his own name, John xii. 28. will be true to his own honour, and not give his glory to another.

(3.) Because God has done great things for us, and we may take encouragement from his works, which are a part of his name, Ps. lxxv. 1. God did for his own name's sake bring about the Revolution; keep our head above water through the last war, and ended it not to our disadvantage. The Lord has now of late done great things for us in the beginning of this reign. Our land is still peaceable at home, and considerable abroad. Our liberties continued, and many other benefits yet with us.

(4.) Because we call upon his name. Though we cannot say, Do it for our prayer's sake, yet we may say, Do it for that name's sake which we call upon in our prayers and praises. God manifestly gave answer to the prayers of the last fast day, in the unanimous resolves of the parliament for the public good, and the preventing of the heats that were feared, and the guiding of the counsels upon the death of the king.

Show, 4. What is our duty upon the whole matter. Now we have prayed that God will *do it*, what must we do?

(1.) Let us be daily earnest with God in prayer, for the peace of our English Jerusalem, and the prosperity of our brethren abroad. Would you approve yourselves true friends to the queen and nation, preserve and improve your interest at the throne of grace. *Cry day and night*, Luke xviii. 7.

(2.) Let us patiently bear the inconveniences of the war we are engaged in. It is a calamity, but much less than we have deserved, and necessary to prevent a greater calamity. Better be taxed than plundered by the sword of war, or our estates confiscated by the sword of persecution.—It is a hinderance to trade; those that have effects at sea, have now more need than ever to live by faith, that they may bear losses with an even mind, and lay up treasure above.

(3.) Let us every one take heed of sin, and reform our own hearts, lives, and families. It is but a mock fast, if it be not like *Nineveh's*, Jonah iii. 8. Now we have special dependence upon God, we should take special care to please him, Deut. xxiii. 9. Keep from sin, which is God's enemy.

(4.) Let us prepare for troubles, and get ready for the worst. What God may yet do with us we know not; he can secure his own name, and yet make us a desolation, Heb. xi. 17.

(5.) Let us encourage ourselves and one another in God, when we hear evil tidings.

SERMON IV.

[*Preached May 26th, 1703, on occasion of the National Fast, for success in the war with France and Spain.*]

MARK xiii. 7.

And when ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled.

BY this word of Christ we are both forewarned and forearmed; for what he here says to those who were then his disciples, he says to all, *v.* 37. he says to us, for our learning.

I. We are here forewarned to expect trouble, *Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars;* and it follows, *such things must needs be;* look for no other. Is not our life a warfare?

1. This points immediately at those wars which brought on the final ruin and overthrow of the Jewish church and nation. The struggles that were between the conquerors and the conquered. The Jews resolute in their resistance, and the Romans in their conquests. This occasioned many bloody battles, and a long war for several years. Josephus's History of the Wars of the Jews largely relates the fulfilling of these prophecies. Never was there such a desolation. At the same time the Romans were at war with other nations.

2. It looks further, and is intended as an intimation to us all, and to all Christians, to count upon trouble in this world; particularly to expect that in every age, more or less, there will *be wars and rumours of wars:* see *v.* 8. *nation rising against nation.*

When ye *hear wars,* (so the word is,) when ye hear war at home, the noise of it, for war in a country makes a noise; never more than since the invention of guns, the most noisy way of fighting; yet of old they complained of the *noise of war,* Nahum iii. 2. Exod. xxxii. 17, 18. Some alive have heard much of this noise in our own land; not nation against nation, but neighbour against neighbour. But blessed be God, it is not our case at this day; we hear not the noise of foreign invasion or domestic insurrections.

When ye *hear the rumours of wars,* the reports or tidings of wars. We commonly call uncertain reports *rumours,* and in time of war we often hear such, but the original word signifies intelligences, that of which we hear.

DOCTRINE. That though it be very sad, yet it is not at all strange in this world, to hear of wars and rumours of wars. There are three sorts of wars:

1. Law-wars among neighbours and relations, bad enough, and very common, through too much love of the world, and too little of our brother. While there is so much folly and covetousness, so much envy and malice, among neighbours, no marvel if there be strife. There are few of the spirit of Abram, Gen. xiii. 8. We hear much of these contests; would to God we heard less! for there is utterly a fault among men, 1 Cor. vi. 7.

2. Book-wars among scholars and Christians. Different sentiments maintained by each side with great heat, too often greater than the occasion demands. We must not by these be shaken in mind. Such things must be. They are needful sometimes in defence of plain truths, and for the discovery of doubtful and controverted ones.

3. Sword-wars among nations and public interests: of these the text speaks. The first war we read of was, Gen. xiv. though probably Nimrod the mighty hunter was a soldier. As to these, we have reason upon some accounts to think it strange. Whence is it that so much mischief should be done in the world by wars? considering,

(1.) What principles there are in the nature of man. Is there not such a thing as humanity? One would wonder that ever the wit of man should be employed to invent instruments of cruelty and death; that men should be so *prodigal* of their own blood, and so *covetous* of the blood of their brethren. Man is not born for war, but naked and unarmed; not fierce, as birds and beasts of prey.

(2.) What promises there are in the word of God. It seems hard to reconcile this text with Isa. ii. 4. and with Isa. xi. 6, &c. The Jews object it. Christ himself has said otherwise, Luke xii. 51. and in the text. How shall we reconcile these two? I reply,

Those promises are in part fulfilled already. Christ was born at a time of general peace. The gospel has prevailed much to the civilizing of the nations, and as far as it is received, it disposes men to peace. The primitive Christians were of a peaceable disposition.

They will have a more full accomplishment in the latter days. Though contrary events come between, that word shall not fall to the ground.

Yet the commonness of war in every age takes off the strangeness of it. It is what we must expect in our day. A few years ago we had peace proclaimed, but war again quickly; and that crown which was then the mediator of the peace, was first itself engaged in another war. What do we hear of at this day so much as of wars? Several countries are the seats of war; cities are besieged and fields overspread with armies. Now this we are not to think strange,

Because men are so provoking to God, and he does thus in a way of righteous judgment punish them for their sins. It is the sword of the Lord bathed in heaven, that lays waste on earth, Isa. xxxiv. 5. War is one of God's sore judgments, with which he corrects the people of his wrath, Ezek. xiv. 17, 21. Sometimes God thus makes wicked men a scourge one to another, as Nebuchadnezzar was to the nations. Sometimes a scourge to

his own people, Isa. x. 6. It is sin that draws the sword, removes the defence, and sheds blood. The Lord has given the sword a charge, Jer. xlvii. 6, 7. Ezek. v. 2. But let us not judge uncharitably of those nations that are the seat of war, as if we were better than they: are there not with us, even with us, sins?

Because men are so provoking one to another, and they do thus give way to their own lusts, James iv. 1, 2. No war carried on but there is certainly a great deal of sin on both sides, as 2 Chron. xxviii. 9. But as to the cause of war,

1. Sometimes men's lusts on both sides begin the war, and where there may be a right and colour of reason on both sides, yet not such as on either to justify the taking up of arms, and while there are such follies set in great dignity, Eccl. x. 6. no marvel if we hear much of wars; punctilios of honour, inconsiderable branches of right, to which lives and countries are sacrificed by jealous princes; the mouth justly opened to denounce war, but the ear unjustly deaf to the proposals of peace.

2. Where the war on the one side is just and necessary, it is men's lusts on the other side that make it so. And if we see it, we need not marvel at the matter. Here is the original of war and bloodshed.

(1.) Men's pride and ambition sometimes make a war just and necessary. By pride comes contention, Prov. xiii. 10. He that said, I will be like the Most High, was the man that made the earth to tremble, Isa. xiv. 13, 16. Proud and haughty men, that aim at a universal monarchy, that will set up and depose at their pleasure, entail war upon the nations. Every sheaf must bow to theirs; either bend or break. Did men know themselves to be but men, they would not think themselves gods, and prove themselves beasts.

(2.) Men's covetousness and injustice sometimes make a war just and necessary. It is not strange to hear of wars, when there are those that would be placed alone in the midst of the earth, Isa. v. 8. and would command the territories and treasures of all their neighbours. This is a provocation not to be borne: see Hab. ii. 5—8. 1 Kings xx. 3, &c. The injured rights of nations must be asserted, &c.

(3.) Men's treachery sometimes makes war. No marvel we hear of wars, when *all men are liars*, and no confidence is to be put in them. When the public faith of princes and nations is pawned in vain, and the most sacred cords broken, like Samson's bands, only because a man thinks himself a Samson for strength. This is one thing that justifies our national engagement at this day. War is an appeal to God's providence against those who would not stand to an appeal to his ordinance, see Ezek. xvii. 18, 19. It is a quarrel God will avenge.

(4.) Oppression and persecution sometimes make war just. In this case sometimes the law of nations comes in for a timely and seasonable relief, as in our own land in the late happy revolution, on the foundation of which the present government stands, in which we are so happy. However, in the last extremity the very law of nature helps, as in the case of our brethren in France, the province of Languedoc, last and least enslaved. However, if Nebuchadnezzar be driven from among men, must men be a prey to him? Christianity teaches patient suffering, but the God of grace is the God of nature. Since the empire became Christian, perhaps the case is altered. The infraction of civil edicts is a disease which may be remedied by a method of cure of the same nature. We know what oppression does, Eccl. vii. 7. Thank God that we are not in their temptation, and pray to God that we never may, lest the remedy be worse than the disease.

II. We are here forearmed against the trouble we are bid to expect.

When you are yourselves disturbed with the alarms of war, *be not troubled*, i. e. be not inordinately dejected and cast down, be not terrified, whatever happens; keep trouble from your heart, John xiv. 1. if war come to your door.—When you hear of war abroad, hear of war proclaimed, hear of war pushed on, hear of the direful effects of war, hear of sieges and battles, marches and countermarches, famine and plunder, cities burnt, and countries laid waste; in the midst of all, *be not ye troubled*. It is both for caution and comfort. You need not be troubled, therefore give not way to it.

Doctrine. That the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ ought not to be inordinately troubled, when there are wars and rumours of wars.

1. As for others, they have reason to be *troubled*. Those that are not the disciples of Jesus Christ, and are not interested in his merit and grace, have cause for trouble when God's judgments are abroad: see Isa. xxxiii. 14. Terrors belong to them, and as for comforts, they have no part nor lot in the matter, see Luke xxi. 25, 26. Those that have the most cause to be troubled commonly put trouble furthest from them. Have not they reason to be troubled that lie under the guilt of all their sins, and the wrath and curse of an angry God, to whom the sword is like that flaming sword, Gen. iii. 24. As men are, so God's judgments are to them, 1 Cor. iii. 12, 13. To such these are indeed but the beginning of sorrows.

2. There is cause for the disciples of Christ themselves, upon some accounts, and in some degree, to be *troubled*. Christ would not have his followers to be without feeling. God calls to mourning at such a time. This is a doctrine that needs explication and limitation. When you hear of wars *be ye troubled* after a godly sort. There is a threefold *trouble* commendable:

(1.) Sympathy with the sufferers. Even the guilty

side partake of the same nature. Much more should we sympathize with the innocent countries that are the seat of war, and the righteous undertakers of a just and honourable cause. Feel for their griefs that lie exposed to spoil, and hear the voice of the oppressor, and that have their lives jeoparded in the high places of the field. Think of the sufferings of prisoners, and the alarms of besieged cities;—these sufferers are our bone and our flesh.

(2.) Sorrow for sin. It is sin that makes all the mischief. Mourn for the sin that is the cause of the war, and the sin that is the effect of it. How is God dishonoured! how are arts of sin taught and propagated! It should trouble us to think of the wickedness of the wicked; it is a thing for which horror should *take hold on us*, Ps. cxix. 53.

(3.) Solicitude for the ark of God. For this our hearts should tremble, lest religion in its various interests suffer damage; lest the protestant religion be weakened, and antichristian powers be strengthened. We should be concerned, as Eli was, 1 Sam. iv. 13. The desolations of the sanctuary should trouble us more than the desolations of the earth: this is a holy fear.

3. Christians ought not to be inordinately troubled. When ye hear this, *be not troubled, i. e.*

(1.) Be not disquieted, but make the best of it. It is not our wisdom to aggravate to ourselves the causes of trouble, nor to make them worse than they are. Our Saviour has here told us, such things must be; there is no remedy. God is doing his own work in all events. Thus it was before we were born, Eccl. vii. 10. and so it will be. Let us not magnify the events of our own time, as if there never were the like; there is nothing new under the sun. The histories of former times make our own less formidable.

(2.) Be not affrighted, but hope the best from it. When we hear the rumours of war, we must not be of doubtful mind; not as Ahaz, Isa. vii. 2; viii. 11, 12. We must not give up all for lost upon every disaster and disappointment. When rumours of wars are abroad, we have great need to watch against the prevailing fear of evil tidings, and to keep the heart fixed. Courage is an excellent virtue in time of war, and needful at home as well as abroad. Make not your brethren's heart to fail as your heart, Deut. xx. 3.

(3.) Be not amazed, but prepare for worse after it. There seems to be this also intended in the caution; compare *v.* 8. *these are the beginnings of sorrows.* Be not troubled for this, but rather arm yourselves with Christian courage and patience against the assault of the next trouble. Weep not for this, but get ready for the next, Luke xxiii. 28, 29. Faint not in these lesser conflicts, for then what will you do when greater come: see Jer. xii. 5. Several considerations will be of use to keep trouble from the heart of good Christians, when we hear of wars.

[1.] The righteous God sits in the throne judging right, therefore *be not troubled.* War is an appeal to him, and he will determine those appeals in justice, and execute the determinations by an overruling power, Ps. ix. 7, 8; xcvii. 1; xcviii. 9. God is King of nations, and presides in the affairs of nations. He has not only a negative voice, but a guiding hand, in councils of war, and treaties of peace. Men talk of the fortune of war, but it is not a blind fortune, the issue is determined by a wise God. If it be doubtful to us on which side the right lies, it is not so to God. Leave it to him, therefore, to govern the world.

[2.] The church is built upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, therefore *be not troubled.* We must be concerned for the church, but we have this to comfort us, God has espoused the cause of his church, and will plead it with jealousy. Whatever revolutions there are in the nations, God will secure the interests of his own church and people, Matt. xvi. 18. The Lord has founded Sion, Isa. xiv. 32. Christ will have a church, a kingdom in the world in spite of all the oppositions of the powers of darkness. The protestant cause is the cause of God, and shall arise, though it be small.

[3.] Christ is his people's peace, therefore *be not troubled.* This may comfort us in reference to others that are in the midst of these wars. The remnant of those that fear God, find rest in Christ, even in troublous times: see Micah v. 5. John xvi. 33. If trouble should ever come within our own border, here is our Noah, here is our ark, this same shall comfort us. In him we have peace with God, Rom. v. 1.—all clear and calm between us and heaven; peace in our own bosoms; all sedate and quiet there, no rumours of wars.

[4.] The name of the Lord is a strong tower, therefore *be not troubled.* Into this citadel the vanquished may retire and find shelter, and a refuge that they cannot be beaten out of, Prov. xviii. 10. This is a strong hold, inaccessible, insuperable, and which cannot be taken. The power and providence of God are fortifications which cannot be scaled, nor battered, nor undermined. What need good people fear? Ps. xlvi. 1, 2. they have always a God to whom they may go.

[5.] Men are God's hand, therefore *be not troubled.* God is doing their own work by them all this while, and they are accomplishing his purpose, though they mean not so, Isa. x. 5, 7, 15. Ps. xvii. 13, 14. They are not only restrained by his hand, that they can do no more than he will suffer them, but they are used by his hand to do what he appoints them, what his hand and his counsel determined before to be done, Ps. lxxvi. 10. Isa. li. 13.

[6.] There will come a reckoning day, when all these things shall be reviewed; therefore *be not troubled.* The seeming disorders of providence shall all

be corrected at that day, when God will come and make *inquisition for blood*, from the blood of righteous Abel. Innocent blood shed by the sword of war, as well as by the sword of pretended justice, shall be required. Behold, the Judge standeth before the door, and the mighty men shall shortly stand at his bar, Isa. xxvi. 21. Rev. vi. 10.

[7.] The wars of the nations perhaps may end in the peace of the church. God can bring light out of darkness, and meat out of the eater. The greatest perplexities of the children of men may introduce the joys of the people of God: see Luke xxi. 28. Heb. xii. 2. compare Rev. xiv. 20. with xv. 3. and see *chap.* xix. 17, 18. Glorious times we hope are reserved for the church.

[8.] However, we are sure in heaven there are no wars nor rumours of wars, therefore *be not troubled.* All will be well there. Make that world sure, seek mansions in a heavenly Father's house, and that will keep trouble from the heart. At such times, blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord, Rev. xiv. 13.

To conclude: 1. Let us thankfully own God's great goodness to us in this nation—that we have peace at home, a happy government, peaceable habitations, a defence on our glory, Isa. xxxiii. 20.

2. Let us not complain of the inconveniences that attend our being interested in the present war; the expense of it, or the abridging and exposing of our trade and property.

3. Let rumours of wars drive us to our knees. Pray, pray, and do not prophesy. Spread the matter before God, and you may greatly help the cause by your supplications.

4. Patiently wait the issue with a humble submission to the will of God. Do not limit him, nor prescribe to him. Let him do his own work in his own way and time.

A FUNERAL SERMON

PREACHED AT HACKNEY, JULY 11TH, 1714,

ON OCCASION OF THE MUCH-LAMENTED

DEATH OF THE REVEREND MATTHEW HENRY,

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL THERE.

BY W. TONG.

JOHN xiii. 36. latter part.

Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

THESE words are the answer our Lord and Saviour gave to a hasty question proposed by the apostle Peter, *Lord, whither goest thou?* The occasion of that question was a dark saying that our Saviour dropt, ver. 33. *Little children, yet a little while I am with you: ye shall seek me; and, as I said to the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say to you.*

This affectionate disciple was so struck with that expression, that he seems not so much to mind what our Saviour added, that *they should love one another as he had loved them all;* but, as one whose heart was full, and could hold no longer, he breaks in abruptly upon his Master with this inquiry, *Lord, whither goest thou?*

Our Saviour thought fit to give a gentle check to the forward temper of his disciple, by answering as in the text, *Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards.* Yet this did but raise his zeal the higher, and produced that warm expostulation, *Lord, why cannot I follow thee? I will lay down my life for thy sake.* Our blessed Lord, who knew Peter better than he knew himself, saw so much spiritual pride and self-sufficiency in that resolution, that he thought fit to take him down, and tell him of his approaching scandalous fall, *v.* 38.

In the temper and language of this disciple there was a remarkable mixture of good and evil, grace and corruption, much love to Christ, and too much confidence in himself; and in the reply that Christ makes to him in the words of the text, there is a wise mixture of reproof and encouragement suited to Peter's case.

1. Our Saviour checks the apostle's curiosity and self-confidence, *Whither I go thou canst not follow me now.* I am going to the cross, and thence to the crown and kingdom; but though thou hast been so long in my family, heard my doctrine, seen my miracles, and conversed so freely with me, thou canst not yet follow me; thy work is not yet done, thy soul is not yet ready, thou art not fully prepared for death and heaven.

2. He encourages the hope of his disciple, and his honest zeal; "*But thou shalt follow me afterwards.* Thou canst not follow me now, and therefore thou must be content to be left behind in this evil world; but my grace shall be working in thee and by thee, and thou shalt in due time be made ready to follow me both to the cross and to the kingdom. Thou shalt not be lost, though thou be left behind; *thou shalt follow me afterwards.*"

I cannot but observe something in the countenance of this great assembly, that tells me it is expected I should take some particular notice, as others of my brethren have done before, of the surprising, lamented, long to be lamented, death of the late excellent pastor of this church.

And indeed it is upon that account that I have fixed my thoughts upon this text, these words of Christ to Peter, *Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.* I believe I am not the only person here who feels in himself a secret regret, that so dear, so faithful, so every way desirable, a friend has got the start of me, is gone to heaven before me, and left me behind him in this valley of sin and tears; but when my

heart is musing upon this unexpected parting, and wishing I had been so happy as to have gone to heaven with him, he seems to me to look back upon me, and bid me, for a while, farewell, in these words of the text, *Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.*

I hope I shall not be thought to presume too far, in accommodating these words of our blessed Lord to any mere man. I intend not hereby to compare the servant to his Lord, so as to set him upon a level with him, either in the excellency of his person, or the nature of his death; in both these respects I know and believe our Saviour *was alone, and of the people there was none with him.* Nor do I intend to compare myself to this blessed disciple, unless it be in those things in which he was least like himself. But certainly, conformity to Christ is every Christian's duty and honour; and where we see this conformity wrought up to a very eminent degree, our love to Christ will oblige us to esteem such persons the excellent of the earth, precious both in life and death; and we hope we may, without offending God, wish that we might have our lot with them living and dying.

That man must be worse than Balaam, who does not desire *to die the death of the righteous, and that his latter end may be like his*, Numb. xxiii. 10. Good men will be ready to carry their desires further, not only to die like the righteous, but, if it were the will of God, to die with them; especially with those of them, to whom their souls have been long united by the sweet and sacred bonds of an intimate and religious friendship: having been *lovely and pleasant in their lives*, they would have thought it a favourable providence, if *in death they had not been divided*, 2 Sam. i. 23.

When Christ told his disciples that his beloved friend Lazarus was dead, Thomas was so affected with it, that he made a sudden motion to the rest of the disciples, *Let us also go, that we may die with him*, John xi. 16. You will find that affectionate proposal so excellently opened and applied by the late Reverend Mr. How, in his funeral sermon for Dr. Bates, that I cannot but recommend it earnestly to your review on this occasion. I have not the least doubt but that extraordinary person was able to speak the words of Thomas from his very heart at that time, though with a due subjection to the Father of spirits. I am confirmed in this persuasion, by what I myself had the opportunity to observe for some years together, of those stedfast hopes and holy desires with which he waited for his great change. And I very well remember what I have heard from an eminent, wealthy, and religious citizen, (alderman Rodbert,) in whose house that venerable person Mr. Richard Fairclough died, that when Mr. How visited him on his death-bed, and they discoursed together in a very affectionate manner upon the glory of heaven, Mr. How familiarly said to him, "To this glory you are hastening; but why will you not take me along with you?" And then answered himself, "But we must, with good old Simeon, have leave to die from him who is the Lord of life."

I could mention some other such instances, which, how much soever they may be derided by men of defiled consciences and earthly minds, plainly show there is something in the temper of a serious, godly person, that suggests such desires and wishes as these, when he sees his dear companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ going to heaven before him, What do I do loitering and lingering here? why could I not have gone along with them?

What I shall offer to your thoughts upon this affecting and important subject, will be under these two general heads:

I. To consider, what it is that makes it so desirable to go along with our godly friends into the other world. And,

II. What reason we have to be quiet and patient in continuing here a while longer, even when our best friends are gone before us.

I. What is it that makes it so desirable to go along with our faithful godly friends into another world?

If a man would give his affectionate thoughts their full scope, many things might be mentioned to this purpose; but I shall confine myself to these three:

1. Had we gone along with such deceased friends, we should now have been delivered with them from the evils of this world, which they have left.

2. We should have been now put into possession with them of the blessedness of that world to which they are gone.

3. The sorrow of parting by this means would have been prevented.

1. Could we have gone along with our godly deceased friends, we should now have been delivered, as they are, from the many evils of this world, which they have left.

The present world is an evil world, God frequently tells us so in his word, the faithful servants of God find it so, and even the men of this world themselves, when they come to leave it, confess it is so, though they would not believe it before.

It is so evil a world, that our blessed Lord was resolved he would deliver his people out of it at any rate; and, rather than fail, he would give his life, he would give himself, to accomplish the great design; and God the Father approved of the resolution, as worthy of the wisdom and grace of Christ, and exactly correspondent to his own mind and will; *Who gave himself for us, that he might deliver us from the present evil world*, (or out of this present evil

world,) *according to the will of God and our Father*, Gal. i. 4.

The evils of this present world are innumerable, but the chief of them may be reduced to these three heads; sin, affliction, and the danger we are in of miscarrying for ever.

(1.) Sin: this indeed is the greatest evil, and the procuring cause of all the rest; and it is no small burthen to those whose hearts are tender and upright with God.

They are grieved to see so much sin committed in the world, their righteous souls are vexed at the filthy conversation of those among whom they live; the bare-faced atheism and infidelity of some, the gross and scandalous profaneness and immoralities of others, are a trouble and a terror to them. To see the glorious gracious God so much dishonoured and provoked, to see precious souls in such numbers so desperately destroying themselves, good men have much ado to bear the beholding of it with their eyes, it makes them weary of the world; they think themselves unhappy thus to dwell in *Mesech*, and to sojourn in the tents of *Kedar*, Ps. cxx. 5.

They are grieved yet more to see so much sin in their own families, among their near relations; and how few are there who have not this cause of sorrow, less or more! The daughters of Heth were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah, so great, that Rebekah declared, *she was weary of her life because of them*, Gen. xxvii. 46.

They are most of all grieved to feel so much sin still remaining and working in their own souls, they have known the evil of it, it has been to them more bitter than death, and yet they are not free from it; it makes them loathe themselves, to think there should be still so much in them of that abominable thing that the soul of God hates, and that they should by in-dwelling sin, be so often hindered in that which is good, and drawn into that which is evil; they sigh and groan for a full deliverance, and a sinless immortality, where they shall never say or do a foolish thing any more, never entertain a foolish sinful thought or desire any more.

Now, in the multitude of those thoughts which they have about their good friends deceased, this presents itself readily to them. They have now released from sin. While they were with us, they had their complaints as well as we, they often bewailed the deceitfulness of their own hearts, their unbelief, carnality, deadness, and distractions in holy duties; but now all is well with them, all their complaints over; sin is abolished, it has no place, no being, with them: and if we might have had leave to have gone along with them, our complaints of this kind had been over too, and all had been right and well in our souls; but, alas! we are left behind in a sinful world, and which is worse, are ourselves daily sinning in it.

(2.) Affliction: this is another kind of evil with which the world abounds; sin has filled it full of sorrow; men are every where *walking contrary to God*, and God is justly *walking contrary to them. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, especially where men hold the truth in unrighteousness*, Rom. i. 18. Not only revealed by his word, but by his providence.

The best of Christians not being here free from sin, cannot expect to be free from affliction; they suffer from the hands of men, because they are better than others, and often suffer from the hands of God, because they are not so good as they should be; they are God's children, they are of his family, and he will correct them; judgment usually begins at the house of God, and their spirits being tender, and broken, and impressed with an awe of God, afflictions go nearer their hearts, and make a deeper wound in them than in other men.

Now as for these, our godly friends who are departed, all these calamities are overpast, they are entered into peace, the wrath of their enemies cannot reach them now, and their heavenly Father will never frown upon them any more; he receives their departing souls with this most sweet and gracious welcome, *In a little wrath I hid myself from thee for a moment, but with everlasting loving-kindness will I now have mercy on thee*, Isa. liv. 8.

And if we could have gone along with them to heaven, our troubles would have been over too, and all tears wiped away from our eyes by the tender hand of our Lord Jesus Christ; but we still remain in an evil world, and seem to be reserved for yet greater trials. Since so many that stood in the gap are removed, we can conclude no other, but that they are taken away from the evil to come; that they are safely housed before the storm comes; they are gone to a good home, and gone home in a good time; *henceforth, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord;* and it had been happy for us, if it had been the will of God, that we had died with them; especially considering,

(3.) The danger that we are yet in of miscarrying for ever. And this is not the least of the evils we groan under in this world, *fightings without, and fears within:* dangerous temptations are daily assaulting our souls, and these occasion sad misgivings of heart, lest we should one day fall by our spiritual enemies.

The serious Christian has his hopes, and though they are often but weak and wavering, he would not be without them for a thousand worlds; but he has his fears too, and not without cause; the concern is vastly great, the battle is not yet over, he has not yet reached the mark, nor won the prize; a disappointment would be fatal and irrecoverable. The heart is deceitful; many have flattered themselves to their

own ruin; and the humble Christian thinks with himself, What if I should do so too? The very possibility of being deceived in a matter of endless consequence, is enough to shake the firmest mind, and to make it tremble.

The case of a Christian in his journey to eternity, is like that of a man that is to go over a narrow and long bridge, that lies upon high and rugged rocks, from whence there is a mighty precipice to the deep waters; though the bridge be strong, and his hold sure, yet he cannot forbear looking down to the rocks and river so far below him, and he is ready to shiver and tremble when he thinks, If I should fall, what a dreadful fall would this be! Though the Christian has the strong bridge of the covenant to go over, yet he cannot avoid meditating terror, when he thinks what it is to fall into the bottomless pit, and lake that burns with fire and brimstone; he is upon a sure foundation, he has sure hold of Christ, or rather Christ has sure hold of his soul, and yet he trembles when he looks down and thinks, If I should fall, what a desperate fall would that be!

Now, those holy ones who are got safe over the narrow bridge of death, have nothing more to fear; they are safe landed, the risk is run and over; the matter is fixed, they are in heaven already. They are where they would be, and where sometimes they were afraid they should never have come; but those fears have now no room in their souls; the battle is won, the victory gained, the day is their own, and they are safe for ever.

And if we had gone along with them, our dangers and fears had been over too; but we have not attained, we are not already perfect; we know not what deep, what dark and dangerous, steps we have yet to take, how often our feet may slide; we know our blessed Saviour is able to keep us from falling, and we hope he will do so, but *hope deferred maketh the heart sick;* and when such a one as Paul was at so much pains to keep under *his body, and bring it to subjection, lest while he preached to others he himself should be a cast-away,* (1 Cor. ix. 27.) we cannot think ourselves above all fear: we are admonished to fear, *lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it,* Heb. iv. 1. It was from this text that your deceased minister preached the Lord's day before he died; and I doubt not but it was with a serious concern upon his own soul, that he might not come short of the promised rest; but now all the care is over, he enjoys that everlasting rest that he so unweariedly pursued and pressed after; but we are left to *work out our salvation with fear and trembling.* This is one consideration that renders it desirable to have gone to heaven with our godly acquaintances, that we might with them have been fully delivered from all the evils of this present world.

2. We should have now possessed with them the blessedness of that world which they are gone to. How great that blessedness is, none among the living can tell; we understand but as children, and speak but as children, when we think and speak of the glories of heaven. Though we have now the evidence of our adoption, and know that we are the children of God, yet we know not what we shall be; but this we are sure, to be dissolved and to be with Christ, is far better than to be in the most prosperous condition in this world. Permit me here to give a few short hints.

(1.) In heaven the principles and habits of grace in the soul are all perfected. Those who are arrived safely there, know as they are known; their apprehensions are clear, distinct, and as adequate to their objects, as a created mind can admit of, in its highest improvement and most enlarged capacity; their love to God is now without any coldness or inconstancy, it is most pure, and perfectly refined from all sinister and selfish ends and interests. Their delight in God is now full, the top-stone is now brought forth to crown the building, and grace is ripened into glory.

(2.) The operations of these perfected graces are perfect too; their knowledge, love, and delight in God, are in continual exercise without any interruption; they are in more easy and pleasant exercise, without any opposition; they are in the most lively and vigorous exercise, without any weakness or weariness; they worship God day and night, and their work is their felicity, their rest and reward.

(3.) The blessed objects of their graces are now near to them, viewed by them, and fully enjoyed; they are made like to the angels of God, and with them by a spiritual sight they see God face to face; they behold him in his glory; that which Moses desired, but was not then able to bear, they enjoy with infinite pleasure; *God shows them his glory,* Exod. xxxiii. 18. They look with stedfast pleasure and wonder upon the Lord Jesus Christ; they walk with him in white in the heavenly paradise: and what soul can imagine the delightful conversation they have with him in those most pleasant walks; with what mutual joy and satisfaction their Redeemer and they record the wonderful steps of that rich grace, that found them in such depths of misery, and raised them to such a height of glory? They have the fullest, sweetest, and most satisfying sense, relish, and assurance of the free, unchangeable, peculiar, distinguishing love of God to them; God rejoiceth over them, and rests in his love towards them, and they rejoice and rest in him and his favour for ever.

I am persuaded none will blame me, if I here insert some passages, which your deceased minister has gathered up out of a sermon preached by his excellent father, on the death of Mr. William Laurence. Addressing himself to the widow and father-

less children, he uses the words of Christ in Luke xxiii. 28. *Weep not for me*, &c. and thus enlarges upon them: "It is said of Abel, that being dead, he yet speaketh; if our deceased friend and brother who is dead, could be heard speaking, this is what he would say, My dear wife and children, my dear brothers and sisters, my dear neighbours and friends, weep not for me, for you have something else to do with your tears. And having described the evils he was freed from, he proceeds thus:

"Consider the happiness I am entered into. Would you know where I am? I am at home in my Father's house, in the mansion prepared for me there. I am where I would be, where I have long and often desired to be; no longer on the stormy sea, but in a safe and quiet harbour: my working time is done, and I am resting; my sowing time is done, and I am reaping; my joy is as the joy of the harvest.

"Would you know how it is with me? I am made perfect in holiness, grace is swallowed up in glory, the top-stone of the building is brought forth. Would you know what I am doing? I see God, I see him as he is, not as through a glass darkly, but face to face, and the sight is transforming, it makes me like him. I am in the sweet enjoyment of my blessed Redeemer, my Head, and Husband, whom my soul loved, and for whose sake I am willing to part with all. I am here bathing myself at the spring-head of heavenly pleasures and joys unutterable: I am here keeping a perpetual sabbath; what that is, judge by your short sabbaths: I am here singing hallelujahs incessantly to him that sits upon the throne, and rest not day and night from praising him.

"Would you know what company I have? Blessed company, better than the best on earth: here are holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. I am set down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, with blessed Paul and Peter, and James and John, and all the saints; and here I meet with many of my old acquaintances that I have fasted and prayed with, who have got before me hither.

"And, lastly, Will you consider how long this is to continue? It is a garland that never withers, a crown of glory that fades not away; after millions of millions of ages it will be as fresh as it is now: and therefore weep not for me."

I have taken only so much as relates to the blessedness of heaven; and it is described in such sweet, lively, and unaffected strains, so suitable to the excellent, heavenly spirit of him that spoke it, I am sure it deserves to be often read over, and seriously considered by us all.

3. If we had gone with our godly friends to heaven, the sorrow of parting had been prevented; and need not tell some of you, that is no little sorrow; the experience of those who have lost such relations and friends will speak for me, and speak much more emphatically than I can. It is hard parting with a faithful minister, who *naturally cares* for the spiritual state of his people. It is hard parting with a tender, faithful, affectionate yoke-fellow, who has been for many years helping you forward in the way to heaven; with an affectionate parent, who was as compassionate to the souls of his children, as careful of their bodies and outward welfare. To part with such, is like cutting off a right hand: when such a one leaves us, he takes part of our very life and soul along with him, and we feel ourselves only to survive. Such a parting, such a loss, imbitters every thing in the world to the sorrowful survivors. Nothing is now to them what it was before; life itself is less valuable; house, family, food, raiment, rest, conversation, none of these things are what they used to be. There is a kind of blast and death upon every thing, an emptiness in every thing, when we can no longer enjoy the endeared friend who made every thing else pleasant to us. To souls united, not only in the bonds of nature, but of grace too, a separation, though it be but for a time, is hard to be borne. Now all this trouble and sorrow had been prevented, if we could have gone to heaven with them.

Such considerations as these represent it to us as a desirable thing, if it had been the will of God, that we had died with our excellent departed friends, and gone to heaven in company with them.

I now proceed,

II. To consider what reason we have to be quiet and patient in continuing here a while longer, even when our best friends are gone before us.

To men of carnal minds, who have their portion in this world, this will appear very needless; they are willing enough to stay here, whoever goes before, and would rather be left alone upon the earth, than leave a world they love so well, to enter upon a state their hearts are wholly strangers to. When they hear that death is to the righteous a deliverance, and that Christ gave himself to procure for his people such a deliverance, the secret language of their souls is, "God deliver me from such a deliverance."

But as for those who have laid up their treasure in heaven, and whose hearts are there, they find it more difficult to be content to live, than willing to die, and especially when they see one intimate faithful Christian friend after another, go before them.

But yet, even these, if they would recollect themselves, and consider every thing with a calm, composed, and dispassionate mind, may see sufficient reason to acquiesce in the will of God, who has ordered it so, that when others are taken they should still be left in a sinful calamitous world: and that they may be enabled in holy patience to possess

their own souls, I would suggest a few things to them.

1. Consider, that in dying work, every one must expect to be alone; though you should die in the same place, and at the same time, with your best friends, yet both they and you must be alone in dying. It is a work by itself, and every one must die for himself, and enter into eternity as much alone, as if none else had died besides him. Departing souls cannot help, cannot comfort or counsel, one another in the article of death; it does not appear that they can have any communion with each other in dying. While they lived, they could converse together about death and eternity, and comfort and encourage each other about those awful concerns; but though they should enter together into the valley of the shadow of death, they must expect to part there, and lose the sight and society of each other there, and each of them must have to do alone with God, the Father of their spirits, in that important moment of dying. And why then should any be impatient, because they are left behind their godly friends, since there must have been a parting in death, though they should have died in the same moment? But,

2. You would do well to inquire, whether you are yet so thoroughly prepared for death and heaven as those who are gone before you. If you are not, you have not only reason to be patient, but to be thankful to God that he has given you a little more time. Dying work is hard work; it requires not only an habitual but an actual preparation; and there needs a great deal to actual meetness for death and heaven: it is not a passionate wish for death, or weariness of life, that makes the soul ready for another world. You sometimes think you would be glad to be gone, but are you as ready as you are willing?

Are you sure there is not yet something wanting in you, which you cannot so well die without? Is there no breach between God and your souls, that you have not so seriously considered, and endeavoured that it might be made up by a particular application to the blood of Christ? If there be, you cannot imagine how difficult that very thing might have rendered your dying work to you.

You seem to be very much weaned from the world since your best friends are gone out of it; but is this weanedness as great in reality as it is in your present opinion? For all your haste to be gone, if the world and you were just now to part, it may be you would find your hearts cleave faster to it, and come with more difficulty from it, than you imagine.

It may be your house is not yet set in order; something is omitted, that both in prudence and in conscience ought to be done; and if that defect be not supplied, it may prove a great distraction to your dying thoughts.

Perhaps there is some latent corruption in you not yet sufficiently lamented and subdued. This was the very case of Peter; his self-confidence must be discovered to him, and repented of, and mortified, before he was fit to die; perhaps it may be so with some others, who in a warm and affectionate frame may seem to themselves very willing to be gone.

Now if any of these things be your case, you have cause to bless God, that he has been so tender of you and indulgent to you; he has given you more time, that you may be better prepared to encounter your last and great enemy, and to make the state and concerns of your souls more sure and clear, before you go to that place where there is no further work to be done for eternity.

You are ready to think God has been more kind to your deceased friends than he has been to you; but if you better consider the matter, you may see cause to be very thankful to him, that he had more regard to the real wants of your souls, than to their hasty wishes. Jonah was impatient to live when his gourd was withered, he *wished for death, and said, It is better for me to die than to live;* (*ch.* iv. 8, 9.) but he was not so ready to die; that was no good frame to be found in at death; he must be more calm and cool, and better reconciled to the will of God; and therefore God condescends to reason the case with him in a most kind and compassionate manner, to bring him to himself; God would not let him die in that peevish humour; and doubtless Jonah was made sensible before he died, that his God had dealt tenderly with him, in giving of him time to recover a better frame of soul than that which he was in, when he so passionately wished for death.

3. But though you are ever so well prepared for death and heaven, yet if God has any more work for you to do in the world, it becomes you to stay with patience till you have done it.

You are Christians, and you have been often told, that Christians *do not live to themselves nor die to themselves, but whether they live they live to the Lord, or whether they die they die to the Lord:* and this you have been very seriously and very seasonably put in mind of, but a few days ago, on this very occasion.* It is not for you peremptorily to choose either life or death, but to refer it to him who is the Lord of life, to appoint that for you which may be most for his own glory. You are serving your heavenly Father and your blessed Redeemer, to whom you owe all you are, and have, and can do, and you are serving your generation according to the will of God; and you should be well pleased with it, both for the work's sake, and for his sake who has called you to it.

If others have done their work before you, it was fit they should go to heaven before you; it will be time enough for you to rest, when your work is done;

* By the Rev. Dr. Williams, on Rom. xiv. 7, 8.

would you leave any part of it undone? This very case is well stated and determined by the apostle Paul, in Phil. i. 21, &c. *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain: but if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour; yet what I should choose I know not: for I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.*

It becomes you as the servants of the Lord, redeemed by him, to be willing that your rest and happiness should be deferred for a while, if in the meantime you may bring more glory to God and your Saviour, and do more service to his interest in the world; and if you are doing his will on earth, while others are beholding his face in heaven, you must think yourselves well employed, for his glory should be dearer to you than any interests of your own.

You are servants to your Creator and Redeemer, and you must stay till you have leave to die. He who called you to your work, expects you should abide by it with obedient patience till he also call you from it, and in due time he will call, and then you may give a cheerful answer, knowing that he will have a desire to the work of his own hands, Job xiv. 15.

It is not for want of love to his disciples, that Christ keeps them in this world sometimes longer than they could wish; he has a desire to them, and to the work of his hands in them, but yet he will not have them (like your season birds) all to take wing and fly away together; for what then would become of his cause and interest in the world? In the same prayer where he declares it to be his will that all those the Father had given him, should be with him wherever he is, to behold his glory, yet he also declares it is not his desire they should all leave the world now, or all at one time: *I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil*, John xvii. 15.

4. You complain that some of your best friends have got the start of you, and reached heaven before you; but pray consider, is it not well for you, if they left you in the way to heaven, following after as you are able? All travellers are not of the same speed, some have more strength, more activity, and are better furnished for their journey, and meet with fewer hinderances, and so move faster, and get sooner to their journey's end; but it is some comfort to those who cannot keep pace with them, that those who are gone before can tell their friends at home, that they have left them upon the road, in the right way, and making what haste they could after.

You find it is some exercise of your patience, to see that those who did not set out for heaven before you, but some of them perhaps after you, have quite outgone you, and have got home before you, but if they can carry this good report of you to heaven, that you are in the ready road thither, that you are not loitering, that you are not gone the wrong way, but that they left you in the King of heaven's high road, making the best speed you can, walking in the same spirit, in the same path of the just; this will cause joy in heaven, and may afford you comfort in the land of your pilgrimage. Are you moving Godward and heavenward? It is well, thank God, and take courage; remember how great a support this was to the blessed Paul, even while he was bemoaning himself that he had not yet attained to sinless perfection; *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*, Phil. iii. 12, 13.

5. Though you are left behind for a little while, yet if you keep close to God, and maintain communion with him through Christ, you may have even a heaven here upon earth: communion with God will make life comfortable, at the same time that it makes heaven so desirable. You think it long till you be joined to the general assembly and church of the first-born in heaven, and till you begin your everlasting sabbath. Come, sirs, thank God through Jesus Christ, that you have a nail in his house here, and a place in the assemblies of his saints, and such comfortable sabbaths and sacrament days; that God thus vouchsafes to come down to you, before he thinks fit to take you up to himself.

The presence of God is the highest happiness of heaven itself; *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* Ps. lxxiii. 25. If you have the presence of God with you on earth, though it be not in so immediate a manner, and in so high a degree, yet it ought to be greatly valued by you, and should not only keep you quiet, but cause you to rejoice: you cannot have the presence of deceased friends any longer with you, and that makes you weary of the world, but you may have the presence of God even here, and is not that infinitely more? Good old Jacob left this with his children as a sufficient support to them, *Behold I die, but God shall be with you*, Gen. xlviii. 21. Is the gracious presence of God nothing to you? Is it not a great thing that the tabernacle of the Lord should be with men, and that he should dwell with you here on earth?

You say this is something, but it is not heaven: it is true, but it is the next door to heaven. Wherever we meet with God, we may say of that place, *This is no other than the house of God and the gate of heaven*, Gen. xxviii. 17. Have you communion with God in secret and solemn acts of worship? Why then you are got within the borders, and even in the suburbs, of heaven. You are in the very gates of the

city; and their God is preparing your souls, and making them ready for his more immediate glorious presence. Here is no room for discontent, but abundant cause for holy love and thankfulness.

6. You lament it that you are not yet in heaven; but know this for your comfort, that if you be in Christ Jesus, you shall as sure be there in a little time as if you were there already. I speak here of the objective certainty, the certainty of the event; not of the subjective certainty, the assured persuasion of your souls concerning it. In this respect, you may be in doubt, and apprehensive of the danger of missing your way, and being lost for ever, as I have already observed; but if you be in Christ, there is no condemnation to you, Rom. viii. 1. Your state is safe, and your end shall be peace. You are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation. Your spiritual life is hid with Christ in God; it shall not be lost. Your salvation is nearer than when you first believed, Rom. xiii. 11. It will not be long but you will overtake your friends who are gone before; you will come up to them at your Father's house; though death has separated you for a while, yet that same death shall bring you together again; when they died, then you parted for a while, and when you die you shall meet them again. The great boat that carried them over Jordan, to the land of promise, will, in a little time, come back again and fetch you, and bring you together. This Christ assured Peter of, *Thou shalt follow me afterwards.*

The same grace that has brought them to glory is ready for you, and sufficient for you. If your hearts be right with God, you and they are built on the same foundation; you have embarked in the same vessel; you have the same skilful pilot to steer you; and after you have been tossed to and fro on a tempestuous world a while longer, you also shall come safe to the desired haven. They once had their fears, as you now have; *but the foundation of the Lord stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knows who are his,* 2 Tim. ii. 19. The same evidence you have of the sincerity of your faith and holiness, the same you have of your eternal happiness; for it is unalterably settled between the Father and the Son, that of all that are given to Christ, none should be lost, but all forthcoming at the last day; that every one that believeth in Christ should have everlasting life, John vi. 39, 40. You are in the hands of Christ; all his saints are in his hand; and none shall be able to pluck you out of that safe and powerful hand.

7. And lastly, When you are once got safe to heaven, you will have as long a term in your happiness as those who are gone thither before you. Yours is everlasting, and theirs can be no longer. If the blessedness of the saints in heaven were only for a limited season, though ever so long, you would have some excuse for envying those who are gone before; for they would enjoy more of heaven than you; their lease would be longer than yours, because it commenced before yours. But in eternity there is not properly a longer or shorter term; *one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* When you have been a thousand years in heaven, your happiness is as much beginning, and as far from ending, as it was at the first moment of your entrance there.

The apostle observes, (1 Thess. iv. 17.) that the different circumstances of dying before Christ's second coming, or remaining alive at that day, would make no material difference in their happiness, because they *shall all be for ever with the Lord.* This being for ever with the Lord makes up all; it swallows up all lesser distinctions of the time and manner of going to heaven: this will effectually silence all emulous complaints, and perfectly unite the sons of God in holy love and joy; *they shall all be for ever with the Lord.*

I have now considered both what it is that prompts us to wish we had died with our holy acquaintance who are gone before us; and what reason we have patiently to wait here, till our great Lord shall give us a kind dismission.

It remains that we should bring these things home to ourselves by a close and serious application. I can but give you a few hints, and must leave you to enlarge upon them yourselves, depending upon the help of God's Holy Spirit to make all effectual.

1. Instead of repining that our best and most beloved friends are gone before us, let us set ourselves to improve their life and death for the establishment of our souls in the belief of an unseen eternal world, and of the blessedness of the saints in that world. If you say, Who does not believe this? I am sure I may say, Who is there that does not need to pray, *Lord, help my unbelief?* We are dull of understanding, and slow to believe the invisible realities of the other world. A strict observation of wise and good men is a great establishment to our faith. Let us remember their holy conversation, their zeal, their diligence, their self-denial, their fervent desires after God and Christ, and the delightful hopes they had of the glory to be revealed; how they fetched their comforts from heaven by faith and hope, when this world frowned most upon them. What shall we think? Were they deceived? Is all this come to nothing? Was their faith a mere fancy, and their lively hope only a pleasant dream? It can never be: there is a life beyond this; they knew it to be so; they had tasted of the powers of the world to come, not in a superficial manner, but by deep and satisfying experience; they had heavenly affections, excellent designs, and delightful expectations, all which centred in a world of everlasting rest with God. Are all these perished with

their dead bodies? No, surely: who that believes a God, can think he would suffer the wisest, the most holy, and every way the best men in the world, thus to flatter themselves; and that only the foolish, vicious, unthinking part of mankind should happen to be in the right? It can never be. Verily, there is a reward for the righteous, and his expectation shall not be cut off.

2. Let the death of our godly friends teach us to think of heaven more frequently, and with greater affection and delight. Indeed, when we consider heaven as the glorious throne of God, and the seat of the blessed angels, we should for that reason raise our thoughts and our hearts thither; but no man hath seen God at any time; we have little acquaintance with the holy angels; but we have seen and known many of the blessed saints who are now in heaven; we had familiar acquaintance with some of them, our souls were knit to them. Now though we should chiefly value heaven for the sake of the Divine Presence that shines most gloriously there, yet we may ascend in our thoughts to God by the scale of the creatures; and what we saw in good men of God, of Christ, and heaven, while they lived with us here, should make us to love God, and Christ, and heaven more, and meditate more upon them, since so many who bore the image of the heavenly are now gone thither.

It has been often observed, that when Esther was taken into the court of Ahasuerus, *Mordecai took a walk every day before that gate*, *ch.* ii. 11. We should follow our friends in our thoughts and desires, to that blessed state into which they are entered.

Nature teaches us to love the place of our fathers' sepulchres; we look with affection upon the very graves of our friends, and take pleasure even in their dust. Should we not then much more frequently and affectionately meditate upon the glorious world to which their precious souls are gone? By this means, we not only show our affection to them, but we maintain some kind of communion still with them.

3. Instead of passionately wishing that we had died with our friends who are gone to heaven, let us be followers of them, as they were of Christ: if we ever expect to come to them in heaven, we must be such as they were upon earth. Natural conscience and natural affection may put us upon wishing we had gone with our pious acquaintance into the other world, because we believe they are happy. This amounts to no more than Balaam's wish; but we must be found walking in the path of the just, if ever we arrive at their happiness; and whenever we think of them with affections of love and sorrow, we should presently charge ourselves not to be slothful, but followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises, Heb. vi. 12.

Let us consider with ourselves, we have heartily wished that we had died with those excellent ones; but if God had taken us at our word, and death had found us out of Christ, out of the covenant, out of the way of good men, it would have separated us from them; though we had died with them, our souls and theirs would have taken a quite contrary way; we should have lost their company not only in dying, but after death, and never have met them again, till we had met at the judgment seat of Christ, they on the right hand, and we on the left; and if indeed we loved them so well, let us think with ourselves what a woful meeting that would be to us! The very sight of them would add to our confusion and misery.

4. Since we must not yet enjoy their company in heaven, let us converse more with their surviving labours here on earth: these are like the mantle that Elijah dropt when he left this world, and Elisha so carefully preserved and used. Some of the servants of Christ who are gone, live still in their excellent works; and by these, being dead, they continue to speak to us. This is the case now before us: your laborious, faithful pastor has left behind him most excellent remains, such as shall never die. I am persuaded, as long as the Bible continues in England, those admirable expositions of his upon it will be prized by all serious Christians. In them you have his clear head, his warm heart; his life, his soul appears to be in them: prize them more, read them more than ever you have done; and while you are seriously perusing those excellent books, besides many others published by him, you will seem to yourselves to have Mr. Henry still with you. It is in vain for us to pretend that we had a great value for the lives of such as he, if we neglect their labours, in which so much of their life was spent.

5. Since it is the will of God that we should be still alive when our best friends are gone, let us endeavour to fill up their places as well as we can here on earth. Their death is a public loss, and leaves a wide breach in our fence: let us all, according to the duty of our several places, stand in the gap, and endeavour to turn away the anger of God from the land. Are so many of our humble, praying, wrestling Israels gone? Let those who remain pray more, and pray better. Are so many diligent ministers gone? Let those who remain be more than ever *instant in season, out of season*, and look up to him who has the residue of the Spirit, to pour it forth afresh, that the church and nation may be as little losers as possible. If we do not so, the churches of Christ will have *sorrow upon sorrow*; sorrow for the loss of those who are gone, and sorrow for the sloth of those who are left behind.

6. And lastly, Let us live in the well-grounded hope of following our godly friends to heaven, and meeting them there, and being together for ever

with the Lord; lay the ground-work of such hope sure and strong, for the superstructure is to reach as high as heaven; and when you have done this, then rejoice in hope. I know nothing that can better support your spirits under the loss of such excellent ones, than a lively hope of a speedy meeting again in a better world; the time of separation is but short, yet a little while and you shall see them again; you parted in sorrow, you shall meet in joy. Perhaps you had not the opportunity of seeing some of them die, of closing their eyes, and bidding them farewell: but that shall not hinder your joyful meeting; and how will you then welcome each other into a world of bliss, and wonder to see how much you are all changed for the better, since your last parting! How will you congratulate each other in the favour of your blessed Lord, who has washed your souls so clean, and made them so glad! But I must stop my thoughts here, that are ready to run out beyond bounds. Comfort yourselves and one another with these things.

I know I speak to many this day who need such comforts. Here is a great congregation, bereaved of a most faithful, wise, laborious minister; here is a disconsolate family, bereaved of one of the most exemplary and useful relations that I ever knew any family blessed with. How is a great blow given to us all! The death of Mr. Henry is an universal loss! It is and will be universally lamented.

Expect not, sirs, that I should enter upon the particulars of his excellent character; very much has been said of him already in a little compass, by that worthy aged minister who first preached to you on this mournful occasion.

I hope this will be more fully done in an account of his exemplary life: that constant diary he kept, will furnish out proper and excellent materials, besides what may be added from the observation of others.

But that which chiefly restrains me now is, that it is needless to do it in this place; for though you have not enjoyed him much above two years, yet in that time you *have known his doctrine, his manner of life, his purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, and patience*, 2 Tim. iii. 10.

And who has not known him? His works praise him in the gates, and will do so; his great and good works from the pulpit, from the press, his immense labours, his incredible diligence in preaching, in expounding, in writing, his care of all the churches: he, like *Demetrius, had a good report of all men, and of the truth itself; and we also bear witness, and ye know that our witness is true*, 3 John 12.

He had in him that happy mixture of excellent gifts and graces that seldom meet in the same person, and they made him very amiable to all who knew him.

In him you had the happy mixture of great strength of judgment and fervour of spirit. Some are very zealous, but not so judicious; others judicious but not so zealous: he was both a burning and a shining light.

In him you had a true greatness of soul, mixed with exemplary modesty and humility; nothing in him appeared sordid and abject, nothing vain and supercilious.

In him you had a most agreeable cheerfulness, with a due temperament of solidity and seriousness.

In him you might observe a strict regard to the dictates of his own conscience, joined with a most candid tenderness to those who differed from him.

In his preaching you had a very just and close way of thinking, with the most plain, proper, natural, and easy expression, and a great regard to the honour of Christ and free grace, joined with a constant endeavour to beat down sin, and revive the power and practice of godliness.

It was this happy conjunction of excellent gifts and graces, that made him live so much desired, and die so much lamented.

I am a witness of that tender and conscientious concern with which he left his old and dear friends at Chester, and of that comfort and satisfaction he had in his acceptance and usefulness in this part of the vineyard. I am persuaded, these last two years of his life and labours have been a great blessing to many souls in and about the city of London.

My own interest in his acquaintance and friendship for the space of above twenty-eight years, is a thing of too private a nature to mention upon so solemn an occasion; but it must never be forgotten by me. I own it as a precious talent put into my hand, and to be accounted for. He was a most cordial, prudent, faithful, unalterable friend: and if a passionate affection does not deceive me, I think verily I shall less value this life and world, since he is gone from it.

The death of this faithful servant of Christ at this time is a very dark and threatening providence: God calls us to more than common sorrow by it; he expects we should lay it to heart; and, all the circumstances of it considered, both those of a private and public nature, we should lay it nearer to our hearts than ordinary. We should not suffer it to pass over us lightly; we should feel our loss, and fear the displeasure of our God, and tremble because of the ark of God.

But yet we must not abandon ourselves to inconsolable grief, nor quarrel with God, nor despair of his mercy to us.

As for the broken family, I am persuaded there are great mercies in store for them: the fatherless children are left with God, and he will keep them alive; and let the widow trust in him. Though God in this sad providence seems to have spoken against them, I believe he will earnestly and affectionately remember them still.

I know no family in which the entail of the covenant from one generation to another has more evidently appeared. I know no family more enriched with a large stock of treasure of prayers by religious predecessors on both sides. And a family that is thus rich in prayer, is rich in the promises too, while the present branches of it adhere to the covenant, and live up to their education; and we rejoice to see that it is thus with them, and daily pray for their growth and establishment in wisdom and grace.

And for this afflicted broken congregation, though they ought to be sensible what they have lost, a skilful guide, and a faithful helper of their souls; one who, they hoped, would have been the happy instrument of great good, not only to themselves, but to their families; one that was wonderfully fitted to feed the lambs of the flock, and took great delight in that part of his work.

Yet let them not distrust the care of the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. This place and people have been signally owned and favoured of God, from one time to another. In the mount it has been seen that God has provided; and we hope he will have the same care and concern for you still. And the great respect you always had for your faithful ministers while they were with you, and the true Christian generosity with which you have treated their families when they have been gone, gives us good encouragement that the presence of God shall be the glory in the midst of you; and that you shall yet have a pastor according to his own heart, who shall carry on the same work, feed you with the same sincere milk of the word, and be a great blessing to you, and the rising generation among you.

And though the church of God in general feels this loss, and laments it greatly, that this your minister was taken away before he had finished the great undertaking, his noble, delightful task, the Exposition of the Bible; yet we have all cause to bless God, who spared him so long, and helped him to carry it on so far.

It is the observation of a worthy minister, on the death of a person of great note in all the churches, who had a heart enlarged for God, and bent upon doing more eminent service, that "no one ever finished all the great designs he had for the glory of God in this world, excepting the Lord Jesus Christ. He indeed could say, *It is finished.*" As for others, their good desires and purposes go beyond the limits of their time and life; but they have finished all that God designed to do by them: and he is able to carry on his own work by other hands, and thereby to make it evident that he is to his people *all in all.*

And I hope those who have attended long upon the ministry of good Mr. Henry, and taken down his expositions upon that part of the Bible that yet remains, whether in the public assembly or in his family, will carefully gather up those precious fragments, that none may be lost; and will communicate them to the world in the best way they can, that this great work may be finished, and be as much as possible his own performance.

To conclude: We must flee to this as our last resort; though ministers, the best of ministers, die, the gospel does not die with them. 1 Pet. i. 24, 25. *All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

A FUNERAL SERMON

PREACHED AT NANTWICH, JUNE 25TH, 1714,

ON OCCASION OF THE

DEATH OF THE REVEREND MATTHEW HENRY,

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

BY JOHN REYNOLDS.

TO HIS TRULY HONOURED FRIEND

MRS. MARY HENRY,

LATE PIOUS RELICT OF THE DECEASED.

MADAM,

Little could I suspect that the report of such a discourse (meditated in such haste, and amidst such tumultuary thought and passion) would so soon have reached London; and be, from thence, so solicitously desired to the press; and that, as a piece of further respect to the worthy memory that occasioned it. While that is pleaded, I must resign it, that it may sensibly appear (to those that will not otherwise be persuaded) how incompetent it is to serve so great a name and memory. And while I resign it, I must present it unto you, that I may take occasion thereby to beg of you, Madam, to dry up the falling tears, and put on, now, a sympathizing spirit: *Rejoice with him that rejoiceth:* the heavenly mind is got within the heavens; far beyond mortality and the mournful contingencies of it. Since the divine Good-will ordered your so long converse together in pious, pleasant harmony, let not the disposal of the same will occasion present discord. Rejoice that he has been (by grace) so good, so faithful unto death, and that he is now added to the triumphant communion. As you bless that God that gave him to you, bless him also that he lent him to you so long; and by him gave you so much cheerful assistance and encouragement in the way to heaven. Good Madam, do all you can to refuse the importunity of debilitating grief. Regard your health, even for the sake of those dear, living remains, that are now laid upon your care. You know time is short. Rejoice in hope of that glory to which he is gone, and where you will find him more loving, more amiable, and more happy than ever; and where (though the society of perfected saints will be an inconceivable felicity, yet) the blessed God and the Redeemer will be the supreme portion and delight. That the God of all grace would please to enlarge your patience to your trial, and sanctify the important affliction to you, and the young bereaved mourners with you, and proportion his strong consolations thereto, and be, jointly, your everlasting inheritance, is the sincere prayer of,

Madam,
Your truly sympathizing friend,
And real servant in sacred offices,

JOHN REYNOLDS.

DID our reverend, honoured, faithful brother (now withdrawn) act by prophetical instillation, when, at the obsequies of the late pious minister of this place, he chose to treat upon that passage,* Sorrow upon sorrow? *This day are these words fulfilled in your ears, before your eyes. He himself is now become the occasion of our successive sorrow; of multiplied, aggravated sorrow; sorrow to city and country; sorrow to the church of God. But I would call to your meditation, upon this sorrowful day, a few character-*

* See his sermon at Mr. Lawrence's funeral.

istic words, which, I am apt to think, would occur almost to every mind, upon the hearing the sad, surprising news of this decease.

MATTHEW XXV. 21.

Well done, thou good and faithful servant, &c.

How can we choose but suppose, that, on last Tuesday morning, this sentence was sensibly pronounced? *Virtually*, by the God of heaven, while he remanded this servant of his from the pulpit; gave him his *quietus* here, and ordered his entrance into heavenly rest and joy: *actually*, by the good angels of heaven, while they met him on the other side the river of mortal life; received him with a *Well done, good and faithful fellow-servant!* You have, in your world, diligently served your Lord and ours. We are now ready, at his command, to conduct and introduce you into his presence and glory.

Well done, good and faithful servant! Can such a character fall from such lips? such an encomium be assigned by the Son of God, the impartial Judge of the world, to any of the fallen, apostatized race of mankind? It must argue, that reconciling designs have been a-foot; that recovering grace has been at work; that in and with some, it has prevailed; that, of accursed enemies and malignants, it has raised them to the honour and office of good and faithful servants.

Time allows not to look into the contents of this awful chapter; or into the peculiar paragraph to which these words belong. Supposing, therefore, that it is, in some competent measure, remembered, whose these words are here represented to be, to whom spoken, and when; we take these observable truths in our process, as supposed, intimated, or included therein.

1. The Lord Jesus designs to come again. For, he must take cognizance of all human affairs. His servants shall be considered and regarded. He has great work to do, that requires his own hand and presence. He will put an end to this world, and all the transactions of it; will wind up the work of redemption, gather his servants together, and pass an universal judgment. O the unconceivable day of his return! How little do the world think of it! How honoured and joyful will his servants be! How desperate and confounded, the opposers of his gospel and kingdom!

2. The illuminated part of the world is a stage, where persons are called to be servants, and service is to be done for the Redeemer. We cannot but say, that all the inhabitants of the earth are under obligations to the blessed God, to love him and be devoted to him; yea, so far as any of their indulgence and benefits depend upon and flow from the Redeemer's mediation, they are obliged to him for them. But they cannot expressly believe on him, or cleave to him, as long as they have not the means of being acquainted with him, with his mediation and grace. But in the enlightened lands, persons are *called to be saints*; called to be expressly devoted to God in Christ, and to act and walk according to such devotion. They are the people called here to an account; concerning whom the ultimate judgment proceeds, and among whom the Lord Christ expects to find his servants. There he has left work to be done. There he gives light and time for the doing of it; gives advantages and opportunities for the doing of it well; sends motives, alarums, and counsels, for making haste in doing of it. The church of Christ should be a busy place. All hands and hearts at work there. The service is important and sweet. Time hastens to its end. The negligent and loiterers will find themselves in a doleful condition at the Lord's return. It is an unanswerable question, *Why stand ye here, all the day, idle?* Here, in the Lord's vineyard, where is so much work to be done? where so many talents are continually distributed? where the Lord himself is so constant an inspector? and where idleness will be attended with so much absurdity and ingratitude? The enlightened world is a theatre for sacred service.

3. The Lord Christ hath his servants in this world of ours, and good and faithful ones too; though they are but few, indeed, now; and one the fewer by Tuesday's blow and breach. But as bad as the world is, there have been in it, there are and will be, those, that are intent upon the Redeemer's service. Where else will be the kindly issue and effect of his redemption? By the same right that he hath a seed, he must have servants; for his seed shall serve him, and shall reckon it their honour so to do. His spouse shall be his servant, and shall think her dignity consistent with her office, for *he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.* They that are good and faithful in this world, are peculiarly the servants of the Lord Christ. The Father's, that is, the Creator's, are fallen and lost. The grace, or the sanctity, given by the law of creation was soon forfeited and removed; the obligations that lay on man, on the account of original creation, were soon rejected and deserted. The exterminating curse of the law, and the devil, (by the temptation first, and the curse afterward,) soon prevails over the world. So, the Creator, as such, is like to have no servants here. It is a Redeemer must raise and regain them. The Lord Christ comes to purchase, hire, and persuade them. He comes to purchase them. To purchase them out of the hands of legal, vindictive justice; out of the various thraldom and captivity in which they lay. *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself* (and to his own service) *a peculiar people, zealous of good works*; to hire them for himself and his service. He is the householder, that went out early in the morning to hire

labourers into his vineyard. He hires them by proposing and promising to them an unconceivable recompence of reward. He sets before them a crown of righteousness, a crown of glory. He says to them all, *Be ye faithful to the death, and I will give you a crown of life.* And not only so, but he persuades into his service. Persuades not only by moral motives, and intellectual incentives, but by the power of his determining grace, sweetly concurring therewithal. He so persuades as to prevail with souls to be good and faithful unto him. And so, the good and pious are peculiarly the Lord Christ's servants. They are his, not only by this efficiency of his love and grace, but by the disposition and inclination of their minds. They are sensible of their numerous and vast obligations to him. *The love of Christ* (the contemplation of his love to us) *constrains us* to judge, that we must live to him. They are desirous, in and by all their services, to be more acquainted with him: *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.* They resign up themselves to his command and conduct, cleaving to him with purpose of heart. They love him with an incorruptible affection; love the service he requires, and particularly, what is suitable to redeemed ones. They are concerned for his interests on earth, desire the support and enlargement of his kingdom here, and breathe after his presence and glory. Well, therefore, may he take cognizance of them, as those that have been his own servants; faithful to himself.

4. Our Lord hath, among his servants, those that are eminently good and faithful. Such, that by way of discrimination, shall hear that applauding sentence, *Well done, good and faithful servants!* At least, some are faithful in the employment and improvement of more talents than others, having received more. Were we, indeed, to insist upon the accuracy and rigour of the parabolical account here, we might say, that all that are found faithful, are equally so. For he that well improves two talents, is as faithful as he that well improves five: the disparity lies not in the improvement, but in talents communicated and received. But, (not to intimate, that proportionably there may be a greater improvement of two talents by some than of five by others,) we may justly suppose, that it is not the design of our Lord's parabolical representation of things here, to signify that all his faithful servants are, with exact equality, so, in proportion to what they received; but only that, in general, of his servants (that are so by his trust, and their obligation) some are faithful, and some are not so. Of those that are faithful, some have received more than others, and have accordingly improved and gained more than others. As their stock hath been greater, so they have had their heads, and heart, and hands full of business, in order to manage and advance their stock. They have wrought hard; they have redeemed time; they have traded far; they have been concerned that their Lord should receive his own (as much as it was) with proportionable interest or usury. And so there is room and reason to give them, in the first place, the remunerant approbation, *Well done, good and faithful servants!* And surely experience will testify, that all that are sincerely faithful under equal talents, are not yet equally faithful. Nay, have not many of our Lord's servants, intrusted with few talents, been much more faithful than others, intrusted with more? May not this be spoken to our shame? How eminently faithful were they that lived in the dawning of the gospel and reformation among us! There are of those, to whom the Lord will in a distinguishing manner say, *Well done, good and faithful servants!*

5. Our goodness lies especially in faithfulness to the Lord Jesus. Then we are good, when we are faithful servants to him. The disciples have, otherwise, much sin. Should they be compared with the Father's, that is, the Creator's, law, they will be found miserably corrupt, defective, and guilty. Moral pollution runs through all their powers. Many a transgression they commit, and many an egregious defection they make from God, and their duty to him. His original law would condemn them all. But their faith in, their faithfulness to, the Redeemer, may be styled their evangelical goodness. They are good in his eye, while they heartily abide with him. As amidst the exercise of moral virtue, and observance of those laws that secure the peace and order of this world, something is still wanting, if there is not a sovereign respect to the Lord Christ, Mark x. 17. So, if that dwell in the heart, it is habitually and denominatively good, whatever corruptions and disorders may also dwell there. And believers are, at present, far enough from perfection. But this sovereign respect to the Lord Christ, dwells in all the sanctified. The *saints* are *faithful* brethren in *Christ*. This faithfulness, in mind and heart, continues with them, amidst their falls and failures. Though temptations, sometimes, make a prey of them; yet they would not, for all the world, renounce their Lord and Master. They are desirous to follow him still, though sometimes they are faint, weary, discouraged, or sometimes stumble in their way. They may fall out sometimes among themselves, (as Paul and Barnabas,) yet neither fall out with their Lord, nor with his service; but resolve to go on, and maintain their contract made to serve him. Should, in an hour of temptation, the proposal be made, as once it was, *Will ye also go away?* it would be refused with the same distaste, *Whither shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.* And while this disposition and choice abides, thy Lord will acknowledge thy goodness. Thou art good as long as thou art faithful to him.

6. The Lord Christ will call all his servants together, when he comes again. His faithful ones shall all be collected and united. He has something to say to them; something to do with them. Something to say to them, that will be to their utmost transport and joy. Something to do with them: to receive them to himself, and to conduct them to the felicity he has prepared for them, and promised to them. What a noble congregation will that be! The universal assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven! Oh holy, happy society! Holy, without blemish and mixture. Without blemish in their own persons. Incorporated spirits made perfect! made like to the angels of God! without mixture of any other persons among them. No goats then among the sheep, or tares among the wheat. Sinners shall not dare to stand in the congregation of the faithful. Happy society! Joyful in the love and smiles of their Lord, and in their love to each other! We know not how the transactions of that day will be so accurately managed as they are to be, without the knowledge of those we have known and conversed with before. We shall see those that we have offended, and that have offended us; those we have done good to, and those we have received good from. An account is to be given either with joy or with grief. *As ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.* Then shall these tears be wiped from your eyes. Ye shall see the faithful *Henry* again; see him rejoicing in and with all those, to whom his love and friendship, his ministrations and sacred services, have been savingly beneficial here.

7. When the Lord Christ comes, he will call his servants to an account; to an accurate, severe account: all his servants, good and bad, faithful and unfaithful. The words themselves, indeed, only bespeak an account of the good; but that account must suppose a discrimination of them from the bad; and the context extends the account further. The world is his; the church is his. The dwellers there are, by profession and obligation, his servants. The sacred advantages they enjoy, are talents committed to them by him. He sets them in a state of probation. He calls them to work, intrusts them with goods, and says, *Occupy till I come.* Negotiate, merchandize, trade and traffic, till I return. Intimating, that he will come to call to an account. And how strict is that account! He knows very well, to whom he has committed ten talents; to whom five; to whom one single one. O how little do we remember this account! how little do we study to give it up with joy!

8. When our Lord comes, his good servants shall appear in all their faithfulness before him. They shall come attended with all their faithful services to him. The servant here approved, shines in the improvement of his ten talents. The Lord takes notice of it all. Of their faithful offices it may be said, as well as of their persons, that none of them shall be lost; but the Lord will raise it up (to light and to remembrance) at the last day. He will have it so; for there was but little faithfully done for him in the world; and that, that was so, he will not forget. He has had but few real servants, though many pretenders to his house and family. It may be, few of the seeming great and pompous works of religion have been done seriously and sincerely for him. Many corrupt principles have founded monasteries, colleges, churches, hospitals and almshouses. A great many famous, splendid works will be lost at the fiery day. Many will appear such, as for which the authors have either already received their reward, or must expect no other, than the wages of sin. Nay, possibly, the good servants were not good in all their services, but must lose some at the day of fiery trial; as seems intimated in that of the apostle, 1 Cor. iii. 15. *If any man's works shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so, as by fire.* Since little has been well done, evangelically done for him, he designs that his faithful ones shall appear attended with all their faithful services. The *Gaiuses*, the *Henrys*, shall be illustrious in all that they have done faithfully, both to the brethren and to strangers. Also, wherein faithful service has been done, therein was dutiful, honourable regard paid to the Lord: it was done for his name's sake; out of love to him, and respect to his glory. And will he not consider what has been so done? Will not his love to himself and to his own name, engage him to remunerate such sacred regard to himself? Sure it will. *In that ye did it unto the least of these, ye did it unto me.* And *he is not unrighteous*, (or ungrateful,) *to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed to his name.* And then, he hath promised remuneration to each piece of faithful service. None of their labour to him and for him shall be in vain, or shall be thought to have been so, at the great day of account. Happy they, that come loaded with faithful services for the Redeemer! Happy (we must needs say) the three *Henrys* most nearly related, and last deceased! the present object and occasion of our grief, with both his parents. The *father* gave himself up to the active life, and was eminently skilful and faithful therein. The *mother* (as the son hath informed me) was as eminent in her place, as the father in his. The *son*, the present object and occasion of our grief, was (as is well known) *in labours more abundant.* Singular vessels of mercy here, of glory now, and especially at the great day of their joyful account!

9. The Lord Jesus means to commend his faithful servants at the day of his return: he will openly, solemnly commend them, at the day of their ac-

count. Angels, men, and devils shall be witnesses of the complacential suffrage and approbation that he will then give them. It shall appear how he loved them, how he was pleased in them and with them, when heaven and earth shall hear the loud, commendatory sentence, *Well done, good and faithful servants!*

We know not now the nature, the parts, the organs of a spiritual, glorified body; we know not what voice is among spirits, or how, without voice, they communicate their intentions and sentiments one to another. We know not how the spiritual body of the Redeemer, far transcendent to, and more glorious than, those of his saints, will differ from a spirit. We know not particularly, how his approbatory mind and good-will will be reported to them. It is sufficient to us, at present, that he will so represent to them his acceptance of them and their faithful services, as will amount to an abundant commendation, and to their abundant satisfaction, exultation, and joy. Our Lord, we may say, commends his servants now, in his intercession and advocacy for them; while he recommends them to his Father's favour, protection, and grace. This we may see in his last prayer for them, which seems to be the pattern and substance of his intercession above. Though in his converse with his disciples, he had had occasion enough to find fault with them, and to chide them for the dulness of their minds and earthiness of their apprehensions; for their unbelief and hardness of heart; the deficiencies of their love and courage, and readiness to forget his word and works; yet, when he is leaving the world, and willing to leave them, thereupon, to his Father's care, he has nothing but good to say of them; no mention of their faults; but—*They have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee;* and—*I have given them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them,* (though they had received them at a slow rate,) *and have known surely, that I came out from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me.* Endearing Lord! how good and kind is he, thus to make the best of his servants' case! And does he commend them now, and will he not do so when he comes again? That is the day of retaliation and reward! The day, in which he will be admired and glorified in his faithful ones. The day of account is the proper season for approbation; and that he will afford in and with an open commendation, *Well done, good and faithful servants!*

In the reason or reasonableness of this generous transaction of his, his public commendation of his faithful servants, we may satisfy ourselves by such considerations as these:

He will commend them, we may suppose,

1. For his Father's honour. From him they obtained mercy to be made and to be found faithful. His grace was displayed in leading them unto the Mediator, and confirming them in him: in leading them to him: *No man can come to me* (by reason of the predominant corruption of nature) *except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him.* As the Father sent him into the world, so, by potent persuasion, he draws disciples to him; and confirms them in him, and in a holy faithfulness to him. *Now, he who establishes us with you, in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.* He pours on them the same unction as on the Redeemer; and so implants and enlivens them in him unto all fruitfulness. Their faithfulness honours him as the prime root and cause of it; and not only as such, but as the final cause, and ultimate end, of it. The Redeemer's servants were the Father's also: they were restored and returned unto the eternal God. As none came to the Father, but by the Son; so none come to the Son, but they come to the Father also. We come to him as Mediator; and coming to him in that office and notion, we come on purpose to be directed, led, and united by him unto the blessed God. The true worshippers, and those that are represented, by the apostle, as the object of his intercession, are styled, *Those that come to God by him. At that day,* says he, viz. when the divine Spirit shall be plenteously poured out, *ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you,* John xiv. 20. Ye shall be certified then, that as I act by the concurrence of the great God with me, so I conduct you to him, and join you with him. The faithful servants of the Lord Jesus, are the faithful servants of the eternal God. *All mine are thine.* They that belong to me, and are devoted to my name, are devoted to thine also. And where else, truly, are the servants of the eternal God to be found, but among the disciples of Jesus? We may talk of natural religion, but where is it to be found in the life and practice, but within the church of Christ? We may talk of moral virtue, but what an empty shadow is it, if not founded on the love of God? And where is that to be found, but among the servants of Jesus? It is he that opens to them the nature and excellences of the eternal God, the counsel, law, and love of the eternal God. It is he that calls them unto the worship and obedience of the eternal God; that, by his heavenly revelations and Spirit, kindles in their hearts the love of the eternal God. His servants then are, and must be, the servants of the eternal God. In being faithful to him, they have been faithful to God. In their faithfulness, they glorified God; and demonstrated thereby their true discipleship to him. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.* Having by their faithfulness glorified the eternal God, according to the law of discipleship to him, he will be ready (almost to thank, but sure) to commend them, when he comes again. *Well done, good and faithful servants!*

2. For his own honour. His grace has been displayed in their faithfulness. Without him they could do nothing. He was the vine, from which their life, their fruitfulness, and faithfulness was derived. He is the second *Adam*; and he appears, in them, much more potent and successful than the first was. The first was, indeed, a living soul; but he secured neither himself, nor his posterity: he soon proved unfaithful, and entailed unfaithfulness upon his race. The second *Adam* is a quickening Spirit; not only continued faithful himself throughout the whole course of his obedience, but teaches and enables thousands to be faithful too; thousands of old *Adam's* apostate race. He transferred them to himself, ingrafted them into his vital body, shed fructifying virtue and Spirit upon them; in recounting the products of which, he may well, to his own praise, say to his faithful ones, *Well done, good and faithful servants!*

3. To manifest his approbation of their active, diligent holiness. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and hath promised to crown it at the last day. By the same rule, that sin is offensive to him, obedience must be acceptable and grateful. He rectified their nature, that it might be capable of, and intent upon, regular and sanctified operations. He purified his people, that they may be zealous of good works: and when they are so, they answer a great design of his redeeming, purifying grace. In their holy faithfulness, they act most suitably to the original law of creation and integrity. They most nobly employ the native powers bestowed upon them; they act most rationally, spontaneously, and agreeably to heaven-born spirits. Most *rationally*. Their pious faithfulness is dictated by the highest reason. They must needs serve him, that served them to the death, served their chief interests and eternal salvation. They see, that all other service, separate from his, is folly and madness. They see, that time is short, the world is vanity, and death approaching: that it is his service, faithfully performed, will give them peace and satisfaction then. Most *spontaneously*, as the scales are dropped from their eyes, the ill bias and load is removed from the heart and will. They run the way of their Lord's commandments with an enlarged heart; and are sorry that they can run no better, and do no more. They gladly design and meditate the ways wherein they may serve him. Most *agreeably* to heaven-born spirits. As those that, in their first formation, came from the Father of spirits; and as those that have been anew created by him. They now show that they are returned to God, to his law and love. They please him, and are aspiring towards the enjoyment of him. To this, the Mediator called them; and this must be delightful to him. If the steps of moral virtue, and observance of the secondary table of the law, be pleasing to him, (as in the young man, whom, upon the assertion of such virtuous observation from his youth, our Lord is said to love, Mark x. 21.) much more will the zealous exercise of his own sanctifying grace, in his faithful servants, be approved and commended by him. The exercise of their integrity and love, of their faith and faithfulness, will be found to their praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Therein they have endeavoured to conform themselves to their Lord himself.

4. To vindicate them from the vile aspersions cast upon them by a blind, malicious world. Holy faithfulness has seldom here appeared in its true light and colour. The servants of God, and of his Christ, have, in all ages, had their abuses, reproaches, and misrepresentations. Their innocence and integrity have been usually clouded and obscured. Thence, they have not been able to do the good they might and would, nor have been such an honour to their Lord and his cause as they should have been. They were not of the world, and so the world hated and reproached them. They were opposers of the devil's kingdom; and the devil hath found ways enough to vilify and blacken them, and make deluded miscreants believe, they were his complices and friends. Do any of them come in the severe, abstemious spirit of the reformer, John the Baptist; they are melancholy, or have a devil. Do they come in the familiar, sociable mind and conduct of the Redeemer himself; they are then friends of publicans and sinners. An irreligious world will not be pleased with any of their deportment and conversation, as long as they walk according to the great rules and end of divine religion. In modern times they are loaded with the scandalous names of *heretics* and *hypocrites*; of *schismatics*, *precisians*, and *fanatics*: and under such names they are sent to exiles and galleys, stakes and prisons. But he that knows their integrity, will bring forth their righteousness as the light; will vindicate his cause and them; will silence and confound all their impleaders, and particularly the great accuser of the brethren, by one public sentence of his, *Well done, good and faithful servants!*

5. They were his honour here. That little honour that he had in and from this world of ours. As they were called and culled out of the world to be a people to his name, so they lived to the honour of his name. They were witnesses for him, for his truth, and office, and glory, in the several generations in which their lot was cast. On this account he recommends them to his Father's tuition, when he was leaving the world: *Thine are mine, and I am glorified in them*, John xvii. 10. They speak him, preach him, exemplify and commend him to an ignorant, unbelieving world, and in kind

retaliation, he will commend them at his return. *I say unto ye*, (and ye may depend upon my word for it,) that *whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man confess before the angels of God*, Luke xii. 8. Since, then, the name of the Lord Jesus was here glorified in them, they shall be glorified by him, and particularly receive the glory of a solemn acknowledgment and commendation from him, at the day of their account, and appearance before him.

6. To set them on admiring at his surprising condescension and love. Unutterable grace is to be poured out at that day. The Redeemer resolves to do every thing, by which he may be admired and glorified in his saints, at that astonishing day. And this shall be a piece of the wonder of the day, that he will take notice, approving notice, of such servants and such services. Such servants, that were in themselves so sinful and defective! sinful in nature, to their own continual shame and grief! so dark and destitute of spiritual light! so impenitent and hard-hearted! so unbelieving, remiss, and cold in their love, and grateful resentments of his goodness! Alas! they knew not how to bear themselves and their own hearts, while they were here. They were their own continual disease and burthen. So defective in what they did, and in the omissions of what they should have done. Had they done all that was required, they were, at best, but unprofitable servants. And will the Lord of life so kindly regard such impertinent ones as they? He needed them not. And how much did they omit of their duty? *Lord, forgive my sins of omission!* said the pious, famous *Usher*, when he came to die. How oft did the laziness of the flesh, the temptations of the world, the discouragements of the times, divert them from plain and excellent services! And then, how defective in those they wrought! And will he respect and recount such services as theirs? proceeding from such imperfect principles, and so darkly levelled at his glory? O the unspeakable goodness, and favour! Will he approve what they had forgotten, or what they thought would never have been forgiven? Surprising grace! This must needs overwhelm them with wonder, and set them upon the reflection and inquiry, when ever such works were done by them: *Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or naked, or in prison, and did so minister unto thee?* But he knows the times when, the persons to whom, the cases in which, they ministered, in all their services, to him. They are recorded, and shall be recounted at that day, to their surprise, and unconceivable amazement at his grace and love. With what rapturous astonishment will the strange but charming accents strike their souls, when the blessed Judge shall say, *Well done, good and faithful servants!*

7. To shew to all, the reason of the difference he makes among the natives of this world at that day. Vast distinction he makes among them. Some he raises with such horrid, yet deathless bodies, as devils would have, were they to wear any. Them he sets at his left hand, frowns upon with utmost disdain and indignation, and then dooms to the region and flames designed and prepared for the implacable rebels against heaven, the devils themselves. Others he raises in honour, power, and glory; clothed with immortal bodies, glorious like his own. Them he sets at his right hand, the place of reputation and renown. Them he adjudges, not to the mansion of angels only, but to an endless blessedness with himself and his Father in their glory. In so doing, he acts not merely at a despotical, arbitrary rate; it is not the office of a judge to do so. For then he might as well confer this glory on the opposite black rank and company. But it is the function of a judge to do justice, to administer law, and put in execution the rules of government. However arbitrary our Lord may seem now in distributing his grace, to prepare persons for the honour of the day; *As he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy;* yet, then he appears as the righteous Judge. And as such, he must execute gospel sanction, and fulfil the threatenings and promises he himself hath made. He hath promised to his faithful ones the crown of life, and he will be sure to bestow it. Accordingly, he will find out all his faithful ones; will recount their faithful services; will let the world know, that though they have no merit, they have done the work he commanded and approves; they have cleaved unto him and his service, when others would not; they are the persons to whom his promises of life and glory appertain; to whom, as righteous Judge, he is obliged to give the crown of righteousness; whom therefore in open court, before men and angels, he must pronounce and commend as his good and faithful servants.

8. To cast (as we may well suppose) a tormenting reflection upon those refractory souls, that would not be faithful. They shall see what they have lost; what honour and approbation they have forfeited and fallen short of. O the dismal regret that will seize unfaithful souls at that day! They shall bethink themselves how they were invited and called unto like faithfulness. That the same crown of glory was proposed and promised unto them, as to others. The process of that day was opened to them; the honours of the faithful were set before them; the loss, the misery and shame, of unfaithful ones were sufficiently represented; but they would not believe, would not be faithful. They regarded not the honours that were to be adjourned till the last day. They loved the praise of men and approbation of the world. They would be of some noise

and figure here, whatever became of eternal glory. And now they are debarred the Judge's commendation. Horror and confusion must seize them, while they are separated from the good and faithful company, and excluded their applauses and joys. O what unspeakable honour and dignity have they lost, and what eternal, blessed consequences thereupon!

9. To reflect a tacit honour upon faithful angels. Consequentially, to approve and commend them also. They will stand by; and their faithfulness cannot but redound to their honour, in the day when faithfulness is publicly commended. We know not that those unblemished spirits will be brought into judgment at that day. *Know ye not, that we shall judge angels?* is usually and plausibly restrained to those that are confined in chains of darkness. Though it may, perhaps, be thought, that there may be reason for a solemn judgment in reference to the one, as well as the other. Have the evil angels, since their fall, been continually opposing the Redeemer and his kingdom; the pious ones have, on the contrary, ever since their conservation, been diligently serving the Redeemer and his kingdom. Have the evil ones been the tempters and opposers of the saints, and so capable of being judged and condemned by them; the pious ones have been also their friends and ministers, and so as capable of being approved, thanked, and commended by them. But let us not be wise above what is written. Will the Mediator commend his faithful mortals? those that were so imperfectly and defectively faithful? What respect must he have for his perfectly faithful servants! They that always rejoiced in his commands, and never failed in the complete execution of them. While the saints of earth are commended, the commendation must ascend, and affect the saints of heaven; their consciences, in the mean time, will applaud them; and they rest assured of the Judge's good-will towards, and approbation of, them also. Saints on earth were faithful in few things. Their time was short. The saints of heaven (the natives there) were faithful in many things; faithful in the great *crisis*, when thousands of their brethren fell; faithful, each of them, through all ages of the world; faithful in all things. Commendation is much more due to them.

10. To cast shame and torture (as we may well suppose) on those angelical spirits, that refused to be faithful. Angelical spirits we may call them for distinction sake; though in refusing to be faithful, they refused to be angels; i. e. messengers and ministers to the heirs of God in the world. They soon renounced their allegiance, and faithfulness to their God and Creator. Yea, and some think to their Redeemer too; i. e. to the Son of God considered in the capacity of the Redeemer of this world. For it is apprehended by some divines, that the primitive sin of the angels lay here; it was discovered to them, that this world of ours would revolt and fall from God; that the blessed Son of God would put on human nature and accomplish our redemption; that this Redeemer (thus humanized, or incarnate) should be made head of men and angels; that by his redemption he should advance a great body of mankind to their seats, or seats superior to their own; that now, some of the angelical tribe acquiesced in this discovery of the divine counsel, comported with it, and secured their station and the divine favour; that others, in their pride disliked the method of the divine purpose, stomached the superior advancement of the human nature in the person of the Mediator, and so, were thrown down from their illustrious habitations. But however plausible this sentiment may, at first, appear, yet, upon maturer thoughts, it will appear attended with irrational or unsupportable consequence. For should it be revealed to the angels, in the state of their integrity, that this world would apostatize, it must be revealed also by whose means and seduction we should be induced so to apostatize; viz. by the seduction of angels antecedently apostatized. At least, the revelation of the Redeemer must represent to them out of whose hands we must be redeemed; viz. out of the hands of fallen angels; the seed of the woman must be supposed to bruise the serpent's head, and destroy the power and works of the devil. And should it be known to the angels, before they sinned, that they should sin, and be thrown down to horrid darkness, be trampled upon by the Redeemer, and tortured for ever, what a blast must that be to their happiness, what a beginning of despair, and desperate occasion of their sin and ruin! But in what instance and particular soever their sin was exerted, sinned, we know, they have, and fallen from their integrity and faithfulness. Faithful they would not be to their God, to the law of their creation and of the happy region where they dwelt. What sharp regret and envy will torment them, to see fallen mortals (such that were fallen by their instigation and inducement) raised to a noble degree of faithfulness to their Lord! to hear them commended by the Lord of life and death, from a resolved faithfulness to him in the midst of a perfidious world! yea, to hear them commended for their faithfulness in opposition to them and all their wiles and storms! These revolted spirits were here grieved and vexed, that any of our race were recovered out of their hands; were reconciled to heaven; and walked faithfully with their great reconciler. They did all they could to reduce them from their stedfastness. They laid snares, employed stratagems, and raised storms of persecution against them.

The devil shall cast some of ye into prison, and ye shall have tribulation ten days. But be thou faithful unto death. They would neither be faithful themselves, nor let others be so. And it may justly be determined that the faithful ones, that thus stood it out to the last against them, shall be solemnly commended in their hearing, for striking utmost shame and confusion into them. They see, with horror and despair, the glories they have lost. They see sinning mortals (such that were once so) raised to their happy seats. They see them received with joy, approved and applauded by the Judge; while themselves are hurled down to endless shame and contempt. O the direful lashes of their own conscience! O the reproach and disdain cast upon them by the great God, by the flaming Judge, by the faithful angels, and faithful saints! Away with such proud, rebellious, cursed miscreants, into the lake of inextinguishable fire!

Thus we see there may be reason enough, why the Lord Christ will publicly commend his faithful servants, when he comes again.

May this now prepare us for some application of this affecting truth. O that it may strongly affect our hearts! And may the application be taken in such inferences as these:

1. We see what a good Master the Son of God is. What condescension is here, not to admit only, or barely accept, but to commend such servants, such service! He knows very well what they are; he sees through their hearts; and sees all the corruption and corrupt principles there. And so, discerns well enough, how impure they are, and how imperfect their services; and might justly disdain them all. He is holy and jealous; his eyes are as a flame of fire. And the more holy and jealous he is, the more naturally and justly might he slight and abhor such servants. But here is an instance of gospel indulgence. He commends those whom he might condemn. Here is something more than mere pardoning grace. He does not only pass by their faults and follies, does not only forgive the iniquity of their holy things, but commends the work, applauds the service. Who dare say that he is an austere person, or a sour master? Can any one be more candid and generous? He knows the weakness, the failures, the defects of all the service offered him. He knows how indebted his servants are to him and to his grace; that without him they can do nothing, and yet he is resolved to commend them in the day of their account. O how happily deceived and disappointed will many of them be! They were continually poring on their sins, and thought that such as they should never be accepted. They were continually meditating the imperfection of their grace and holy principles, (if they could suppose they had any,) and could not believe that such blind, lame, cold services, could be pardoned, much less approved by their Judge. But be of good cheer, ye faithful ones! Your Judge is far better than you; and better than you can imagine. He remembers the work that you have forgot. Wherein or whereon ye are ready (and have reason in some respects) to say, or write, Ill done, he will say, Well done! What you have given up for lost, he has laid up for your joy. How will you be transported, when you shall hear him say of such as you, *Well done, good and faithful servants!* Admire his noble candour and generosity! ye are thus glorified in him and by him, according to the *grace* of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The Lord Jesus will himself be faithful. He commends his servants for being so. And will he be defective in that, that he reckons, and declares before the world, to be their commendation? No, he cannot; so far as that can belong to him. And faithfulness does. He is the *faithful and true Witness.* Depend then upon his word and covenant. Rest assured of the infallible accomplishment of all his promises. Intrust him with your souls, your bodies, and all the affairs of your salvation. *Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it;* will do all that he hath called you to expect at his hands.

3. May it not seem strange, that he does not take more care to vindicate his servants here; to wipe off the reproaches and opprobrious reflections cast upon them? It would tend to his honour, as well as theirs. How is his glory eclipsed, while his servants lie under such clouds here! We are reckoned *as the off-scouring of all things,* (as the filth of the world,) says one of the most faithful of them. Will he commend them at last, and not commend now? or suffer them to lie under all manner of shame and ignominy? Let us take it as a piece of his mysterious providence.

4. See what honour awaits the Redeemer's servants at the day of his return. None of the applauses of the world may be set in the balance with his commendation. Not all the trophies, triumphal arches, or ensigns of honour, on the globe, can give the fame, that attends the breath of his approving lips. He can soon make your name ring through the heavens, assumed and shouted by angels there. Let his holy servants be content with their obscurity at present; content with the scandalous names and imputations now falsely affixed upon them. They are not fit for great honour and applause now. They know not how to bear it. When they are fit to bear it, they shall have it. When they are purged from all their pride and vanity; from all their self-conceit and self-assuming apprehensions, they shall have it in abundance. The King of saints will bring forth their names to open light, and fix it in the heavens. The Lamb that was slain, will make it appear, that their names were wrote in his adamantine book, before the foundation of the world. The prince of the kings of the

earth, the Judge of quick and dead, will bring forth all their exploits in religion, all their achievements for his cause, and in his service; will publish them before heaven and earth; will give the performers of them an *encomium* beseeming angels; and so, consecrate their name and memorial to eternity.

5. Is it not strange, that he will carry his servants to all this honour through all the obscurity of the grave? Will he commend them at last, but slay them now? Will he applaud them, when he comes again, but now lay their honour in the dust? What strange transaction is here? Must now the head and heart, that so faithfully served him, be lodged where they can praise him no more? Must the lips and tongue, that were so much our dear brother's glory, and with which he so faithfully glorified his Lord, be laid aside to crumble into dust? What sovereign determination is here? How easily could his pleased Lord despatch for him (as for *Elijah*) an angelical chariot to fetch him home, as a presage of future applause! If the minister and ministration of and under the law were so glorious, should not the minister and ministration of the gospel be much more so? But we see that heavenly treasure is committed to earthen vessels; that the vessels must be broken, in order to be re-framed, and fitted for glory. We see, that mysterious counsel governs the world.

6. Where is the belief of this great report? a report, that should vividly strike the power of our souls? Where is the faith, that is due thereto? Will the Redeemer commend his servants, at the end of the day, at the end of the world; what work would this believed make upon our minds! What a turn would it give to our souls, and all their faculties! It would awaken the drowsy and lethargic; rouse the negligent and remiss; warm the frozen and benumbed; resolve the slow deliberator; invigorate and inspirit the fearful and discouraged; confirm and cherish the faithful servant; and instil new life and strength to all. Is so grand encouragement set before us? the Lord pardon and cure our unbelief!

7. Will our Lord commend his faithful servants, and will he take it ill, if we do so too? Nay, does he not expect we should? Must we esteem them highly in our own minds, and may we not tell our estimation to others? Sure we may. And that for the same reason for which he commends them, and for which he would have so much of the lives and acts of his faithful ones recorded in his own book, the New Testament; the honour of his own name and grace in them. They therefore have done good service, that have portrayed the holy lives and transactions of his zealous servants, and transmitted them to posterity. The lights of the world should be set up to be seen. The epistles of Christ should be read of all men. But who shall speak the excellences, the faithfulness of that servant, whose departure occasions this day's sorrow and solemnity? It is a subject quite too big for me. I cannot satisfy myself (much less you, who knew him longer, and knew him more) in any representation I can make of his natural endowments, acquired ornaments, or sacred dispositions and virtues. I must leave it to some one better instructed, (and more akin to himself,) to tell you the largeness of his mind, and of his heart. To tell you the strange readiness and fertility of his invention on any subject, to which he, at any time, applied his thought; the faithfulness of his memory amidst various studies and perusals; the solidity of his judgment both in secular and divine affairs. To tell you the various parts of learning into which he travelled, particularly languages and law. To tell you the sweetness of his disposition, in modesty and meekness, affability, candour, and love; and to tell you how all these were sanctified and consecrated by divine grace. Faith and love, you might see, instigated to such unwearied labours. You knew something of his eminent piety and devotedness unto God. His life was like a continued scene of actual devotion; continually employed (besides the necessary repasts and converses of life) in prayer, exposition of Scripture, singing of psalms, instructing of catechumens, preaching the words of life, or meditating something for the service of his Lord and the benefit of souls, to be communicated from the pulpit or the press. And all this was done with such spontaneity and cheerfulness, as if he would regularly prove the truth of the title of a discourse, (which he told some of us was in the press, and which, now, must be the last he will send thither,) the *Pleasure* or *Pleasantness of Religion*. The abundance of his public labours you pretty well know; instant in season, and out of season (if such work could be so). The excellency of the subjects he treated on; the sweetness and spirituality of his management of them; the seriousness and affection of his spirit in treating with you by them, you have often seen and experienced. His compassion and liberality to the poor and indigent: his extensive charity and love to all Christians, under their relation to their common Lord, and common character as saints: his sincere affection encouraging respect to his brethren in ministerial bonds, you cannot be altogether unacquainted with. His exemplary duty and faithfulness in his various relations, as son, (that was a crown to his parents,) husband, father, master, and pastor, (first at *Chester*, and afterward at *Hackney*,) may not now be insisted on. These many and more great things belonging to him, it is to be hoped, will, in due time, be reported to you. His singular acquaintance with holy writ, his dexterity in making it familiar and useful to meanest capacities, as well as to others, will, in his expositions, be published to the world, as

long as time shall last, or the *English* language live. Happy man, that was touched with lethargic symptom but one day, or part of a day, while it is the chronical disease of our lives! So ill could his zealous constitution comport with that drowsy disorder, that, next morning betimes, he withdrew from it, and retired into that lucid, perfect world, where alone uninterrupted, sacred activity and unweariness concur together. In one thing mercifully disappointed; whereas he expected to be ground to the dust by the *stone*, or dissolved by the *diabetes*; from the time of his last sermon (on the Monday here) he slumbered away without sickness or pain, (as he usually confessed, when asked how he did,) till the next morning, that he fell fast asleep in his blessed Master's arms. Happy servant, that had said and done so much in the proper season of life and health, that he had nothing to say or do, when he came to die, but silently retire to bed, and enter into his Master's joy! Yet, being dead, he loudly speaks. Speaks the monitory words he last insisted on at his beloved *Chester*, *Let us fear! Let us fear, lest a promise being left us* (or, lest the promise being left, or deserted by us) *of entering into rest, any of you should seem to come short of it!* Prophetical, sure, in the choice of the last words he was allowed to preach upon; the last opened to you in this place, in this pulpit; *Surely I have heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himself*; when, the next day, all the country was in tears, and true *Israelites* were bemoaning themselves for loss of him. O what a friend have we, has the church of God, yea, the whole world, lost! The *chariots* of *Israel!* the *horsemen* thereof! In him we have, particularly, lost the sixth volume of Expositions on Scripture; (unless any *apparatus* be found, that will assist some competent hand to send it forth;) a seventh volume, that was to be critical on difficult places of Scripture; and an eighth, that was to be a body of divinity, in sermons; besides what other he would have occasionally sent into the world: these I know he intended. O let us bemoan the sins that have forfeited this light, and procured this loss! But this loss to us is gain to him. To be with Christ above is far better, in respect to his own felicity, than to be serving him here below. With what joy must such a servant be received into the heavenly regions! What solace and delight must overflow his active soul at the great day of his joyful account, (joyful, as concerning himself, however it be concerning you,) when his great Master shall receive him with these loud accents, (containing a character above all that flesh can say,) *Well done, thou good and faithful servant!* And this I speak with the more confidence, (for I would dread being swayed by party prejudice, especially in matters of such moment,) as being persuaded that not you only, but all the pious of all persuasions, that had opportunity of being acquainted with him, with his spirit, life, and labours, unanimously concur in this sentiment, that this must be his entertainment by his Judge at the great day, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant!* And since there will be subordinate judges too, those that approve and applaud the determination of him that is supreme; we may well suppose, that *Chester*, *Cheshire*, *Lancashire*, *Shropshire*, *Hackney*, *London*, and other places, will bring in their verdict, and add their concurrent suffrage to the Judge's sentence, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant!* Yea, shall the *stone cry out of the wall*, and the *beam out of the timber answer it*, against the wicked and perfidious; and must we not say, that the walls of his own house, and particularly of his study therein, the pulpit, and the press, will all be ready to resound and echo to the Judge's applauding accents, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant!*

8. What a provocation and incentive, now, is here to holy faithfulness! Be faithful, brethren, to the Son of God! His commendation will be your sufficient reward. Are you ambitious? It is incident to polite, refined minds, so to be. Here is a mark for your highest ambition. Covet the approbation, the applause, of the great Judge of the world. One commending word from his lips, will secure your glory and renown for ever. One word of his will confound every accuser. Will cancel or prevent any condemnation from sin, or the world; from conscience or the devil. One such word of his will recommend you unto the most august, angelical spirits, and fix you in their favour and company for ever. Yea, it will recommend you to the eternal God, to his complacency and endless communion; you will, thereupon, be immediately presented before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. This sentence, *then* pronounced, will be sufficient retribution to our dear brother for all his work of faith and labour of love. It would now be epitaph for him, long and large enough, as good and as great as he was, supposing it spoken by those sovereign lips, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant!* Do not the accents charm your ears, and dissolve the heart, and instigate you to a holy, ambitious aspiration after them? Is the faithful servant thus commended? Have ye had such a wonderful example of sacred faithfulness before your eyes; *Go ye, and do likewise.* Be faithful (brethren) to the Redeemer, to his interests and kingdom in the world. Be faithful to the ministry ye have received, to the souls he hath redeemed, to the vocation wherewith ye have been called, to your light, and numerous talents and obligations: and when the opener of the graves shall come, the arbitrator of life and death shall appear in the clouds, he will make the heavens ring with your praise and applauses; *Well done, ye good and faithful servants! Amen*, and *Amen.*

A FUNERAL SERMON

PREACHED AT HACKNEY, JUNE 27TH, 1714,

ON OCCASION OF THE

DEATH OF THE REVEREND MATTHEW HENRY,

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

BY DANIEL WILLIAMS, D. D.

TO MRS. HENRY,

LATE WIFE OF THE

REV. MR. HENRY.

MADAM,

At the desire of your relations I submitted to make known to you the sad and unexpected news of the death of your late husband. The surprise of that afflictive stroke made this to me a very difficult undertaking.

On the following day you were pleased, by several worthy gentlemen of Hackney, to request that I would preach there a funeral sermon on the next day; the honour I had for the dead, and for you his relict, conquered my backwardness to such a performance upon one day's warning. Your circumstances not admitting you to appear so soon in public, I was willing to send you what I had delivered, with some additions of what I formerly preached on the same text. I heartily wish, that what I have said of the deceased may contribute to your comfort, and conduct too. What I collected from the text, will show you not only your duty, but that the happiness of saints is secure under all the occurrences of life and death. The surest mercies are dispensed in both. You have a great charge upon you; viz. the education of many of the children of a father so near to God. But you have also much to encourage your endeavours; they are dedicated to God, the pains taken with the capable have well succeeded, the rest are hopeful; many prayers for them are recorded in heaven, they are children of the covenant, and of one well beloved by God and good men; he has left many printed instructions for your assistance, which they will be apt to regard; and above all, you may, you ought, in all your good attempts, and in every pressing difficulty, to look to and depend upon the Almighty God, as the *Husband of the widow, and Father of the fatherless.* May you find constant tokens of his fulness, truth, and favour, and from him receive comforts by all your remaining mercies! I am

Your sympathizing brother,
And faithful servant,
DANIEL WILLIAMS.

ROMANS xiv. 8.

For whether we live, we live to the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

THE scope of this chapter is to maintain peace, and urge moderation, among Christians, notwithstanding their different sentiments and practices in rituals and other matters, wherein the essentials of faith and godliness were unconcerned. The *text* assigneth a convincing reason, why a charitable opinion of each other should obtain, although such differences remained; *q. d.* both parties are the Lord's in life and death, both parties live and die unto the Lord, and therefore they should neither despise nor censure one another; *i. e.* they are subject to the dominion and judgment of the Lord as their sole *Proprietor*, they are also received and accepted by him as devoted saints, and as such they serve him according to their *different* sentiments. It must

then be unjust usurpation, and dangerous uncharitableness, to condemn such because of some inequality in their degrees of light. But more of this afterwards.

Observe, I. Sincere believers are the Lord's in life and in death.

Jesus Christ is the Lord, for, *v.* 9. it immediately follows, For to this end *Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.*

Life here expresseth man's present state, and connotes all the time, endowments, abilities, interest, opportunities for improvements and service, with every talent possessed by us in this life.

Death puts a period to this present life by a separation of the soul from the body. Upon death the immortal soul passeth safely into the unseen state; which state is also referred to, because the interest of Christ in his saints is not interrupted by death, and his dominion is over the inhabitants of that world of spirits.

Christ is indeed Lord of all men, as truly as of believers; *All being created for him and by him*, they owe to him obedience in life, and must abide his judgment after death. *All must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.*[a] But sincere Christians are the Lord's in a more peculiar sense; for they were assigned to him by the Father, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.* They are his by *special* redemption. He also *apprehended*[b] them by effectual calling, whereby they dedicated themselves to Christ, and by mutual *covenant* they further became his own; *They are for him, and not for another.*[c] Upon such accounts it is justly said to all believers, *You are Christ's;*[d] nor is it a small part of their privilege that they can say, *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.*[e]

Quest. 1. What is intended by a Christian's being the Lord's in life?

Ans. 1. He alone has authority to rule them, especially in what concerns religion. His will ought to be a rule to them; whatever power others can claim over them must be subordinate to his, and by delegation from him. He is *Head* of the church, to govern, as well as influence, his members.[f] His propriety is of that sort as to be a foundation of such an absolute dominion, as admits no challenge or excuse. All his laws bind the conscience immediately; nor can any person dispense with, or authority control, them. Our Lord has reserved to himself to appoint officers in his church, sacraments, qualifications of ministers, and terms of communion, &c. To add to these is to usurp his rights; to alter or refuse these is rebellion against his crown and dignity.

Ans. 2. They are his to use and dispose of them whilst they live. Shall not he do *what he will with his own?* His justice and wisdom will preserve the rules of equity in disposing of them, and yet he is so true to his own rights, as to claim the disposal of all our circumstances, and the appointing how our time and talents shall be employed. It is an unjust denial of his propriety to murmur at the *work* he ordains, be it never so mean or difficult. His title to his people is such as to serve his purposes by their health or sickness, prosperous or low estate, higher or lower station; they are not to choose or dispute. The interest of our Lord in us authorizeth him to effect his own ends by us, and by all that is ours, as his wisdom shall direct. Nor is this to be in some cases, but in all; or at some certain times, but as long as life endureth.

Ans. 3. The Lord is sure to be concerned for their good in all the occurrences of life.

The vicissitudes, wants, and dangers in this present life are many; the Lord's people are exposed in this world to more distresses than others, because of their fidelity to him; but as their being his brings on them the hatred of the wicked, so the same thing is their security and relief under all their troubles. He oft, on this account, restrains their enemies, saying, *Touch not my anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*[g] They find cause to say, We which live are delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, *that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal bodies.*[h] He who saith, He is worse than an infidel who provides not for his own, cannot neglect to provide for his own, the care of whom he has undertaken when they became his: they are not sent to war at their own charges.[i] His *eye* guides them in the way he orders them to go; by *his strength* they are enabled to perform what he enjoins. *His consolations* abound with their troubles. When weak, he *carrieth his lambs in his arms.*[k] When they go astray, he brings them back as his own sheep; and will say, *Of them whom thou hast given me, I have lost none.*[l] Their whole life shall evidence the truth of that place; *He will be our guide, even unto death.*[m]

Quest. 2. What is it to be the Lord's in death, or dying?

Ans. 1. The time and the manner of a believer's death are in his hand.

He *has the keys of hell and death.*[n] His saints shall not die when their enemies please, but when he thinks it most for his glory, best for his servants, and in the fittest time. The weakest shall live as long as he has work for them; and commonly they who have been very useful, are taken away before a longer life shall prove dishonourable, useless, or intolerable to them. It belongs also to him to prescribe, whether the death of his servants shall be

a 2 Cor. v. 10. b Phil. iii. 12. c Ezek. xvi. 8. d 1 Cor. iii. 23. e Cant. vi. 3. f Eph. v. 23. g Ps. cv. 15.

h 2 Cor. iv. 11. i 1 Cor. ix. 7. k Isa. xl. 11. l John xviii. 9. m Ps. xlviii. 14. n Rev. i. 18.

sudden or slow, easy or painful, natural or violent, in youth or age, by what disease, and by what means they shall die. He has ends worthy of himself in all this variety; and what is so equal, as that those ends should be subserved by such as are his own? *Peter* had no cause of repining, when Christ *signified to him by what death he should glorify* God, though it was to be a violent death; and he asserts his right to determine of such matters; when *Peter* asked, Lord, *what shall this man do? i. e.* Shall *John*, thy beloved, die as I must? Christ replies, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee; follow thou me.*[o]

Ans. 2. When believers die, they are *to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.*[p]

He alone has a right to judge them. By his sentence their state will be determined, and not by the censures of men; or their own mistaken opinion of themselves. His own *gospel will be the rule of judgment;*[q] the great and convincing *witness*, will be his omniscient mind, to which the gracious *secrets of their hearts* were known; *viz.* their good desires, resolves, contrivances, affections, and governing aims; these are better than what appeared oft, in their actions and attainments. It is the same all-seeing eye which observed those *prayers, fasts, and charitable works,*[r] which they concealed from the world, to avoid ostentation, and to approve themselves to him as satisfied with his sole approbation.

Ans. 3 *Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints.*[s]

He who bottles their *tears*, cannot be prodigal of their *blood*, for it is *precious in his sight;*[t] it shall not be spilled but for valuable ends; as to attest his truth, and be the seed of his church; and they shall pay dear who are guilty of shedding the least drop of it. So the cry of this brought utter ruin upon *Rome pagan.* And in revenge, shall *Rome papal* have *blood to drink*, because she was *drunk with the blood of the saints.*[u] She may shortly boast those wounds are healed, which she received by the word of Christ's mouth, but she will, after a short triumph, find her plagues *shall come in one day, and be utterly burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her;*[v] though the protestants will be too much reduced to effect it.

Ans. 4. When dying, and when dead, he will deal with them as his own.

The *sting*[w] of death he will take away by an assured pardon, and full absolution. He sets them above its *terrors*, by a firm persuasion that he overcame death, to deliver them from the fear of it;[x] and by some foresight and foretastes of that good which follows their release. To render them *meet* for the upper world, their souls shall be set free from all that is carnal and earthly, by their separation from the body; and the divine principle alone reigning in all its faculties, his angels[y] shall guide and defend the departed souls through the upper regions, till they arrive to the place of the blessed, where Christ will receive them to himself; to possess the *mansions*[z] he has prepared, and enjoy that perfect light, love, life, glory, and delights, which he purchased for, and becomes the *members* of such a head. *Them he will bring to appear with him in his glory,*[a] when he comes to judge the world. Their *bodies* shall his Spirit raise,[b] as the bond of union betwixt him and them, which death could not dissolve; those bodies he will frame to that spirituality, as shall suit the heavenly regions, and the employment of exalted souls. These bodies will not only be freed from all blemishes, pains, weakness, listlessness, and weariness, but made like unto Christ's glorious body,[c] then their whole persons are solemnly absolved and vindicated, *and Christ is glorified and admired in them*, upon which they ascend, and *be ever with the Lord*, to be perfectly happy in a full conformity to Christ, and the beatific vision.

Exhortation. Be all of you persuaded to become the Lord's, by a sincere dedication of yourselves to him.

Acknowledge that right he has to each of you; at the judgment-seat of Christ, *every tongue shall confess to* God,[d] i. e. to Christ, who is God, unless Isa. xlv. 23. be spoke of some others besides the true God. If you are among those who are devoted to Christ, you will confess as they, *v.* 24, 25. *In the Lord we have righteousness and strength, in him we glory;* but if unbelievers, you shall be *ashamed* that you were so *incensed* against him, as to deny to come and yield up yourselves to him; this you shall confess to be injustice towards him, and destructive to yourselves. He now puts in his claim, that by your consent you may become his for your own benefit. *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God,*[e] was what better became the *devils* to say, than you; for he invites you; your salvation depends on him entirely; and it is possible to be obtained for his sake; nay, it is certain to all, who will yield up themselves to their blessed Lord.

Motive 1. For *this end he died and rose again, and revived, that he might be Lord of the dead and living.*[f]

He has not only a claim to you as your *Creator*,[g] but as your Redeemer too. You are bought with a price, and that no less than his precious blood; to offer up yourselves to him, is your reasonable service;[h] he might well expect, when bleeding on the cross, that he *should draw all men to him;*[i] for what ene-

o John xxi. 19—22. p Rom. xiv. 10. q Rom. ii. 16
r Matt. vi. 4, 5, 18. s Ps. cxvi. 15. t Ps. lxxii. 14.
u Rev. xvii. 6. v Rev. xviii. 7, 8. w 1 Cor. xv. 55.
x Heb. ii. 14, 15. y Luke xvi. 22.

z John xiv. 2, 3. a 1 Thess. iv. 14. b Rom. viii. 11.
c Phil. iii. 21. d Rom. xiv. 10, 11. e Matt. viii. 29.
f Rom. xiv. 9. g 2 Pet. ii. 1.
h Rom. xii. 1. i John xii. 32.

mies could be so unconquered by his love, as rather die by their wounds than come to him to be healed? He merited a propriety in you by his death; he is *risen*, and entereth his claim; he is *alive*, to observe how it is received, and has *all power in heaven and earth*, to avenge himself on such as reject him, as well as to confer all his blessings on those who accept his offer, by dedicating themselves to him. O bethink you, whose are you, if you be not the Lord's? it is an usurper, even the devil, who possesseth you.

Motive 2. You comply not with the chief design of the gospel, unless you become the Lord's.

The gospel is an invitation of sinners to Christ; and all that is recorded therein, tends to incline men to be the Lord's. What is historically declared of Christ, the account given of the Spirit's operations, the promises, and threatenings, all concur to prevail with men to yield up themselves to him. What is mentioned of the evil of sin, the misery of sinners, the dangers, weakness, and emptiness of self, the vanity of the world, the wiles and cruelty of devils; all this is to bring us to *renounce* these, as competitors with Christ for our affections and choice.

No minister can think his labours are effectual, till he can say, *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you a chaste virgin to Christ.*[k] All the authority of the gospel, all its directions, all its allurements, encouragements, and helps, are not only *in vain* to such as refuse to be the Lord's, but they will *aggravate* their condemnation, and expose them to the *sorer* punishments. This Jesus *will come in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them who obey not the gospel.*[l] Flatter not yourselves by any impressions the word has made upon you, or by the hopes you have gathered from it; for unless it has prevailed with you to give your hearty consent to be the Lord's, it has had no saving effects upon you. That is its chief intention, for that it is adapted, and its design is not fully answered, till every *thought and imagination be brought to obedience to Christ.*[m]

Motive 3. To be the Lord's, includes the highest honour and felicity.

The godly are pleased with the title of being his *servants*, and oft mention it as their honour. But if you will be the Lord's, you shall not only be his servants, but his *peculiar people*, his *friends* and *favourites*, his *brethren, joint heirs with him, his temple, his spouse, the members of his body, and his heritage.*[n] Our Lord Jesus declares all these concerning every true believer. He fills up every relation to the extent of it; and must you not admire his condescending goodness, in inviting such as you into such relations. What honour, what safety, what power, what riches, what happiness, must any *one* of these contain! what then must all of them together include? To be his, that is, to be his in all these respects, connotes a happiness not to be expressed by fewer terms. Look back to what I have said of the Lord's concern for his in life; how precious their death is to him, and how he deals with them dying and dead; and will you not find *cords* fit to draw you to him, or enough to convince you what enemies you must be to yourselves, as well as to him, as long as it is your resolve, *We will not come unto thee.* I reserve another exhortation, as proper to the next head, as well as to this.

Observe, II. All true believers evidence their being the Lord's by living and dying to him.

This is the *duty* of every man, but it is the peculiar *character* of saints, they live and die to the Lord; it is the best and most undoubted evidence of their being the Lord's that they can give; nor will it be proved by any thing without this. All saving acts suppose our being the Lord's, and are comprehended in *living and dying to him.*

Self is excluded in both, *v.* 7. *None of us liveth to himself, no man dieth to himself.* Self is the great rival with Christ, and therefore to *deny ourselves*[o] is made one of the first conditions of men's becoming the disciples of Christ. Man by his apostasy set up carnal self as his chief end, and supreme ruler; his own humour, his own will, his own honour, yea, *his belly, are to him his God.*[p] Therefore till self be renounced we cannot become the Lord's, nor live or die to him.

Quest. 1. Wherein do believers live unto the Lord?

Ans. 1. In general they live to the Lord, when throughout their lives they act for Christ and towards him, as they who *are his in life.* The course and tenor of their lives must express a true acknowledgment of his propriety in their persons and all their endowments; and this not by starts, but as the scope of their lives; not for a short time at first, but as long as life shall continue. St. *Paul* sums it up in these words, *To me to live is Christ.*[q] More particularly,

(1.) They live and act in subjection to his authority as their Lord. You heard that the Lord has the supreme right to govern them; this believers confess, by their obediential regards to him; they walk as he commandeth them; and *put away none of his statutes from them.*[r] What he prohibits they forbear, what he enjoineth they account themselves obliged to perform, and to exercise sincere repentance, when they fail in either of these. Their solicitous inquiry is, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*[s] This they impartially study, with a sincere purpose to observe it against all the motions of their lusts, and without respect to their secular interests. His word they esteem a sufficient warrant, though

k 2 Cor. xi. 2. l 2 Thess. i. 8. m 2 Cor. x. 5.
n Rom. viii. 17. o Matt. xvi. 24.
p Phil. iii. 19. q Phil. i. 21.
r Ps. xviii. 22. s Acts ix. 6.

many censure them; nor can the greatest powers make them forbear to do what the Lord enjoins, or comply with usages he has not warranted them to impose; for they are at a point,[t] whether they shall obey the almighty God, or feeble mortals. If men assume to prescribe rules in matters the Lord hath reserved to himself, they dare not follow them; but from a loyal regard to him, they reject all human inventions in the worship of God, and sacred ministrations of his house.

(2.) They live to his glory, as their great end.

The glory of Christ is their *governing end;* this they propose in their undertakings; they contrive and pursue the best means to exalt his name,[u] and carefully avoid what would be a dishonour to him. So he be glorified by what they do, they are contented to want the praise of it, yea, to be despised; and therefore are most solicitous after considerable performances, to observe whether Christ is exalted thereby, and not how they are applauded. As the Lord is greatest in their eye, so they contribute what they can to render him excellent in the esteem of others, and are grieved when any treat his name, his word, or his image, with contempt.

To him they ascribe the praise of all their gifts and graces, and of all their benefits and blessings; whenever they find any good effect of their labours, they humbly confess, that herein *Christ has wrought with me; and glory through Christ Jesus, in those things which pertain to God.*[v] Believers strive to be what they account the highest character a man is capable of, viz. *the glory of Christ.*[w] Not that they think they can make him more glorious in *himself,* but they desire his own glory may *shine* forth in more illustrious instances, and that they may discern it as far as he is pleased to manifest it, and may discover it to others in all the ways he has appointed for that purpose; and among the rest, that his perfections may, as in a mirror, shine forth in their Christian temper, labours, and behaviour. What pleasure was it to the apostle to be assured, *Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.*[x]

(3.) They serve his interest with faithfulness and diligence, as the chief business of life. They impartially desire to know it, they heartily espouse it as a *trust* committed to them; it is just and honourable in their judgment, even when despised and condemned by the great and learned. This lies near their heart, as their great concern, whoever are unconcerned. They dare not deny or betray it, whatever hardships they are exposed to by their faithful adherence; nor will they neglect it even when the defence and propagation of it require the greatest application of mind, the hardest labours, the largest expense, the severest self-denial, and very manifest peril of both losing the best friends, and undergoing the wrath of the most powerful enemies.

Such as are his owe him all service. The *angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, stood by me.*[y] Not to serve him at all times, and in all things, directly or indirectly, is defrauding him of his right. But though in all acts of obedience in every station, and doing what prepares us for his service, we *are serving the Lord,*[z] and especially in all acts of religious worship, nevertheless an eminent part of this service consists in being witnesses and agents for him in the world.[a] If we neglect this, we live not to him but to ourselves.

The interest of our Lord is too glorious to make us ashamed, afraid, or backward to promote it to our utmost; for the design he is carrying on, and the purposes to be served by us, are what become his wisdom, holiness, and goodness, and they are conducive to the good of men, as well as glorious to himself. If you ask, What of this kind is it wherein you must be active? I answer, You must resist sin and destroy the works of the devil, as far as your station admits; with all your might *promote* reformation of manners, the welfare of mankind, the purity of worship, a godly discipline, the conversion of sinners, the edification and comfort of saints, and peace among all such as call on the name of the Lord. Again, *propagate* the gospel for the knowledge of Christ, and the salvation of sinners, and defend the faith of the gospel against popery and all damnable errors. In a word, enlarge and advance the kingdom of our dear Lord to the extent of your ability.

(4.) They approve themselves to him, and study to please him from day to day. They are under the influence of that rule, *Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.*[b] They appeal to him for their sincerity, when censured; they are satisfied with his approbation of what they perform, and are not free from doubts of the truth of their graces, till they can appeal to him as St. *Peter, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.*[c]

The same care they *take to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing;*[d] they avoid what may grieve his Holy Spirit, who is their only Comforter. They are ready to communicate to his necessitous ministers, and relieve his poor, for *with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*[e] Every duty and good work they endeavour to perform *acceptably to God,*[f] and to stand on good terms with him, whoever are displeased; as knowing, if *they pleased men they should not be the servants of Christ,*[g] for he justly claimeth, that our doctrine and actions should not be directed

t Acts v. 29. u 2 Cor. viii. 19. v Rom. xv. 17, 18.
w 2 Cor. viii. 23. x Phil. i. 20. y Acts xxvii. 23.
z Col. iii. 24. a 1 Thess. ii. 19.

b Col. iii. 23. c John xxi. 17.
d Col. i. 10. e Phil. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 16.
f Heb. xii. 18. g Gal. i. 10.

to be acceptable to men, further than as they please him, by a conformity to his declared will. And this is wisdom for ourselves; for he hath the disposal of all that concerns our welfare in both worlds.

(5.) They are well contented with his disposal of all the circumstances of life.

They refer themselves to him to choose their lot, and acquiesce fully in his determination, as persuaded he knows what is best for *them*, and most conducive to his own blessed purposes; to subserve which they are devoted, and every way obliged. They *have learnt in every state to be content*.[h] What condition, work, and station he appoints, they submit to without repining; and labour to accommodate themselves to it, so as to answer the ends of God in that disposition of their affairs. It is their care to improve the advantages, watch against the temptations, perform the duties, and exercise the graces, proper and peculiar to that condition wherein they are placed. They dare not attempt a change of their station, but under his conduct; and are more solicitous to acquit themselves well in a present mean condition, than to get it altered. If sickness, poverty, afflictive relations, or reproach, be their trial, by the hand of an *unoffended God*, every word of his supports them. If they are culpably accessories, they submissively accept their *punishment*, and rest not till a pardon frees them from guilt, which is the bitterest part of their exercise.

But the worst things that they endure for the Lord's *sake*,[i] they can glory and rejoice in, as what will work for their good in this life, and add an exceeding weight of glory in the life to come.[k]

(6.) They labour to clear their interest in him, and to grow up into him, as the greatest end of life next to the glory of God.

All believers have a covenant interest in Christ, but many of them doubt about it: they who have some good hope, want a full assurance; they who have this, enjoy it not alway. The most blessed comfort, next to a saving interest in Christ, is an uninterrupted full assurance of it. This they, who live to the Lord, strive to obtain, by an exact walk, eminent service, willingly suffering for the cause of Christ, constant, intimate communion with God, growth in grace; and by the lively actings of love to Christ, and of faith in him, and in the gospel constitution and promises. This is what *Paul* was so intent upon, *to be found in Christ, and to win Christ*.[l] He had an interest in him, he had accounted *all as loss for him;* yea, he had attained assurance, *for he rejoiced in him*. What then he was still intent upon, and pursued, is either a constant assurance well established, and more strengthened, or a further growth into Christ, with a fuller conformity to him, or *both*.

All believers are *in Christ; Christ in them, by his* Spirit and image, *is the hope of glory*.[m] They are all *new creatures*, but some are weak, others stronger; all have some degree of conformity to Christ, but some have less of his image, Spirit, life, and power; others have more. But they who have *most* of these, are still pressing after further degrees. *They forget the things that are behind, and reach forth to those things that are before*.[n] They would grow up into him in *all things* which is the head, even Christ; they propose no less than to come to a *perfect man*,[o] unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. For this they pray, and go from one ordinance to another. They endeavour to derive more virtue from Christ; they desire the most transforming sight of him, that they may be *changed from glory to glory*.[p] They thirst for such communications, as that they may find *all* of Christ's image, in the *whole* of them.

Thus I have shown what it is to live to the Lord. All believers do live thus in some measure: to come up to the full of it is our duty, and happiest are they who come nearest to this description.

Quest. 2. In what respect do believers die to the Lord?

Ans. 1. They are resigned to him as to the time and way of dying. They will *wait till their change come*,[q] how bitter soever their lives may be; and with *Simeon*,[r] receive God's *dismission* and *release*, before they die. But when he sends the message of death, they receive it, whatever age they are of, and dare not fret at the manner or means by which God will have them die. How composedly does St. *Peter* speak of his approaching death, *Knowing that shortly I must put off my tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus has showed me*.[s] Was this to be by an easy or natural death? No. Christ had showed him, that he should be *bound*,[t] and forced to *die on a cross*, which was a shameful, painful death.

Ans. 2. They willingly die for the Lord's name and cause, when he calls them to it.

Every believer is a *martyr* in purpose and resolution. The Lord is pleased to call some out to resist unto *blood*, and sacrifice their lives in the honour of his name. Such *loved not their lives unto the death*.[u] Innumerable are the witnesses, whose blood was shed by heathen and popish idolaters. And still there remain many, who say, in the strength of Christ, *Neither bonds nor afflictions move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my course with joy*.[v] A life is justly and profitably laid out by dying for Christ.

Ans. 3. They apply themselves to him as their *Judge*, upon the approach of death.

When we see death before our eyes, we know we are near the judgment-seat of Christ, (or what is

h Phil. iv. 12. i Rom. viii. 26. k 2 Cor. iv. 17. l Phil. iii. 7, 8.
m Col. i. 27. n Phil. iii. 15. o Eph. iv. 13, 15.
p 2 Cor. iii. 18. q Job xiv. 14. r Luke ii. 29. s 1 Pet. i. 14.
t John xxi. 18. u Rev. xii. 11. v Acts xx. 24.

equivalent) the sentence we must expect from his mouth, which shall determine our state for ever, for he is to be our Judge. The favourable opinion, or rash censures, of men, signify nothing; nay, our own apprehensions and sentence will not be decisive in this important case; but *he that judgeth me is the Lord*,[w] therefore believers apply to him, that he would prepare them, that he would undertake their cause as their advocate, as well as judge; and that he would so work in them, and so assist them to *finish their course*, that they may, by the testimony of his Spirit, have ground to say, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.*[x]

Ans. 4. They long for death, that they may go to him, and be for ever with him.

It is not love to the world, nor a mere natural aversion to death, nor a fondness of a present life, that must hinder any true Christian from saying, with *Paul, I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.*[y] No, it is a suspicion of their state, the awfulness of judgment and eternity, and the weakness of their faith, which do represent death as undesirable. If the Spirit of God set them right in all these things, death must appear amiable, for it opens the prison doors, and sets them in the way to behold the glory of their Lord, to whom they are so obliged; and enjoy him without interruption, to whom their hearts cleave with ardent love. As terrible as death is to nature, they cannot but embrace it, as it lets them into the full possession of all their Lord has purchased for them; the very hopes whereof yielded them more joy than all this world could give. Such things make them judge, *that to die is gain*,[z] and therefore to be coveted by them.

Ans. 5. They leave a good testimony for him, when their death is near.

They are far from repenting of any service done to him; they wish it had been greater. They regret not the heaviest suffering they had endured, but are thankful that they were enabled to bear it; esteeming it a *benefit that was given them*[a] to suffer for him. They have such experiments of his conduct and assistance in distresses; they have found such constant instances of his faithfulness and power, that they can without anxiety pass into the endless state. *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.*[b] *Paul* knew the importance of what he deposited in the hands of Christ, a soul capable of the greatest happiness or misery, and this to be determined in the day of death, and published at the judgment day. Nevertheless, he was cheerful, and his mind at quiet, on the very borders of eternity; but that none might accuse him of indiscretion, he tells you, the ground of his confidence was the acquaintance he had with Christ, by experiments, wherein any one besides this Lord had failed him; and so leaves it upon record, that the Lord had manifested his kindness, faithfulness, and truth to him, in the whole course of his warfare: he had so discharged the trust he had committed to him from his first conversion, that he is not ashamed of his labours or sufferings, and has no doubt concerning him, as to what concerned his perseverance in death, and his welfare in the proceedings at judgment. I might instance in *Polycarp*, and many others, who left a glorious testimony for Christ as a good master, and fit to recommend his service to all survivors.

Ans. 6. They believingly commit their departing souls to him for their final happiness. *They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*[c] He knew his intelligent rational part must subsist after death; this was the *man*, and though of dignity far superior to the body, yet it was incapable to conduct, defend, or adapt itself to that world of spirits, upon which he was entering. He therefore puts himself into the hands of Jesus Christ, not doubting his willingness to receive him, or his fitness to discharge his undertaking. He was persuaded that if he received it, he would wash it from all its filth,[d] supply all its wants, make up all its defects, answer for all its faults, secure it against all its enemies, enlarge all its capacities, and replenish them to their utmost extent. Happy souls! thus lodged with him, who fully knows that state, of which we are so ignorant; and has the entire disposal of all that good which can make us happy there: *He saves to the uttermost.*[e]

Exhortation. Resolve to live to the Lord; and see that you maintain and exercise that resolution.

This is your duty and your interest too: a life thus spent will yield comfortable reflections upon a death-bed. *This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in this world.*[f] But see that your purpose extend to all the six particulars, wherein I have described wherein believers live to the Lord.

But I must consider this duty with some special respect to the *context*. There you will find, that the Holy Ghost calleth you to live to the Lord; more particularly,

1. In a strict adherence to his rules in the matters of religion.

2. In a Christian behaviour towards his servants who differ from you in lesser matters. Therefore,

1. Live to the Lord by a strict adherence to his rules in the matters of religion. It is his prerogative

w 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. x 2 Tim. iv. 8. y Phil. i. 23.
z Phil. i. 21. a Phil. i. 29.

b 2 Tim. i. 12. c Acts vii. 59. d Eph. v. 27.
e Heb. vii. 25. f 2 Cor. i. 12.

to appoint rules in this; for none but he knows what he will accept as worship, or what he will use as means which shall be blessed by him to spiritual benefit, and he is most jealous in things of this kind.

We find in this chapter the following directions about this matter:

(1.) Place not religion in things indifferent, *v.* 17. *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost.* Men by not obeying this rule, abridge themselves as to their spiritual liberty; they are tormented with scruples, spend their time and zeal about trifles, which profit not, and neglect to mind what is accepted with God, and conducive to salvation. They who are hot for ceremonies, seldom mind the substance of religion.

(2.) Sincerely endeavour to get thy conscience rightly instructed in the mind of God; pray, and study his word, to find out what he enjoins and forbids, and what he allows as indifferent, *v.* 14. *I am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself.*

(3.) Admit no man to prescribe to thee in matters of religion, further than they show God's warrant. In this, the Lord is thy only *master*, and thou art his servant only; and not the servant of any one on earth. Therefore, *If thou keep a day, keep it to the Lord, and if thou keep it not*, let thy forbearance be because he has not appointed thee *to keep it*, *v.* 4, 6.

(4.) Be well persuaded in thy own mind as to every thing thou accountest to be sin or duty, that thou apprehendest it to be so, by divine direction, *v.* 1. *One believeth that he may eat all things, another eateth herbs.* And, *v.* 5. *Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, i. e.* of the lawfulness of it by God's word.

(5.) Be true to thy conscience, and do nothing doubtingly, for the sake of any man, *v.* 22, 23. *He that doubteth, is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for what is not of faith, is sin.*

These comprehend much of that rule by which the apostle declares, that he and others *lived to the Lord;* it is incumbent on you to follow their steps; for he is *your* Lord as well as theirs, and he will be your *Judge*. In this, therefore, be faithful; and what matter is it who condemns you? for he is sure to justify you, and approve of your practice. Men may reproach, imprison, take away your estates and lives too, for not obeying them, against this his declared will: but obedience to him will give you inward peace; and your Lord is sure to reward your fidelity with a *hundred-fold more in this life, than you can lose by it, and in the world to come eternal life.*[g] Loyalty to Christ will be found more gainful, than all the preferments you can get by will-worship, and compliances with human inventions.

A day is near, when this Lord whom you serve will publicly applaud you. He will say, *Well done, good and faithful servants*, who would not violate my laws, nor act against conscience to please the greatest, or to gain the pomp, the riches, or power, which your base compliance might have procured. It was to me you my *ministers* did live, when you refused such conditions of your ministry, as I appointed not. To me you lived, in executing your office when rulers forbade you. I will ratify your administrations, which the profane accused as nullities. To all the faithful *members* of his churches, he will say, To me you lived, when you adhered to my ministers, who were rejected because they durst not submit to sinful terms; well done you, who concurred with them in attempts for reformation, and kept your *garments clean*, in a time of common degeneracy and revolt. It was for me you became subject to calumnies, and branded as incapable of civil offices. For it was my cause you espoused, when you adhered to a pure worship, and refused to acknowledge that men had right to impose any terms of the communion of saints, which I had not appointed. His commendations may well encourage you to persevere, for they will be attended with a *crown of glory*, and ravishing *pleasures* for evermore.

2. Live to the Lord, by a Christian behaviour towards the servants of Christ, who differ from you in lesser matters. The apostle distinguisheth Christians here as strong and weak. The *strong*[h] (elsewhere called Τελειοι;) were such as understood their liberty by the gospel from the *Mosaic* ceremonies and rites. These were free to *eat* any wholesome food, and to omit the Jewish festivals, *v.* 2, 5. The *weak* were such as scrupled to eat flesh upon the principles of *Pythagoras*, or did forbear meats offered to idols. Many also of the Jews apprehended that *Moses's laws*,[i] which prohibited some meats, and enjoined the observation of certain *days* and *months*, were not abrogated. The strong *despised*[k] the weak as ignorant; the *weak* judged the strong as profane and ungodly; both quarrelled, and would force him, who differed, to comply with his own usages, and do as himself practised.

You find here many directions as to our behaviour in this case.

(1.) Own such to be *his* servants, as appear so in the judgment of charity. He is *thy brother*, *v.* 10. God *has received him* whom you judge, yea, *he shall be holden up*, *v.* 4.

(2.) Neither despise nor judge those that differ in such matters, *v.* 3.

(3.) Do not offend or grieve them, much less impose on them a compliance with you against their consciences, *v.* 13. *But judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his*

g Mark x. 29, 30. h 1 Cor. ii. 6. i 1 Cor. viii. 7. k Col. ii. 16, 23.

brother's way, v. 15. *If thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably, destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.* If we must forbear the use of our liberty in lawful things,[l] lest the good opinion they have of our goodness, or better judgment, induce them to act against their consciences, and so destroy themselves; surely the argument is much stronger against *compelling* them to do so by any penalties; as loss of place or privileges, times, &c.

The arguments are strong, by which these directions are enforced, viz. Christ is our *only* Lord, and so allows no man to possess his throne, either to impose on conscience, or to judge men's state. *To him* they and you are accountable, v. 4, 11. Again, it is from a dutiful regard *to the Lord*, that they are scrupulous, and act by their light, v. 6. yea, the Lord may serve very good purposes by their different light and practice in those lower matters.

(4.) *Follow the things that make for peace, and things wherewith we may edify one another*, v. 19. This would both restrain from hurting each other, and tend to common benefit. He is wiser than the apostle, that under our present imperfections expects an *uniformity*, by another rule than that, viz. *Whereto we have attained, let us walk by the same rule; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this to you.*[m]

I shall, from the connexion of the words, and to apply what I have said of dying in the Lord,

Observe, III. They who live to the Lord shall die in the Lord, and be found to be his for their endless felicity.

Though in the former observations I began with the last clause, *viz.* living and dying we are the Lord's, yet the conjunction may import, that because we live and die to the Lord, we shall be the Lord's living and dying; and as we shall be his both living and dying, so, as we live to him (which is what death depends on) we shall also die to him, as far as that expresseth our comfort and benefit by death. Of which I have spoken at large.

Exhortation 1. Be the Lord's *in life*, if you would be his *at death*. The state of men at death, is what it was at the end of life. Accept, therefore, of his offers at present, for *now is the accepted time;*[n] now he invites and pleads, this is the time of espousals. If you reject him whilst this life continues, it is in vain to think you can ever be joined to the Lord. There will be no further overtures made, death will seal you up under an eternal separation from the Lord, other than as he will be thy Judge, and an avenger of thy contemptuous refusals of him.

Exhortation 2. Live to the Lord, if you desire to die to the Lord, for your eternal advantage.

All of you must die, *it is appointed.*[o] You shall die when, and where, and how the Lord pleaseth, whether you consent or not. But would you find death unstung, and friendly? Would you have Christ receive your departing souls, to fit them for, and admit them into, the heavenly mansions? Would you find it a release from all that is grievous, and to be a *joyful entrance into the everlasting kingdom of your Saviour?*[p] Then live unto the Lord. These are inseparably joined by the gospel constitution. O ask then, to *whom* do you live, is it to God or the devil? After what do you *walk*, is it after the flesh or the Spirit? This is your seed-time; *If you sow to the Spirit, you shall reap life everlasting: if you sow to the flesh, you shall of the flesh reap corruption.* It is high time the youngest of you should begin to live to the Lord, for you may die in youth. It is truest wisdom in any of you who have begun, to hold on to the end: for a life spent to the Lord, will at death end in happiness to yourselves, and great comfort to your godly friends.

This may afford some allay to our grief, when we reflect on the very afflictive occasion of our present meeting, viz. the death of the reverend, laborious, and useful Mr. Matthew Henry. I could not have chosen a fitter text, for it was eminently exemplified in him. Few ministers so acknowledged Christ's propriety in them, much fewer arrived to an equal degree of activity in the Lord's service.

He was the son of two eminent saints, who were the *glory of Christ* in their day; and their character has eminently survived in his life and temper, as in the account of their lives which he published. As they took more than ordinary pains in his education when young, so they received the highest pleasure in his probity and usefulness in their aged years. Nor did God give a testimony to their pious care in making it successful to him alone; but gave them the comfort of seeing all their grown children walking in their integrity.

God, to whom *all his works are known from the beginning*, oft lays a foundation for the service he designs, by fitting persons from the womb, as to constitution and genius, in great variety; as we see in St. *Paul*, *Luther*, *Melancthon*, &c. in like manner, having determined to do great things by our deceased brother, gave him a very strong body, without which his labours had wasted him in his youth: he also framed the organs of speech to the advantage of his public performances; his fancy was lively, his memory retentive, and his judgment solid.

Such a natural capacity rendered him capable of uncommon improvements, and being cultivated at home, and at the Reverend Mr. *Doolittle's*, he soon signalized himself in all the useful parts of learning proper to his designed employment, which was the

l 1 Cor. viii. m Phil. iii. 15, 16. n 2 Cor. vi. 2.

o Heb. ix. 27. p 2 Pet. i. 11.

ministry. Having finished those preparatory studies, and apprehending that the knowledge of the laws might contribute to more distinct conceptions of some subjects and terms in theology, he applied himself for some time to that study, and made good use of that knowledge in several of his composures.

After he had attained what he proposed to himself in the *Inns of Court*, he set himself toward entering upon the ministerial work, though in a time of persecution! He preferred this to all other employs, because (as himself oft suggested) the work was more pleasant, the subject which still employed the mind, more helpful to promote a heavenly life, and the power of religion in his own heart; it gave the best opportunity of serving Christ in his greatest designs on earth, and of benefiting mankind in what most concerned them, viz. the salvation of their souls.

In order to his undertaking this work, he impartially studied the controversy between the established church and the dissenters, and upon the maturest thoughts, he chose to be a *presbyterian* minister, being fully persuaded, the cause of Christ, in the matters debated, was in their hands, and for this, resolved to embark with them, notwithstanding the reproach and hardships to which he might be exposed; for it was not earth, but heaven, to which he directed his course. Yet, with his non-conformity, he highly esteemed all pious conformists, and kept up a Christian charity towards such as differed from him.

Upon the evidence of his eminent gifts and graces, with a strong propension to discharge the duties, and promote the blessed ends, of that sacred office, he was regularly invested in it by fasting and prayer, and the imposition of the hands of presbyters.

He always accounted the work of the ministry the most honourable employment; and was to his death a singular honour to it, by his unwearied diligence and exemplary conversation. From his undertaking the service of Christ in this function, the *business* of his life was, both to improve in meetness for it, and to *fulfil the ministry he had received of the Lord*. His *profiting appeared to all*, by being able on the sudden to perform so well upon any subject, and thereby he commended the close study of the Scriptures; for the whole *Bible* being fixed in his head, (as well as heart) facilitated his work on all occasions. Can the most invidious point to the man alive, of whom it can be more justly said, He laboured much in the Lord. If you consider how oft he preached, you must wonder how he could write so much. But if you reckon how many books he printed, could you imagine he preached so frequently? What time must be laid out in the five volumes on the Bible, besides many other valuable books and printed sermons!

Whilst he continued pastor in *Chester*, which was two-and-twenty years, he filled up that station with service on Lord's days and week days: besides this, he laid out himself in the adjacent counties, as one who had upon him the care of all the churches. How frequently did he preach seven or eight times a week!

Since his transplanting to this place, he spent himself here and in the city, as if his strength were miraculously supplied to do much, upon a foresight that his time was short. And of this he seemed to have some presages, when he assigned it as an apology to a godly person who cautioned him against over doing; and truly some such impulse was the best reason he had to give.

Great was his acceptance, though his lot was to be in an age wherein the office is so despised, that the same qualifications which commend all others can scarce preserve a minister from contempt. But Providence peculiarly smiled on our brother in this respect, though he neither courted applause, nor sought his worldly interest by flattery, or other unbecoming methods. What gave him esteem were his integrity, affableness, the triumph of grace over his passions, forwardness to speak well of all and ill of none, savoury discourses readily fitted to all occasions, useful and unwearied labours, and a readiness to serve all, with a pleasant acknowledgment of what endowments or success any others were blessed with. By these means the places were full where he was employed, persons of all denominations greatly affected him, and his surprising death is the subject of universal mourning.

All must acknowledge the aptitude of his performances to common benefit. Thus he studied, and accommodated his labours to persons of all ages. Young ones he catechised in a way that exceedingly conduced to give light, and beget an affection for gospel truths. Early religion he warmly pressed, and meltingly invited youth to close with Christ Jesus. Such as were converted, he laboured to improve to higher degrees of grace, and an exacter walking. For this end he published tracts, wherein most of the heads of practical religion are treated of with that judgment, as shows his acquaintance with the power of godliness and the hearts of men. His words were decent, though familiar, and his proverbial sentences were contrived to affect, and retain in the memory some important truth. If it be objected that he oft made use of Scripture phrases allusively, rather than in their *proper* sense, yet it must be granted, some *pious* things were ever gravely expressed by those words; and I think, that from his being so very conversant in Scripture words, they first presented themselves to his mind, when the matter he treated of would be aptly expressed thereby.

Whether he prayed or preached, it was with such a *fervour*, as declared his heart was in it, and that

he was employed therein from the vigorous actings of his faith and love.

As he earnestly implored the presence of God for success, so through his blessing he found it granted in a signal manner. Many, very many, were converted and edified by his ministerial labours. These are now his crown.

This is the person whom God *has taken away with a stroke, and so suddenly*, as not to allow us time to pray for his life. You can hear him no more, nor see him any more, till the general assembly. He is cut off (at the age of fifty-two) when ripest for service.

Need I call you to *lament* this loss; a loss so great, that I cannot aggravate it; so extensive, that I scarce know where to begin or end. A tender *wife* has lost a faithful affectionate husband, filling up that relation to all good purposes. Hopeful *children* deprived of the kindest of fathers; one concerned to see *Christ formed in them*, and fitted to promote their welfare in every respect. You, *his people*, are bereaved of a faithful, profitable pastor, whose place is not easily filled up. *We ministers* have lost a bright example, an affectionate brother, a general assistant as occasion offered; a man, whose excessive pains must put the slothful to many blushes. The loss is *public*, we have one fewer to promote the kingdom of our Lord, and stand in the gap to avert impending judgments; yea, I fear we may lament the fall of such a pillar in the church, as *taken away from the evil to come.*

We are stupid, if we weep not *for ourselves.* But as for his part, his sudden death has no terror attending it, for his Lord found him employed as the wise and faithful servants, whom he declareth *blessed.*[q] He had preached twice on the Lord's day, he preached also on *Monday*, and had appointed to do the same on *Tuesday*, but died that morning; God, by death, released him from his labours. Submission to the divine will only, could have reconciled his active soul long to survive his work; this trial God prevented, by not suffering him to live one day beyond his labours. But the *rest* in heaven after death, was what he longed for, and it seems that by some presage he apprehended he was not far from this; for the last head in the last book he published, is this, *Let us long for the perfection of those spiritual pleasures in the kingdom of glory.* And adds, *Our love to God in this world, is a love in motion, in heaven it will be a love at rest; O when shall that sabbatism come*, &c.

His present happiness yields some allay to our sorrow; but yet it is a greater relief under all losses, that our Lord is the King *eternal*,[r] his word endureth for *ever*;[s] with him is the residue of the Spirit; he has wise ends in this sore dispensation, and can make it work for *good.*

That this end may be attained, be all of you attentive to the voice of God by this rebuke, and comply therewith.

Let each impartially inquire, whether you have not a hand in removing this mercy, by your forfeiture. The death of very useful ministers (especially when much needed) is generally a punishment for some sins of those who were most concerned in them. Wherein conscience points to any guilt, neglect not repentance; and apply to the blood of Christ by faith, lest even a worse thing come unto you. Again, see you act as becomes Christians under this providence.

Let the afflicted *widow* trust in God, as able to fill up the place of the deceased, and the *children* walk worthy of his name, and not depart from such a father's ways, as too many have done in this degenerate age. How solemnly would he have laid this charge, if he had seen them about him in his dying agonies! O may they find the return of his many recorded prayers!

You who here attended on his ministry, see you live the truths he dispensed, for you are accountable for great advantages: Christ will not account them *good* servants, who gained but *two* talents when they received *five.* Nor is it proper for you to overlook it; that since the death of the eminent Doctor Bates, you have lost two such worthy men, as Mr. Billio, and Mr. Henry, in the midst of their days, and the greatest capacity for service.

Many observe you, and your influence on our public interest, as dissenters, is very considerable. Therefore it is your concern, unanimously, to get a well qualified pastor; but regard sincerely the real benefit of your *souls*, in the choice you make; for if lower matters govern your inclinations, it discovers *carnality* of mind, and will grow more so, if indulged in this instance.

We *ministers* are hereby called to double our care in serving the designs of our Lord; we have fewer hands, and may soon meet with harder work. The aspect of things warns us to apply ourselves to get more wisdom, faith, and fortitude; that we may neither mistake our duty, or treacherously desert it, in the greatest trials.

Finally, It is incumbent on all to lay to heart the *suddenness* of your pastor's death. When he left you, he was likelier to live than many of us, and no symptom of any danger, till within a very few hours before his dissolution. We must be stupid unless it excite us to pray, *Lord, teach us to know how frail we are!*[t] And to endeavour so to know the frailty of your state, as to be always *ready.*[u] O get oil in your lamps, and those lamps trimmed: he that may die without warning, has reason to see that he delay not repentance, nor trifle in what eternity depends

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q Luke xii. 43. r 1 Tim. i. 17. s 1 Pet. i. 25.

t Ps. xxxix. 4. u Matt. xxiv. 44.

on. He *who applies his heart to wisdom*,[v] must so number his days, as to finish the proper business of every day in its day; for the morrow is not ours, and if it come, its own work is assigned with it.

It will be vain to wish we could recall past time, when conscience represents the many abuses and neglects of a past life now ending. The summons may be so hasty, that you have not many moments to set heart or house in order.

Therefore take care that your pursuits of this world be not excessive, lest you be arrested by that voice, *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.*[w] When you are tempted, remember, you may be cut off in the very act of sin, as *Zimri*[x] was. Entertain every call to duty, and opportunity for service and spiritual benefit, with this thought, there is *no working*[y] in the grave, where I must soon be; the night cometh, wherein no man *can work*.[z]

You must all confess, that you cannot die *safely*, unless you have served your generation,[a] are real converts, and in temper of spirit meet for heaven: nor can you die *comfortably*, unless your graces flourish, your fruit abound, and have at least a grounded hope of your interest in Christ, with a vital sense of his favour.

These are too great, too necessary, and too difficult, to be postponed, or negligently applied to, by men, who are *crushed before the moth*.[b] The greatest haste, and the utmost diligence, are scarce enough to quiet us, when we realize how much depends upon a life subject to be cut off in a moment, by a thousand accidents. Happiest he, who *soonest*[c] enters into wisdom's paths, passeth the whole time of his sojourning here, with the *most* solicitous care in discharging all present duty, and improving all present helps. This is the way to finish well.

This *finishing well*, was a sentence oft made use of by my deceased brother, and therefore I conclude, with an importunate desire, that we may have a solemn regard thereto in all our sacred and civil transactions.

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v Ps. xc. 12. w Luke xii. 20.
x Numb. xxv. 14. y Eccl. ix. 10.
z John ix. 4. a Acts xiii. 36.
b Job. iv. 19. c 1 Pet. iv. 17.

AN APPENDIX:

CONTAINING

AN ENTIRE SERIES OF SERMONS,

(FORTY-ONE IN NUMBER,)

ON WHAT CHRIST IS MADE TO BELIEVERS, IN FORTY REAL BENEFITS;

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL MSS.

OF THE REV. PHILIP HENRY.

APPENDIX.

SERMONS BY THE REVEREND PHILIP HENRY.

SERMON I.

CHRIST IS THE FOUNDATION AND BELIEVERS ARE THE BUILDING.

1 CORINTHIANS iii. 11.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

IT is not here alone, but in many other scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, that our Lord Jesus Christ is held forth unto us under the notion of a *foundation*; and believers, the church of the first-born, under the notion of a great *building*, reared upon that foundation. The explaining and applying of this will be the work of this day.

DOCT. That our Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation, and believers are the building reared upon that foundation.

There is a like union and relation between him and them, as there is between a foundation and a building.

Now that relation and union is,

Very near and close. The closer the better. Such is that between Christ and his church. They that are joined to the Lord are one with him, 1 Cor. vi. 17. "For both he that sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one," Heb. ii. 11. *of one piece.*

It is also *very necessary and useful.* The building cannot stand without it. A foundation may stand long enough without a building upon it, but no building can stand without a foundation under it: and they must be joined—united. So Christ might have been without us, but we cannot be without him.

But are not the apostles and prophets the foundation? Eph. ii. 20. compare Matt. xvi. 18.

I answer; It is not said, the foundation, the apostles, but the foundation *of* the apostles; that is, the foundation which they themselves rested on. Had the apostles and prophets been asked, one by one, Who is your foundation, on whom do you build for life and happiness? they would have said, Jesus Christ. He was their all in all; and, therefore, should be ours.

Christ was the foundation which they reported, and preached of to others. Paul says here, *v.* 10. *I laid the foundation.* Whom? Himself! No, *v.* 11. no foundation but Christ. The prophets prophesied of him as to come; the apostles pointed at him as already come. "Behold the Lamb of God," said John the Baptist.

As for that place in Matthew, *by this rock,* is not meant the person of Peter. A poor rock for the church to be built on. A rock shaking immediately, *v.* 22. and worse afterward, Matt. xxvi. But it is the *confession* of Peter that is intended, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," *v.* 16. "Upon *this rock* I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

But is it not said that Jesus Christ is the corner stone? The corner stone is not the foundation!

I answer; His being the corner stone doth not hinder his being the foundation also. He is both in different respects, "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste, Isa. xxviii. 16. The use of a corner stone is to unite the sides of the building, yea, and of the foundation too. That Christ doth by making Jew and Gentile one. "But now, in Jesus Christ, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us," Eph. ii. 13, 14. He that could join those two distant sides, and make them one, can certainly (and we hope will in his own due time) reconcile lesser differences. The corner post is reckoned very material in a timber fabric, and so the corner stone. "The stone which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner," Ps. cxviii. 22.

I. Show the properties of Christ as a foundation, what kind of foundation he is.

1. A laid foundation, Isa. xxviii. 16. *I* lay; that is, God the Father, one that knew well enough how to do it, a God of infinite wisdom, and power. The Lord Jesus did not take to himself this honour of being a Mediator; he was called to it, appointed of God for such a purpose. And this is our comfort and joy: he that could best tell what would best serve to satisfy his offended justice, here fixed upon his Son for that purpose: "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom," Job xxxiii. 24. "I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people," Ps. lxxxix. 19.

2. A low foundation. Foundations are wont to be laid low; the lower the surer. So here, the Lord Jesus Christ was laid very low, that he might be a meet foundation for us; Phil. ii. 8. he *humbled* himself.

These were several steps of his humiliation:

Into the human nature; to be made a man. That was a long step downward. That the word should become flesh was more than if a star should turn into a clod.

Into subjection under the law. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," Gal. iv. 4. The moral law; nay, the ceremonial law—to be circumcised—presented in the temple—redeemed and ransomed with two turtles—bound to go up to all the feasts.

Into poverty and persecution, contempt and contradiction; to be spurned and trampled on.

To death itself, even the death of the cross; painful, shameful: it is called lifting up, but it was humiliation.

To the grave. When he was buried he was, as other foundations, laid under the ground.

And there was a necessity for all this: without it, no atonement, no reconciliation.

3. A foundation of stone, Isa. xxviii. 16. A stone is the fittest of all other things to make foundations of, because hard and firm, and yet easily hewn. Now Jesus Christ is a stone foundation, a rock. The Israelites "did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ," 1 Cor. x. 4.

4. A foundation out of sight. All foundations are so; we see the building, but we do not see the foundation. Now such a foundation is the Lord Jesus Christ; he is out of sight. Not below us, as he once was, under the earth, but above in glory.

His person is out of sight. Yet we *love* him, 1 Pet. i. 8.

His presence is invisible. He is with us every where, especially in his ordinances; but it is in an invisible way. We feel it; we do not see it. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20. Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20.

His proceedings are invisible; the proceedings of his grace within, the proceedings of his providence without. "Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron," Ps. lxxvii. 20.

5. A precious foundation, Isa. xxviii. 16. Though all stones in their places are useful, yet they are not all precious stones. Few buildings are built upon precious stones, but the church is. Christ is precious in himself, he is of great worth, the fairest of ten thousands. He is precious in their account and esteem, 1 Pet. ii. 7. To others he is a stone of stumbling, but to them that believe he is precious.

6. A permanent foundation; Isa. xxvi. 4. the *rock of ages*, from everlasting to everlasting. The saints have been building on him from the beginning, and will be to the end of time. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," Heb. xiii. 8. His righteousness is everlasting righteousness; his promises unchangeable promises.

7. An elect, chosen foundation; Isa. xxviii. 16. *chosen* of God, and precious.

8. An experienced, tried foundation. He was tried by God, who laid a load upon him; by men and devils, who did their best against him, yet all to no purpose; by the saints, who have had occasion to make use of him, and he never failed them.

II. Show what is our duty in reference to this foundation.

1. To believe all this concerning him—that God hath laid him purposely for a foundation—anointed, and appointed, him to be a Prince, and Saviour—given him to the world, that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

2. To behold and see our need of him. There is no rearing a building without a foundation. We have each of us a building to rear; and what foundation have we? None in ourselves; no righteousness of our own to commend us to God; no strength, or ability to any thing that is good.

3. To renounce all other foundations. They are all but sand. He that builds upon the sand, his building will fall. "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it," Matt. vii. 24, &c.

4. To repair to him in the way of faithful and fervent prayer. Tell him thou art sensible of thy need of him, thou art undone without him.

5. To build upon him. In the great business of justification, to roll and rest thy soul by faith upon

his meritorious righteousness—None but Christ, none but Christ.

In all our perils and dangers, personal or public, to fly to him, to trust in him, to rely upon him: faithful is he that hath promised. Ps. lxii. 1. 2; xlvi. 1. "Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence: I shall not be greatly moved," Ps. lxii. 1, 2. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," Ps. xlvi. 1.

6. To beware what we build upon this foundation, in opinion, in practice. "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." 1 Cor. iii. 12—14. If you build loose, vain, careless walking, your hopes built will be accordingly wood, hay, stubble.

OF THE CHURCH THE BUILDING. "Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 20—22. *Ye are built*, saith the apostle,—ye believing Ephesians, Christians, saints.

Show, I. What kind of building the church is; what are the properties of it.

There is a great deal of difference in buildings. The church is a none-such building.

1. It is a spiritual building. Other buildings are made of wood and stone, and such like materials. But this building is made of men and women: "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. ii. 5. What our Lord Jesus says of his kingdom, is true of his building, that it is not of this world—*in* it, but not *of* it, John xv. 19. It is a building of souls. Souls, united to him by faith, are those that make up this building.

2. It is a spacious building; a building of large and vast extent; a great house, nay a great city, nay a great kingdom, from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same—east, west, north, and south, Matt. viii. 11. It is true, in comparison with the devil's building it is but small, a remnant, a little, little flock; but in itself considered, it is exceedingly wide and comprehensive. "I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands," Rev. vii. 9.

3. It is a high building. Though part of it be here below, yet the top of it is as high as heaven. There it is that the glorious angels are, and the spirits of just men made perfect; all of this building.

And then for those that belong to it that are below; their aims and desires are high, their hopes and expectations are high, their affections and conversations are above: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ," Phil. iii. 20. They trample upon the great things of the world as dirt, as Moses: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter," Heb. xi. 24.

4. It is a holy building, Eph. ii. 21. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. iii. 16. Every building is not a temple. The church is God's temple. The temple was a place set apart for God—from all other uses for holy uses; so "The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself." And it is our duty to set ourselves apart to be for him—wholly—solely. This temple is called a house of prayer, Isa. lvi. 7. Holiness to the Lord is written upon the front of this building. It is the house that he dwells in. "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it," Ps. lxxxvii. 1, 2; cxxxii. 13, 14.

5. It is a living building. No other is so. The same who are quickened, are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," Eph. ii. 1, 20. The foundation is a living foundation, and the superstructure is a living superstructure, 1 Pet. ii. 4. 5. All the materials in this building are men and women made spiritually alive—quickened with divine quickenings. Such as once were dead in trespasses and sins, but are now otherwise—alive to God. O make this sure to yourselves.

6. It is a light building. This is one thing that makes a building pleasant, and comfortable—many and large windows. All the world besides is in darkness; it is the church only that hath the true light. As Egypt and Goshen. "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord, walk as children of light."

There are many things about which men are in the dark till they are in this building. As, about God; his glorious excellences, and perfections. About the Lord Jesus; who he is, and what he is, in himself, and to us. About the corruption of nature. About the evil of sin—the vanity of the creature. And the reality of invisible things—heaven—hell.

In all these grace enlightens. The devil's building is a dark building—called the kingdom of darkness, Col. i. 13.

7. It is a secure, a safe, building. Other buildings are exposed to wind, and weather, and water—to fire—to assaults, and batteries; but this is safe from all peril and danger, Matt. xvi. 18. Men in all ages and generations have been heaving at the church of God, and seeking to overthrow it, but it hath hitherto been in vain, and to no purpose; and will be so still, Ps. ii. The church of God is such a building as the ark was, 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.

8. It is a spreading, growing building. "All the building fitly framed together, *groweth* unto a holy temple in the Lord." It grows larger—by the addition of those to it who shall be saved. It grows better—as to light and knowledge—as to gifts and graces. Amen! The Lord increase it more and more. It increases slowly—church-work is slow work—but sure; though amidst much opposition, as in Ezra's time.

In some places, where a while ago there were but two or three houses, there is now a great town. And is it not so, (and would to the Lord it were so more and more!) as to the growth and progress of religion? In many towns and families where ignorance and profaneness ruled a few years since, now God is worshipped, and Christ; and his truths and ways are owned, and professed.

Show, II. What is our duty in reference to this building.

1. To see that we have a secure place, and standing in it. As it is a great privilege to be of that body and tree whereof Christ is the head and root, so it is a great privilege to be of that building whereof Christ is the foundation.

It is certain all that adhere to it in an outward, visible profession are not of it. The moss and the ivy cleave close to the walls of a house, but they are not on the foundation: so the hypocrite. There is a great deal of difference between such a one and the true stones, 1 John ii. 19.

All the true stones in this building are living stones, 1 Pet. ii. 5. What life hast thou? They are a habitation of God through the Spirit, Eph. ii. 22. Art thou so? Rather, doth not the unclean spirit dwell in thee, and rule in thee? Luke ii. 21—26.

But, how may it be done?

I answer: We must be sure we are fetched out of the quarry of a natural condition, by regenerating grace. There is much to do in this work—the dust flies in the face of him that hews; but it must be done—there is no other way.

We must by faith receive Christ Jesus the Lord; make him our foundation; rest and rely upon him for righteousness, acceptance, and salvation; cleaving to him with full purpose of heart.

Having done so, we must build up ourselves in our most holy faith; *growing* in grace; *adding* to faith, virtue. If we grow *into Christ* more and more, we are certainly in him, Jude 20, 21.

2. To seek as much as in us lies the good of the building. If we can do nothing else we can pray for it, Ps. cxxii. 3, 6. "for the *peace* of Jerusalem." Peace within itself; that differences may be healed: the cement, or mortar, is love. It is said, that all the stones in Solomon's temple were so ordered that they looked like one stone. Peace from enemies; open, secret, covered, uncovered.

Our prayers must be seconded with our endeavours. Can we do nothing towards its enlargement, its establishment, its repair?

SERMON II.

CHRIST IS OUR FOOD, AND ALL TRUE BELIEVERS FEED UPON HIM AND ARE FED WITH HIM.

John vi. 51.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

There are several things to be learned out of these words.

I. That Jesus Christ is bread.

II. That this bread hath sundry special properties which belong to it, and to no other.

III. That it is our duty to eat of this bread.

IV. That they that truly eat of this bread shall live for ever.

I. Jesus Christ is bread. There are several things by which he is set forth in the Scriptures, and among the rest, bread. Those who heard him say that he was bread, and that they must eat him, were offended; it was a hard saying, and they could not bear it, v. 60. The reason was, they understood it carnally, and they should have understood it spiritually; just as the papists do by another of his sayings, *This is my body.* He says also, I am the vine; I am the door: and must these be understood literally? It cannot be. He is the head of a great body, and the foundation of a great house. Literally? no, spiritually. So he is bread; he himself says so.

You know bread is some kind of corn, rye, or wheat, or barley, or the like, thrashed and ground, kneaded and baked, and then it is food for us. We eat it, and are nourished by it. So Christ: he is spiritual bread.

He was thrashed and ground in his suffering and dying, and that was necessary in order to his being made bread for us: I give my flesh. Luke xxiv. 46. "It *behoved* Christ to suffer." It was necessary it should be so, in order to the satisfying of God's justice, without which we could have no nourishment, no comfort to our souls. Without blood no remission. There was death in the threatening, and

therefore his heel must be bruised, or the serpent's head would not have been broken. Therefore it concerns us all to be acquainted with Christ, and him crucified, 1 Cor. ii. 2. This was Paul's chief study, and it should be ours.

The sufferings and death of Christ are the food of our souls. Every thing that hath life must have food to support that life; it cannot live without food. So it is with our souls; they can no more live without food than our bodies can. Take the food away, and you take the life away. Adam in innocency had all the trees in the garden given him, save one, that the fruit thereof might be food to him; that is, to his body; and as for his soul, God himself immediately was the life, and strength, and maintenance of it. But when we find he fell from God, all supplies of that kind were for ever cut off, and he must have perished everlastingly, if some new nourishment had not been provided for him. Now that new nourishment was the seed of the woman bruised; and therefore God revealed it to him immediately, even before he pronounced sentence, Gen. iii.

II. Notice the properties of this bread.

1. It is the bread of God. "The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world," *v.* 33. Not the bread which God feeds upon himself; and yet in a sense he is so, Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5. He is satisfied in him and with him. But he is the bread which he hath provided for *us* to feed upon, as the Lamb of God, John i. 29. He knew we could never have thought of such a way of nourishment for ourselves. No, not if we had had all the angels in heaven to help us, and therefore he did it, Job xxxiii. 24. Ps. lxxxix. 19. Gen. xxii. 13, 14. As he is a foundation of God's laying, so he is bread of God's providing.

Was the bread made of corn for our bodies our own contrivance? No: who could have devised such a thing? It is the appointment of our heavenly Father, and a wise and gracious appointment it is, Gen. i. 29. So Christ, the bread of life, is of God's providing.

2. It is given bread. Given by God the Father; "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven," *v.* 32. The same that contrived gave, freely and of his own accord, without our asking or seeking. It was a choice gift, John iii. 16. It was the unspeakable gift, 2 Cor. ix. 15. O be sensible of this love, and give thanks; forget not this above all his benefits! "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

This bread is given by the Son himself. It was his own act and deed, to give himself to be bread for us: "My flesh which I will give for the life of the world." It was a wonder he should ever yield to such a motion when it was made to him; but he did it readily, at the first word; "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Such love he had for us, and for our redemption and salvation, Eph. v. 2. And should not we then readily and cheerfully give ourselves to him; all we are, have, or can do? Can we bestow ourselves better?

3. It is living bread. "I am the *living* bread that came down from heaven." All other bread is a dead thing, but this bread lives. It was dead, but it is alive, and lives for evermore, Rev. i. 18. And it is well for us that it is so, for he ever lives to make *intercession* for us. That is the work and business of his life, Heb. vii. 25.

4. It is the bread of life, *v.* 48. Not only living itself, but giving life to us: no other bread doth so. Other bread maintains life, but where is the bread that gives life? This bread gives life; it makes those to live that were dead. It is no sooner received by a hand of faith but the man is alive; alive to God, which is the best life we can live in this world.

5. It is manna. Manna was the bread which God gave the Israelites from heaven, fresh every morning; and dainty bread it was. It came down in a dew; it was small, round, and white, and the time of gathering it was the morning.

This manna was a type of Christ, the true manna. As that came down from heaven, so did he; that in a dew, he in the dew of the gospel. As that was little, round, and white, so is he; *little*, in his humiliation; *round*, in his eternity, without beginning of days or end of life; *white*, in his spotless innocency. As the time for gathering that was in the morning, so of this: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." As that fed the Israelites while in the wilderness, so this feeds our souls while we are in the wilderness of this world. It ceases in Canaan.

6. It is meat indeed, *v.* 55. It is *solid* and *substantial* meat. Not the shadow of meat, but *true bread*, *v.* 32. All the things in this world are, to a soul, like the picture of the world with which the devil tempted our Lord Jesus, delusive, and unsatisfactory. "Wherefore," then, "do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Mix faith with this, and labour accordingly, John vi. 27.

It is *suitable* meat. It is no meat if it be not suitable. Every creature is maintained with food suited to it, Gen. iii. 14. Now nothing is suitable food to our souls but Jesus Christ; nothing else is suitable to their *nature*. Spiritual beings must have spiritual food. All things under the sun are carnal. He was a *fool* that bid his soul feast upon what was in his barn, Luke xii. 16. Nor is any thing else suited to the *necessities* of our souls. Two things

our souls have need of—righteousness, and strength; and where are these to be had, but with him? Isa. xlv. 24. We have need of food that will be physic too: and such food is Christ, Ezek. xlvii. 12. *Sweet* meat, Cant. ii. 3. the *fruit* of his death, resurrection, ascension, 1 Pet. ii. 3. gracious, or sweet. Every thing in Christ is sweet to a believing soul: his promises, pardons, offices, ordinances, comforts, communion. His word is sweeter than honey, Ps. cxix. 103. His love is sweeter than wine, Cant. i. 2. His presence is sweeter than marrow, Ps. lxiii. 5. In a word, his mouth is sweetness, and all he is delights, Cant. v. 16.

Satisfying meat. A man may surfeit with the world, but he can never be satisfied with the world. A man may be satisfied with Christ, but he can never be surfeited with Christ. Compare Isa. lv. 2. with Ps. xxxvi. 8.—abundantly satisfied, satisfied, and over-satisfied, satisfied, and satisfied again. This is the excellency of spiritual dainties, that the more a man feeds on them, the more he would have, and yet he hath a kind of satisfaction in what he hath; such as causes him to say, *Return unto thy rest, O my soul*, Ps. cxvi. 7. He hath union with Christ, yet he would have more and nearer union; he longs to be with him.

Now all this is said to draw out your desires, and to provoke your appetite to this meat. And doth it not prevail? Do ye not feel your need of Christ? Are ye not hungering and thirsting after righteousness? If you are, blessed are ye, for ye shall be filled; if not, you will be sent away empty, Matt. v. 6. Luke i. 53.

III. It is our duty to eat of this rare bread.

If any man eat; implying, if we do not eat of it we are like to be never the better for it. It will do us no good to hear of it only. We have heard a great deal of Christ; but what will that avail us, except we believe what we hear. It will do us no good to look upon it only. Will looking upon meat nourish us? No; we must eat if we will be nourished. Will looking upon Christ, and seeing others feed upon him, feed and nourish thee? No, though it is the best fare in the world.

What is meant by eating? I answer, believing, *v.* 35. Of all the comparisons by which believing is set forth in Scripture, none is like this of eating Christ, and feeding upon Christ.

Before we eat we feel a need of meat, and have a desire toward it, an earnest desire, we *must* have it. Give a man what else you will; No, says he, I must have meat. As the Egyptians parted with all for bread. So it is with the soul. It sees its lost and undone condition in itself by reason of guilt, and not sees it only, but feels it, and thereupon must have Christ; as the prodigal, Luke xv.

As in eating there is the taking of the meat, putting it into the mouth, and chewing and digesting it, whereby it is made my own, and turned into blood and spirits in my body; so in believing there is a particular application made of Christ, and his merit and righteousness, Gal. ii. 21. We may see, and hear, and smell at a distance, but that that we eat must be near us; that that nourishes must be made one with us. "That Christ may dwell *in* your hearts," Eph. iii. 17.

As after eating there is strength and vigour, (Ps. civ. 15. *the staff of life,*) the desire satisfied, the body recruited, made able for work and burthen; so upon believing there follows spiritual strength, peace, comfort, joy, ability for duty, walking with God, working for God, which they that do not believe have not.

How is it proved to be duty thus to do?

I answer; 1. From the many calls and invitations to it both in the Old Testament, and in the New, Isa. lv. 1. Matt. xi. 28. John vii. 37. If his mind were not we should come and eat, he would not in this manner invite and call. See Mark x. 49. He calls; therefore we may come.

2. From the many commands and injunctions to it, absolutely requiring it of us. He commands, therefore we must come. We are under guilt, the greatest guilt of all other, if we do not, 1 John iii. 23. O bethink thyself, and do as he commands. Thou hast broken other commands; in this be obedient. It is to eat of the best meat that ever was prepared. When the serpent (namely, the devil) assailed Eve, that which gave him advantage was, that the thing he moved her to was only to eat, and the fruit was such as was pleasant. Yet all the persuasions of heaven and earth will not prevail with some people to eat of this fruit; not forbidden, but *commanded*, fruit; not meat that will poison, but meat that will *save* thee. O then take and eat; receive Christ Jesus the Lord, and believe in him: think thou hearest him saying to thee, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved," Cant. v. 1. Shall I inquire what bread do ye live upon? Bread of idleness, deceit, violence, carnal pleasure, your own duties and performances! It will be gravel, Prov. xx. 17.

IV. They that truly eat of this bread shall live for ever.

What more likely motive could possibly be used to prevail with us: Eat, and live; eat, and live for ever. Everlasting life will certainly be the portion of all those, that by a true and a lively faith receive Christ Jesus the Lord, who eat his flesh and drink his blood, feed upon him. But who says so? He that will certainly make it good; the Amen, the faithful and true witness. It is repeated often, *v.* 35, 48. and *v.* 47. with a solemn asseveration:—he *hath* it; it is as surely his as if now in glory. Now, do you know what this living for ever is, what it means? It is to be saved; delivered from the second death in hell, and made eternally happy in heaven.

And shall not this allure us? God said to Adam, In the day thou eatest, thou shalt die the death, surely die. Christ says to us, In the day thou eatest, living thou shalt live, thou shalt surely live. Eating ruined us, eating saves us.

Inference,

1. Then the bread spoken of in this chapter is not sacramental bread; nor the eating here spoken of sacramental eating, as the papists would have it, to prove transubstantiation.

For, the sacrament of the Lord's supper was not yet instituted, when Christ spake this: and, therefore, it had been impossible for his hearers to understand what he meant.

Many do eat the sacramental bread that do not live for ever, as 1 Cor. x. 4.

Many do live for ever, that never eat sacramental bread, as, besides all elect infants dying in infancy or childhood, the converted thief upon the cross, and many another. Yet to eat the sacramental bread is certainly duty—*Do this;* and for any that are adult to live in the neglect of it when they have a call to it, and opportunity for it, is a great sin, and must be reckoned for. Nay, it is comfortable, sweet, profitable, gainful duty; it is a feast, and that is the reason our Lord Jesus hath appointed the outward elements to be bread and wine, that by eating and drinking them by faith, might be sealed to us pardon of sin, peace with God, right and title to heaven.

2. Then see the reason why multitudes perish eternally. They will not eat of this bread, their mouths are out of taste to it, they are filled with worldly trash; if he that eats lives eternally, he that doth not eat dies eternally. This is gospel, Mark xvi. 16.

3. Then you that have eaten, in God's name, take the comfort of it; I mean, that are true believers. Eternal life is yours.

4. Then be exhorted all of you to eat of this bread; we must eat often, daily.

SERMON III.

CHRIST IS THE ROOT AND BELIEVERS ARE THE BRANCHES.

JOHN XV. 5.

I am the vine, ye are the branches.

THESE are the words of our Lord Jesus, which he spake to his disciples; wherein he says, concerning himself, I am the vine, and concerning them, Ye are the branches. I am the vine, namely, the root of the vine. Christ and true believers are a great tree; and, amongst all other trees, he hath pitched upon two to set forth himself and them; a vine here, and an olive-tree in Rom. xi. Both of them are choice trees, and of great use, bearing excellent fruit. Now, the root is Christ, and believers are the branches of that tree. These two, the root and the branches, make the tree, as the head and members do the body. Compare 1 Cor. xii. 12.

DOCT. Jesus Christ and true believers make one great tree, whereof he is the root and they are the branches.

I wave at present that it is a vine; having had occasion lately to speak of the church under that notion from Isa. xxvii. 2, 3. and therefore I only say, it is a tree, a great tree, whereof he is the root, believers are the branches.

Show, I. They that are in this relation are true believers.

Are not hypocrites branches? Doth not baptism ingraft all that come under that ordinance into Christ? In a sense it doth, into his visible body: many grafts are grafted that come to nothing, never knit, never fasten, and so wither and die: yet the stock remains alive and good, and breaks forth again. So it is here: only true believers, such as are called, and chosen, and faithful, are the true branches.

1. They, and none but they, have communion with Christ. Elect persons not yet called may be said to have a remote potential union, being in the decree. External visible professors have a kind of seeming union, such as a sprig or branch which is tied to a tree with a string or with only, may be said to have; which is another sort of union than that of the true branches. The true branches are so in it as to be of it, but so is not such a branch, 1 John ii. 19. Judas was constantly with Christ as the rest of the apostles were, tied both to him and them by an external tie, yet all the while he was a limb of the devil, a branch of the cursed root; not of Christ the true root.

O then see to this, that besides the outward, there be an inward, ingrafting by a true act of faith.

2. They, and none but they, have spiritual life in them. We are all by nature dead in trespasses and sins, dead in law, dead in state; there is no spiritual life in us, none of the life of God, Eph. iv. 18. we are alienated from it. We have natural life, and live as men, but not otherwise. Just as in a tree; you may see it plainly in yonder great oak;* how many dead branches are there; *branches*, but dead. Such are all hypocrites in the tree Christ; they have none of Christ's Spirit dwelling in them, and therefore they have no life. It is the Spirit that quickens, 1 Cor. xv. 45. They have not the Son, therefore no life. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life," 1 John v. 12.

It concerns us all to inquire, What life have I? Am I alive to God? The prodigal son was alive, during his ramble, but not to his father, he was

* Mr. Henry's residence was called Broad Oak, there being a large tree of that description very near the house. It was cut down in May, 1711. Matt. Henry's Diary, MS.

dead to him. Inquire what signs of life you have. Do you possess sense, motion, appetite?

3. They, and none but they, do bring forth fruit in him, see *v.* 2.—"every branch *in me* that brings not forth fruit." To bring forth fruit is to do that which is for the matter of it good; either towards men, in works of justice, mercy, charity; or towards God, in praying, hearing, sanctifying the sabbath. Now all this an hypocrite may do; nay, he may do more than many a true Christian; but nothing of it *in Christ*. Here they part. "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in *the name* of the Lord Jesus," Col. iii. 17. They do it by virtue of strength received from him, John xv. 5. 2 Cor. iii. 5.

They bring forth fruit, aiming with a single eye at pleasing him, to show forth his virtues and praises, 1 Pet. ii. 9. And also, it is done trusting to his merit and mediation alone for acceptance, Phil. iii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 5. Now doth any hypocrite do this? Can he say, as Paul, Phil. i. 21. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain?"

4. They, and none but they, have heartily and unfeignedly consented to him. This is it that makes Christ ours, and us his; when we receive him to ourselves, John i. 12. and give ourselves to him, 2 Cor. viii. 5. upon gospel terms. This puts us *into* him. Now no hypocrite doth this. He may profess to do it in word and tongue, but that is all.

5. They, and none but they, are owned by him as true branches. To others he says, *Depart from me*, I know you not. What, not know us? We have prophesied, eaten, and drunk in thy name, Matthew vii. 22, 23. Luke xiii. 25—30. Though ye have, yet, if workers of iniquity, depart.

Aye, but he calls the honest, upright, obedient, fruitful people, his friends, his children, his brethren, John xv. 7.

Show, II. What kind of root Christ is to these branches.

1. A universal root; to all of them; Jew or Gentile; of what kindred, or country, or nation, or language soever they be.

To Old-Testament saints. He was Abraham's root, and David's root: a branch from them as man, and yet a root to them as God-man. They were all in him; all saved by him.

To New-Testament saints. He was Peter's root, and Paul's root, and thy root, and my root, if we be true believers.

There are two universal roots; and these are the two Adams. The first man Adam was a common root to us all, as men and women. God planted him a noble vine, but he degenerated, and became, to all his posterity, a root of bitterness, bearing gall and wormwood, sin and wrath. When he fell we all fell. But God was pleased to appoint us a second Adam, another root—Jesus Christ—that whosoever believes in him might not perish, 1 Cor. xv. 22.

2. An unseen root. The root of a tree lies invisible, out of sight; we see it not. The tree we see, but not the root. So it is with Christ that saves us, 1 Peter i. 8. He was visible many years when, being made flesh, he dwelt among us, but now we see him no more with bodily eyes; though by an eye of faith we do see him, as it is said of Moses, Heb. xi. 27. The root of other trees is out of sight below; this root is out of sight above. The church is a great tree inverted, its root is in heaven, its branches here on earth, multitudes of them. It is true there are branches in heaven with their root.

3. An unsightly root. In the root of a tree there is no kind of beauty, or comeliness; no greenness, as there is in the branches, or fruit; nothing to commend it to the eye; it is a despicable thing. So was Christ our root, in his humiliation, Isa. liii. 2. View him in his birth, in the stable; in his life, not having where to lay his head; but especially in his death, hanging upon the tree. Would any one think him to be the Son of God and Saviour of the world? Allude to 1 Samuel x. 27.

4. A strong root. This is one excellency of a root, that it be firm and stable; sufficient to bear the weight and burthen of the tree and branches that grow upon it, Rom. xi. 18. Our Lord Jesus is a strong Saviour, Ps. lxxxix. 19. Jer. l. 34. Heb. vii. 25. We have need of such a one,

(1.) To satisfy the justice of God for the sins we are guilty of, by undergoing the weight of his infinite wrath. This he did, and no one else could, Psalm xl. 6—8.

(2.) To support and succour us under our temptations. This also he is able to do. Heb. ii. 18. The world tempts, but, be of good cheer, "I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33. The devil also, but "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly," Rom. xvi. 20.

(3.) To save and deliver us from all our enemies; wicked men, death, and the grave, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56.

5. A sappy root. This is another excellency. If a root be withered, and dry, the tree cannot flourish; how should it? See Ps. civ. 16. "The trees of the Lord are full of sap.'

The sap of this great tree, that keeps it green and flourishing, is the Spirit; the Spirit of grace. Now Christ the root had the Spirit without measure, John iii. 34. Col. i. 19: according to the promise, Isa. xi. 2. He had a fulness of all the gifts, graces, and comforts of the Spirit: knowledge, wisdom, faith, love, meekness, patience, humility, self-denial. He had them all in *perfection* as God-man. There were in him no mixture of the contrary corruptions.

6. A supplying root. The sap which the root hath, it hath it not for itself, but for the branches. The branches suck and draw from it, and so are maintained in their greenness and fruitfulness. Though

the root have it, yet if it do not communicate it the tree is none the better. The Lord Jesus Christ is a communicative root. What he hath of the Spirit he hath for *us*, John i. 16. Psalm lxvii. 18. compare Eph. iv. 8.

As the sun hath light, the springs and fountains water, the mother milk in her breasts, not for themselves; so it is here. He is our Joseph, our great corn-master. Joseph did not lay up for his own use, but to supply others. See his gracious invitation to poor sinners, to come to him for what they want, Isa. lv. 1—3. Matt. xi. 28. John vii. 37. Rev. iii. 18. And let us come to him accordingly.

Exhortation I. Suppose we are branches, true branches, in Christ the vine, what is to be done?

1. You have cause to be very thankful to the great Husbandman that hath grafted you into him.

Consider, (1.) If he had not done it, it had never been done. We could not have ingrafted ourselves. Godly relations, ministers, could not have done it. No hand but his could have performed it.

(2.) What misery it frees us from. Hereby we are cut off from the wild olive, from the devil's stock and family, from the bondage of his vassals, Rom. xi. 24.

(3.) What privileges it entitles us to. It is a great dignity and honour to be a branch of such a noble vine. Now thou mayst with comfort call God Father, and come to him with boldness, assured of due supplies, of all things needful both for life and godliness. Hereby thou hast right and title to the heavenly inheritance: thy root will certainly bring thee where he is.

(4.) How unworthy thou wert, and how unlikely for such advancement. Perhaps of mean extraction, less than the least; perhaps a crooked piece. There are but a few, and thou art one, John xiv. 22. Be not high minded, Rom. xi. 14.

(5.) The time when he did it. Perhaps early in thy days. If so, the time was a time of love, Ezek. xvi. 18.

(6.) By what means. The word, perhaps occasionally heard; the rod, perhaps working with the word. O say, as David, Ps. ciii. "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Say, as Paul, "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever," 1 Tim. i. 17.

2. Your duty is to take the comfort of it to your souls daily. It is the will of God, that his people should be a comforted people; and what will comfort if this will not. Christ is the vine, and I am one of the branches? If so,

(1.) Then the Father will certainly take care of me; to purge me and prune me. Seasonably; for my good, *v.* 1, 2.

(2.) Then I shall be sure not to be cut off, nor cast out, John xvii. 11, 12. Dead branches are easily broken off, nay, blown off, but not living ones. That is, provided I am a fruitful branch. And he will make us fruitful. As it is our duty, so it is his promise.

(3.) Then when I die, I shall be transplanted into God's paradise.

(4.) Then he will reckon with those that lop at these branches, Ps. lxxx. 12.

3. You must abide in him. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," John xv. 4—8. There are in these verses three arguments to move us to it: While we abide in him he will abide in us; It will be a means of our fruitfulness; and, We shall have what we will for asking.

What is it to abide in Christ?

(1.) To abide in the truths of Christ; to hold them fast, and not to let them go, 2 Tim. i. 13. God only knows how we may be tried as to this matter. The way of popery is an erroneous way in doctrinals; it is called the lie, and how many poor souls are poisoned by it; but beware, "lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness," 2 Pet. iii. 17.

(2.) To abide in the righteousness of Christ. Our own righteousness and Christ's righteousness are in competition. Now which art thou for? The Pharisee was for his own, Luke xviii. Paul was for Christ's, Phil. iii. We have need to look to this daily, in every thing.

(3.) To abide in the love of Christ, Jude 21. John xv. 9. The way to continue in the love of Christ, is to continue in his obedience, *ch.* xiv. 23.

(4.) To abide in the fellowship of Christ. Fellowship with Christ is to be had in the use of his holy ordinances, Cant. i. 7, 8.

4. We must abound in fruit-bearing. This he expects from all the branches that are in him. Leaves will not serve the turn; it is *fruit* that God looks for. Yet there must be leaves also: a visible profession, Rom. x. 10.

(1.) There must be good fruit, Matt. iii. 10. The fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

(2.) Much good fruit, John xv. 8. A little will not serve, though good; it must bear a proportion to our standing. There is more looked for from those that have stood long than from others, Heb. v. 12.

It must also bear a proportion to our supplies. Where most cost hath been bestowed, most means used, there should be most fruit.

(3.) It must be fruit in season, Ps. i. 3. According to the present circumstances of our condition. Eccl. vii. 14.

O that I knew what to say to move to this. The great controversy that God hath with us at this day is about our fruit: so little is found, that we have reason to fear cutting down, Luke xiii. 7—9. Isa. v. 7.

5. There is duty lying upon us also towards our fellow-branches. Which is.

(1.) As much as in us lies to live in love and peace with them, not envying, judging, despising, boasting—the higher, the lower—the bigger, the lesser—the stronger, the weaker. All branches are not top branches: there should be no provoking, rubbing against, fretting one another, Gal. v. 6.

(2.) To promote their growth and fruitfulness. Every one in his place and way: one means of doing this is by Christian communion. Heb. x. 25.

Exhortation II. Suppose we are not yet true branches, is there no hope?

None at all if we continue in that condition. Eph. ii. 12. If without Christ, we are without hope. But if we look about us in time, the matter may be amended. O then be persuaded—To-day, while it is called to-day.

1. Acquaint yourself with the terms of the change: upon what terms you may be Christ's and Christ yours: and accept of them. Many are ignorant and so perish, John iv. 10. The terms are,

(1.) You must be willing to come off from the old stock, the service of sin, all sin must be renounced; no more fruit must be brought forth to it.

(2.) You must assent and consent to a new Master: you must take his yoke upon you. And what harm is there in all this? O do it.

2. Apply yourself to the great Husbandman, which is the Father: beg of him to graft you into this vine: to bestow his Spirit and grace upon you, to be a living principle in you.

3. Assent and consent to the gospel.

SERMON IV.

CHRIST IS RAIMENT TO US, AND IT IS OUR DUTY TO PUT HIM ON.

ROMANS xiii. 14.

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE same that was said when our Lord told his hearers he must be their food, and they must eat his flesh—*This is a hard saying*, John vi. 60.—may be said concerning this of Paul here—*But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*. Is Christ a garment, a coat? It seems he is.

Food and raiment are the two great requisites for our bodies, which if we have we are commanded to be therewith content, 1 Tim. vi. 8. The same two things must be had also for the soul, food and raiment; spiritual food, and spiritual raiment. And what is that? I answer, Jesus Christ: he is our food, and he is our raiment, and if we have him we may well be content; nay, joyful, and cheerful, and thankful; but, alas! how many are there that mind not these things, that are carking and caring *what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and wherewithal* they shall be clothed, as to their bodies, their perishing part, but mind not what becomes of their souls, their precious, their heaven-born souls, whether they be fed or no, clad or no.

The apostle here would have it to be otherwise, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." But in Gal. iii. 27, he speaks as if all that were baptized had put on Christ already; "For as many of you as have been baptized unto Christ, have put on Christ."

There are two ways of putting him on—in *profession*, in word and tongue—in *power*, in deed and truth. Of the former it is intended in Galatians—so we have all put him on when we were baptized. Of the latter in Romans—oh that we would all be persuaded so to put him on.

Show, I. What of Christ is the garment that we must put on.

II. What are the properties of Christ as a garment; what kind of garment he is.

III. Why and how we are to put him on.

I. What of Christ is the garment that we must put on.

Two things in Christ are the garment: His merit and righteousness: we must *put on* this for our justification. His spirit and grace; we must *put on* this for our sanctification.

Justification and sanctification are our two great concernments. It is necessary that we be justified, and that we be sanctified. Now neither of these can possibly be had otherwise than by putting on Christ. There is no justification but by his merit, no sanctification but by his Spirit. See 1 Cor. vi. 11. And therefore should we not, by all means, put him on?

1. His merit and righteousness for justification. Justification hath two things in it:

(1.) Acquitting us from guilt. We have all sinned: have we not? Yes. And is not God thereby offended? Yes. And must he not be atoned, and pacified, his justice satisfied? Yes. But how? By any thing that we ourselves can do or suffer? No. By any thing that any of our fellow-creatures can? No. How then? Only by the dying and rising again of the blessed Jesus; "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

Rom. iv. 25. His blood alone satisfies and pacifies; herefore, his blood alone justifies. And that blood s the garment that we must *put on*, else no atonenent. *Put it on!* What is that? hear, talk, of it? No. Stand by, and look upon it? No. Hearing of clothes s not putting on clothes; looking at clothes is not. So here,

To put him on, is to receive and apply him to ourelves by a true and lively faith. Believing him both ble and willing to redeem and save me, and thereupon coming to him, and closing with him; and upon ny so doing, persuading myself that God for his ake doth forgive me, and thereupon comforting nyself; being of good cheer. It is called receiving he atonement, Rom. v. 1, 9—11. Till this be done hy soul is naked in the sight of God, *the shame of hy nakedness appears*; that is, thy sins are all upon he score: thou art guilty, and God is angry, and if hou shouldst die in that condition thou wilt be cerainly lost, and that for ever. Doth it not concern s then to *put on Christ*, to believe in him for justiication from the guilt of sin.

(2.) Accepting of us as righteous. Some will have his to be no part of our justification, but the former nly. I think justification includes this also, accordng to the definition in the catechism,* "Wherein e *pardons* all our sins and *accepts of us*, as righteous n his sight." This Paul says he laboured in, 2 Cor. . 9. Now how may this be? Eph. i. 6. *In the beloved;* nat is, in Christ, through his merit and righteousness lone. He hath not only prevailed by what he did and uffered, and is doing, for us that we may be forgiven, nd not come into condemnation; but, moreover, nat we may come into favour, be loved and owned, e kissed and embraced, our persons accepted, our erformances accepted. And how? for any worth or orthiness that is in us or them? No; only in his ame, and for his sake, and through his merit; in rder to which we must put him on, as Jacob put n the clothes of his brother Esau, Gen. xxvii. 15. hen he came for the blessing. Jacob was in no ult; he did not come for a pardon: no, he came for blessing; but unless he had put on Esau's clothes e had not had that blessing; but having them on e had it: "And he came near, and kissed him: nd he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessd him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the nell of a field which the Lord hath blessed," *v.* 27. o here, we must put on the Lord Jesus Christ, that , his merit and righteousness; we must come in his ame; we must plead what he hath done and suffered r us, as our elder brother: and then—See, *the smell of y son*; and then—a *blessing*, else none; "*Therefore* od give thee of the dew of heaven and of the earth," 28. See, also, in the story concerning Joseph and s brethren, Gen. xlii. 20; xliii. 5. No Benjamin, no corn. Now our Benjamin is Christ, or rather, God's Benjamin, *his* Son, our Brother. In him he is well pleased, and in him *only*, Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5. If we come without him we come without our errand.

2. His Spirit and grace for our sanctification. Besides the clothes we are to appear in before God, which are Christ's righteousness alone, there are clothes also that we must appear in before men; yes, and before God too; and those are Christ's Spirit and grace; the new nature, the divine nature. We must be *new creatures*, 2 Cor. v. 17. New within, and new without; new in heart, and new in life; *putting off the old man, and putting on the new*, Eph. iv. 24. Now that new man is Christ. If we have not his Spirit, we are none of his, Rom. viii. 9. Him, therefore, and his Spirit we must put on; his image and likeness: being as he was, (Heb. vii. 26.) holy; doing as he did; walking as he walked, 1 John ii. 6. Note how it comes in here, Rom. xiii. 12, 13. *Cast off the works of darkness*, rioting, drunkenness; and put on—what? sobriety, temperance? no; but, all in one—the Lord Jesus Christ,—*Jesus*, the Saviour; *Christ*, anointed to be so; *Lord*, to rule you.

II. What kind of garment is the Lord Jesus Christ?

It is a great matter, especially with some, what kind of clothes we wear; that they be tight and fashionable, and according to our rank and quality; rather above it than under it, or below it, or short of it: and most commonly those that are most curious and concerned about the clothing of their bodies, are least curious and concerned what clothes their souls have; it is to them no matter what rags, what filthy rags, they appear in, both before God and man.

Behold, I bring you tidings this day of brave clothes, which may be yours, if you will—each of you—for the putting on. And those are, the *Lord Jesus Christ;* his merit and righteousness to justify you; his Spirit and grace to sanctify you. What say you? Will you accept of them, will you have them, put them on, wear them?

Tell us, first, what are their properties, that should commend them to us?

In general—In Luke xv. 22. it is called the *best* robe. Best indeed; no other is to be compared with it. Brown bread and the gospel are good fare; rags and Christ's righteousness are good clothing. It is first in worth and excellency, and first in order of time—though not as to our persons, yet as to our nature, in Adam.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is a costly garment; the dearest and most costly garment that ever was. We may judge of its excellency by its price. Some people are extraordinarily profuse about their clothes; and are cautioned against it, 1 Tim. ii. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 3.

* Commonly called the Assembly's Catechism, being agreed upon by the assembly of Divines at Westminster, A. D. 1643.

Lo, here is a costly robe indeed; not to us that must wear it, (it costs us nothing but the accepting and putting it on,) but to him that made and prepared it: it cost him dear. Ere the Lord Jesus Christ could be a suit of clothes for thy soul—to justify, sanctify, save thee, he must be made a man. And so he was. He must die the death of the cross. And so he did. We read, Gen. xxxvii. of Joseph's brethren dipping their brother's coat in a goat's blood, and sending it to their father; but our Joseph dipt the coat that was to be for us in *his own* blood, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. And doth not this commend it to you? He clothed himself with the rags of our nature, that he might clothe us with the robe of his grace: nay, more than that—he was made sin for us, a curse for us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13.

2. He is a comely garment. There are some persons whose clothes, in the eyes of sober men, are very uncomely; disfiguring, rather than adorning, the body; discovering, rather than hiding, their shame. But here is a garment comely indeed, beautiful, and lovely, and glorious; a garment that makes the soul that hath it on amiable towards God: he is pleased with it, and accepts of it.

The imputed righteousness of Christ doth so. The implanted righteousness is called *grace*, that is, beauty. See what is said of one particular grace, 1 Pet. iii. 4, 5. Could we but see a soul out of Christ, that hath not put him on yet, what guilt and filth it lies under, what dirty rags it hath on; we should wonder how it could endure itself, much more how the pure and Holy God doth endure it; especially, coming so near him as sometimes they do in holy ordinances, Amos v. 21. "*I will not smell* in your solemn assemblies." See Ezek. xvi. where is set forth, both our miserable, loathsome condition by nature, v. 4—8. and our lovely, amiable condition by grace, v. 10—14. though what is said is meant chiefly of their church privileges.

3. He is a large garment. The righteousness of Christ for justification is so. He is able to save to the uttermost. There is in him merit enough to satisfy for all thy sins, to pay all thy debts. He has incense enough to perfume all thy services. What is said of the bed, Isa. xxviii. 20. is true of all the garments—of all our own righteousness—they are too short and too narrow; thy nakedness appears through them.

The Spirit and grace of Christ for sanctification is so. As he forgives all thy iniquities, and hath wherewithal, so he will heal all thy diseases, mortify all thy corruptions. There is a perfection of parts in sanctification: the *whole* man is renewed, though not yet *wholly*, 1 Thess. v. 23. but as light in a morning—all the sky over.

4. He is a lasting garment, nay, everlasting. The Israelites had clothes that lasted forty years, and did not wax old; that was a great while, Deut. viii. 4. But here is a garment which lasts for ever.

The righteousness of Christ for justification is *everlasting* righteousness, Dan. ix. 24. There is a fountain of it that cannot be drawn dry—not a cistern, a laver, Zech. xiii. As long as we shall last sinning, the righteousness of Christ will last satisfying. Abuse not this, at your peril. Rom. vi. 1. "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.

The grace of Christ is lasting too. Where it is in truth it is in perseverance. "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing," Ps. xcii. 13, 14. We read of two sorts of clothes, Gen. iii.—One, of Adam and Eve's making—aprons of fig leaves, v. 7. Another, of God's making—coats of skins, v. 21. There is a great deal of difference in warmth and in duration. The former may represent our own righteousness, the latter Christ's. The beasts whose skins were used died.

5. He is a white garment; he is expressly said to be so, Rev. iii. 18. When the angels appeared at any time in human shape, that was the colour their clothes were of, Mark xvi. 5. Acts i. 10. So, when our Lord was transfigured, Matt. xvii. 2. The whiteness signifies two things:

(1.) Innocency and purity. Every justified person clothed with Christ's righteousness is, as it were, innocent before God, Ps. xxvi. 6. So the sanctified are in comparison with others, and it is their duty to labour to be so more and more.

(2.) Joy and gladness, Eccl. ix. 8. He that hath put on Christ, and is accepted of God, hath reason to rejoice all the days of his life; and he ought to do so, Phil. iv. 4. Isa. lxi. 10.

The woman which John saw, Rev. xii. 1. was clothed with the sun: a shining garment indeed. The priests under the law were clothed in white linen garments; and see Rev. xix. 8. "The fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

6. He is the wedding garment; of such we read, Matt. xxii. 12. It is to be understood of Christ's righteousness imputed. There is no welcome with God without it. It is to be understood, also, of his Spirit and grace implanted; a suitable frame of heart to gospel privileges. Put on Christ, and thou hast that. And shall not all this prevail to make you in love with it?

III. How must we put on Christ?

Three things must be done.

1. There must be a work of conviction wrought upon thy soul. Thou must see thy need of this clothing. Most people, as Laodicea, say, they have need of nothing, and alas! they have need of every thing; particularly of good clothes, for they are *naked*. A sinful condition is a naked condition

Thy body is perhaps well enough clothed, decently and warm; but thy soul is naked, and destitute, and exposed; dirty, and has nothing to hide it.

2. All that will have these fine clothes must come to Christ, and buy them, Rev. iii. 18. Isa. lv. 1. In buying, there is parting with one thing and receiving another. Canst thou find in thy heart to part with thy rags in exchange for these good clothes? the rags of thy sins, Rom. xiii. 12—14. Eph. iv. 22—24. the rags of thy own righteousness, Isa. lxv. 6. See Zech. iii. 3, 4. Were such an offer made thee concerning other clothes, how gladly would it be accepted!

3. Having bought them, that is, made the bargain, and consented to the terms of having them, we must put them on, and wear them. Not as a hat, to put off to every one we meet; not as a cloak, to be worn only when we go abroad; but as thy inner garment, to be worn next thee; an upper garment; and, above all these, as thy entire garment. Christ must be thy all in all; thy day-clothes, thy night-clothes: put him on daily and duly, constantly and continually. It is a good meditation, when we are putting on our clothes, we must put on bowels of mercies, Col. iii. 12. charity, v. 15. humility, 1 Peter v. 5. meekness, 1 Pet. iii. 4. or, which includes all, *the Lord Jesus Christ*. If so, when we die we shall put on better clothes of glory. Christ will never put them off that put him on.

SERMON V.

CHRIST IS THE HEAD, THE CHURCH IS HIS BODY.

COLOSSIANS i. 18.

And he is the head of the body, the church.

THE union between Christ and his church is twofold: 1. Relative; like that between persons that are in relation mutually one towards another. Of which kind we have had an account * of fourteen—as he is their Husband, Father, Brother, Friend, Master, Teacher, King, Captain, Physician, Advocate, Shepherd, Bishop, Inhabitant, Keeper. 2. Real. Of which kind there are several: this is the first.

DOCT. That the Lord Jesus Christ is the head, and his church the body.

There is such a kind of union between them and such a kind of relation, as is between the head and the body. Bodies are of several sorts, whereof each have their several head.

1. There is the body politic. And so a kingdom is a body; and the head of that body is the king, Psalm cx. 6. The church is a spiritual kingdom; the head and king of it, in that sense, is Christ.

2. There is the body natural, and that hath a head joined to it; and one and the same living soul animating that head, and that body, they make together one living man. So here; the head is Christ; the body is the Church. The living soul, which is one, and still the same, animating this head and this body, is the Spirit. So that Christ and his church, being endued with one and the same Spirit, make together one mystical body, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

What church is this meant of? Whether is it—the church visible, consisting of all those good and bad that profess faith in Christ and obedience to him; or—the church invisible, called the church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven, including those only that are called, and chosen, and faithful, and excluding others? I answer: Both, in a different sense, are to be reckoned Christ's body, and Christ the head of both.

1. In respect of *external rule and government*. So Christ is the head of the church visible, and the church visible is his body: nay, he is head of every man, 1 Cor. xi. 3.

All that call themselves Christians do profess, at least in word and tongue, to own the Scriptures as the rule of faith and manners; and what they declare we are to believe concerning God, that, they say, they do believe; and what the Scriptures declare to be duty required of man, that they say they will do.

And this profession makes them members at large of the great body the church, Gal. iii. 27. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," that is, put on the profession of Christ. And we may plead it with them accordingly. Are not you a Christian baptized into Christ? How dare you then to carry it at this rate?

2. In respect of *vital influence*. So he is the head of the church invisible only; nay, only of those in it that are effectually called. Though the elect not yet called are to be reckoned his, and he theirs, in purpose and decree, yet none but such to whom it is actually given to receive him to themselves, and to give themselves to him, (Hos. i. 11.) *appointing to themselves one head*—making it their own act and deed, are to be considered his body.

As in the natural body, besides the integral parts, such as hands, arms, legs, back, breast, &c. which make the body, there are oftentimes wens, warts, moles, and other excrescences, which are covered over with the same skin, and are fed and nourished, after a sort, with the same nourishment, and yet are not true parts or members of the body; so it is here, there are many that stick, as it were, to the body of Christ, covered over with the same skin of profession,

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* Alluding to a course of sermons preached by him on the subject.

partake in the same ordinances, and yet after all, are but wens, and warts, and moles. They are no living members; they have no true union, nor any true communion, with the Lord Jesus; they are amongst us, but not of us; and the day is coming, when they shall be made manifest. On which account the gospel is compared to a net. See Matt. xiii. 47—50.

There are but two heads of all mankind—Christ and the devil. If thou art not a member of Christ, thou art a limb of the devil, that spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. O tremble at the thought of it; for yourself; for your near and dear relations, your children; and make sure your true union with Christ as your head; make sure that you have his Spirit.

Show, I. What kind of head Christ is.

II. What kind of body the church is.

III. What kind of members of that body we should every one of us be.

I. What kind of head is Christ?

This I shall lay before you in several particulars.

1. Christ is to his church the only sovereign and supreme head. The head hath the pre-eminence in the body; it is placed by nature uppermost, and all the rest of the members below it. The Lord Jesus is uppermost, above all, and *over all*, Rom. ix. 5. It follows here, *that in all things he might have the pre-eminence:* the pre-eminence is his above all persons in all things, Psalm xlv. 2. Cant. v. 10. It is our duty then in all things to give him that which is his due. Let nothing rob him of it; Psalm cxxxvii. 6. "If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy"—Hebrew—*the head of my joy.* Make the Lord Jesus the head of your love, hope, desire, delight. Many stand in competition with him, as the world, sin, self, the devil. Also, the Antichrist. He styles himself the head of the church universal, but it is a usurpation. The church hath no head but Christ; no ministerial head: none is deputed by him for that office, himself alone being sufficient for it.

We do acknowledge, in a sense, the supreme magistrate may be styled the head, that is, the governor in external matters of that part of the church which is in his dominions; as the head of the woman is said to be the man, 1 Cor. xi. 3. that is, her superior to rule over her in the Lord. But *such* a Governor of the *universal* church we know none.

2. Christ is a suitable head; a head suitable to the body of which he is head. The body hath the human nature, therefore, so hath he, Heb. ii. 14. It was necessary it should be so, that the same nature that sinned might suffer. We may here take occasion to adore the infinite wisdom of the Father, that contrived this way, and the infinite love of the Son, that would stoop so low, Ps. viii. 4. 5.

3. Christ is a supplying head. He nourishes and cherishes, Eph. v. 29. 30. The head in the body supplies the body with two things especially;

With spirits. It is the seat of spirits, from whence they are derived to all the parts as there is need and occasion. The Lord Jesus is said to have the seven spirits, Rev. iii. 1. that is, abundance of the Spirit;—compare John iii. 34. Col. i. 19. Eph. i. 23.—and that to communicate, *ch.* i. 16. Ps. cxxxiii. 2. To him, therefore, we must have recourse.

With guidance and direction. The office of the head is to show the body whither to go, and what to do: there the eyes are seated, as in a watch tower. See Rev. v. 6. *Seven eyes.* Whereinsoever we have need at any time of guidance, we must look to him, as Paul, Heb. xii. 6. and we have a promise, Ps. xxxii. 8. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

4. A sympathizing head. He is such a head as hath a fellow-feeling with all his true members, even the meanest of them, in all the evils that befall them. In the evils of temptation, Heb. ii. 17, 18; iv. 15, 16. In the evils of affliction, Isa. lxiii. 9. In the evils of persecution, Acts ix. 4. When the toe was but trod upon, the head cried out, Why persecutest thou me? This affords great comfort and encouragement, good ground of hope that he will arise for their rescue, Isa. lxiii. 9. Also in their joys and comforts, Matt. xxv. 40.

5. A safe head. If a man be fallen into a pit of water, as long as his head is kept above, he is well. Whatsoever befalls the body, the head is above, out of the reach of gun-shot. It is well for him, it is well for us, that it is so. Men may strike at his headship, but "why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion," Ps. ii. 1, 6. Christ is far above "all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," Eph. i. 21.

6. A saving head. Being safe himself he will in due time make us safe too, Eph. v. 23. He is Jesus, Matt. i. 21.—*a Saviour.* It is his *prayer*, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me," John xvii. 24. Though the head and members are parted a while, yet they shall be together for ever. Salvation is either personal, or public; temporal, spiritual, or eternal; according as the evils are that do encompass us; sins, sorrows, temptations. 2 Tim. iv. 18—"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom." In the head are the eyes, to spy dangers; the mouth, to speak for help; the wisdom and understanding, to contrive which way to effect it.

II. What kind of body is the church?

1. It is a great body. This appears if we consider those only that are called, and chosen, and faithful; though who those be is not, and cannot be, infallibly known to us. Even they, at this day, now living in the world, are not a few but many. Indeed, comparatively, compared with them that perish, the Scripture says of them, they are but a little little flock; yet in themselves they are many. And the Lord make them a hundred-fold more than they are.

It appears also, if we consider the whole professing body of Christians, that are baptized into the faith of Christ. Then they are a great many more.

And it appears further, if we consider all that have been, and are, and shall be, as met together with their head in glory. See what account the Scripture gives of them, Rev. vii. 9. "I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Therefore there is no reason why any should stumble at the paucity or fewness of the people of God.

2. It is a growing body. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end," Isa. ix. 7. There are many promises in the word to this purpose which have had, and have, and shall have, their accomplishment. Growth is two-fold:

(1.) Extensive. When more are added. More to the number of the elect, we believe, are not to be added. They who teach, "If thou art not predestinated, pray that thou mayst be predestinated," do certainly miss it; but to the number of the called, there may be more added, (Acts ii. 47.) with a common call, with an effectual call; and our duty is to pray heartily every day that we may be so.

(2.) Intensive. When those that are already good, and are in the body, are made better; better in heart, and better in life. This is often promised as a mercy, and as often commended as a duty, Mal. iv. 2. Prov. iv. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 18. 2 Pet. i. 5—8.

3. It is a divided body. The more is the pity, but so it is. A great part of it is divided from the head. I mean, not in respect of unity of spirit and affection; so all the true members are near to him, and he is near to them; but in respect of place and condition. He is in heaven above, they are on the earth beneath; and it is their grief and burthen that it is so; and, therefore, they pray, and long, and wait till it be otherwise, Phil. i. 23. Rev. xxii.

It is also divided, sadly divided, within itself; not divided from the wicked of the world only, that is a division that must be, but the body within itself; Christian against Christian, church against church; nay, I would I might not say, saint against saint. But then, observe, it is not in fundamental matters; all are agreed to love God, and hate sin, and believe in Jesus Christ, and keep the commandments. The difference lies in some lesser matters; as that between Paul and Barnabas about John Mark going along with them; Paul and Peter about eating or not eating with the Gentiles; about meats and days, wherein the kingdom of God consists not.

And the truth is, the evil lies more in the mismanagement of their differences than in the differences themselves. The fault is, either despising or judging. There is hope the Lord in due time will mend this matter, as Christ hath prayed, John xvii.

4. It is a distempered body. This is one reason of the former; therefore so divided because so distempered. If it were not for the distempers that are in the body, there would be no such divisions in the body, James iv. 12. 1 Cor. iii. 1—3. The distempers that prevail are, ignorance, darkness, want and weakness of judgment in the understanding, which cause error and mistake; also pride, passion, self-love, ambition, covetousness. These are the diseases of this great body. The man of sin with his great lie, the whore with her fornication cup, hath deceived, deluded, intoxicated the nations; and when they will come to themselves, and be thoroughly sober, God only knows.

5. It is a persecuted body. Look how it was with the natural body of our Lord Jesus, when he was here upon earth; even just so it is, and hath been, with his mystical body: he was scourged, buffeted, spit upon, crowned with thorns, torn with nails, speared with spears, nailed to the cross; even so hath it been with his followers. We may wonder, the enemies of it being so many, mighty, and malicious, that they have not made an utter end of it before this time. That complaint of the Psalmist, Ps. iii. 1. may well be the whole church's complaint, "Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me." But why doth the head suffer it to be so, when it is certainly in the power of his hand to help it? I answer, there is good reason for it, else it should not be. He knows how to make it work for good to them, and for glory to himself.

6. It shall be a prevailing body: allusion to Gen. xlix. 23, 24. See Zech. xii. 1, 3, 6.

Not a member shall perish: a good argument for the perseverance of saints. Lord, if in thy book all my members are written, much more are all thine.

The body natural was so, in its glorious transfiguration, resurrection, ascension, coronation in glory; and so in its kind, and measure, and time, shall the body mystical be also, Isa. xxvi. 19. See Ezek. xxxvii.

III. What kind of members of this body should we be?

As to ourselves; we must look to it,

1. That we be true members, that we have true union with this blessed head; and that must be by a true and lively faith, accepting of him and

giving ourselves to him, Eph. iii. 17. Is this done? Is it done in deed and in truth? I beseech you, see to it; many are tied to Christ by an outward profession, that are not grafted into him. There may be glass eyes, and wooden legs fastened by art to the body, and those wooden legs may have silk stockings, and yet they are not of the body. So *as* to ourselves. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," Matt. vii. 21.

2. That we be thriving members. If a member in the body do not grow, it is a sign something is amiss in it, Col. ii. 6. 1 Thess. iv. 1. This is one end wherefore the means of grace are afforded to us, Eph. iv. 11—15. They do grow indeed that do grow up into Christ the head more and more; into his merit, into his Spirit, for justification, for sanctification. Yet note, Every part hath a proportionable measure of growth, though what that is we know not, and therefore, we are still to be pressing forward.

As to our head; our duty stands in,

1. Subjection. If he be our head we must be subject to him in all things: our will subject to his will in doing, in suffering. What he appoints concerning his day, his worship, his discipline, we are readily and cheerfully to submit to; taking his yoke upon us. Though commands be hard and uneasy to the carnal part, are they his commands? If so, we must obey. So also for providences,—"And Jesus said unto them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me," Luke ix. 23.

2. Similitude. The members ought to be like the head. In Dan. ii. we read of an image, whose head was gold, and the members silver, brass, iron, nay clay. It must not be so in Christ's body,—"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," Rom. viii. 9, 29. See how the apostle argues as to this: "Know ye not, that your members are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid!" 1 Cor. vi. 15. O think, when a temptation to sin comes, is this to be like Christ? Was Christ passionate, or revengeful, or covetous?

3. Sympathy. As the head sympathizes with the members, so the members sympathize with the head. If a blow be offered at the head, the hand will venture a cut to save it. Are we affected with the dishonour done to the Lord Jesus by the wickedness that abounds in the midst of us? do we lay it to heart? do we feel the contempt cast upon his name, his gospel, his ministers, his people? The Psalmist could say, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me," Ps. lxix. 9.

As to our fellow-members; our duty stands in these seven things:

1. Charity, brotherly kindness, and love towards them all. All the members in the natural body love one another; so should all the members in the mystical body: and that love must be unfeigned, and without dissimulation, Rom. xii. 9, 10.

2. Care not to hurt any of them in word or deed. Eph. iv. 25. *Lie not.* Why? *because members one of another.* The hand will not take a knife and cut the leg or the foot; nor will the teeth bite the arm; no, not though accidentally hurt; there is no revenge. So should it be among Christians, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves," Rom. xii. 19. "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; but if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another," Gal. v. 14, 15.

3. Contentment in that place in the body in which God hath set us, though a mean and low place. Not envying those that are above us, or are preferred before us, in parts, gifts, estate, employment, Gal. v. 26. The foot envies not the hand, nor the leg the arm, because the hand and the arm are nearer the head.

4. Condescension. If we be in a high place in the body, we should be condescending to those that are below: not slighting, despising, or undervaluing, 1 Cor. xii. 21, 22. Rom. xii. 16. 1 Pet. v. 5.

5. Compassion towards all. We are to weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice. The members in the natural body do so, 1 Cor. xii. 26. Heb. xiii. 3. *In the body* mystical it should be so.

6. Communion, free and frequent. In the natural body the members are always together. We cannot be so in the body mystical: our condition is a scattered condition, till gathered together in heaven, 2 Thess. ii. 1. 1 Thess. iv. 17, 18. But it should be the case as much as may be, Heb. x. 25.

7. Communication. Whatever each member hath, it hath it not for itself, but for the body. The eye, the ear, the hand, are not for themselves merely; so it should be with the body mystical, not every man for himself, but for others also, Phil. ii. 4, 21. Eph. iv. 16. Hereby also we may try ourselves, whether we are true members.

SERMON VI.

CHRIST IS OUR HOPE.

1 Timothy i. 1. latter part.

And the Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope.

Does any one inquire, What is Christ to us? I reply, He is our foundation—our food—our root—our raiment—our head—and our hope. Hope hath in Scripture two significations:

1. It signifies the *grace of hope*, which is the expectation of some good thing to come; Prov. x. 28. "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness;" that is, their hoping hath a good issue. And it signifies,

2. *The object of hope.* So in the text.

Doct. That the Lord Jesus Christ is a Christian's hope—the object of his hope.

All the good that we look for, we do and look for only from, by, and through, our Lord Jesus Christ. Others may possibly make other things the object of their hope, but we must make the Lord Jesus Christ alone the object of our hope. I shall

Show, I. What the things are that we do hope for by, from, and through Jesus Christ.

II. What in Christ we do make the grounds of that hope.

III. What the success of that hope is, and how we are like to speed in it.

IV. Whence it is that we speed so well.

V. Make application.

I. What are the things that we hope for by, from, and through our Lord Jesus Christ?

They are in general of two sorts:

1. Things that concern the life that now is, that pertain to the body, and to the outward man. We have occasion for these, and shall have, while we are in the body. Now which way must we look for them? who must be our hope? Not any creature, one or other; not second causes; if they be, they will deceive and disappoint us; but our Lord Jesus Christ himself alone. Every good man says, *He* is my hope, Prov. xviii. 10, 11. Psalm lii. 7; xx. 7, 8. It sweetens all such mercies, that they come from, and through, such a good hand. We must exercise this hope,

(1.) In all our wants and necessities, for supply of them. If we want food, raiment, rain, fair weather, success in business, health from sickness, ease from pain, he alone must be our hope; and if he be so, he will see to us, Psalm xxiii. 1; xxxiv. 10; xxxvii. 3. Luke xxii. 35.

(2.) In all our perils and dangers; for preservation from them, for preservation through them, Ps. iii. 5, 6; xxiii. 4. When the ship was sinking wherein Paul was:—See the narrative, Acts xxvii. 22, &c.

(3.) In all our straits and troubles; for support under them, for deliverance out of them, Ps. xxxiv. 19; lv. 22.

(4.) Concerning our children after us, when we are gone, Ps. xxvii. 10. Jer. xlix. 11.

(5.) In reference to public affairs, that he will fight our battles for us, and give us victory over all our enemies. See Josh. v. 13.

2. Things that concern the life that is to come—spiritual things, eternal things. For these, also, our hope must be in Christ, and in him only; 2 Pet. i. 3. "His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life," namely, life present, "and godliness." For,

The grace itself that makes us godly is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is he that sanctifies, his Spirit that regenerates; Heb. xii. 2. "*The Author* and Finisher of our faith;" the gold is his, and the eye-salve his.

The forgiveness of our sins and the justification of our persons, is through Christ, Rom. v. 1; viii. 1. Eph. i. 7.

The acceptation of our services—audience for our prayers, is for his sake, 1 Pet. ii. 5. John xvi. 23.

So ability and strength both for doing and suffering. We can do nothing further than he enables, John xv. 5. nothing; nor undergo any thing if his arm be not under us.

A blessing upon ordinances is through his presence with us in them, Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 20.

Victory over spiritual enemies, corruptions, temptations, the devil, the world, the flesh, is through him, Rom. viii. 37.

The pouring out the Spirit as a Comforter, is on his account, John xiv. 16.

So persevering grace is from him: it is by his power we are kept, 1 Pet. i. 3.

A safe and comfortable passage out of this into the other world, is the effect of his presence, Ps. xxiii. 4. He will send his angels, Luke xvi. 22. And, when we come thither, good entertainment there,—that we shall be acknowledged and acquitted, that he will say, Well done—give us a place in his kingdom, Matt. x. 32. Jude 24. John xiv. 2, 3.

The raising up of our bodies at the last day is because of him, John xi. 25. "I am the resurrection." And this is promised, John vi. 39, 40. But how? See 1 Cor. xv. 42—44.

Soul and body shall be together in eternal happiness, with all the saints and with the Lord; and here is the top-stone of the great building. And is this by Christ? Yes: by Christ. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. xv. 19. *In this life*, but not in this life only, else, of all creatures most miserable. Now all these together are great things. Then,

(1.) The saints of God are people of great hopes, that look for all this. They are great dealers; they

trade not, as the men of the world do, for pebbles, but for rich pearls; for a kingdom, an eternal kingdom. O that all such would learn to carry it accordingly, that it might appear by their behaviour in every thing, that they are of a great spirit, and of great designs, as Moses, Heb. xi. 24—26.

(2.) The Lord Jesus Christ is a great Saviour, that hath wherewithal to answer the hopes of such abundance of people, trusting to him and expecting from him, to be made thus happy by him, and to have all this from him. We may wonder whence the king hath to maintain such armies, and whence to reward his friends that are faithful to him, and do him service, but how much more cause to wonder whence the Lord Jesus Christ hath to reward his faithful servants.

(3.) The men of the world are great fools, that when such a great happiness may be had, in the heavenly Canaan, they prefer the onions and garlic of Egypt before it; as the old Israelites did, despising the pleasant land, Ps. cvi. 24. a sin that God did never forgive them, but charged it upon them, so that their carcasses fell in the wilderness. And the case is the very same as to those that despise the grace of the gospel, and the rich offers of life and salvation by Jesus Christ, Heb. ii. 3; iii. 17; iv. 1.

II. What in Jesus Christ do we make the grounds of our hope touching all these things.

There is ground enough and enough, again and again. We know whom we have trusted, and in whom we have hoped; and why, in Heb. vi. 19, 20. Hope is there compared to an anchor, the use whereof is to keep the ship steady in storms. What kind of anchor? Sure and stedfast, not weak and wavering. How so? It *enters within*, fastens upon Christ in heaven; not upon mud or sand, or other loose ground, but upon a rock, Isa. xxviii. 16.

Three things we have in him to bottom our hopes upon:

1. The price he has paid to procure and purchase them: that was, his own blood; a price sufficient, a price accepted by the Father. They are all bought and paid for, yea, and paid for to the full worth and value of them. If a friend of ours have purchased an estate for us, we feel confidence. Behold a friend, "who though he was rich became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich," 2 Cor. viii. 9. Have we not then good grounds for hope? nay, for joy in hope? Rom. v. 2.

2. The promise he hath made to bestow it. There is nothing of all these blessings and benefits, but what he hath expressly told us in his holy word, shall be certainly conferred upon us, if we will believe in him, and be ruled by him, Matt. xii. 28, 29. John x. 28. But may we trust him? Is he faithful? Will he not deceive us? I answer, There is no danger. Hadst thou as many souls as thou hast hairs upon thy head, thou mightest venture them all upon his bare word; but for our more abundant consolation we have his *oath*, Heb. vi. 18. his bond with two seals, Rom. iv. 11. And shall we yet distrust hope?

3. His being present always at the right hand of the Father, making intercession, that he may see it all done accordingly, Heb. vii. 25. If a legacy be left me by a dear friend, and he trust executors with it that are false, I may lose it that way, notwithstanding his good intention—as with many an orphan; but there is no danger of that here. Our Lord himself hath so ordered the matter that he is his own executor. Then certainly he will see his will performed: then we have good ground of hope if able to make out our title.

III. How are we likely to speed in our hopes?

Many hope for great things, and fall short. Here there is no danger, "Hope maketh not ashamed"—their hope, Rom. v. 5.—the grace of hope, or the object of hope—Jesus Christ; neither of them *makes them ashamed;* that is, they are sure not to be disappointed, they shall certainly have the things they look for. The reason follows, namely, either God's love to them, in the sense of it, *shed abroad in our hearts*, or their love to God. Because he loves them and they love him, therefore no disappointment. I dare challenge all the ages of the world, and all the records of time, and all the people that ever lived upon the face of the earth, to produce one instance of one person that made the Lord Jesus Christ rightly and truly his hope, that was disappointed; disappointed of pardon, peace, acceptance with God, and eternal life at last; or, disappointed as to the things of this life, unless they hoped amiss. Our rule in hoping, is to hope *according to the promise;* else we may hope amiss. The promise being with proviso, as far as for God's glory and our good, such must the hope be, Ps. xci. 10.—no evil shall befall, Ps. xxxiv. 10—no good wanting.

IV. Whence is it we may be so certain we shall not be disappointed, if the Lord Jesus Christ be our hope?

Because he is what he is according to these three titles given here to him:

1. He is Jesus a Saviour, one raised up on purpose to bring people to heaven. The very name encourages hope.

2. He is Lord; Jehovah, blessed for ever; King of kings and Lord of lords; almighty in power; able to save: other hopes are weak and unable.

3. He is Christ; anointed of God to be both Lord and Jesus; him hath God the Father sealed, that is, commissioned under hand and seal, and also fitted every way for the undertaking, Acts x. 38.

V. What use should we make of this?

1. Then if Christless, we are hopeless, Eph. ii. 12. Not absolutely, but while remaining in that state. For let me ask, What is thy hope? I mean especially touching the main matter, thy eternal salvation.

Hast thou ever any thoughts about it?—It is for the most part grounded upon a purposed repentance and reformation hereafter, on our part, and on God's part, a little mercy, which a good God will not deny, for a good man would not. This is all that the most trust to; but this will certainly deceive, Job xxvii. 8. Prov. xi. 7. Matt. vii. 24—27. It hath deceived thousands, and will thee.

2. Then saints are blessed; for the Lord Jesus Christ is their hope, Ps. cxlvi. 5. Why then not comforted, having such things in hope, in reversion; besides in hand, in possession?

3. Then try your hopes, and be sure they be right, else expect disappointment. How were they wrought? If born with thee, and you never did otherwise than hope, suspect that hope. The foundation of *good* hope is laid in a kind of despair;—no hope in the way I am in, therefore I must have a better foundation. How do they work? Is it in a constant care to please God—fear to offend him? then they are right, Acts xxvi. 7. Do they lead to self-purifying? 1 John iii. 3. Do they produce love to the Lord Jesus? It cannot be otherwise if you have a good hope.

4. Exhortation to all to make Christ alone their hope, renouncing all other, Ps. lxxiii. 25. especially thy own righteousness, Phil. iii. 7, 8.

5. Caution. Do not say there is no hope; for, blessed be God, there is while Christ lives.

SERMON VII.

HE IS OUR REFUGE.

HEB. vi. 18.

Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.

THESE words are a description of true believers, such to whom belong the *strong consolation;* that is, who ought to be greatly comforted. They are such as have fled for *refuge* to lay hold on the hope set before them. The same that is the *hope* is the *refuge*, namely, Jesus Christ, and his undertaking for us. True believers are such as fly to him—for two reasons:

1. In reference to what is to come, to lay hold on the *hope* set before them; that is, the hope laid for them in heaven, Col. i. 5. and *set before* them in the gospel, together with all the benefits purchased for them in their way thither.

2. In reference to what is present. They fly to him for *refuge* every day, and they have need so to do.

DOCT. That the Lord Jesus Christ is a Christian's refuge, to whom he must fly every day.

Show, I. What is meant by refuge.

II. What need we have of a refuge every day.

III. What kind of refuge Jesus Christ is.

IV. What it is to fly to him for refuge, and what should move us so to do.

I. What is meant by a refuge? A *refuge* is that which men are wont in times of trouble or danger to betake themselves to, for safety or supply, promising themselves that there they shall have it. Refuges are of two sorts.

The one *personal.* Sometimes there are such and such persons in whom we confide, and from whom we expect shelter, a near and dear relation, a trusty faithful friend. We call him our refuge, and make him so, if we want any thing, if any thing ail us. Jonathan was David's refuge in his flight from Saul. Jephtha was the Gileadites' refuge, Judg. xi. Magistrates are the poor man's refuge, the shields of the earth.

The other *real.* There are things that are our refuge; as, in time of war, a strong castle or walled town; there we conclude we shall be safe. Against want: The rich man's wealth is his strong city, Prov. xviii. 11. In case of guilt and justice pursuing: Joab fled to the horns of the altar; that was his refuge. The Jews, by God's appointment, had six cities of refuge, to which the manslayer was to fly. Now to these the apostle is supposed here especially to allude. As they had their refuges, so have we; theirs were so many cities, but ours is one Christ.

II. What need have we of a refuge every day? We need a refuge on a four-fold account:

1. Guilt contracted. We are sinning daily, besides old scores. The avenger of blood, that is, God's offended justice, is in pursuit of us, at our very heels, though we see him not. If he overtake us before we get into Christ we are undone. If we trust to other refuges, if we take hold of the horns of any other altar, he will pluck us thence, as they did Joab, and away we must go to execution. It is for every sin that this is our case; for the law says, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. O what need have we then to bethink ourselves!

2. Temptations assaulting. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are all busy, by fair means, by foul, by allurements, by affrightments; setting upon us, to draw us *from* God and duty, *to* sin and folly. Temptations are sometimes of one kind, sometimes of another. Now the query is, Where is our refuge? whither go we for strength, for safety? To something in ourselves; or, as David against Goliah, in the name of the Lord of hosts, in the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ?

3. Troubles befalling. Sufficient for each day is the evil of it; one event or other happens that crosses and grieves us. Now have we no refuge, nothing to betake ourselves to, that may help to bear us up?

One says, I have a father and mother to look after me. Another—I have a friend that will not see me want. But, says the believer, I have a refuge beyond them all, and that is Christ.

4. Dangers threatening. Besides what present evils we meet with, there are others that we have prospect of, afar off. And many times, the very fear of them is more grievous than they themselves are when they come. Now against these, also, Christ Jesus is, and ought to be, a Christian's refuge, Ps. lvi. 3; cxii. 7. O be convinced of this, that upon all these accounts you have need of a refuge. Till this is done all I shall say will be to no purpose. "What will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?" Isa. x. 3. These are good questions.

III. What kind of refuge is Jesus Christ?

He is a refuge that hath these properties; and they are all desirable in a refuge:

1. He is an appointed refuge; ordained of God on purpose for us to fly to, in all our ailments. There were many cities in Israel, many in every tribe, but only six appointed for refuge; and God himself appointed them, not Moses, John iii. 16. 1 Cor. i. 30. We may plead it with him in reference to all his offices, whereinsoever we have need of him, that he is therefore raised up, and sent, and anointed, and sealed, as Priest to satisfy for us, as Prophet to teach us, as King to protect and defend us.

2. He is an able refuge—all-sufficient. Many refuges that people fly to, under guilt, under trouble, prove unable to shield and shelter them. Many persons are either feeble and infirm, and cannot, or false and treacherous, and will not. Many things, as strong holds and castles, in time of war are untenable, broken reeds: so Rabshakeh calls Egypt, Isa. xxxvi. 6. and so it proved to God's people, when they trusted to it and relied upon it. "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb; yet could not he heal you, nor cure you of your wound," Hos. v. 13. Of our Lord Jesus this is said, which is certainly true, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty," Ps. lxxxix. 19. "He is able to save to the uttermost," Heb. vii. 25. "In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted," Heb. ii. 18. Lord, if thou wilt *thou canst*, says the poor leper, Matt. viii. 2. He *can* acquit from guilt, he *can* secure from danger, he *can* support, and he *can* supply.

3. He is a refuge at hand. If a friend be never so able to help, if he be far off when we have need of him, what the better are we? "The word is nigh thee," Rom. x. 8. "God is a very present help in trouble," Ps. xlvi. 1. "The Lord of hosts is with us," Ps. xlvi. 7, 11.—*present with* us. It is a very comfortable consideration when under guilt—wounded, to know that the remedy is at hand; when tempted—under prevailing fears of want—in trouble, in danger, to be assured that cities of refuge are so near.

4. He is a universal refuge: *for all persons.* Whosoever will may come, and find shelter with him, Isa. lv. 1. *every one*, Rev. xxii. 17. *whosoever will*, Jew or Gentile, rich or poor. God hath no where excluded thee; then do not thou exclude thyself. Cities of refuge were for strangers, not Israel only.

He is a refuge *in all cases*, inward or outward, bodily or ghostly.—Let the offence be what it will, he hath merit for the pardon of it. Let the temptation be what it may, he hath strength to overcome it. Let the danger be ever so threatening, he can save from it. There was a limitation in the cities of refuge; they were only for the manslayer; the thief, the highwayman, the adulterer had no city; but in Christ there is a refuge for the most guilty. "I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy," 1 Tim. i. 13. "And such," referring to the awful list before enumerated, "were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," 1 Cor. vi. 11.

5. He is an unchangeable refuge, Heb. xiii. 8. The six cities of refuge in the land of Canaan are passed away, and gone, and are refuges no more; so is also many a strong fort and tower; but our refuge is still what he was, and where he was, Heb. vii. 24. Ps. xxvii. 10; cxlvi. 3, 5, 10.

6. He is an open refuge. If a refuge be never so near us, if it be shut against us, what the better are we? If the castle bridge be drawn up, what can it avail us? Our Lord Jesus is an open Saviour, Zech. xiii. a *fountain open*—not sealed and shut up. His eye is always open to see and behold us; his ear, to hear our prayers; his arms, to receive and embrace us; his hand, to give, to supply us; his doors, to bid us welcome. O that we were as open to him as he is to us, Ps. xxiv. He calls and calls again, Cant. v. 1.

7. He is the only refuge. Besides him there is no other;—none in heaven, none on earth; none within us, none without us, Isa. xl. 6—8.

None for *justification*. When we have sinned what other way is there of making atonement? Can saints and angels do it? Can our own righteousness? Then Paul would never have renounced his, as he did, though far beyond ours: his anxiety was to be found in him, Phil. iii. 8, 9. as the malefactor in the city of refuge.

None for *strength*; either to do duty or to resist temptation. Paul says, he could do all through Christ strengthening him, but nothing in and of himself. We are more than conquerors only in him, Rom. viii.

None in all our *outward concerns*, public or personal, Ps. lxii. 5—8; cxlvi. 3—5.

IV. What is it to fly to him for refuge, and what should move us so to do? If Christ be such a refuge, and the only such, then what is the reason so few come to him for refuge?

1. The reason is, they do not know him; their minds are blinded; they will not believe the report of the gospel concerning him, John iv. 10. *If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that said unto thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.*

2. They are deluded with false refuges: they have other things to trust to; one to this, another to that, Ps. xx. 7. Prov. xviii. 11. Isa. xxviii. 15. When God shall send them hereafter to the refuges they have chosen, O the shame and confusion that will then follow! as Judg. x. 14. "Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation." The righteous when they see it shall laugh, Ps. lii. 6, 7.

3. They do not feel their need of a refuge, Prov. iii. 17.

If others however will not, let *us* make him *our* refuge and fly to him accordingly.

1. *What is it to fly to Christ for refuge?*

(1.) It is to *betake ourselves to him.* Behold he calls, *Come unto me;* let thy soul answer, *Lo I come.* Come for pardon of all thy sins; come for righteousness wherein to appear before God; come for mercy, grace, peace, strength, comfort, quickening; yea, come with boldness, Heb. iv. 16.

(2.) It is to *lay hold* on him, so the word is here, by a true and a lively faith.

As a man sinking lays hold on a bough, cord, plank, cast out to save him.

As Joab laid hold on the horns of the altar, when Solomon sent to slay him, 1 Kings ii. 28.

As we lay hold on the opportunity of a good bargain, when it is offered to us; closing with it, accepting of it, deliberately, sincerely, freely, and for ever. This is believing: and you that have thus taken hold keep your hold; let not Satan, nor unbelief, beat thee off; say, Either at this door I must have salvation, or perish for ever. Necessity oftentimes makes them strong that are otherwise weak. When life lies upon it, and I must either hold fast or die, strength is summoned.

(3.) It is to do it *with all speed.* Flying is the swiftest motion of all other: such should ours be to Christ,— I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments, Ps. cxix. 60.—for three reasons;

The imminency of our danger. The avenger of blood is at thy heels; if he overtake thee short of Christ, thou art undone for ever.

The uncertainty of our life. We are here to-day, and gone to-morrow: no time is ours but the present time, 1 Cor. vi. 2.

The uncertainty of the offer of this refuge. Many a man's day of life is longer than his day of grace, Luke xix. 42. O then bestir thyself; hoist up sail while the wind blows; strike while the iron is hot. Do ye think the malefactor pursued would stay to talk and prate with every idle companion? No: but run with all his might for fear of the worst. So should we: his flight was but to save a temporal life, ours eternal.

2. *What encouragement have we thus to fly to Christ for refuge.*

(1.) His express call and command, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden," Matt. xi. 28. Heavy laden,—either with outward burthens, want, sickness, unkindness of relations, or malice of enemies. However it be, make thy case known to him, spread it before him, by prayer and supplication. Cast thy care upon him; believe it is that which he knows to be best for thee. He can and will make a way for thee to escape. But then thou must keep his way, not turn aside. Or, heavy laden—with inward pressures of guilt, sense of wrath, prevailing fears. Come to me, says he, as to thy refuge; I will relieve thee and succour thee, Isa. l. 10.

(2.) The experience of the saints of God in all ages, who have found him a ready refuge to them in all their troubles, Ps. xxxiv. 4—6. There is no instance to the contrary. No guilty sinner, that repented and believed the gospel, and laid hold by faith on the Lord Jesus, for peace and pardon, ever went without it.—And should not this encourage us?

Under the law we are told there were officers yearly chosen on purpose to oversee the highways to the cities of refuge, to be sure that they were in good repair, that there was no hinderance, no stumbling-stone, Deut. xix. 3. Besides, they were all Levites' cities. The same is the work of ministers of the gospel now. The command to them is, Isa. xl. 3. *Prepare ye the way.* And woe unto us if it be not done, and a thousand woes to them, that instead of removing stumbling stones out of the way, lay them in the way, instead of encouraging, discourage.

To conclude. My exhortation this day is,

1. To all that have not made Christ their refuge, by all means to do it, and that quickly, for delays are dangerous.

2. To those that have; to be doing it, yet daily more and more. And when they have done it, in God's name to take the comfort of it. Your consolation should be *strong* consolation, that have fled for refuge; that is, too strong for all your doubts and fears—prevailing against them and over them. No life is so sweet as theirs that make Christ their refuge at all times, in all things. But then be sure ye are never caught out of him. The malefactors if ever taken out of the refuge were slain. "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end," Heb. iii. 14.

SERMON VIII.

CHRIST IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

JER. xxiii. 6.

And this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.

THAT these words are to be understood of the Messiah, or Saviour, no one doubts that knows the Scripture, Jew or Gentile; but that Jesus of Nazareth is he, the Jew denies, the Christian only believes. He hath many names given him in Scripture; two, in the words foregoing, v. 5. a *righteous Branch; a King, reigning, and prospering;* Isa. vii. 14. *Immanuel;* ix. 6, 7. *Wonderful, Counsellor:* Matt. i. 21. *Jesus.* But among all the rest of his names, none is more sweet than this in the text, the *Lord our Righteousness. The Lord* Jehovah; the incommunicable name of God, never given to any creature, in heaven or earth. By this we prove him to be the infinite and eternal God. What can be plainer? He is *Jehovah*, having his being of himself, and giving breath and being to all things, for "all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made," John i. 3. He is *our righteousness:* what that means you will hear, but this is his name by which he will be known, and this is his memorial unto all generations; by this name he hath been, is, and shall be, called by all true believers.

DOCT. Jesus Christ is the Lord our righteousness, and it is our duty to call him so.

Of all the sermons that ever I have preached to you concerning Christ, I would most earnestly beg your attention to this sermon. Of all that we are to teach, and you are to learn, concerning him, I beseech you learn this, be not ignorant of this.

Show, I. What it means.

II. Prove it duty to call him so.

I. Show what is meant by his being our righteousness. It means,

1. That it is in him alone that God the Father is well pleased. And is that so? Yes: it was declared twice by a voice from heaven, Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5. Not only *with* whom, but *in* whom, I am well pleased, atoned, pacified, satisfied. I acquiesce in him, without looking any further. Let me have him, and I have enough, I have all. He is God's all in all, and why then should he not be ours. If *he* be well pleased in him, why are not we?

2. That it is by and through him alone that we are justified; that is, acquitted from guilt, and accepted into favour, which are the ingredients of justification.

Acquitted from guilt. Guilty we all are; we know it, we can none of us deny it. Having sinned, we are for our sins justly liable to God's wrath and curse, both in this world and that which is to come. To be so is to be wretched and miserable; now how shall we do to be acquitted? Why, through Jesus Christ only: He is the way, and there is no other, Acts xiii. 38, 39. Were we thoroughly convinced of guilt, we should hearken to this; it would be thought a word worthy of all acceptation; and so it is, 1 Tim. i. 15.

Accepted into favour, Eph. i. 6. Rom. v. 1, 2. The grace and favour of God is the creature's happiness;—want that, and want all; have that, and have all. Now there can be no hope of this favour but in and by Jesus Christ. The holy God will admit of none into his friendship or fellowship, but those to whom Jesus Christ is made righteousness.

3. Tis through his merit and mediation alone that our performances are made acceptable, 1 Pet. ii. 5. As our bad deeds are no otherwise to be expiated, so our good deeds are no otherwise to be accepted. To what purpose is it for any of us to do any thing that is good, if we be not accepted in it; to pray, hear, give alms, keep the sabbath? Now it is Christ's righteousness alone that merits that acceptation; he is the incense that perfumes all.

4. It is by him alone that we have right and title to the heavenly inheritance. It is his purchase; he bought it with his blood. We had a right by creation upon condition of perfect obedience, but we lost it by our fall in Adam: it is restored only by the second Adam. If he be the Lord our righteousness, we may plead that, and say, Lord, Christ is mine, save me, save me from hell, for I am in Christ Jesus, Rom. viii. 1. bring me to heaven, for I am in Christ; he is the way, the door.

But it may be asked, How will it be made out from Scripture, that this is the meaning of his being *our righteousness?* I answer: Both the Old Testament and the New are one in it; as face answers to face in a glass, or in the water, as the cherubims looked towards each other, so the Bible agrees on this subject.

In the *Old Testament* it is prophesied of him, Dan. ix. 24. *that he should bring in everlasting righteousness.* What to do? To *finish the transgression and to make reconciliation for iniquity.* Wouldst thou have an end made of thy sins? It must be in this way; it can be in no other. In Mal. iv. 2. He is called *the Sun of righteousness*, not only righteous in himself, pure and spotless, but the Lord *our* righteousness.

As full of righteousness for our purpose, in every thing, as the sun is of light; no danger of wanting.

As free to communicate as the sun is; whosoever will may come.

As refreshing and comfortable where he doth communicate it, as the sun is.

In the *New Testament* it is further cleared, so that he that runs may read.

Made unto us of God, righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30. that is, God the Father pitying our lost and undone condition, for want of a righteousness, made him righteousness to us. Here is my Son, saith he, shall be your righteousness, I make him so to you; ordain, constitute, and appoint him your atonement, propitiation, advocate, surety. Plead him accordingly.

Again, *He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 1 Cor. v. 21. Note. It is said, he was made sin for us; that is, the sin of the world was imputed to him, made to meet upon him as the debts of a great many debtors are upon one common surety, Isa. liii. 6. Being found under such a debt he was treated accordingly, Isa. liii. 10. bruised—*made an offering*, that is, by dying upon the cross—the same with his being made *a curse* for us, Gal. iii. 13. (Lord! that such things should be spoken of him, done unto him, for the sake of poor worms!) Now this suffering and dying of his is imputed to us, as our righteousness; as when the surety pays a debt, his payment is imputed to the debtor, as if he himself had paid it. Not his being born, living, fulfilling the law, but his *death*. Not the sufferings of his life, but his dying sorrows.

Note also, Hereupon we are made *the righteousness* of God in him. We are accepted, justified, acquitted. But why the righteousness of God?

(1.) Because this imputed righteousness is a righteousness of God's own contriving and providing for us, Phil. iii. 9. *which is of God by faith*; not the righteousness of works, which is of ourselves; but of God by faith. We are sinners by imputation; we may be righteous the same way.

(2.) Because Christ is God, who wrought it out and brought it in for us. It is not a man's righteousness, poor and weak, and insufficient, but a God's righteousness. He is *Jehovah* our righteousness.

II. I am to persuade you all, to call Jesus Christ by this sweet name, the Lord *our* righteousness; each one with application to himself—as David. And would you think an Old-Testament saint, that lived under that dark dispensation, should have such clearness in this matter? A shame to us that are not clear in it, that live under gospel light. Ps. iv. 1. *O God of my righteousness*—the God on whom alone I do rely for righteousness. The prophet Isaiah speaks of it as the Shibboleth of all the saints, Isa. xlv. 24, 25. It was Paul's choice in particular, his deliberate choice, and should be ours, each of us, Phil. iii. 8, 9. O that I knew what to say, that would prevail. Some one perhaps objects, and says—"Call him by this name? It is the easiest thing of a thousand." You should distinguish doing it in word and tongue, and doing it in deed and truth—understandingly, uprightly, absolutely, so as to renounce all others, and to cleave to him alone.

Consider, 1. The misery they are in who never yet called Jesus Christ by this name, and the blessed and happy condition they are in that have done so. Let me set the one of these over against the other, and if you will mix faith with it, I should hope it might move you.

(1.) Till we have called Jesus Christ the Lord our righteousness, that is, heartily owned him as such, our condition is a shameful, *naked* condition, and that is a wretched, miserable condition, Rev. iii. 17. because, till clothed with Christ's righteousness, our shame appears in the sight of God. Our shame is our sin. All thy sins are before him, and he loathes the sight of them. Perhaps thou sayest, What matter? O do not say so, for it is a matter, a sad matter.—When Adam saw his nakedness, he ran and hid himself; so wouldst thou, didst thou see thine. Well but, on the contrary, if thou hast heartily owned Christ, thy soul is a clothed soul; clothed with white raiment; clean and white, lovely and amiable; thou mayst go with comfort into the presence of God, as Jacob in Esau's clothes. Again,

(2.) Till we have called Jesus Christ the Lord our righteousness, ours is a dismal, dark condition. When we call the Lord our righteousness, then he rises upon our souls as a Sun of righteousness, and that which follows is the light of comfort, and peace, and joy; such joy as none knows but they that feel it. It is hidden manna, Ps. lxxxv. 10. Righteousness and peace meet together, in this sense, Rom. v. 1, 2. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand: and rejoice in hope of the glory of God," Rom. v. 12. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall *glory*," Isa. xlv. 25.—But till then there is small cause for glorying; all thy own righteousness is but a spark of thy own kindling, notwithstanding which, thou liest down in sorrow. Is it possible for thee to think of past sins and a future judgment, and the joints of thy knees not tremble, as Belshazzar's did? But,

(3.) Till we have called Jesus Christ the Lord our righteousness we are in a perilous, perishing condition. Christ's righteousness is to us as Noah's ark. How happy were Noah and all his that were in it, they all escaped. How miserable all the rest, though many: some climbing higher than others, nay, some that helped to frame the ark, yet they perished.

Consider, 2. The difficulty, nay, the impossibility, of being pardoned and justified, accepted and saved, in any other way, and the facility and easiness of obtaining it in this way. Set these also the one against the other.

(1.) It is impossible we should be accepted of God without a righteousness, one or other, because he is a righteous God; that is, he is of pure eyes, and, therefore, cannot endure to look upon iniquity, Ps.

v. 4; xi. 7. He is also just and true to his word, his threatening word. Now by that the curse is entailed upon every transgression, death is the wages of every sin; therefore, death and the curse must be undergone, or no pardon. The very natural conscience owns this. Whence else are all the qualms of fear and horror, which the wicked lie under? Besides,

(2.) It is impossible that either our own righteousness, or the righteousness of any of our fellow-creatures, one or other, in heaven or earth, should bear us out and bring us off before God. I say it is impossible, absolutely impossible—

That our own should. For it is not to be called a righteousness. We have no such thing, Rom. iii. 9, 10. Righteousness is complete conformity to the righteous will and law of God. Where is that to be found? Nowhere on earth, Isa. lxiv. 6. See Mic. vi. 6, &c.

It may be objected—Yea, but with the help of a little mercy it may do. I answer, Show me that scripture where pardon, and peace, and salvation, are promised to a mixture of a little of our righteousness and a little of God's mercy. It is impossible—

That any other creature's should. I mean, saint or angel, or what they call the church's treasure, made up of works of supererogation, done by men eminent for piety, in things good but not commanded, whereof the pope hath the key. (And who had the key lately, when for several months there was no pope.*) It is a mere fiction; Isa. lxiii. 16. Ps. xlix. 7. But.

On the other hand—How easy is it to obtain peace, and pardon, and salvation, by the merit and righteousness of the Lord Jesus, by calling him by this name. Easy, did I say? mistake me not. I do not mean easy in itself, or easy to the power of nature. No, it is harder to believe in Christ for righteousness than to keep all the commandments, because keeping the commandments hath something in the heart of man agreeing with it, but so hath not the way of justification by faith, it being purely by revelation.—I mean easy to grace, easy where God is pleased to give a willing mind, as knowledge is easy to him that understandeth, Prov. xiv. 6. Matt. xi. 28—30. 1 John v. 3.—Easy; that is, it is a ready way to justification and salvation, whereas seeking it by our own righteousness is a round-about way. We can never while we live know in any other way that one sin is pardoned, because perseverance to the end is required.

It may be asked—"If this be the only way, and such an easy, ready way, then what is the reason there are so few that walk in it; nay, what is the reason it is so scoffed and ridiculed as it is:—It is called putative righteousness?" I answer, The apostle, who was best studied in this point of any other teacher that ever was, speaking of the Jews, who of all other people did most stumble at this stumbling-stone, gives two causes of their so doing: Their ignorance and their pride, Rom. x. 3. "They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." The same are still the causes. *Ignorance of God's righteousness.* Their minds are not enlightened to see that this is the way that God hath appointed, and that it is a sweet way, and a safe way. *Lothness to let go their own righteousness.* They would fain merit heaven for themselves. They scorn to accept of it as a gift, or to sue for it as poor persons. Some who would be persuaded to leave their sins, would not be persuaded to quit their doing so from being their righteousness, but it will not be, Isa. xlvi. 12. He that will put on the Lord Jesus Christ for justification, must put off himself, and all his own merit and righteousness, saying, None but Christ, none but Christ. And if he alone were not sufficient it were another matter. Is he not Jehovah our righteousness? Hath not the Father said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased? O then be persuaded; and you that have called him by this name, call him so still. There are four special times and seasons when this should be done:

1. When we have done amiss, and are under guilt, and wrath threatens. And when is it not that it is so? Every day. If you are not concerned, so much the worse. If made sensible, we shall cry out, O for a righteousness! Behold, here is one, Jesus Christ the righteous, "is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," 1 John ii. 1, 2.

2. When we have well done, after some good work, and pride of heart rises, and we begin to expect from God as if we were something. No, Jesus Christ is the Lord my righteousness. I am an unprofitable servant when I have done all.

3. When we ask any thing of God, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you," John xiv. 23.

4. When we come to look death and judgment in the face, which will be shortly; when sick and dying. O then for Christ, and his righteousness—it will be the cordial of cordials, 1 John i.

But observe this *caution*—Christ is not so our righteousness, as that we ourselves must not be righteous, and do righteously. We must be righteous, as if we were to be saved by it, and deny it, as having done nothing.

* Pope Alexander VIII. died, Feb. 1, 1691. His successor, Cardinal Pignatelli, was not elected till July 2d. Rapin, vol. xvii. p. 209, 210.

SERMON IX.

CHRIST IS OUR LIGHT.

JOHN xii. 46.

I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should (or might) not abide in darkness.

IT is not here only, but elsewhere, in divers places of Scripture, that our Lord Jesus is held forth under the notion of a light.

1. It is said, God is light, 1 John i. 5. No creature hath the like resemblance to the divine nature, as light hath. He doth not only *dwell in light*, but he *is light*. Light is a pure, bright, clear, spiritual, unmixed substance. God is infinitely so. Now Jesus Christ, as God, is light. God of gods, light of lights, very God of very God.

2. But the text speaks of him as *coming into the world*, as God incarnate, God manifest in the flesh; and as such, it saith of him, nay, he saith it of himself, *I am come a light;* and why? to what end? *That whosoever believeth in me should (or might) not abide in darkness.*

Here are two DOCTRINES:

The one—That Jesus Christ is come a light into the world. The other—That now Jesus Christ is come a light into the world, those that believe in him do not abide in darkness. Or rather thus,

Jesus Christ is *come* a light into the world; that is, good news. It is one of his Old-Testament names, *He that cometh*, Ps. cxviii. 26. compare Matt. xi. 3. It is a truth now, that he is come; he that was to come is come.

1. Jesus Christ is come *a light* into the world; a *foundation* and *food;* a *root* and *raiment;* our *head* and *hope; refuge* and *righteousness;* and not only so, but *a light*. This adds to the goodness of the news, and makes it better. What comfort could we take in any thing we have without light?

2. Now Jesus Christ is come a light into the world, those *that believe in him abide not in darkness*.

This is the best news of all, that the light doth not shine upon them in vain. They have eyes to see it, they have the comfort of it.

Show, I. What kind of light Jesus Christ is.

II. What inferences we are to draw, from his being come a light, such a light, into the world.

I. What kind of light is the Lord Jesus?

There are several kinds of light. There is glow-worm light, and rotten-wood light; fire light and candle light; star light and moon light: all these are lights. But there is one light more, that is far beyond them all, and that is *sun* light; between which, and the former, there is no comparison: and that light Jesus Christ is—sun light. None of the former is *the light of the world;* only the sun is so. Now Jesus Christ is *the light of the world*, John viii. 13. Not only come *a* light into the world, but he is *the* light of the world.

It was prophesied of him, before he came, that he should arise a sun, Mal. iv. 2. Ps. lxxxiv. 11.

It is expressly told of him, that he did arise accordingly as such when he did come, "The day-spring from on high hath visited us," Luke i. 78.—the sun-rising. John the Baptist was the morning star that came before him. Now sun light hath these properties:

1. It is *glorious* light. The most glorious in itself. The glory of it is such as the eye cannot behold, or look upon, without winking, or twinkling, 1 Cor. xv. 41. The beauty of glorified bodies is set forth by it for want of a better illustration, Matt. xiii. 43. So is represented Christ, in his transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 2. And is not Jesus Christ of all others the most glorious. His name is Michael. *Who is like unto thee, O Lord*, Ps. xlv. 2. *Thou art fairer than the children of men*, Cant. v. 10. He is *the standard-bearer*, Col. i. 18. His *is the pre-eminence*. If you ask, In what? I answer, In every thing that is excellent. In all manner of perfections, wisdom, power, holiness, he is far exalted above all that is named both in heaven and earth. Every knee must bow to him, and every creature yield. Candles are not seen, no, nor stars, nor moon itself, when the sun shines; their light disappears: so are all other things eclipsed by the Saviour. O then let this advance your esteem of him more and more. You may think too highly of others, but not of him; either he will be uppermost, or nothing.

2. It is *general* light. It shines every where, Ps. xix. 6. One sun serves all the world, nay, we are told, that all places have equally the same measure and proportion of the sun's presence with them every year, though not after the same manner. All have as much day as night, and as much night as day, which is certainly a contrivance of Infinite Wisdom, and it is to be adored in it. There is but one Christ, but that one is a universal Saviour to all the world; so that all that are saved are saved by him alone, and by no other, 1 John ii. 2. When he sent forth his apostles to preach the gospel, see their commission, how large! "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Mark xvi. 15. What the Psalmist says of the sun and its course, Paul applies to their preaching, Rom. x. 18. I cannot say, all the world hath alike the benefit of the gospel at this day; would to God it had. But to be sure we have it, and have long had it, Matt. iv. 16. For which we have cause to be very thankful. "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light," John xii. 36.

3. It is a fountain-light. What light the moon and the stars have, they derive it all from the sun. They have none of their own further than he com-

municates. So Jesus Christ is the spring-head and fountain from whence every good and perfect gift comes. *Gifts of nature* do all flow from him. "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," John i. 2. So some understand that of the *light of reason*, which all men have: it is a ray from this sun—all learning, knowledge in arts and sciences, trades and manufactures. So also *gifts of grace*: "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace," John i. 16. He is the *author* as well as finisher of faith, Heb. xii. 2. And, therefore, in all our wants we must have recourse to him; and in all our receivings we must give him the praise.

4. It is a free light. It costs us nothing. What is more free than the light; so what is more free than free grace, John iv. 10. the gift of God, Rom. v. 15. the free gift. So Christ is called, and justification by him. In this strain the promises, and calls, and invitations run, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness," Isa. lv. 1, 2. Rev. xxii. 17. Therefore ye are inexcusable if ye go without.

5. It is enlightening light. The sun hath not its light for itself, but for the world, and it communicates it accordingly. It rises every morning, and dispels the darkness of the night, and shines all the day; and very sweet and useful it is. Our sun Christ is an enlightening sun, Luke ii. 32. He finds us not only in the dark, but blind, Rev. iii. 17. even darkness itself. But he doth not leave us so. He opens blind eyes. That is more than the sun in the firmament doth or can do. Bring your eyes, and he will bring light; but eyes he gives not. But this sun gives eyes, Isa. xlii. 6, 7. He doth not only reveal the object, but repairs the faculty; he is a *healing* sun, Mal. iv. 2. In Rev. iii. 18. we read of *eye-salve*, and in 1 John ii. 20. of the *unction*. O pray for this, as Paul doth for the Ephesians, Eph. i. 17, 18. Pray, as the blind man that came to Christ, for eye-sight.

6. It is increasing light. In the morning, when the sun first rises, there are mists, and fogs, and clouds, which darken the air. But, by degrees, as the sun gets up, they vanish, and are gone, and anon noon-day comes. So it is with the souls that Christ enlightens, Prov. iv. 18. See Isa. xxx. 26. Our knowledge in the things of God is never perfect and complete while we live in this world, 1 Cor. xiii. 14. hereafter it will be: allude to Mark viii. 22.

(1.) We should therefore be humble in ourselves, not only because what we have we have received, but because if we receive but little, it is little only in comparison with what we shall have. Pride of understanding is a root sin.

(2.) We should be patient towards others, not judging, and censuring, and despising them, because they see not what we do. We should rather encourage and comfort them. Their light also is growing, Phil. iii. 15.

II. What inferences are to be drawn from this subject.

1. What a miserable condition then is a sinful Christless condition! If Christ be the light, then those who are out of Christ are out of the light. If the Sun of righteousness be not risen upon thy soul, thou art benighted to this day. It may be risen amongst us, and yet not be risen upon us. It may shine in the places where we live, and yet not shine into our hearts, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Who can choose but pity Egypt, where it was dark for three days; much more the northern parts, where it is dark for six months: most of all the poor souls that have been in darkness all their days; those who see nothing, know nothing, and, which is worst of all, care to know nothing, in the things of God and of their souls: nay, who hate the light, shut their eyes against it, and love darkness rather than light, John iii. 19, 20. How will such escape, that rebel against the light, Job xxiv. 13. saying, Depart, Job xxi. 14. as the Moors, that curse the rising sun? No godly man doth so. Where the least glimmering of saving light hath shined into the soul, it begets a desire after more and more of it; a love to the means, especially the word of God.

But wherein lies the misery of a blind and dark condition.

(1.) I answer, It is very *uncomfortable*. Eccl. xi. 7. Light is sweet and pleasant, so is knowledge in the things of God. Ask those that have it, they will tell you that they would not be without it for a world, Prov. ii. 10. This pleasure thou hast none of. Sermons are like the white of an egg to thee, without savour, without relish.

(2.) It is very *unsafe*. Thou hast a journey to go, that will not be gone without light. There are many by-ways; it is easy to miss the right way: they find it so that are most enlightened, much more those that have no light. There are many gins, and snares, and pit-falls, there is great danger of being caught; John xii. 35. "He that walks in darkness knows not whither he goeth." He thinks he is going to heaven, and alas! he is going to hell.

(3.) Thou hast work to do that will not be done without light, nay, not without sun light. Some ordinary works may be done by candle light, but not this. Thou hast a God to serve, a soul to save; which is needful work, Luke x. 42. and nice work, not to be done by the light of nature or the power of nature.

(4.) It is miserable *here*. Such are under the

devil's power at present, (who in this sense is the ruler of the darkness of this world, Eph. vi. 12.) and in the highway to the regions of eternal darkness, to be a companion with him for ever. Darkness and prison go together, Isa. xlii. 7. Acts xxvi. 18.

(5.) It will be miserable *hereafter*. All this is said to affect you with the misery of such a condition, and yet all is nothing till you are brought to make the application to yourselves: Is not this my condition?—Rather are you not ready to say, with the pharisees, John ix. 40. *Are we blind also?* Sure I am, we were each of us born blind.—Are we convinced of that?—Hath the light enlightened us so far?—If it hath, the next query will be, when and how wast thou enlightened; thine eyes opened, the change wrought? If you do not know when or how, canst thou witness the thing itself, and say, as he, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see," John ix. 25. It cannot be, but that one born blind and afterwards seeing, must be sensible of a great alteration; though but little at first, yet more and more afterwards.

2. What an unspeakable mercy then was the giving of Christ to save us from all this misery; to be a light to lighten the world. We have cause to bless God every day, for the light of the sun.—What a dungeon were the world without it! the moon and all the stars, as many as they are, cannot do that that one sun doth. So saints and angels, and all the creatures put together, are nothing without Christ. Therefore thank God, above all, for the unspeakable gift; especially if he be risen upon thy soul, if he have begun to make thee light in the Lord, Eph. v. 8. This is certainly the mercy of mercies; all is nothing without it. Though he have blessed thee with temporal blessings of all sorts,—health, strength, wife, children, a plentiful estate; say, all this were nothing, if he had not called thee out of darkness into his marvellous light, Col. i. 12, 13.

3. Of what concernment is it to us to come to Christ, to be enlightened by him. Were you, any of you, (which blessed be God you are not,) destitute of bodily eye-sight, and I could tell you tidings of one that could infallibly cure you, how welcome should I be. Behold! I bring you tidings of one that can cure your spiritual blindness. But then you must come to him, believe in him, as here; that *whosoever believeth*, that is, mixes faith with the report of the gospel, concerning him, his ability, and willingness to save; in the sight and sense of this blindness and darkness, and the insufficiency of all other remedies, betakes himself to him, craves help of him, casts himself upon him, trusts in him, doth as he directs him, shall not abide in darkness.—As he—"Jesus said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam. He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing," John ix. 7. The direction was, *Go wash*;—so I address you. Now what harm is there in all this? Will it not be of unspeakable benefit and comfort to thy soul here, hereafter? Behold he counsels thee; "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see," Rev. iii. 18. Behold he calls thee, Mark. x. 49. O let the call this day be an effectual call. Delay no longer; away quickly to the throne of grace, and beg for this eye-salve;—to the means of grace, and seek it there.

4. What is to be done by those on whom this light is risen; I anwer,—As Christ is the light of the world, so ye also are the light of the world. He himself hath christened you with that name, "Ye are the light of the world, Matt. v. 14. not the greater light that rules the day, he only is that; but—the lesser lights. Then,

(1.) *Let your light shine before men, v.* 16. hide not your candles under a bushel. Walk as children of the light, Eph. v. 8. Rom. xiii. 12, 13. 1 Thess. v. 5—8.

(2.) Let your light be *growing and increasing* more and more—especially concerning the evil of sin, the weakness of self, the excellency of Christ, the beauty of holiness, the vanity of this world, the reality of the other world.

SERMON X.

CHRIST IS OUR LIFE.

COL. iii. 4.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

THERE are three lessons to be learned from these words:

1. That Christ is *our life*.
2. That Jesus Christ shall *appear*.
3. That when Christ shall appear all true believers shall *appear with him* in glory.

Our attention will be confined to one—Christ is our life. You see it is plainly and expressly laid down here; he that runs may read the truth of it. And is he *our life?* then how dear and precious should he be to us! Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life, yet how many are there that will give nothing for Christ, no not a lust for him; a bad sign, he is not yet their life, for if he were, they would not part with him for a world, for a thousand worlds.

Show, I. In what sense Jesus Christ is our life.

II. What inferences may be drawn from it.

I. In what sense is Jesus Christ our life?

Life is three-fold; there is natural life, spiritual life, and eternal life.

1. Natural life, which is the life of the body flowing from its union with the soul: while soul and body are together, we live: when they part, we die. Now who brought them together, who keeps them together? Jesus Christ: then he is our natural life, Deut. xxx. 20.

He is so as God blessed for ever: it is in him that we live, and move, and have our being: he breathed into us the breath of life at first, Gen. ii. 7. he holds our soul in life, Ps. lxvi. 9. In this sense he is our life, John i. 3, 4.

He is so also as God-man, the Mediator; we owe it to his intercession, that we are here alive this day: did not he interpose, we were gone. He is the dresser, Luke xiii. 7—9. *Cut them down*, saith justice. *Let them alone*, saith Jesus; and because it is that we are let alone.

If a man be under a sentence of death, the friend that procures for him a reprieve may well be said to be his life. Now that is our case,—and what joy is it, that so few consider it, that so few lay it to heart;—we live upon him, we cannot live without him, and yet we do not live to him.

2. Spiritual life, which is the life of the soul flowing from its union with God. When God and the soul come together, the soul lives: when they part, it dies: the soul is but the carcass of a soul, if it have not union with God. Now there is no union with God but by Jesus Christ; it is he alone that brings God and souls together. He is the Mediator, the Peace-maker. First, the two natures, God's nature and man's nature, were united in him, as God-man; then he took up the quarrel between these persons, and made peace. God and man could never have come together but for Christ: he is the bond of the union: then he, and he only, is *the life*. John xiv. 6. *no coming to the Father*, that is, to union with the Father, *but by him*.

By our natural life we live to one another, to mutual comfort and converse; by our spiritual life we live to God, and have converse with him, and he with us: which cannot be, unless we be alive to him, for he is not a God of the dead, but of the living. Now how are we made *alive to God*? Only through *Jesus Christ*, Rom. vi. 11.

It is he that begins spiritual life in us, Eph. ii. 1. Our natural condition is a dead condition, not only a dark condition, a blind condition, till he enlighten us, but a dead condition, till he quicken us. Many a man is blind that is not dead; born blind, yet not born dead; but we are born both blind and dead. We are before him, as those dead and dry bones, Ezek. xxxvii. till he breathes upon us by his word and Spirit, then we live, and not till then. Col. iv. 10. He is said to be formed in us, that is, to become the soul of our souls, his Spirit dwelling in us, (which if *we have* not, Rom. viii. 9. *we are none of his*,) is the same thing to our souls, that our souls are to our bodies—the means, and way, and principle of their living. As his human nature was formed in the womb of the virgin by the Holy Ghost over-shadowing her; so his divine nature is formed in every believing soul, 2 Pet. i. 4. by the same Holy Ghost over-shadowing them.

It is he that carries it on and continues it. When he hath breathed the life of grace into us, if he should then leave us to live of ourselves, alas! we should die again presently, and therefore, he looks to it, when he hath bestowed it, to maintain and cherish it, Heb. xii. 2. Ps. lxvi. 9. *Which holdeth our soul in life*. This is true of life spiritual. We say, Preservation is a continued creation. John v. 17. It is so with reference to grace; in him we live spiritually, and move spiritually, and have our being spiritually: live, and move, and have our being, towards God. His flesh and blood is the food of our souls: except we eat of that, and drink of that, by believing, our souls can no more subsist, than our bodies can without meat and drink.

He is the keeper of our spiritual life, 1 Pet. i. 5. Adam had the keeping of his own, and lost it, the devil tempted him of it: and so should we: therefore he himself undertakes it, and it is well for us he hath. We are no good keepers of spiritual life, we cannot ourselves keep life and soul together; it is he that doth it every day.

3. Eternal life, which is the life of heaven: this and spiritual life are for substance the same; they differ in degree only. Life spiritual, the life of grace, is life eternal, the life of glory, begun; and life eternal, the life of glory, is life spiritual, the life of grace, perfected.

They differ as the child's life and the man's life, 1 Cor. xiii. 11, 12.

As the morning-sun from the noon-sun, Prov. iv. 18.

As the spring from the summer: the budding rose from the blown rose.

Now of this life Jesus Christ is,

1. The procurer and purchaser: he bought it for us, Heb. v. 9. It was the will of the Father that he should come and bestow it on the remnant, John vi. 40, 47. x. 10. He *hath* it, *hath* it already, that is, the earnest of it, in his heart, the first-fruits of that great harvest; or, he is as sure of it as if he had it in his hand.

2. He is the life itself. Wherein consists the happiness of heaven?

In being *with Jesus*. This was it he promised the penitent thief, Luke xxiii. this was it that Paul desired, Phil. i. To be *with* him so, as to see him and enjoy him. It is sweet now to see him through the lattices, through a glass darkly, in his holy ordi-

nances, what will it be then to see him face to face, to see him not afar off, but near? Numb. xxiv. 17. not as another's, but as our own. Dives saw Abraham, and Lazarus in his bosom,—but what the better.

In being *like* him. There is now a kind of rude draught of his image drawn upon the soul, but hereafter that draught shall be perfected, we shall be completely like him: this follows upon the former, likeness—upon vision.

Now, in the rude draught, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Hereafter, in the perfection, 1 John iii. 1, 2. Like him in body, Phil. iii. 21. We shall *appear* with him—as here. Now, to speak properly, this is the life, and of this that saying of his is commonly interpreted, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," John xiv. 6. As if he had said, I am my people's everlasting happiness, as God to Abraham, Gen. xv. 1. thy *reward* hereafter, thy *shield* here. The life hereafter in the other world, and the true way to it in this world; and what would we have more?

II. What may we infer from hence?

1. If Christ be our life, then without Christ without life;—Christless souls are lifeless souls, 1 John v. 12. I beseech you attend to what I say, it is about matters of life and death, and those are matters of great concernment, especially life and death spiritual, life and death eternal.

If ye have not Christ ye are dead men and women, for he is the life.

You are dead in law, under a sentence of death; it is only to those that are in Christ Jesus that there is no condemnation, Rom. viii. 1.—to others then there is.

You are dead in state, void of spiritual life: *This my son was dead*, dead to his father; his father was all one as if he had no such son: so is thy case as to any duty or service. Now when did he begin to be otherwise? When became he alive?—When he *arose and came*. Hast thou done so? If not, thou art dead, dead to this day. If thou *hast* Christ thou didst receive him. But when? how? at what ordinance? by whose offer? Perhaps thou art not able to tell, when first; but I ask, when at all? Saints are often receiving him, but if never, how *have* him. We know when we received, that is, closed with, such a one as husband, wife, master, landlord, friend; and why not know when we received Christ as Prince and Saviour: for certain, they that received Christ have received the spirit of Christ, Gal. iv. 6. *contra* Rom. viii. 9. Now the Spirit is a Spirit of grace and supplication, sets the heart against sin, inclines to what is good; it is a law written in the heart. O try! Will ye believe a man is dead that hath neither breath, nor sense, nor motion; we reckon so, as to the body, and in like manner it is, as to the soul.

If there are no inward breathings towards God, no desires after him, no hearty praying, otherwise than in a cold, dead form rested in, the soul is dead. Crying is a sign of life.

If there are no spiritual senses exercised, seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling; no sense of burthen in sin, no taste of sweetness in the word of God, no sight of invisible things, no ear to hear the voice, either of word or rod; the soul is dead.

And so for motion; they that have received Christ Jesus the Lord, they walk in him: to them *to live* is Christ, as Phil. i. 21. They do all they do, that is good, in his name and strength, aiming to please him. Now, will ye bring your condition to this touchstone? What say ye? are you dead or alive? You are alive with bodily life, God be praised, but are you possessed of soul life? What life is there in the inward man?

2. Then the way to live is to make Christ ours; the only way, there is no other. You would all live, would you not? I live in the world,—what else? I mean, live to God now, and live with him hereafter. O then come to Christ, and close with him; he complains, we will not, John v. 40. And why will we not? Because we are not convinced, we do not understand, we do not believe; in a word, we will not, because we will not. Two things should move us;

The one is, The unspeakable misery of dead souls. See Eph. ii. 1, 2, 12. This now, and as for hereafter, they must be eternally dying.

The other is, The unspeakable happiness of living souls; *they shall appear with him*, who is their life: all must appear, but they in glory. You tell us we are dead, and yet you tell us we must come to Christ. Can dead men come?

I reply, Thou hast as much power as ever any had that lived before thee. What power had Lazarus when he came out of the grave at Christ's call? The power went along with the call—Lazarus, come forth—and Lazarus came forth. Again,

Thou canst pray to God to give thee the power, and when he hath given it, thou canst use and employ it; and who requires more? Eph. v. 14. Is it objected, But I am an old sinner, and have been long dead; is there hope for me? I answer, Lazarus had been long dead, yea, and buried, yet at Christ's word he lived. We read of two others raised by him—the ruler's daughter, newly dead; the widow's son, upon the bier;—signifying the several sorts of sinners spiritually dead,—some young; some middle-aged; some old. There is hope for each. Yet presume not, neither say, I will to-morrow, for to-morrow is none of ours: the uncertainty of the continuance of life natural, should make us hasten to secure life spiritual and life eternal.

3. Then you that are alive, remember how you came to be so. You were not the authors of your own life, you had it from Christ, therefore let him have the glory of it; call him by this name every day, Lord Jesus, thou art my life. We can destroy ourselves, but we cannot help ourselves, Hos. xiii. 9. Eph. ii. 8. This should humble us, and lay us low.

4. Then to him we must go for all our daily supplies, for the support and maintenance of our life; the same that began the good work must perform and finish it; how oft doth David, Ps. cxix. pray, *Quicken* me, O Lord, O Lord, *quicken* me. He was alive certainly, but being sensible of dulness, deadness, decays, he flies to God: so must we; we must excite, quicken, ourselves, and exhort, quicken, one another; yet after all, it is grace that quickens.

5. We should bless God, both for the life we have and the life we hope for. See Isa. xxxviii. 19. Ps. lvi. 12, 13. Had it been from death temporal only, we had cause for praise, but much more for freedom from spiritual death. Encourage faith by it; he that hath done the greater will do the lesser, *v.* 13. Encourage patience by it under outward troubles, Ps. cxviii. 18.—not to damnation: see Lam. iii. 49.—a *living* man.

6. Then rest not in having life, but press after liveliness, Rev. iii. 1, 2. A lively frame in our walking is an excellent frame, it rids work, brings something to pass in religion. See how lively and active wicked men are.

SERMON XI.

CHRIST IS OUR PEACE.

Ephesians ii. 14.

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

This *he* here spoken of is certainly our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *we that were sometimes afar off, are made nigh, v.* 13. That which is said of him is, that he is *our peace.*

Doct. The Lord Jesus Christ is our peace.

I shall show in what sense, and how, we are to understand it, and what improvement we are to make of it.

Peace is three-fold: There is peace with God—peace within ourselves—and peace with one another.

And all these Jesus Christ is: our *peace*, not only a friend to it, but the thing itself; as our *righteousness*, our life, so our peace. He hath not only brought in a righteousness, an everlasting righteousness, but he himself is it. So he hath not only made peace, and proclaimed peace, but he *is* our peace. He not only gives us life, but *is* our life.

I. He is our peace with God.

When God made man at first there was perfect love and amity between them—God at peace with man; man at peace with God. They had sweet fellowship and converse one with another, walking together in the garden. But when Adam sinned, then, immediately, the quarrel began. Eating the forbidden fruit broke the peace, and ever since there hath been a quarrel.

A mutual quarrel. God an enemy to man; man an enemy to God, Zech. xi. 8.

A universal quarrel. It is true of all the children of Adam, without exception, one as well as another, Eph. ii. 3.—*children of wrath.*

Passively, God is wrath with us.

Actively, we are wrath with God. As all men are enemies, so all man is enmity, Rom. viii. 7. The understanding, the will, the mind, Col. i. 21. Besides,

This is a growing quarrel; it increases more and more by actual sin, Hos. iv. 1.—Omission—commission.

And on God's part it is a righteous quarrel: he hath reason to be angry, and to be offended with us.

This appears if we look upon sin as a debt; and such it is. We are taught to pray, Forgive us our *debts.* Sinner, let me tell thee, thou art indebted to the God of heaven. [And he to thee; he owes thee a payment, Deut. vii. 10.] It may be thou art beforehand in the world, but thou art behind-hand with God. Thou owest him for all the talents thou hast received, and not improved, Matth. xxv. 14, &c. "I will recover my wool and my flax," Hos. ii. 9. I will *recover*; it is a law-term: it is *my* wool, mine still, as to the propriety, though given to you for your use.

It appears also if we regard it as a trespass: *Forgive us our trespasses.* The divine law is given us, as a hedge, to keep us in compass. When we sin we leap the hedge; as in profaning the sabbath we rob God, encroach upon his time.

It appears further if we look upon sin as treason, high treason, against the crown and dignity of the God of heaven: an affront to his majesty. It defies, despises, denies him.—"And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go," Exod. v. 2. This is the language of every wilful sin. But,

It is the quarrel of a covenant, Lev. xxvi. 25.

Now, on man's part it is an unrighteous, unreasonable quarrel. He hath done nothing to deserve our enmity, Jer. ii. 4, 5. John x. 32. And

If it be not taken up, it is like to be an everlasting quarrel, like that with Amalek, Exod. xvii. 16. Other feuds death puts an end to, but here it is not so. Death brings the sinner into an endless state of misery and torment, where he is hating, and cursing, and blaspheming God, and God hating, and plaguing, and punishing him to all eternity. O that this were seriously thought of by us! that we would lay it to heart, making application each of us to ourselves—*I* am the man; God hath a quarrel with *me*; *I* am indebted; *I* have trespassed. Think thou hearest him saying to thee, as to Ephesus, Rev. ii. 4. "I have somewhat *against thee.*"

It is in reference to this quarrel that the Lord Jesus Christ is *our peace*. He interposes to take it up, and he hath taken it up upon terms agreed on. He is the Mediator, 1 Tim. ii. 5. He is the Daysman, Job ix. 33. As he that steps between to make peace between two that are at variance, must deal with both parties, first with one, then with the other, so did he.

1. He deals with God—to atone and pacify him. I must have satisfaction, saith divine Justice, for the debt that these creatures owe me, for the wrong that they have done me, so many oaths, lies, curses, so many sabbaths profaned, prayer neglected. Lord, what will satisfy? Blood? Heb. ix. 22. Death? Gen. ii. 17. Rom. vi. 23. Will any blood, any death, do it? Will the blood of bulls and goats make amends? Will the death of rams and lambs satisfy? Nay, will the death of my first-born? Mic. vi. 6, 7. No, it must be the blood of *God*, that the merit of it may be of infinite value;—and that God must be man too, that the nature that sinned may satisfy; the same nature. Now, where is that God-man that will undertake it? Lo, I come, says the blessed Jesus, rather than this quarrel shall continue, and divine justice be unatoned, and poor sinners everlastingly perish, Ps. xl. 6. I will be made a man, a man of sorrows, a poor man: I will suffer and die, die upon a tree. Why, that will do, says God, let me have that, and I will be friends: and he had it, in the fulness of time; he had it, and declared himself satisfied, Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5. Do we understand this, believe it, apply it? "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation," 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

2. Having done with God, he deals with man; every man, one by one; not himself immediately, in his own person, but by proxy. He sends his Spirit to treat with us; and may I not safely say, he hath been one time or other treating with each of you, seeking to persuade you? What to do? Why, to be friends with God, to lay down your enmity against him, and to be willing to be reconciled, 2 Cor. v. 20. Ministers are the Spirit's agents in this matter, and they come and beseech you, and when they beseech you, God in them beseeches you. Now some are prevailed with, blessed be God: "You that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled," Col. i. 21. There is a certain *now* of reconciliation one time or other in our lives, sooner or later; and they are they that can say, he is our peace, he hath made both one, brought God and us together, *broken down the partition wall.*

Some may ask—What is that partition wall?

On God's side the guilt of sin is it; till that be satisfied for, he cannot be friends. This is broken down by Christ dying.

On our part the corrupt nature is it, the carnal, stubborn will. Till that be subdued, the heart of stone turned into a heart of flesh, we will never be friends, we cannot. Now that is broken down by renewing grace. The Spirit of God in the work of regeneration and sanctification makes the change, turns the world upside down in the man, opens his blind eyes, softens his hard heart; of a stranger, brings him acquainted; of an enemy, makes him a friend. Now this work of making peace, bringing God and man together, is,

Necessary work. Work that must be done, or we are undone; it is the one thing needful, and there is reason it should be done quickly, because of the uncertainty of time, and the greater uncertainty of opportunity, Luke xix. 41.

It is work that no one else can do, but he only that is our peace. The papists grant there is but one mediator of reconciliation, though there be many of intercession; but we know but one, both of intercession and reconciliation, and Jesus is he.

It is work that he hath done for some, I hope some of *you*. Are ye not friends, reconciled?

It is work that he would do for all. It is not because of him that any perish; he calls, invites, entreats, persuades, Rev. iii. 20. Matt. xxiii. 37. Isa. xlv. 22. O suffer yourselves to be prevailed with by him. Say, Lord, I yield, I will stand it out no longer. Many arguments may be used to move us to be friends with God, and to make Jesus Christ our peace. In order thereunto,

Consider, 1. That there is no standing out against him, no fighting it out with him; he will certainly be too hard for us.

His arm is a long arm; therefore he can reach us wherever we are. There is no hiding ourselves from him. Besides his sword, he hath a bow and arrows, Ps. vii. 12, 13.

His arm is a strong arm; mighty, almighty, as to save, so to destroy;—therefore the blow, when it falls wherever it lights, will be accordingly, 1 Cor. x. 22. Heb. x. 31. O that this were considered, "Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together," Isa. xxvii. 4. By briers and thorns is meant,—the sinner himself, who is no more able to abide his wrath, than briers and thorns a fire; and—all those uninstituted ways and means which men have invented to themselves, towards making peace. All our own righteousness, penances, pilgrimages; they are all utterly insufficient for this purpose.

Consider, 2. He is willing, freely willing, to become friends, Isa. xxvii. 4. Fury is not in me, and, *v.* 5. *Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me.*

By *strength* is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, the arm of God, the power of God; so called, not only because by him he made the world—as *the word*—but because had it not been for his mediation he had been weak, as it were, could not, consistently with his honour and justice, have forgiven sin; but now it is otherwise.

By *laying hold* is meant believing. Faith in Christ is the soul's laying hold upon Christ, as Joab on the horns of the altar, as a sinking man on a cord cast out;—as when a blow is threatened on the arm, that holds the weapon, which prevents striking, so this laying hold prevents the stroke of justice. Now, shall we thus lay hold on the blessed Jesus, plead his undertaking? Say, Lord, be friends with me, for Christ hath died, and made peace.

Consider, 3. That until this be done, we are certainly miserable, for God is our enemy; either friend or foe, that is certain. If God be our enemy, all that is in God is our enemy; all the creatures are our enemies, waiting only for orders.

Consider, 4. If this be done, we are made for ever. This is Eliphaz' argument to Job, *ch.* xxii. 21. *Good shall come unto thee;* all good—temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

Now there are certain *marks* by which to know whether Christ be our peace towards God.

1. Have we thus laid hold on him by believing, accepted of him, yielded ourselves to him with unfeigned consent and assent, renouncing all other? If so, thy peace is made, the partition-wall is broken down, thou mayst go with boldness to the throne of grace, and sue out thy pardon, and take the comfort of it, Rom. v. 1, 2.

2. What is sin to us? If Christ be *our peace*, sin is our trouble, lies heavy as a burthen; it is felt and bewailed every day.

If God be made our friend, through Christ *our peace*, sin is looked upon as an enemy, and hated, and pursued, and watched against accordingly. Time was when it had the entertainment of a friend, an inmate; the doors were open to it, it was heartily welcome; provision was made for it. Is it otherwise now? 2 Kings ix. 22.

3. If Christ be our peace, he hath not only reconciled God to us, but us also to God, and to all that is his; his name, his glory, his word, his day, his people;—for their relation' sake to him—because they bear his image.

4. If Christ be our peace, and have made peace, there is always care to keep the peace. If any new matter of controversy arise, as soon as the heart smites, which it will do quickly, and we are made sensible of it, there will be no rest in the spirit, till the divine favour be recovered again. Guilt in the soul is like a mote in the eye, not at ease till wept out. It uses to be so among friends.—Now, try by these marks. Many think all is well when it is not so; others doubt when there is no cause; therefore, examine.

II. Christ is our peace with one another.

It were a desirable thing that all who fear God, in the land, in the neighbourhood, were at peace among themselves; for as for peace with wicked men, it will never be while the world stands; the seed of the serpent, of the bond-woman, will hate, will persecute the seed of the woman—the free woman; fire and water will as soon be reconciled as these two seeds. But how happy were it if all good people were at peace, if all their enmities were at an end! The Saviour left this blessing as a legacy, John xiv. pressed it, John xv. prayed for it, John xvii.

The only mean of it is Jesus Christ. The scope of the text leads to understand it of the union made between Jew and Gentile, at mortal feuds before, but reconciled in Christ.—And how?

1. By his becoming a common Saviour to both. It was his object to "reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby," Eph. ii. 16.

2. By breaking down the wall of partition; that was, the ceremonial law, which he put an end to at his death, Eph. ii. 15.

3. By begetting in their hearts, by his Holy Spirit, a dear and entire love one towards another. As in his ministry he preached it, and pressed it, so by his grace he works it. This was a great matter when first accomplished. Now he that hath reconciled this enmity, and made peace, can certainly reconcile any other, for none was ever greater than it: those amongst ourselves are nothing to it. Let us apply ourselves to him then, and pray "for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee."

Pray—That the wall of partition may be broken down—within, without; unwarrantable, unscriptural impositions without; and uncharitable, unchristian dispositions within.

Pray—That by his Spirit and grace he would knit and join us together in brotherly love, which is the bond of perfectness. Something hath been done, and is in the doing, towards it; all other names laid aside—this one taken up—the united brethren. Formerly a book called the Protestant Reconciler was publicly burned; now the king* declares himself such.

III. Christ is our peace within ourselves, in our own bosom.

We commonly call this peace of conscience. It is an inward, sedate, composed, cheerful frame of spirit, at all times and in all conditions. Now, the blessed Jesus is this also; if the first, the third, for it is the result and product of it. When all is clear between us and heaven, how can it be but there must be joy in the Holy Ghost, or if not that, yet, however,

* William III.

peace, quietness? The noise of trouble is without, Micah v. 5. "This man shall be the peace."—His being man laid the foundation, Heb. *this* man, viz. the illustrious person described in *v.* 4. He not only gives peace, as a legacy, but is the peace.—Therefore, if we want peace, we must go to him. If we have it, let us give him the praise. It is called rest, and to him we must come for it, Matt. xi. 28, 29.

SERMON XII.

CHRIST IS OUR PASSOVER.

1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: let us therefore keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

There are two things in these words:

The one a doctrinal position or assertion, containing in it the marrow or sweetness of the whole gospel: *For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.*

The other a practical inference drawn from it, by way of use and application: *Let us therefore keep the feast*, &c.

The former branches itself into three propositions:

1. Christ is our *passover.*
2. Christ our passover is *sacrificed.*
3. Christ our passover is sacrificed *for us.*

So also doth the latter:

1. Therefore we must *keep the feast.*
2. Therefore *not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice.*
3. Therefore *with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* Here were work for many sabbaths. I shall be brief on each.

Under the first head, the doctrine is,

I. Christ is our passover.

The passover was a yearly feast among the Jews, appointed of God in remembrance of the destroying angel passing over the houses of the Israelites when the first-born were slain in the houses of the Egyptians. Now Christ is not the feast, but forasmuch as there was a command about a lamb, called the paschal lamb, concerning which there were sundry rites and ceremonies enjoined to be observed, Jesus Christ is that lamb, that paschal lamb, called by a figure here, *the passover.* That lamb was a type of Christ. He is our paschal lamb, John i. 29. *Behold the Lamb of God*, as John the Baptist said, pointing at him with his finger.

Now, a lamb was the fittest creature that could be to be a type of Christ, both in respect of harmlessness, and also of usefulness. None more patient, none more profitable, than a lamb. So Christ, Isa. liii. 7.

But it may be asked, what kind of lamb is referred to?

I answer, It was a male lamb, to note his vigour and strength. And it was a lamb without blemish, signifying his absolute purity and perfection, 1 Pet. i. 19. In Christ there was no defect or distortion, no spot or deformity. So also it was a lamb of a year old; in the Hebrew it is the son of a year; a lamb in its prime, as we say. Now our Lord Jesus died in the prime of his age, between thirty and forty.

What, it may be inquired, was to be done to the lamb?

It was to be separated from the rest of the flock, and kept apart four days before. So Christ was chosen out of the people, and set apart from all eternity in the decree and counsel of God, to be a prince and a Saviour. It was also to be killed. So was Christ, he must die not a natural, but a violent, death, not in his bed but upon a tree, by the hand of violence; and that death of his is our life. Besides, the time of killing it was in the evening. So Christ suffered in the evening of the day, about three o'clock, at the time of the evening sacrifice. And he suffered in the evening of the world, 1 Pet. i. 20. Towards the latter end of the fourth day, that is, the four thousandth year from the creation.

But the main matter was, what they were to do with the blood, and with the flesh. As for the bones, they were commanded not to break one of them; which was accordingly fulfilled literally in our passover, John xix. 33—36. signifying, that notwithstanding his dying, he remained still able to save, even to the utmost.

As for the blood: they were to put it into a basin, with a bunch of hyssop to sprinkle it upon the door-posts of each house; and when the destroying angel came to destroy where the blood was, it was a warning to him that there was no first-born to be meddled with in that house, and so he passed them over.

Now our passover is Christ. And,

1. The death he died was a bloody death; and it was well it was, for without blood there could be no redemption, no remission.

2. This blood of his we are to sprinkle by faith upon the door-posts of our souls, that is, we are to make a believing application of it to ourselves: who loved *me* and gave himself for *me.* We are commanded to do this; it is our duty to do it; we sin if we do not do it. We must believe that he is both able and willing to save, to save *us*, thee and me, and thereupon to close with him as our Saviour.

3. Wherever this is done the destroying angel, that is, the justice of God, the curse of the law, the divine threatenings, the divine executioners, the avengers of blood, have nothing to do; the blood atones and pacifies. Here dwells a believer, one that

hath an interest in Christ, not in common only, but in special: away, away, meddle not here.

Now is this done, brethren? is Christ your passover? is his blood sprinkled on your souls?

If not, sprinkle it quickly; you know not how near the destroyer may be. Death may be, perhaps, at the next house.

If it be done, in God's name take the comfort of it, Rom. viii. 1; v. 9. Also, make it appear it is so, by your loving him, and living to him. The blood was to be upon the door-posts, visible to all that passed by, Rom. x. 10. But,

As *for the flesh*: they were to roast it, and when they had done, to eat it with bitter herbs, with their loins girt, and their staves in their hand.

Now all this had a spiritual meaning in it: our passover is Christ.

1. The roasting signified his inexpressible sufferings which he did undergo at his death. Was ever sorrow like his sorrow.

2. Our eating of it is by believing. Faith feeds upon Christ dying. As the mouth eats meat when it chews it, as the stomach receives and digests it, whereby the body is nourished and strengthened; so the believing soul feeds upon Christ. See John vi.

Once eating in a man's life doth not do. We eat often; so we must be often feeding by faith upon Jesus Christ: yesterday's meat will not do to-day's work.

3. They were to eat it with bitter herbs. Those bitter herbs to us are godly sorrow for sin: they that truly believe are penitent, they also mourn for sin, Zech. xii. 10. If you believe, and have never mourned for sin, suspect that faith. It is said the herbs were made into a thick sauce, to mind them of the clay that they made bricks with.

4. They were to eat with their loins girt, and their staves in their hands; which is the posture—of servants, girt for their work, Luke xii. 35, 36. We should be ready to every divine call, Ps. xxvii. 8. And—of travellers fitted out for a journey. They were out of Egypt, bound for Canaan, but a wilderness was in their way; so we are travellers to the heavenly Jerusalem. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus."

II. Christ our passover was *sacrificed*.

The Jews, by God's appointment, had several sorts of sacrifices or offerings. Some were bloody, as their burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, sin-offerings, trespass-offerings. Others were unbloody, as their meat-offerings, drink-offerings, of flour, wine, oil, &c.

Now Christ our passover was a bloody sacrifice; his life went for it; he made his body an offering, he made his soul an offering, and the design thereof was to make peace.

III. Christ was sacrificed *for us*.

Not only for our good, to set before us an example, but in our stead. By right we should have been sacrificed; No, saith he, let me be the sacrifice, and let these go their way. We are the Isaacs, he the ram. O what love was there in this! how should it for ever engage our hearts to him!

Under the second head the doctrine is,

I. *Therefore let us keep the feast.*

What feast! Not the feast of Easter; we know no such scriptural institution; each sabbath day is our Easter day; a day sanctified, and set apart for the remembrance of our redemption finished by Christ on his resurrection day, the first day of the week.

But there is mention made of Easter in Acts xii. 4. I consider that the Jewish passover is meant; for it is not likely Herod should owe such respect to a Christian festival.

But the keeping of Easter is ancient in the church. I answer, It was so, but the Scriptures are more ancient.

Not the feast of the Lord's supper; though, it is true, that is a feast, and a feast upon a sacrifice, and a feast that we ought all to keep, and to keep as here appointed; we are guilty of a sin of omission if we do not. But,

By the feast here, I understand, rather, the whole course of our conversation in this world: it is but one word—let us *feast* it then; that is, let us feed heartily and plentifully upon this blessed Lamb, not poorly and sparingly. We ought every day to feast our souls upon Jesus Christ; upon his merit and righteousness, upon his flesh and blood spiritually, upon his word, his promises, the manna, the hidden manna. I say, every day, by fresh acts of faith, Cant. v. 1, 2. Not on sabbath days only, or sacrament days only, but *every day*—it is our own fault if we do not, Luke xvi. 19. And, which follows upon the former, let us *feast* it, that is, rejoice in the Lord always, Eccl. x. 10.

Mirth is two-fold. There is *vain, carnal mirth*, expressing itself in vain, frothy discourse, joking and jesting, which are not convenient, in youthful frolics, drinking, and dancing; enough of this, and too much, every where.

There is, also, *sober, serious, holy mirth*; spiritual joy, called joy in God, terminating in him as the immediate object of it; and this the word calls for again and again, Phil. iii. 1; iv. 4. It stands in opposition to a lumpish, heavy, drooping, melancholy spirit and behaviour, which prevails oftentimes even over the best, but they should chide themselves for it, as David, Ps. xlii. and xliii. Consider,

1. A sorrowful frame of heart is a grief to the Spirit of God, whose office it is to comfort us.

2. It brings an ill report upon the ways of God,

discourages standers by, lays a stumbling block—as the evil spies.

3. It is weakening to ourselves. If the joy of the Lord is our strength, Neh. viii. 10. as oil to the wheels, then a contrary frame of spirit causes us to drive heavily in duty. Remember but this one word, and believingly apply it, *Christ our passover is sacrificed for us*, and see if it will not thence follow—therefore *let us feast it*. O how glad were the poor Israelites to be gotten out of Egypt! At passover time they made all outward shows imaginable of great joy and rejoicing.

II. Therefore *not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness.* Allusion is here made to another of the appointments at the Jewish passover, which was, that they should eat no bread with leaven in it during all the seven days that the passover lasted; and very strict they were in it, searching with candles, cursing themselves if they knew of any crumb kept, or hidden any where.

Now this the apostle applies here to naughty persons; he writes to have the incestuous church-member cast out by the censure of excommunication. Why so? Because he is like leaven, and leaven will spread, 1 Cor. v. 6. Guilt is infectious, therefore put him from among you. It ought still to be so amongst those that own Christ for their passover, 2 Thess. iii. 6.

He applies it also to naughty things, *malice* and *wickedness*. Those that call Christ their passover must not be *malicious*, must not be *wicked*. Malice is inveterate anger, and wrath, and hatred towards any person. Away with it, it is leaven, it sours the spirit of him in whom it is; sours his duties, God cares not for them. No leaven was to be mixed with any sacrifice, Lev. ii. 11. Malice sours the converse, exposes to manifold temptations, Eph. iv. 26, 27. It makes a man in God's account a murderer, 1 John iii. 15. Therefore, I beseech you all, as ever you expect benefit by Christ's sacrifice for you, purge out this leaven, Eph. iv. 31, 32; v. 1.

So likewise for *wickedness*. This is a general word, including all manner of allowed wilful sin; away with it, 2 Tim. ii. 19. There is good reason why you should. Is Christ the minister of sin? Did he die to obtain leave and liberty for us to live in sin? God forbid! We cannot think so, but rather the contrary, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

III. *But with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* There is another thing compared in Scripture to leaven, which all they that keep the gospel passover must put away, and that is, hypocrisy, Luke xii. 1. Away with it, it will spoil all.

We must not be hypocrites, nor do any thing we do in hypocrisy; even disciples must beware of this. It is the cry of the world against us that we are such, but let us approve ourselves to God that we are not such, and then no matter.

We must not have a form of godliness without the power.

Nor a name to live without being alive indeed.

We must not do what we do to be seen of men.

We must not draw near to God with our mouths, when our hearts are far from him.

We must not make clean the outside and be careless what is within.

We must not look one way and row another, as Jehu did.

Suspect this evil; search for it; watch and pray against it. Contrary to all this is sincerity and truth; they differ like shadow and substance, like the picture of a man and a man.

It was the saying of one,—I know no religion but sincerity, John i. 14. It is the condition of the new covenant, Gen. xvii. 1. It will be our comfort and joy, 2 Cor. i. 12. Our strength and preservation, "The integrity of the upright shall guide them," Prov. xi. 3. "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on thee," Ps. xxv. 21.

SERMON XIII.

CHRIST IS OUR PORTION.

LAM. iii. 24.

The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

THERE are several sayings in Scripture, both which men have said to their souls, and which their souls have said to them.

1. Which men have said to their souls.

Bad men—*Soul, take thine ease*, Luke xii. That was a naughty saying.

Good men—chiding sayings—*Why art thou cast down, O my soul?* Ps. xlii. and xliii.

Comforting sayings—*Return unto thy rest, O my soul*, Ps. cxvi.

Exciting sayings—*Bless the Lord, O my soul*, Ps. ciii.

2. Which their souls have said to them.

Among the rest, this is one, *The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.* Where we have two things:

I. A doctrinal position or assertion. The Lord, that is, the Lord Jesus is a believer's portion.

II. A practical inference; *Therefore will I hope in him.*

In this method I shall handle it.

I. For the doctrine—The Lord Jesus Christ is a believer's portion.

I shall show, 1. The meaning of the word.

2. What in Christ is that portion; and,

3. What kind of portion Jesus Christ is.

For the first,—The meaning of the word. The word portion is sometimes taken for a piece or part of a thing, be it a less part or a bigger part.

Sometimes not for a part but the whole. We call our all our portion; all we have to trust to, to live upon. Such a one hath so much, or so much for her portion; provision made for her by her father. Now our heavenly Father hath made comfortable provision, set by a competent portion for every child of his, and that portion is Christ. He hath not divided Christ among them, given a part of him to one, and a part of him to another. Is Christ divided? No; but he hath given him all, all wholly and entirely to each one of them, so that each one may say, all Christ is mine, mine to all intents and purposes.

"The Lord," said the Psalmist, "is the portion of mine inheritance," Ps. xvi. 5. Instead of lands and livings assigned to us, he hath assigned Christ to us, as the Levites and priests were to have no other inheritance than the Lord, Numb. xviii. 20. So it is now. We are *heirs of God*, Rom. viii. 17: His testimonies are our heritage, Ps. cxix. 111. Such a promise as that, Heb. xiii. 5. is better worth than a thousand a year; "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

The Psalmist adds,—"and of my cup," alluding to feasts, where each one had his mess of meat set by his cup-side, and that was his portion for that time, Gen. xliii. 34. 1 Sam. i. 4, 5. Now, the Lord is the portion of every good man's cup, the mess he is to feed upon; and a worthy mess he is, his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. Wicked men have a cup too, and the portion of a cup; and what is it?—"Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup," Ps. xi. 6. O fear and tremble lest this be your cup and your portion.

For the second,—What in Christ is a believer's portion?

All that he is, and all that he hath, both as God, and as God-man.

1. As God. All his wisdom, and power, and goodness is theirs. I say theirs, to be employed for their best benefit and advantage.

2. As God-man; as Mediator.

His merit and righteousness is theirs for justification; his blood for reconciliation; his sufferings and death to make atonement.

His Spirit and grace are theirs for sanctification; of his fulness they receive, John i. 16.

His comforts are theirs, to revive and refresh them when they are sad and drooping, Isa. l. 4. When the three young men were in the fiery furnace the Son of God was there; as, at another time, with a handkerchief wiping off sweat, and blood, and tears.

His word is for their guidance and direction in all their doubts and difficulties, like the pillar of cloud and fire.

His presence is theirs, for their preservation and protection in all their perils and dangers, Gen. xv. 1.

His crown, and throne, and kingdom are theirs, eternally to reward them, Rev. iii. 21.

For the third,—What kind of portion is Christ?

In general, he is a *worthy* portion—allusion to 1 Sam. i. 5.—that is, a dainty, delicate portion, excelling all other; none like it, worthy of all acceptation, that is to be readily accepted of, and closed with by each of us as soon as offered.

But in particular he is,

1. A soul portion—as here, He is my portion, saith my soul. The *portion of my heart*, Ps. lxxiii. 26. of my spirit, my inner man. The body with many people is well provided for, hath a large portion, whose soul in the mean time hath just nothing. Ah poor soul! the belly full, Ps. xvii. 14. the barns full, Luke xii. 19. the coffers full, but the soul empty and unprovided for. The rich man was clothed, Luke xvi. 19. These were his *good things*, v. 25. his portion. Christ alone can be a soul's portion, because he alone can answer the necessities and needs, the desires and expectations, of a soul. Four things we want, which the whole creation hath not for us, but he hath them all, and hath them abundantly, 1 Cor. i. 30.—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.—Concerning the first, *wisdom*, Job makes hue and cry, and returns answer, *non est inventus—it cannot be found*, Job xxviii. 12, 14—28. The same is true of the rest. But in Christ they are to be had.

2. A sufficient portion. There is enough in him, enough and enough again to make us all happy. Merit enough, Spirit enough, grace enough, glory enough. He is El-Shaddai—God that is enough, Gen. xvii. 1.

3. A satisfying portion. The soul that hath him will own and acknowledge it hath enough, Ps. cxvi. 7. There is many a man who hath plentiful provision for this world, and yet is still thirsting after more; like the daughters of the horseleech, crying, Give, give, Eccl. v. 10. The reason is, God never put it into them to be our portion; if he had they should have satisfied; but he *hath* put it into Christ to satisfy, John iv. 13, 14. Not but that there are still desires after more, yet there is satisfaction with what is, nay, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house," Ps. xxxvi. 8. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness," Ps. xvii. 15.

4. A sweet portion—exceedingly pleasant and delightful. It doth not only satisfy the soul that hath it, but fills it with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, Ps. xvi. 5, 6. It is a Canaan portion, which was a land flowing with milk and honey.

How sweet is the knowledge of Christ and gospel mysteries to the understanding part! Phil. iii. 7, 8.

How sweet are the communications of his love and favour to the affecting part of the soul! Ps. iv. 6, 7. Cant. ii. 3.

5. A suitable portion. If it were not suitable it would not be sweet; if not proper not pleasant. All the comfort of marriage depends upon suitableness. Christ is a meet-help. Gen. ii.

6. A sure portion. We cannot say concerning any portion we have in this world, it is a sure portion. Many a child that hath thought himself or herself secure enough, that their portion hath been in good hands, in process of time, it hath proved otherwise, either through death or deceit, or some miscarriage or other. But a Christian's portion, which is Christ, is to be sure in a good hand, Isa. lv. 3.

A part in Christ is, therefore, a good part, nay, the best part, because it cannot be taken away from us.

"One thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her," Luke x. 42.—*shall not* is a sweet word, and because Truth hath said it, I am bound to believe it.—"It *shall* not be taken away."

It shall not while we live. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance: it is secured by the promise, and oath, and power of God.

We shall not waste it ourselves, as the prodigal son did his, and Adam his.

Neither men nor devils shall wrest it from us, John x. 28. It implies they will be trying, and endeavouring, but in vain.

It shall not when we die. If other portions be not taken from us, we must from them; but "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

It shall not to eternity. It is a lasting, everlasting portion. "God is my portion for ever," Ps. lxxiii. 26.—for ever—a sweet word.

II. We notice the inferences to be drawn from hence, and the improvement we are to make of it.

1. Then it follows that Christ is a rich Christ, who hath wherewithal to portion such abundance of people, as in all ages and generations have been portioned by him. The apostle calls it the *unsearchable* riches of Christ, Eph. iii. 8. He is a bottomless mine of merit and spirit; a boundless ocean of righteousness and strength; a full fountain of grace and comfort. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. That may be said of him that can be said of no other, he hath a store that can never be emptied. O how should this endear him to us! how should it draw out our thoughts and meditations into holy adorings of him! as Cant. v. 9, 10.

2. Then all that are true believers are really and truly rich people. I do not mean rich in the world; they are many of them far from that, poor day-labourers, poor servants in poor families; but I mean, rich towards God, rich in his account and esteem, Luke xii. 21. Jam. ii. 5. We read in Luke xvi. of a poor beggar called Lazarus, a godly man. And was he indeed poor that, when he died, was carried into Abraham's bosom? Would you choose his condition, or the rich man's? We are bid, Ps. xlviii. to walk about Zion. So walk about a believer's portion—count his bags, his coffers, his fields; the grace he hath, the peace, the hope he hath; and then tell me, if he be not a rich man. Job was once the richest man in the world, but on a sudden all was gone.—No, his grace remained with him, his patience, his faith, his hope.

3. Then how much doth it concern us all to make this portion ours.

May we do so? We certainly may, each of us.

But how? By a sincere, hearty, deliberate choice of it. Choose it, and thou shalt have it. Thus Mary did, Luke x. 42. "Mary hath chosen the good part."

Now choosing one thing implies refusing another.

We must refuse every thing else that you can name, and say of it, this is no portion for me.

As, the pleasures of sin are not; a merry, jovial, sensual, flesh-pleasing life, is not; merry company is not; wine and music are not; strong drink is not; rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, are not. Away with these then, they are no portion for thy soul.

And, the riches and honours of the world are not; gold and silver are not; houses and lands are not; mammon is not; preferment is not: therefore covet them not, sit loose to them, live above them.

Further, our own merit and righteousness is not. It is a garment too narrow to cover us, a bed too short to stretch ourselves on; therefore we must deny it, not trust to it, not rely on it.

What then must we take to?

To Christ, and to him only; *choose* him: that is, we must cordially accept of him upon the terms on which he is offered; come to him, roll ourselves upon him, assent and consent to his laws and government, saying, None but Christ, none but Christ. None but Christ, to justify, sanctify, rule, save me. None but Christ, to be my Prophet, my Priest, my King. It is a sign God has chosen us for his portion, when we have chosen him, Deut. xxxii. 9. Zech. ii. 12. Thus Moses, Heb. xi. 24—26. Here was, first refusing, then choosing; he weighed both in impartial scales, and upon mature deliberation took to that which he believed best. Something of that kind must be done in like manner by each of us. Though we have not such great things to refuse as he had, yet if we refuse

what we have, and choose Christ, he becomes our portion. Now is this done? have we thus refused, have we thus chosen? If we have, blessed and happy are we! If not, do it quickly, do it this day, do it now. Let thy soul say, Lord Jesus thou art, and shalt be, my portion; let others choose as they list, my sister Martha as she pleases, to be cumbered with much serving, this is my choice. Tell God so, as David, "Thou art my portion, O Lord," Ps. cxix. 57. John xxi. 15.

There are four sorts of persons, who should especially hearken to this motion.

(1.) Those that are young. The days of your youth are the days of your choice, your choosing days. Now choose Christ, Eccl. xii. 1.

(2.) Those that are poor, and low in the world. Thy father perhaps left thee but a small portion, it may be, ten or twenty pounds; it may be, fifty or a hundred pounds; aye, but thy heavenly Father hath provided a rich portion for thee. He hath given his Son to be thy portion, and wilt thou say, I am well as I am, I will have none of him? The less we have on earth the more need there is to make heaven sure; lest we should be doubly poor, poor here, and for ever miserable.

(3.) Those that are convinced, whose eyes are in some measure opened, whose hearts God hath touched. You are specially concerned, for if you fail of Christ for your portion, when *almost persuaded, not far from the kingdom*, how sad will it be! to go to hell by heaven's gates, like the foolish virgins! Therefore choose, choose, I beseech you.

(4.) Those that have children, Gen. xvii. 7. I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed—by entail—upon the same terms.

5. Then if Christ be our portion, and we can make out our title upon good grounds, and that we have thus chosen, then it is our duty to *hope* in him; as here, "Therefore will I hope in him," rely upon him, trust to him. People are used to do so in that which is their portion. I have a hundred pounds, says one, to live upon; another, I have two hundred; if the worst come to the worst that will maintain me. Is Christ thy portion? Nay, but is he so indeed? Thou hast then enough to live upon. If he be thy portion, he may well be thy hope, thy refuge.

A refuge—*As to the things of this life.* Thou art well provided for, thou shalt want no good thing, Ps. xxxiv. 10; cxlii. 5. If all thy creature-comforts should fail, thou mayest rejoice in thy portion, which fails not, Hab. iii. 17, 18. As David, when all was gone, "he encouraged himself in the Lord his God," 1 Sam. xxx. 6.—though flesh and heart fail. Suppose a traveller robbed, all about him taken away, yet if he has more at home, if his portion be safe—if his cisterns be drawn dry, yet if the fountain is flowing—he can rejoice. So should Christians rejoice in their portion.

A refuge—*As to our everlasting condition.* 1 Cor. xv. 19. We have hope in this life, but not in this life only. When we die all our other portions leave us, Ps. xlix. 17. and if we have no Christ to take to, how sad will it be! But if he *be* thine, fear not, thou mayst rejoice in hope of the glory of God. "Why art thou, being the king's son, lean from day to day?" 2 Sam. xiii. 4.

6. Then we should carry it as those whose souls can say the Lord Christ is their portion.

In all holy obedience before him, Ps. cxix. 57. fearing to offend him, caring to please him. For though it be not possible to lose the portion, it is possible to lose the comfort of it.

In a holy contempt of all other things in comparison with him. How high do some women carry it that know they have a great portion—they spend accordingly. So should we,—this is worthy, Col. i. 10. Remember, thou art a King's son. And we should carry it in holy joy, and cheerfulness of spirit, Phil. iv. 4.

SERMON XIV.

CHRIST IS OUR PROPITIATION.

1 JOHN iv. 10.

"And sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

JOHN, the beloved disciple, breathes nothing so much as love throughout this epistle. He gives us here a superlative instance of love—not ours to God, but God's to us, in sending his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

DOCT. That Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is sent of God, to be the propitiation for our sins.

Show, I. The meaning of this.

II. What kind of propitiation Christ is.

III. What we learn from it.

I. Explain the meaning of this.

Propitiation is a hard word, but few understand it. It is used but thrice in all the New Testament,—here, 1 John ii. 2. and Rom. iii. 25. The latter word is used, Heb. ix. 5. and there translated the mercy-seat,—"And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat,"—the propitiation.

1. In that sense it is true, Jesus Christ is our mercy-seat.

Now the mercy-seat was a broad plate of pure gold laid upon the ark, in which were the two tables of the law, for a covering to it, just as long and as broad every way as the ark was; having above it the two cherubims with their wings stretched out, between which was the Shechinah, or the manifestation of the presence and glory of God, who is said to dwell between the cherubims. See Exod. xxv. 17,

21. Now this mercy-seat was a type of Christ, he is our mercy-seat.

As that was of pure gold, so he is pure and perfect and without spot.

As that was just as long and as broad as the ark or coffer in which the law was, so Jesus Christ, by the obedience of his life, did fully answer to all the commands of the moral law, without failing or offending in the least tittle; just as long and as broad; and by the obedience of his death did fully perform all that was required by the mediatorial law laid on him by the Father.

As that covered the ark, and so was between the pure eye of God, dwelling between the cherubims, and the holy law put into the ark, so Jesus Christ comes between us, as sinners and transgressors of the law, and the wrath and vengeance of God due to us. It is therefore called the mercy-seat, because it is the blessed medium or mean of divine mercy towards us, Heb. viii. 12. The same word implying, it is through Christ alone as our mercy-seat.

2. It hath another signification—*propitiation;* which is as much as propitiatory sacrifice. Sacrifices among the Jews, by God's appointment, were of several sorts, with reference to the design and end of offering them. They were especially of four sorts:

Some were merely to honour God: those were called burnt-offerings, because the whole beast was burnt.

Others were, when something was wanting to obtain it: those were peace-offerings, peace including every good thing.

Others were, when some mercy had been obtained, to give thanks for it; called thank-offerings, Ps. cxvi. 17.

Others were, to make atonement for sin, called sin-offerings and trespass-offerings, a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, or the like, duly offered, was a means to make reconciliation for the sin of the offerer. Not that divine justice could be thereby satisfied, but the divine will and pleasure was thereby performed, and it *sanctified to the purifying of the flesh*, Heb. ix. 13. that is, continued to the offerer his right and title to all the privileges of the earthly Canaan, which by his sin he had forfeited. Now our sin-offering, trespass-offering, propitiatory sacrifice, is Jesus Christ: these all pointed at him; they were the shadows, he is the substance, 1 Cor. 7. 2 Cor. v. 21.

II. What kind of propitiation, or propitiatory sacrifice, or sin offering, is Christ?

1. Jesus Christ is a propitiation appointed of God. He did not put himself upon it, but was called to it. He that knew best what would please him, did himself set him forth, Rom. iii. 25. This is a great support to faith in our addresses for peace and pardon, Ps. lxxxix. 19. He is the same that brought the ram to Abraham.

2. He is a propitiation accepted of God, Eph. v. 2. Therefore acceptable to him, because appointed by him.

But how do we know that he was accepted?

There were ways formerly of testifying acceptance by signs, as by fire coming down from heaven and kindling the sacrifice, Lev. ix. 34. 1 Kings xviii. 38.

But this was done by two extraordinary ways:

The one, by a voice from heaven, expressly affirming it, Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5.

The other, by raising him from the dead. No other sacrifice ever was so; no beast, Rom. iv. 25.

3. He is a spotless propitiation. The beast that made atonement must be so; without defect, excess, blemish; else no acceptance, Lev. xxii. 20. Now such was he; conceived, born, lived, died, without sin, 1 Pet. i. 19. Heb. ix. 14.

4. He is a slain propitiation. Without blood there was no remission, and it must be life-blood. The beast must die, else it could not be a propitiatory sacrifice. Now Christ died to make atonement, Rom. v. 10; iii. 25.—in his blood. The death he died was a bloody death, most bloody.

5. He is a voluntary propitiation, a free-will offering. Such the beasts offered in sacrifice were not, they would have lived if they might; therefore *bound with cords*, Ps. cxviii. 27. Howbeit, the offerer was to be willing, Lev. i. 3. But here, the same was both the offerer and the offering; and both willing, John x. 18. Eph. v. 25. Ps. xl. 7, 8. With the same severity wherewith he checked the devil, persuading him to worship him, Matt. iv. 10.—he checked Peter, dissuading him from sufferings, Matt. xvi. 23. See Luke ix. 51; xii. 50.

Why then did he pray—"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me?" Matt. xxvi. 39.

To show that he had the sinless infirmities of human nature, one whereof is, to fear dying: which, if he had been without, his yielding to it would not have been so strange. A shame to us to be so backward in our duty to him.

6. He is a universal propitiation.

The only one—instead of all other sacrifices, though but once offered. The legal offerings were repeated often—yearly, nay daily, twice every day; an evidence of their insufficiency. But Jesus Christ once only, and that once enough, Heb. ix. 25—28; x. 11, 12. If a plaister will cure a sore at once laying on, what need is there of a fresh one. This condemns the popish mass, which themselves own must be repeated often.

It is of universal extent—to all that will accept of it, and close with it: "not for ours only," that are Jews, his countrymen and kinsmen according to the flesh; but to the Gentiles also, all the world over, John iii. 15. *the world*, consisting of Jew and Gentile, Isa. xlix. 6. 1 John ii. 2. This is good news for us sinners of the Gentiles; if we sin, *we*

have an advocate, *we* have a propitiation; a sacrifice offered *for us*.

It is of universal extent likewise—to all sins, even presumptuous sins not excepted.

7. He is a complete propitiation. To a complete propitiation three things were required: a priest—an altar—and an offering.

If either of these were wanting there was no atonement. Now all these three met here in Christ.

The offering was his human body and soul, that is, himself as a man, Eph. v. 2.—His body, Heb. x. 5, 10. His soul, Isa. liii. 10. The same nature that sinned suffered.

The altar which sanctified the gift was not the cross, (what could the wood of the cross do towards that,) but the divine nature; the Godhead; the eternal Spirit, Heb. ix. 14. That was it that bore him up under his sufferings, as the altar did the sacrifice; and that gave worth and value to them, to make them a price sufficient, Acts xx. 28.

The priest was himself the offering, as God-man. See the definition of a priest, Heb. v. 1. "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."

Taken from among men. So was he.

Ordained. So was he, anointed, sealed—not without an oath, as Aaron, but with an oath, Ps. cx. 4.

For man. So was he; not for angels.

In things pertaining to God, to offer

Gifts, first-fruits, thank-offerings. So he, now in heaven, presents our prayers, praises, alms.

Sacrifices for sins. So he, *ut prius—as before*, himself upon the cross.

8. He is a continual propitiation; not continually to be offered, but of continual virtue and efficacy. We read often of the continual burnt-offering. The atonement made upon the cross reaches us now as fully as if he had died but yesterday. The last sinner that shall live to be reconciled and saved by him, shall certainly find the truth of this. That burthen of the 136th Psalm, concerning God's mercy, may be sung also concerning Christ's merit,—it *endures for ever*. There is a fountain of it, Zech. xiii. 1. We come,

III. To the application of this.

Show, 1. What need there was of this propitiation, or propitiatory sacrifice. Might not God have spared his Son, and the Son have spared him? Wherefore was this waste? allusion to Mark xiv. 4.

It was no waste, the work of our redemption and salvation could not otherwise have been brought to pass, for ought we know.—To those that slight it, it is indeed waste.

We have sinned; have we not? by omission—by commission—in thought, word, and deed. Where is the man, the woman, the child, that can say, I have no sin, am under no guilt.

If we have sinned God is angry with us. It cannot be otherwise. All sin is a provocation to the pure eyes of his glory; it grieves him; it vexes him; his holy nature is against it; so also is his righteous law, which forbids it, which threatens it, let the sinner be who he will, 2 Sam. xi. 27.

If God be angry, some course must be taken to appease and pacify him, it will not wear off of itself. There must be some propitiation, something to make atonement. Now what should that be, Ps. xl. 6. Mic. vi. 6, 7. This man bid fair, but it would not do. Nothing of our own, prayers, tears, alms, penances, pilgrimages, nothing of any one's else for us, will do, Ps. xlix. 7, 8. No, no; *he* is the propitiation, *he*, and none but he.

Show, 2. What is to be done by us, that he may be our propitiation. I beseech you, hearken to this, for it is the main matter. Take away *propitiation* if you take away *our*—as to any comfort we can have in it.

In general, we must do it in like manner as the guilty Israelite was to do, when he brought his bullock or his lamb to make atonement for what he had done.

Now what was that?

(1.) He was to lay his hand upon the head of the beast, Lev. i. 4. So must we lay a hand of faith upon Christ, making a believing application of his merit and righteousness, each of us, to ourselves—to our own soul, and to our own sin;—who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*; a propitiation for *my* sins. Without this there is no atonement.

(2.) He was to confess his sin, and to tell why he brought his offering, Lev. v. 5. acknowledging if he had his desert he himself should die, and not the bullock. So must we—as David, Ps. li. 4. as Job, ch. xxxiii. 27, 22. as the prodigal, aggravating his fault against himself, Luke xv. with grief of heart and shame of face, and this with the hand on Christ's head, Zech. xii. 10. Now how have we done this? do we use to do it daily, in ordinary, in extraordinary?

(3.) He was to comfort himself, and to go away rejoicing in the atonement made, and to sin no more: so must we, Ps. lxxxv. 8. This is called receiving the atonement, Rom. v. 11.

Show, 3. What is like to become of us if this be not done, and if Christ be not our propitiation. We must each of us ourselves be made a sacrifice. It is usual in Scripture to set forth the judgments of God upon the wicked under this notion, Isa. xxxiv. 6. Jer. xlvi. 10. Ezek. xxxix. 17, 18. Hence God is styled a consuming fire, Heb. xii. 29. We are described as stubble. Now what work is there like to be, when fire and stubble meet, Isa. xxvii. 4.

Two things Christ suffered in being made a sacrifice:

Pain extraordinary, in body—in soul.

Shame extraordinary, in being crucified without the gate, naked, between two thieves, scoffed at.—Now pain and shame in extremity, and eternal, is hell; and that is the portion of those that must be their own sacrifice, Ps. ix. 17.

Pain *in* soul, from the gnawings of a guilty conscience, the worm that never dies,—Son, remember. In body, to be cast into a lake of brimstone and fire, into utter darkness, tormented, not a drop of water, Luke xvi.

Shame *without;* with wicked company—in the place of souls—God, saints, devils laughing; and all this eternal, Dan. xii. 2. Hear this, and fear, 2 Cor. v. 10, 11. You that are delivered from all this, see the mercy of your deliverance by Christ your propitiation.

Show, 4. What must they do whose propitiatory sacrifice Christ is?

(1.) They must sacrifice themselves, soul and body, to him for a thank-offering, Rom. xii. 1, 2. Ps. li. 17.

(2.) They must sacrifice their sins absolutely and entirely, for a burnt-offering, a whole burnt-offering, Luke xix. 27. They must be crucified as he was, Gal. v. 24. Crucifixion is a slow but sure death.

(3.) They must sacrifice their all, freely and cheerfully, for him, if thereunto called,—estate, name, liberty, life. As Abraham his Isaac, Gen. xxii. Rom. viii. 36. Compare this with Rev. vi. 9. Now how do we like this?

SERMON XV.

CHRIST IS OUR FREEDOM.

JOHN viii. 36.

If the Son therefore make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

THIS *Son* here is, for certain, our Lord Jesus Christ; it can be no other; the *Son of God*, the *Son of man*, so as never any one was besides him.

That which is said here concerning him—*the Son*—or rather, which he says concerning himself, is,

I. That he hath a way of making people free, making himself over to them to be their freedom; *If the Son make you free*—this is implied.

II. That the freedom that he gives is extraordinary freedom; those that are made free by him are free *indeed*, no other freedom is like it, none to be compared with it; *ye shall be*—this is expressed. The explaining and proving of these two together with the application, will be the work of this day.

I. Christ hath a way of making people free—he is their freedom.

Freedom supposes bondage. The people to whom this was spoken, could readily enough reply to him, *We were never in bondage to any man, v.* 33. It was not true that they said, understand them in what sense you will.—Bondage is two-fold:

Corporal, which is the bondage of the outward man; and,

Spiritual, which is the bondage of the soul.

As to the former; their fathers had been oft in sore bondage. Were they not so in Egypt to Pharaoh; to the Philistines, and Ammonites, and Moabites, in the time of the Judges? So for seventy years together in Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar; nay, were not they themselves at this very time in bondage to the Romans? But as to the latter, which is spiritual bondage, concerning which our Lord speaks; they had never been otherwise than under that, *v.* 34. So that it was plainly the pride of their hearts; they were loth to own their condition. So are others besides them, Rev. iii. 17. But whether we will own it or not, it is certain there is a spiritual bondage, which we are all under by nature, and from that bondage it is that Jesus Christ makes free.

We were born in bondage. Paul could say, in a civil sense, I was born free; and so many of us say, but in a spiritual sense we cannot, for we were born captives, prisoners, slaves. O that God would make us this day sensible of the misery of such a condition, that if we be yet in it, we may make haste out of it; and, behold, here is one who will help you out. If we be out of it, and are already made free, we may see what cause we have to be thankful all the days of our lives.

Have we not since sold ourselves to work wickedness, *sold to be* bondmen, 2 Pet. ii. 19.—overcome.

Three things are the cause of this bondage:

1. The guilt of sin. By that we are bound over to divine justice in a bond, the penalty whereof is eternal burning. Sinner, thou dost little think of this, but certainly it is so. Thy sins are thy debts, and they are bond debts, and the bond will be sued shortly; and there will be an arrest, and thou wilt be cast into prison, if some course be not taken to prevent it, Luke xii. 58, 59. Now from this we are made free by the Son's dying for us upon the cross, whereby he paid the debt, and fully satisfied God's justice; and had his acquittance, when he rose again from the dead, Rom. iv. 25.

2. The corrupt nature, called the sin that dwells in us; the flesh, the old man. By this we are so fettered and chained to divers lusts and pleasures, that we are perfect slaves: the drunkard is a slave to his lust of drinking; the wanton to his wantonness; the covetous man to money. One owned he was a slave to tobacco; another said, when he began to love it, meaning, to be a slave to it, he left it. And as to that that is good, there is no desire towards it; but quite the contrary; there is enmity and averseness. Just

as it was with the poor woman, Luke xiii. 11, 16. she could not *lift up herself.* When Satan hath bound the soul it is crippled. Now from this we are made free by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, as a sanctifier, renewing us in the whole man; breaking the power of indwelling sin, planting a contrary principle, Rom. vi. 14—19, 22.

3. The fear of death. Fear generates bondage, which bondage is more or less according as the thing feared is, and according as the fear prevails, in the measure and degree of it. Now we are all by nature subject to this bondage, through fear. Though it does not appear alike in all, there are few but one time or other have their qualms upon every apprehension of danger; though not every one to such an excess as Belshazzar, whose knees knocked each other, or as Herod, who feared lest John was risen from the dead.

From this we are set free by the same Spirit as a comforter, abating this slavish fear, and working holy boldness and confidence; so that now the man can cheerfully look death in the face; can look God himself in the face, knowing he is a reconciled Father, Rom. viii. 15, 16. The death of Christ purchased this, Heb. ii. 14. and the Spirit of Christ applies it to the soul. Let him be afraid to die that is afraid to go to heaven. But,

II. What kind of freedom is it? In general,

1. A freedom *indeed*, that is, real freedom, substantially free. It is no fancied thing, no dream. Many a man that ruffles in the world, and is the world's freeman, doth but seem free; really he is a slave, under the power of sin and the devil. But if the Son have made thee free, thou art free *indeed*—free from the guilt of all thy sins past, from the beginning of the world to this day; free from the power and dominion of sin, for time to come. It may tyrannize over thee, but it no longer *reigns* in thee, of *choice* and with *consent*;—free from slavish fear, causing bondage.

2. It is *inward* freedom. The soul is made free, the mind and conscience. Now the soul is the man, the better, the more noble part. If it be well with that, all is well.—Though thy outward condition be low and mean, perhaps a poor servant, the drudge in the family, an apprentice to some hard master, working hard, and faring hard; no matter, if the Son have made thee free, thou art free to God, the Lord's freeman, 1 Cor. vii. 22.

3. It is *costly* freedom; it cost him dear that obtained it for us; namely, the Son.

There are two ways of obtaining freedom for captives.

The one by force; fighting to procure it.

The other by price; paying a sum of money for ransom.

Both these ways the Son obtained our freedom for us.

He paid a price for it to the Father, bought it out, even the price of his own most precious blood, 1 Cor. vi. 20. 1 Pet. i. 19. Less would not serve; either that or nothing.

He fought it out with the devil, and death, and the grave, and by strength of hand rescued us. It is true, himself was taken prisoner, but they could hold him but awhile, Acts ii. 24. Thus he is *made redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30.

4. It is *comfortable* freedom. Comfortable to us, that enjoy the benefit of it. It is attended with many exceeding great and precious privileges, which should each of them be so many arguments with us, if we are not free, to desire and seek it; if we are, to rejoice in it and be thankful for it. Those that are free of corporations enjoy many immunities and franchises, which strangers are unconcerned in, for the having of which, they serve seven years. But what are those to believers' franchises? what to those that belong to God's freemen? And, which is more, they may be thine immediately, this very day, without seven years' service to obtain them. Allusion to 1 Sam. xvii. 25.

What are the privileges of the Lord's freemen?

In general they are of two sorts:

Those we have by the way, now, in possession.

1. There are sundry evil things that we are free from:

(1.) The guilt of sin; which is taken away by the pardoning mercy of God in the blood of Christ. Even this, where it is denominated a man, a blessed man, Ps. xxxii. 1, 2.

(2.) The domineering power of sin; so that it is no more on the throne in us, Rom. vi. 14. Though it remain, it doth not reign. It is as the Canaanites were in Canaan, after the Israelites had conquered it; they were under tribute.

But some one may say, I find the power of sin great in me.

But art thou a willing servant to it, as formerly? dost thou *yield* thy members? I hope not so, you reply; I can truly say, the evil I would not that I do, and though with my flesh I serve the law of sin, yet with my spirit the law of Christ. Then be of good comfort—the freedom is gradual.

(3.) The irritating power of the law;—this is said to be the *strength of sin*, as water to lime, 1 Cor. xv. 56. Sin takes occasion by the commandment, Rom. vii. 8. If such and such things were not forbidden, we should have no mind to them; but now, when enjoying this freedom, it is otherwise. There is then in the heart a dear love to the law of God; the will consents to it, rejoices in it.

(4.) The unscriptural commands, injunctions, and impositions of men in religious matters, wherein we have to do immediately with God. Not their civil commands in civil things. We say not so, Rom. xiii. 1. Tit. iii. 1. Nor the scriptural commands in

sacred things, as when they command days of public fasting or thanksgiving when there is occasion, because for this there is warrant in the word of God. The king of Nineveh proclaimed a fast, and the good kings of Judah. But their unscriptural commands in the things of God, when they lay a necessity upon those things wherein the gospel calls to liberty: in such a case we are bid to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free," Gal. v. 1. Cor. vii. 23. Herein the Pharisees were faulty; and see what the Master says, Matt. xxiii. 9, 10.

(5.) The *evil* of afflictions: not from afflictions themselves; the best men have oftentimes a larger share of those than others; but from the evil of them, Ps. xci. 10. The evil of an affliction is the wrath of God in it. As much as there is of that in it, so much there is of real evil. Now, by the Son we are freed from that wrath; his blood hath pacified it. That which afflicts is love, for our good, Rev. iii. 19. Heb. xii. 5—8.

(6.) The sting of death and the grave. Not from death itself, nor the grave itself, but from the *sting* of it. What that is, we read, 1 Cor. xv. 56. Now sin is done away, therefore death is unstung; it may hiss and frighten, but it cannot hurt.

2. There are sundry good things that we are free to.

(1.) We have freedom of access to the throne of grace; we may come thither as oft as we will, and stay there as long as we will. The oftener we come, and the longer we stay, the more welcome we are, Heb. iv. 16. Liberty of speech, free to speak our whole mind. It is through the Son, Heb. iv. 15. We would account this a privilege were it to the presence of an earthly prince or potentate. One said he would desire no more towards the making of him rich, than an interview for one hour in a day with his king.

(2.) We are free to all the promises in the whole Bible. Take which thou wilt, if Christ be thine, thou hast an interest in it, a right to it, and mayst comfortably plead it, as if named in it. This is clear from Heb. xiii. 5. a promise made to Joshua upon a particular occasion, yet *we* may say *the same*.

(3.) We are free to the lawful and comfortable use of every good creature of God. This is certainly one thing wherein the Son hath made us free. For instance, in our good, 1 Tim. iv. 3—5. Some have thought, and taught, and themselves practised, otherwise; but it is a mistake. They may as well revive and establish the whole law of Moses in those matters. The reason ceases, it is not such blood now that atones. It is true, in Acts xv. there was a temporary appointment with reference to their present circumstances, but it was but temporary, and those ceasing, the injunction ceased, Titus i. 15. We do not live now among Jews, likely to be offended.

Those we are to have at home hereafter in the other world.

No condemnation, Rom. viii. 1. No wrath to come, 1 Thess. i. 10. No Depart ye cursed. But a crown and kingdom that fadeth not away. All the Lord's freemen are heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, Rom. viii. 17. We are free to heaven now, every day, in our daily addresses, and we shall be free to the mansions there when we go hence, John xiv. 2, 3.

USES. Hence we learn,

1. What a difference there is between one man and another, according as they are, or are not, in Jesus Christ.

Those that are in Christ Jesus are the Lord's freemen. The Son hath made them free, and they are blessed and happy; they are more *excellent* than their neighbours, upon all these accounts, Acts xvii. 11.

Those that are not in Christ Jesus are the devil's bondmen; rowing in his galley; tugging at his oar; doing his drudgery, Luke xv. 15. 2 Tim. ii. 26. having first overcome them, 2 Pet. ii. 19. Amongst men, what a difference there is between a servant and a master, an apprentice and a freeman: With a great sum, saith the captive, purchased I this freedom, Acts xxii. 28.

2. How much it concerns each of us to examine, as to ourselves, which of the two am I? Hath the Son *made me* free? It may be known, and it were good for us to know.

Those that the Son hath made free, cannot but be sensible of a great change from what was to what is. Were the Israelites, think you, sensible when they were out of Egypt, and afterwards, when out of Babylon? Those poor men that have been at Algiers in slavery to the Turks, and are come home again, some by flight, some by exchange, some by ransom, (they come often to your doors,) ask them, Are they sensible of a change? they will tell you, Aye. Canst thou say, I was darkness, dead, blind, captive; but now, I enjoy the light, I am alive, I see, I am free?

They are endued with a free spirit. There is certainly such a spirit, and it is one of the excellent spirits, Ps. li. 12. free to every good work, ready, willing, forward, Ps. cxxii. 1; xxvii. 8; cxix. 108. Not perfectly or universally so, but then it is free.

3. What is to be done that we may be made free? There is no way but one, and that is, to apply ourselves to the blessed Jesus, the Son here spoken of.

Tell him thy sense of present bondage, thy desire to be made free, and thy consent to the gospel terms; tell him that thou art weary of sin's service, and art willing to be his servant, or rather freeman. Know for thy encouragement, he is sent on purpose. Isa. lxi. 1. Compare Luke iv. 18. The gospel proclamation is like that of Cyrus, Ezra i. 1, 5. Could I assure all apprentices, servants, suppose all prisoners, galley-slaves, of freedom, how welcome would be the tidings!

4. What must they do that are made free?

They must own their deliverance and their deliverer with all thankfulness. The bells ring when the time of servitude is out, Ps. xvi. 16. Sing the song of Moses, Exod. xv. 1. Compare Rev. xv. 3.

They must stand fast in their liberty, and press to be made more free.

They must promote and further the freedom of others. Tell them the difference you have found.

SERMON XVI.

CHRIST IS OUR FOUNTAIN.

ZECHARIAH xiii. 1.

In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.

THIS fountain is the Lord Jesus Christ, concerning whom it is here promised, that he should be an open fountain, implying, till then he had been a fountain shut up, a fountain sealed. And so he was.

Now, 1. We are told here concerning the time when it should be—*in that day;* that is, in the gospel day, the famous day of the New Testament, when God was manifested in the flesh, taking our nature upon him, and becoming incarnate. Then this fountain began to be opened. It was opened more and more after his resurrection, when the apostles went forth and preached the gospel to all the world. What was the tidings they brought? Behold, a fountain opened; behold, a Redeemer, a Saviour; as the angel told at first, Luke ii. 10.

2. Concerning the persons for whose use this fountain shall be opened,—it is said, *the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.* Those were, first the nation and people of the Jews; to them first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless "them, in turning away every one from his iniquities," Acts iii. 26. In all places where they came, they began with them, Acts xvii. 1, 2. But upon their refusal, they turned and opened it to the Gentiles, Acts xviii. 5, 6. And it was well for us that it was so—*The house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem* now, are the Christian church, scattered far and wide, here and there, upon the face of the whole earth. Among them it is that this fountain is open, not elsewhere: The rest of the world knows nothing of it.

3. Concerning the intent and design of opening it, and that is, *for sin and for uncleanness.* That is a brave fountain indeed, that will wash from *sin, and from uncleanness*—that is,

From sin, which is uncleanness, polluting and defiling the soul, as dust or mire doth the body. And,

From all sin, and particularly from that sin, which we commonly call the sin of uncleanness. Seventh-commandment sins of all sorts. There is cleansing to be had even for them. And where? At this fountain; namely, with our Lord Jesus Christ, who is made unto us of God, amongst other things, *our fountain.*

DOCT. That the Lord Jesus Christ is our fountain.

Show, I. Wherein.

II. What kind of fountain.

III. The application.

I. Wherein is Christ a fountain?

When it is said Christ is our fountain, it holds forth two things:

1. Fulness. A fountain is not like a cistern: a cistern may be full, but the fulness of it may be emptied; so may the fulness of a fountain too, but then a fountain, or a spring, fills itself again immediately. So doth not a cistern. A cistern may be full, but it doth not rise up and run over, as a fountain doth, and that continually. For this reason the corrupt nature in us is compared to a fountain, Jer. vi. 7.—bubbling up in vain thoughts, inordinate desires, corrupt affections. Now in Jesus Christ there is a fulness, and it is a fountain-fulness, Col. i. 19. *fulness—all* fulness, and all fulness *dwelling,* and *by the good pleasure of the Father.*

What is he full of?

The two things that our poor souls have most need of, towards the making of us happy.

Merit and righteousness for justification; and

Spirit and grace for sanctification.

He hath merit enough; his merit is of infinite value, sufficient to take away all sin, Heb. vii. 25. —*able* to save. And

He hath Spirit enough, to sanctify us throughout, to break the power of every lust, to strengthen us to every good word and work.

He is such a fountain as can open in us a fountain, springing up unto eternal life, John iv. 14. John i. 16.

2. Uses—fulness.

A fountain is of great use. What striving was there in Abraham's time, and Isaac's time, and Jacob's time, about wells of water, Gen. xxi. and xxvi. When Achsah was to ask a boon of her father Caleb, *Give me,* said she, *springs of water,* Judg. i. 15. Were we to ask but one thing of our heavenly Father, there were reason it should be, Lord, give us a fountain. Why, blessed be his name, he hath given us one. Not only, springs of water, useful for our outward man, a *land of springs,* like Canaan, but a Christ, a Christ for our souls.

A fountain of water is useful for three things:

(1.) For quenching of thirst. How glad is the

weary traveller, or labourer, of a spring of water; though it be but fair water. O, says he, it hath saved my life. The Israelites in the wilderness, when there was no water, what an affliction was it to them. When they had it, it was sweet as honey and oil, 1 Cor. x. 4.

Now this fountain is very useful for this purpose. Is thy soul athirst? athirst for peace, pardon, life, salvation, for grace, strength? Here is a fountain for thee, come and drink, Isa. lv. 1—buying frightens; therefore, come freely. Thou art called, John vii. 37. Rev. xxii. 15. See the discourse of our Lord Jesus with the woman of Samaria, John iv. 10—14. Alas! the most of men know not what this means—they are sensible of no need, and, therefore, of no desire, but, Ps. xlii. 1. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."

(2.) For washing away filth. Water cleanses; we could not tell what to do without it—to make our bodies, our clothes, comfortable. This fountain also is cleansing. Sin defiles, leaves a blot, a stain, upon the soul.—It is uncleanness.

The guilt of it is so: from that we are washed by the blood of Christ, satisfying God's justice and making atonement; also purging the conscience—1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5. Heb. ix. 14.

The corrupt nature, which is the root and principle of it, is so, Ps. xiv. 3. From this the Spirit of Christ washes in the laver of regeneration, Tit. iii. 4, 5. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

(3.) For watering the earth, and making it fruitful. They use to have fountains for that purpose in their gardens, to be ready in a dry season to fetch water to refresh the plants. Herein also Christ is our fountain. Did he not water us every moment, grace in us would languish and die, Isa. xxvii. 3. See Isa. xliv. 3, 4. Now it is the second of these especially that this text speaks of—Jesus Christ is a cleansing fountain; we have need of him as such, for we are filthy and defiled.

II. What kind of fountain is the Lord Jesus.

As a cleansing fountain he hath these properties.

1. He is full, he hath enough wherewithal to cleanse us; merit enough, spirit enough. Under the law they had cleansing appointments as to ceremonial pollutions, but ours is beyond theirs.

They had blood, but it was but the blood of bulls and goats, and that in a bason only; but we have the blood of the Son of God, not in a bason, but a fountain full of it.

They had water; one particularly called the water of purification, made of the ashes of a red heifer, kept in a pot for the purpose, Numb. xix. 9. But that availed nothing towards taking away the moral pollution. The blood of Christ doth that. The papists, in imitation of this, have holy water; a mere vanity. They had also water in a brazen laver of vast extent, in Solomon's time, for the priests to wash in when they drew near to worship, 1 Kings vii. 23, 26. Compare 2 Chron. iv. 5. But what is all that to a fountain? In this fountain we are to wash every day, especially when we draw near in duties of worship; Ps. xxvi. 6. "I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Lord,"—that is, in Christ's blood, which makes as if innocent.

2. He is a flowing fountain. It is of the nature of a fountain to flow forth; if it doth not flow, it is not a fountain. There are continual issues every day from the blessed Jesus, both for justification and sanctification, or we were undone. This was signified by the blood and water that came out of his side.

3. He is a holy fountain. We have a spring in this county called by name Holy-well,* but it makes none holy that go to it; it is well if it defile not some by the superstition of it; but here is a holy well indeed, and holy water indeed, that makes them holy, holy, that are washed in it. How unclean soever before, if washed with the grace of Christ that uncleanness is done away. We are made partakers of the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4.—not in perfection at first, but by degrees, renewed more and more till presented without spot to God, Eph. v. 27—faultless, Jude 24. O the rare virtue that is in this fountain; it makes a sinner a saint.

4. A healing fountain.

In John v. we read of a pool, called the pool of Bethesda, which had a healing virtue. This is the true Bethesda. Our uncleanness is like that of the leprosy, a disease; this cleanses, as Naaman by washing in Jordan, 2 Kings v.—as the leper in Siloam.

5. An open fountain. If it were of greater virtue than it is, and were shut up, what the better should we be? No, it hath pleased the Father to lay him *open*. He is not an enclosed fountain, but a common fountain; as a common propitiation so a common fountain, 1 John ii. 1, 2.—As common as the light or air.

Open and common to all persons, Jew and Gentile, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free; whosoever will may come.

Open at all times, night or day, summer or winter, John viii. 2.—*early in the morning*, John iii. 2. Nicodemus *by night*, and both found entertainment with him—Allude to Gen. xxix. 8. There is no stone to be rolled away.

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* In Flintshire.

1707-8, July 13. Went to visit at Newmarket. My wife and daughter with me. We called at Holywell. I was much affected to see a papist long in the well, praying and crossing herself. Surely they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. We can scarce persuade people to pray in their warm closets. They pray, and pray long, in the cold water, and are reproached for it. They shame us. *Rev. Matthew Henry's Diary, MSS.*

Open and free as to terms. We say—What is freer than a gift? He is the gift of God, John iv. 10. the *free* gift, Rom. v. the *unspeakable* gift, 2 Cor. ix. 15. Though thou hast no worthiness, no matter, he is worthy. Cordial acceptance makes him ours. He forgives freely, Isa. xliii. 25.

6. The only fountain. Besides him there is no other, Acts iv. 12. We may think, perhaps, as Naaman—"Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean?" 2 Kings v. 12. But no other fountain will do.

III. The application, in four particulars.

1. Here is matter for thanksgiving to God, who,

(1.) Appointed this fountain in the counsel of his will from all eternity, John iii. 16.

(2.) Opened it in the fulness of time, after it had been shut for four thousand years, Gal. iv. 4.

(3.) Opened it *to us;* to us of this nation, country, neighbourhood; of this present age and generation. Here is matter of thanksgiving, that the gospel is not a hidden gospel to us, that it is yet day-time with us, that we are within hearing of the joyful sound.

(4.) And, specially, that he hath brought us to it, and washed us in it. This is certainly the mercy of mercies,—"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," Rev. i. 5. This is more than angels can say. When ten lepers were cleansed, only one returned to give thanks, Luke xvii.

2. Here is matter for conviction; and O that I knew what to say, and how to order my speech, so that it might be convincing; but Elihu, my God is he that must do it. Convincing! Of what? Of your need of this fountain to wash in.—That which is unclean doth certainly need washing; but thou art unclean, I mean, thy soul, thy mind, thy conscience; inwardly, spiritually. I am sure thou wast so by nature; born in guilt and filth; like an infant weltering in blood and pollution, Ezek. xvi. And art thou washed? When, and how? And by whom, and with what?

I am sure, that every sin thou hast committed hath added to that original pollution, and hath made thee more and more filthy, Ps. cvi. 39. Matt. xv. 19, 20. Even vain thoughts, Jer. iv. 17. So is the world also, Jam. i. 27. Nay, our best duties have their pollutions, Isa. lxiv. 6. But there is one particular kind of sins, those against the seventh commandment, that is especially called uncleanness. And have we been in no sort guilty of that, neither in thought, word, nor deed? That query of Solomon's is a searching one—"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" Prov. xx. 9.—Even those that are washed have need to wash their feet, John xiii. 10.

3. Here is matter for exhortation:

(1.) To that which is best. To keep yourself clean, and to keep your way clean, which must be by taking heed thereto according to the divine word, Ps. cxix. 9. Apply to the fountain.

(2.) To that which is next best. If any pollution happen, to make haste to your fountain, and wash speedily; I mean to the Lord Jesus, confessing, bewailing, believing. The sooner the better—as in the case of other dirt; allude to 2 Kings v. Go wash seven times. You that have never been with him for mercy, for grace, have most need of all. Feel it, and believe there is a fountain just by thee; allude to Gen. xxi. 19.

4. Here is matter for encouragement. This sweet promise hath relieved many a poor soul that hath been sinking.

(1.) That it is a fountain; therefore, mercy enough, merit enough.

(2.) That it is an open fountain, not under lock and key, but free and common to all; none excepted, that except not themselves by unbelief.

(3.) That it is to the house of Israel and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; that is, all the members of the visible church.

(4.) That it is for sin indefinitely, and particularly for uncleanness.

SERMON XVII.

CHRIST IS OUR WISDOM.

1 Cor. i. 30.

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom.

This plainly and expressly proves what I affirm concerning Jesus Christ, that he is made unto us of God *wisdom;* not only that he is wise, nay wisdom itself, *v.* 24. and Prov. i. and viii. but that he is made *unto us* wisdom, and that *God* made him so; that is, God the Father, who first puts us into him. We were not born in him, but we are put into him by renewing grace, as a graft or scion into the stock, and then he makes him to us *wisdom.*—So that here are four things asserted:

1. The original and fundamental privilege of all true believers; they *are in Christ Jesus,* Rom. viii. 1.

2. A consequential privilege following upon that; thereupon *he is made unto us wisdom.*

3. The sole author both of the one and of the other, and that is *God,* God the Father—of him, are ye in Christ Jesus.

4. The scope, end, and design of this, *v.* 31.—that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord.

Doct. That Jesus Christ is made of God wisdom to all true believers that are truly in him.

Show, I. How we are to understand this.

II. What practical inferences may be drawn from it.

I. How are we to understand this?

1. *Objectively.* As he alone is the object about which all true wisdom is conversant, Col. ii. 3. Wisdom is either divine or human, the wisdom of God, or of men.

He is the *wisdom* of God, as the *power* of God, 1 Cor. i. 24. because the divine power and the divine wisdom were never so manifest in any thing that ever he did as they were in Christ, that is, in the great work of our redemption by him. All his works are made in wisdom, Ps. civ. 24. Prov. iii. 19. The footsteps of it are to be seen in all the creatures, in the several parts and members, and their proportions, especially man, Ps. cxxxix. 14. He governs the world in wisdom, wisely ordering all events to the great end of his own glory, and his people's good: when we murmur we charge God with folly, Job i. But above all, in our redemption by Christ; in the contrivance of it, finding out such a way wherein righteousness and peace are met together, mercy glorified, and yet justice satisfied. In Eph. iii. 10. it is called the manifold wisdom of God, such as angels wonder at.

He alone is the object of all *our* true wisdom. There are other things about which wisdom is conversant, but none like Christ, 1 Cor. ii. 2. Phil. iii. 7, 8. Our chief wisdom consists in closing with that wise design of the Father, acquainting ourselves with it, assenting and consenting to it, acquiescing in it, John xvii. 3. So that if you ask, who is a truly wise man? I answer, he that is truly a Christian, not that is barely called so, but that understands, believes, and acts as such, Deut. iv. 6. They are called *Wisdom's children*, Luke vii. 35. The world counts them a company of fools, but God esteems them wise.

2. *Effectively*, as he is the author and finisher of all that in us which is true *wisdom*. Now, that is *grace;* grace is true wisdom, and nothing else is so. It is not wisdom to be wise to do evil, wise, as Ahithophel was, to plot mischief; nor is it wisdom to be able to manage affairs dexterously and to advantage; but wisdom is, to know Christ Jesus the Lord. Now whence have we this wisdom? It is the Spirit of Christ that works it in us, Eph. i. 17. 1 John v. 20. He is the author, Heb. xii. 2. Of his fulness we receive, John i. 16. His is the eye-salve, Rev. iii. 18. But, further, for explication—It may be inquired,

1. *How is it said he is made unto us of God wisdom?*

(1.) In respect of eternal appointment and designation. The Father did from everlasting ordain, decree, and purpose, that his Son, Christ, should be common head to us, deriving wisdom to all his members; a common fountain, whence they should fetch it. The head in the body we reckon the seat of wisdom; here so, Col. i. 19. compare John i. 16.

(2.) In respect of effectual application, in the fulness of time. He is then made wisdom to us when we begin to be made wise by him, and that is when we are savingly converted. Then, and not till then, are we turned to *the wisdom of the just*, Luke i. 17. But,

2. *What are the special acts of this wisdom, by which it may appear whether we are so turned, so made wise?*

(1.) If Christ be *made unto us wisdom*, we have been in some measure convinced of our own folly and foolishness; this is the first step, 1 Cor. iii. 18. A fool thinks himself wise, Prov. xxvi. 12. As the Pharisees, John ix. 40. A wise man knows himself a fool, as David, Ps. lxxiii. 22. Agur, Prov. xxx. 2, 3. Now inquire, How is it with me? What is the opinion I have of myself?

(2.) If Christ be made unto us wisdom, we are brought to see the excellency and usefulness of wisdom, and begin to prize it at a high rate, and to beg it of God rather than any thing else in the world. As the pulse of desire beats, the man is; not desire in word and tongue, not in sudden flashes of wishing and woulding, but the inward, hearty, settled desire—as of *joy*, Ps. cxxxvii. 6. Not the desire *in* the heart, but *of* the heart. Would we do as Solomon, seek an understanding heart? have we done so? 1 Kings iii. 5. If God should say to us, as to him, "I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart," it would be a good evidence of being saved.

(3.) If Christ be made unto us wisdom, we have chosen God for our chief good and highest end, and the Lord Jesus Christ as our alone way to him. If so, we are wise; if not, to this day we are fools. The proper act of wisdom is to determine the choice to right ends; as in other things, so in spiritual things, the things of the soul. Inquire what is your chief good and highest end. Is God? to please and honour him, or self? Can you say, with the Psalmist "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever, Ps. lxxiii. 25, 26. There are few who can say this. Paul complains that "all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's," Phil. ii. 21. To seek Christ's things is to seek such things as he sought. Now *those* were, to please his Father. And have you learnt Christ as your way, and do ye walk in him? Can you say, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain?"

(4.) If Christ be made unto us wisdom, it hath taught us to fear the Lord, and to depart from evil, Job xxviii. 28. There is this difference between wisdom and knowledge—knowledge is in speculatives, wisdom is in practice. Many have a great

deal of the former, that have none of the latter; good heads, but bad hearts and bad lives. See the properties of heavenly wisdom, Jam. iii. 17. It was thus with David, Ps. cxix. 98—101, Eph. v. 15, 16.

(5.) If Christ be made unto us wisdom, it hath made the things of time to be as nothing to us, and the things of eternity to be all in all; it has altered our thoughts and pursuits. Inquire how is it with us as to this. Can we say, as Paul, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal?" 2 Cor. iv. 18.

Things that are seen, and not seen, are either good things, or evil things.

What are the good things temporal, riches, honour, pleasure, in comparison with the good things eternal, the vision and fruition of the blessed God, and the blessed Jesus? Can we despise the former for the latter, as Moses, Heb. xi. 24—26.

What are the evil things of time in comparison with the good things of eternity?—Whether are we most afraid of the frowns of men or the frowns of God, a prison or hell? It was a high charge against Job, but false, "Take heed, regard not iniquity, for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction." Job xxxvi. 21. Daniel chose to disobey the king rather than God, *ch.* vi. So did the three young men, *ch.* iii.

II. The practical inferences.

If Christ be made wisdom to those that are in him, and only to those, then,

1. They that are not in him are not wise. Nay, I must speak plain, they are fools. Nabal is their name, and folly is with them. We are forbidden to say to our brother, Thoudfool, under the pain and penalty of hell-fire, Matth. v. 22, that is, in wrath and bitterness to judge any person as to his eternal estate, but not, when it is spoken out of love, to convince; and, God knows, that is my end. Paul calls the Galatians, *foolish* Galatians, Gal. iii. 1. Christ, the two disciples, nay, and all the rest of them in that matter, *fools*, Luke xxiv. 25. I speak it to your consciences, and if your consciences speak it to you, hearken to them—Unconverted Christless people are fools.

I prove it by three arguments.

(1.) They choose like fools. Is he not a fool, that when a pebble is offered to him by one, and a pearl by another, chooses the pebble, and refuses the pearl? Was not Esau a fool, in parting with his birthright for a mess of pottage? O sinner, whatever thou makest of it now, the day is coming when thou will call thyself a thousand fools, for preferring the trash of this world before the heavenly treasure—the cross, the dirt of the earth before the glories of the eternal kingdom! It is recorded of Mary, as an act of the highest wisdom, and she is commended for it, that she chose to sit at Christ's feet, to hear his wisdom, Luke x. 42. As the queen of Sheba to Solomon's. See Luke xi. 31.

(2.) They count like fools.

They count themselves wise, and religious people a company of fools, when themselves are the fools, and the religious wise, John vii. 47, 48, Luke xviii. 11.

They count upon time to come as their own, and presume accordingly, when alas! it is not so. So that reckoned upon time as property is styled a fool, Luke xii. 20. They count upon going to heaven when they die, but are miserably mistaken, as the madman at Athens, that pleased himself with the conceit that all the ladies ships were his.

(3.) They carry it like fools.

The carriage of a fool is vain and frothy; there is no seriousness in him. Are there not many such with whom it is so? Am not I one of them? "It is as sport to a fool to do mischief." Prov. x. 23. Am I not under the power of a vain mind?

He carries it like a fool, that hugs his worst enemy in his bosom, and turns his back upon his best friend; and can not the same so? Is not sin thy enemy, the devil thy enemy? and are not they made much of, and Christ, thy best friend, slighted and made nothing of? One of the fathers brings in the devil preaching against sin at the day of judgment—Lord, seest not this man deserve to be damned, that would be ruled by me, that never did nothing for him, and would not.

2. They that are sensible of their want of wisdom, and would be wise, may learn hence whither to go, and what to do, that they may attain it. The way is to apply myself to the blessed Jesus, who is *made unto us of God wisdom*. He is our Joseph. As they that wanted corn must go to Joseph, so they that want grace, any grace, the grace of wisdom, must go to Christ.—And plead that text with him—Lord, art thou *not made unto us of God wisdom?*

What need is there of this part?

Universal need, every day, in every thing. They that have most, have need of more.

1. We cannot carry it as we should in any relation without wisdom, neither as superiors, inferiors, nor equals.

What need have magistrates of wisdom? Ps. ii. 8.—A confession of this made Solomon ask as he did, 1 Kings iii. 7—10.

Ministers are in the same situation, Col. i. 28. What a plague are foolish shepherds, Zech. xi. 15. On the other hand it is promised, "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Jer. iii. 15.

So are masters of families, husbands, wives, parents—They all need wisdom, that they do not ruin it by severity so much, or indulgence no more.—Neighbours especially need it. If without wisdom how can we walk in it, Col. iv. 5, so as that we may do them good, and they or us no hurt?

(2.) Nor can we carry it as we should, in any condition, without wisdom.

If we prosper and thrive in the world, there is need of wisdom, to manage it so that we be not insnared, not destroyed by it. If in affliction it is necessary, that we may keep the mean between fainting and despising. If reproached, reviled, persecuted, to carry it as we ought towards our persecutors, with meekness and yet with courage. Jam. i. 3—5.

(3.) Nor can we carry it as we should in any duty to be done to God or man without wisdom.

If we pray, we need wisdom that we do not ask amiss. If we hear the word, we need wisdom that we may discern between wheat and chaff, that we may take our own portion. If we wish to reprove, we need wisdom to know when, how, Col. iii. 16. If to reconcile differences, 1 Cor. vi. 5. If to manage good discourse, Prov. xxxi. 26.—to attend our particular calling, so as not to intrench upon our general calling; to keep the world in its due place: we require wisdom in all.

(4.) Nor can we carry it as we should in any difficult case that lies before us, nor tell how to determine for the best, without wisdom, Eccl. x. 10. I may spare my pains to prove we have need of it; we all know it and feel it by ourselves, if we know and feel any thing.

How is it to be supplied?

I told you, by having recourse to the blessed Jesus in a humble sense of our need, Prov. iii. 5, 6.

We must pray, as Paul, Acts ix. 6. Jam. i. 5.

We must study the word; that must be our Abel, our counsellor, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, Col. iii. 16. What that speaks, Christ speaks.

We must then believe, put on Christ, learn Christ, walk in Christ, which is the certain way to be made wise.

3. Here is matter of unspeakable comfort to all true believers, that *Jesus Christ is made wisdom*, that is, as some interpret it, that all that infinite wisdom that is in him as God, and all that infused wisdom which he had as God-man wherein he grew, Luke ii. 52. is all made over to us, to be employed for our good. Dost thou know the meaning of this? If there be any matter or thing wherein that wisdom may stand thee in any stead, it is thine; as if a woman marry a wise counsellor, or a wise physician, if she need the help of either, it is ready: so it is here. Allude to Prov. xxxi. 11. Apply it,

1. To our particular, private affairs, especially in the great turns of our lives. If thou art in Christ, he will order them for thee, and he will order them wisely, Eph. i. 11. according to the counsel of his will. Therefore, cast thy care upon him, commit thy way unto him, Ps. xxxvii. 3—5. Isa. xxx. 18.

Therefore, submit to his disposals, quietly, patiently; of choice, cheerfully: wisdom would have it so, sees it best it should be so, and shall I gainsay?

2. To the public affairs of the church and nation. Our enemies are not only many, mighty, malicious, but cunning, crafty, subtle; there are Ahithophels amongst them. No matter, wisdom is our friend, knows how to undermine and countermine, Job v. 12. As he did Haman. The pilot is wise, though the sea is rough.

SERMON XVIII.

CHRIST IS OUR WAY.

JOHN xiv. 6.

I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

THESE are the words of our Lord Jesus concerning himself, wherein he says, *I am the way:* the way, whither? To the Father. Is there no other way? No, no other way, *no man cometh—but by me.* And what else is he besides the way? The *truth and the life* also. *The truth*, therefore we may safely believe what he says. *The life*, therefore he is worth the seeking after.

DOCT. That our Lord Jesus Christ is our only way to the Father, and besides him there is no other way.

The Father is God. You would all come to God, would you not? especially to God as a Father? Then hearken to me to-day; my errand is to set you in the right way. Abundance of people quite miss their way to God, and so perish in by-ways. There is but one right way, and that is Christ; therefore "kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

I. Show, in what sense is Christ the way to the Father.

II. The properties of Christ as a way; what kind of way he is.

III. What improvement to make of it.

I. In what respects is Christ the way to the Father?

There are seven things which are our concernment with the Father, to which Jesus Christ is the only way.

1. Our acquaintance with the Father. It concerns us all to know God, and be acquainted with him, John xvii. 3. Job xxii. 21. Now there is no being acquainted with God but by Jesus Christ; no being savingly acquainted with him. We may know something of him by the works of creation, but not unto salvation; *so*, only by Christ, John i. 18. *He hath declared him—*

By what he was, Heb. i. 3.

By word of mouth; he preached concerning him.

By the works he did.

By suffering and dying. It declared him a just, righteous, sin-hating God; therefore, when Philip desired him, John xiv. 8. "Show us the Father," see his answer,—"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," v. 9.

2. Our access to the Father. We are coming to him daily in the duties of his worship; are we not? by prayer and supplication, alone, and with our families, in ordinary, in extraordinary, cases. But if we come without Christ, we come out of the right way. *Through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father,"* Eph. ii. 18. that is, through his merit and mediation, Eph. iii. 12. Rom. v. 2. By faith in Christ, applying that merit and mediation of his unto ourselves, and appearing in it before God; as Jacob in Esau's clothes.

3. Our acceptance with the Father.

If we come and are not accepted, what the better are we? Paul laboured, "that whether present or absent, he may be accepted of him," 2 Cor. v. 9. So should we. Now that is only in and through Jesus Christ, Eph. i. 6. This has been proclaimed so by a voice from heaven, Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Pleased with our persons: allude to Gen. xliii. 3.

Pleased with our performances, "Ye are an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, *acceptable to* God by *Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. As no sacrifice was accepted, unless offered by a consecrated priest upon the right altar;—so here. Now Christ is both, our priest and altar, sanctifying the gift, Heb. iv. 14, 16.

4. Our atonement with the Father. The Father and we are fallen out; he is displeased towards us; how shall we get the quarrel taken up? There is no way but one, and Christ is that way, Eph. ii. 13, 14. 2 Cor. v. 19. Rom. v. 1. He made peace by the blood of the cross; his death atoned and pacified God's offended justice; made amends for the wrong that we have done him; and we may comfortably plead it, accordingly, as our righteousness.

5. Our adoption by the Father. Adoption is that that makes us the children of God. We are by nature the devil's children, branches in the wild olive, and our fruit is accordingly. Adoption cuts us off from that stock, and grafts us into a better stock, a good olive; puts us into God's family. Now, how is this done? Only by Jesus Christ; he is the way, Gal. iii. 26. Eph. i. 4, 5. John i. 12. And upon our receiving of him, it is done immediately.

6. The accomplishment of all the promises of the Father. The promises are our great charter; they are both exceedingly numerous and exceedingly precious.

But our Lord Jesus was the way to the making of them; they were made in him, that is, supposing his undertaking. Out of Christ God was a threatening God only, ever after the first promise, Do and live—was slighted.

Also he was the way to the making of them good, 2 Cor. i. 20. If ever we have occasion to put a promise in suit, it must be in his name, in the virtue of his merit and mediation.

7. Our admission into the everlasting kingdom of the Father. To say he is the way to the Father, is as much as to say, he is the way to heaven. Heaven is a place, a city, a city that hath foundations; now every city hath a way to it, and so hath this city—and that way is Christ. There our Father dwells, and keeps court. When we come thither, we shall see him, and enjoy him, only by Jesus Christ.

It was he that purchased it for us, by the merit of his death. We had never had title to it, if he had not so bought it. He is entered as our forerunner.

It is he that prepares us for it, by his Spirit in the work of sanctification, beginning, carrying on, finishing it, Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Col. i. 12, 13. He is our Joshua, both conquering the promised land for us, and dividing it to us, leading us over the Jordan of death.

II. I am to show what kind of a way Christ is.

In general, when it is said Christ is a way, it must needs be that he is so in a singular and peculiar manner, and that his properties, as such, are extraordinary; and so they are, even made up of seeming contradictions.

1. He is both a new way and an old way; as the command of loving one another is both an old command and a new command, 1 John ii. 7, 8. So it is here.

He is the *old way* to the Father, even from the beginning; the way that Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, all went; in and through him they were accepted, and justified, and saved, Jer. vi. 16.

He is the *new way*—expressly said to be so, Heb. x. 20. New in respect of clearer discovery and manifestation; held forth before under types and shadows, now laid open; so that he that runs may read. For this new way we are concerned to sing a new song, Ps. xcvi. 1; xcviii. 1, 2.

2. He is both a dead way and a living way.

Dead: all other ways are dead things, and therefore he must die, and so he did, upon a tree, or else he could not have been our way to God. If by dying he had not paid the ransom, undergone the penalty, there could have been no peace for sinners.

Living: he that was dead is alive again, and lives for evermore. In Heb. x. 20. he is called a *living way*—as here—*and the life.* If he were not living, and the life, he could not be a way for us to the Father. It was his rising again that was our justification, Rom. iv. 25.

3. He is both a broad way and a narrow way.

A narrow way, Matt. vii. 14. We cannot walk

in it, and have elbow-room for our lusts. The strictness of the divine precepts is the hedge compassing this way about, both on the right hand and on the left, which must not be transgressed and leaped over by those that intend Christ for their way to the Father, 2 Tim. ii. 19.

A broad way—in respect of the true spiritual Christian liberty, which they have that walk in it. The same that is our way is our freedom, John viii. 36. Ps. cxix. 45. 2 Cor. iii. 17. There is no liberty to sin or to do what we list, but liberty as opposed to bondage through slavish fear, Rom. viii. 15, 16. In this sense he is our way to the Father.

4. He is both a high way, and a low way.

A high-way, in the sense of Prov. xv. 24. *above* to the wise. They that walk in Christ, walk in a way out of sight to the carnal world; a way out of their ken, they know it not, nor what belongs to it. Also in the sense of Isa. xxxv. 8. the high way is the ready way, the next way; so is Christ to the Father. Also in the sense of Ps. lxviii. 18. because he himself is on high, at the right hand of the Father, far above principalities.

A low way, because he so humbled himself as he did, that he might be the way trodden under foot of men; and because they must humble themselves, and be meek and lowly in heart, that will walk in it: denying ourselves our own righteousness and merit, Luke ix. 23.

5. A rough and rugged way, and yet a plain and smooth way.

Rough and rugged, in respect of the stones of stumbling and rocks of offence that are in it, to them that perish, 1 Cor. i. 23. "Unto the Jews a stumbling-block."—That he that could not save himself from being hanged, should save us from being damned—that by his stripes we should be healed. His death is our life.

Smooth and plain to him that believeth, 1 Cor. i. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 7. Such, though fools, shall not err therein, Isa. xxxv. 8. "Knowledge is easy to him that understandeth," Prov. xiv. 6. to be sure, the knowledge of Christ and him crucified, is so to every believer.

6. A persecuted way, and yet a sweet and pleasant way.

A persecuted way, both with hand and tongue—a sect every where spoken against, Acts xxviii. 22. That sect was the Christian sect, the followers of the Lord Jesus; every where spoken against. Aye, and besides this, they that walk in it meet with many a cross of God's laying in the course of his providence, Matt. vii. 14. "Strait is the gate, and narrow—affliction—is the way, which leadeth unto life."

Yet it is a *pleasant way* notwithstanding, Prov. iii. 17. The way of justification by faith in Christ is certainly so, beyond any other way, so sweet, so comfortable to the enlightened soul; no other is comparable to it. The way of holiness also, and new obedience—carries its own reward with it, Ps. xix. 11.—in the testimony of a good conscience, 2 Cor. i. 12.

7. It is a way beset with enemies on every hand, and yet secure and safe to them that walk in it.

Beset with enemies. Those are, the devil, and the world, and the flesh; all against Christ as our way to the Father, all seeking to waylay us, and to turn us aside into by-paths, 1 Pet. 5, 8.

Yet *secure and safe* to them that walk in it; their heels may be tripped up, and they may stumble and fall, but they shall not be utterly cast down, Ps. xxxvii. 24. *for the Lord* upholdeth him with his hand. See 1 Pet. i. 5. "Kept by the power of God." If divine power be not sufficient for our preservation, what is?

8. An open way, and yet an enclosed way.

Enclosed in the decree and counsel of God, which is secret and unknown. There is a remnant only according to the election of grace, Rom. xi. 5. Matt. xx. 10.—few chosen.

Yet *open* in the proclamation of the gospel; as a fountain open, Zech. xiii. 1. Whosoever will may come, freely, Isa. lv. 1, 2. So come ye to this way; come and welcome. It is not a way shut up from any of you, one or other.

9. A beaten way, and yet but few walking in it.

But *few* at one time, and in one place; here and there a traveller.

But *beaten* by the multitudes that have been in all ages, and are, and shall be, as will appear, when they shall all come together, Rev. vii. 9.

III. What improvement are we to make of this?

If Christ be the way to the Father,

Then, 1. If we are out of Christ, we are out of the way. Suppose a traveller hastening onward were informed, in answer to an inquiry respecting the road, that he was out of the way, how would he be surprised! especially—if the business were earnest,—if it were drawing towards night,—if the false way were a foul way,—and if the danger were imminent if he went on.—And how culpable would he be, if he had been warned of that danger beforehand and would not heed; and still more, if a guide had been offered to lead him in the right way, and he had refused him.

Now this is thy case, sinner. O bethink thyself—it is to the Father thou wouldst go.—If thou get not into Christ, thou wilt never come to him. There is no other way. The way of sottish ignorance is not the way; nor of sloth, and carelessness, and lukewarmness; nor of wickedness, and profaneness, swearing, drunkenness; nor of formal profession, in guilt and hypocrisy; nor of thy own merit and righteousness; nor of trusting to the mediation of saints and angels. There is no way but Christ.

2. Exhortation. Then, "as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." *Receive Christ* Jesus the Lord, this day. Ye that never yet

received him, close with him as your way to the Father, your only way, renouncing all other; none but Christ, none but Christ.

Having received him, *walk in him.*

Walk in his life and example, as your copy to write after, 1 John ii. 6.

Walk in his death, as your comfort and joy, Rom. viii. 33, 34. 1 John ii. 1, 2.

Walk in his name, merit, and mediation, in his righteousness and strength, in every thing wherein you have to do with God, living and dying. If he be thus your way, he will be your life too.

SERMON XIX.

CHRIST IS OUR ENSIGN.

Isa. xi. 10.

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious.

By this root of Jesse here spoken of, is certainly meant our Lord Jesus Christ, who came, according to the flesh, from Jesse, the father of David.

It may be objected, It should then be said of him rather that he was a branch of Jesse, than the root of Jesse.

I reply, He was a branch of Jesse as man, but as God he was the root of Jesse; as David, Ps. cx. 1. compare Matt. xxii. 45.

Or thus: The family of Jesse was like a tree cut down and worn out, and in process of time, from one of his roots *in a dry ground*, Isa. liii. 2. that is, from Mary the virgin, a poor woman of the meaner sort, came one strangely and unexpectedly, and that was Jesus Christ the man, the branch, and he is the ensign here promised. And *in that day*, namely, the famous day of the gospel so much talked of, *there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.*

Doct. Jesus Christ is our ensign.

I shall inquire,

I. What an ensign is, and how we are to understand it. And,

II. What kind of ensign Jesus Christ is, and what good lessons we may learn from it.

I. What is an ensign?

An ensign hath two significations, a standard, and a standard-bearer.

1. A standard, that is, a flag or banner, such as both horse and foot companies of soldiers have, each company one.

2. A standard-bearer. We call him that carries that flag, the ensign of the company. Now here it is taken not for the person, the standard-bearer, but for the thing, the standard, because it is said, to *it* shall the Gentiles seek; and yet, to show that the same that is the ensign, or standard, or flag, or banner, that is, the thing, is also the ensign-bearer, the standard-bearer, the person, it follows, *and his rest shall be glorious.*

II. What kind of ensign is Christ.

This ensign is an ensign extraordinary, such as is not to be found elsewhere; a none-such ensign. And so you will say when I have laid before you these ten properties which it hath: and in the opening of each property, I will show you what the particular duty is which it calls for from us.

1. He is a military flag or ensign; a banner of war. We call the coats of arms which noblemen and gentlemen give for the distinction of families in times of peace, *insignia*, ensigns: but such an ensign Jesus Christ is not; he is an ensign for war, a soldier's ensign. Elsewhere he is said to be given for a *leader, and a commander to the people*, Isa. lv. 4. He is called the *captain of our salvation*, Heb. ii. 10. here, *the ensign.*

This teaches us that Christianity is a warfare, and that Christ and Christians are warriors; he the captain, and the ensign, and they the soldiers.

But who are the enemies, and what is the quarrel?

The enemies are, the devil, and the world, and the flesh. The cause we are in is the glory of God: remember this, as many of you as are baptized, you are the enlisted soldiers of the Lord Jesus, and look to it that ye be good soldiers, prepared for hardness, 2 Tim. ii. 3. fighting under him not only as your captain, but as your banner. He himself is your banner. We are every day, upon one occasion or other, engaged with one temptation or other; now what do we do? Do we yield, suffer ourselves to be overcome, led captive? Is that like a good soldier? Or, do we resist and fight it out in the strength of God's grace, standing fast in the way of our duty, keeping our integrity, whatever it cost us? This is like a good soldier, Heb. xii. 4.

2. He is a movable ensign. Ensigns, flags, or standards, march from place to place, from one town to another, as there is occasion, at the appointment of the captain. Now Christ our ensign, is Christ held forth in the preaching of the gospel; where the gospel is preached, there Christ the ensign is. He is said here to stand, in respect of his abiding a Saviour, Heb. xiii. 8. Yet he moves as an ensign. And who knows not what removes the preaching of the gospel is subject to; how it is for a time in a place, and then after a while gone again, and another place hath it that had it not before. This was signified by the Old-Testament tabernacle, which was a movable tent, made to be suddenly taken down, and set up again, and carried hither and thither. "Lord, who shall dwell in *thy tabernacle*," Ps.

xv. 1. that is, thy church on earth. It was awhile at Shiloh, then at Gibeon, then at Jerusalem. What is our duty then? To make a good use of it while we have it, John xii. 35, 36. Some people bid the ensign be gone, as the Gadarenes did.

3. He is a gathering ensign. The design and end of an ensign is to gather together all that either are enlisted soldiers, or have a mind to be under such or such a captain. Now, in the preaching of the gospel, Christ, by his ministers, proclaims, Ho, every one that will be on my side against sin and the devil, come to me, whether Jews or Gentiles, come, come; as here, *to it shall the Gentiles come:* "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth," *v.* 12. See the prophecy of good old Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10. And of Isaiah, *ch.* lvi. 8.

There is a gathering together to Christ, which is to come, 2 Thess. ii. 1.

There is a gathering to Christ, which is present. Now, now it is our duty to gather to him; till we do so our condition is sad and perilous. We are the devil's soldiers fighting the devil's battles. Away to me, saith Christ. Now what says thy soul? shall the call be an effectual call? It is as much as I can remember forty-nine or fifty years ago, to hear talk of the king* setting up his standard, that is, his ensign, at Nottingham, after that at Shrewsbury; the language whereof was, All that will fight for me against the parliament, come hither,—for my prerogative against their privilege,—and multitudes came. That is the use of a standard or ensign. Now the Lord Jesus, I say, in like manner, invites you all to come to him, and to fight for him, as Jehu, 2 Kings ix. 32. Lord, whoever will not, I will. Let thy soul thus answer. Our gathering to Christ freely and willingly must be not only as soldiers, to their standard—but,

(1.) As sheep to their shepherd. He is the good and great Shepherd. Are we joined to him? Do we follow him? John x. 28. Cant. i. 7, 8.

(2.) As doves to their windows, Isa. lx. 8. If they once get to their windows they know they are safe there. Return unto thy rest,—Ps. cxvi. 7.—to thy Noah,—as the dove, Gen. ix.

(3.) As the children to the father. Children, to be sure *good* children, love to be where their father is,—to be taught, and instructed, and employed by him; so should we, 1 John i. 3.

(4.) As the eagles to the carcass, Matt. xxiv. 28. for food. It is strange how far off sometimes they will reach the scent of a carcass. So here,—Where Christ is powerfully preached, and comfortably exhibited in holy ordinances, there, O my soul, saith the lively Christian, will I resort. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them: Who passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well: the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness," Ps. lxxxiv. 1—10. This is the right gathering of churches, to gather souls to Jesus Christ, to fight under his banner.

(5.) As the chickens to the hen, Matt. xxiii. 37.

4. He is a guiding ensign. The use of the flag is to show the soldiers which way to march: the way that the ensign goes they must go. Our Lord Jesus, as our ensign, is our guide to go in and out before us, Isa. lv. 4. a *leader:* and but for this leader how oft should we be at a loss; as the Israelites in the wilderness, but for the cloud and fire.

He leads us by his word and Spirit; his word outwardly, as the rule; his Spirit inwardly, as the principle, Isa. lix. 21.

He leads us also by his pattern and example, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Matt. xi. 29. John xiii. 13, 14. Now inquire, I beseech you, is it your daily care, every day, in every thing, to walk after this guide? Is Christ your guide to the ale-house, to be drunk there? Are you following him as your flag, when you are going into wicked company? I know you will say no; then how are ye his soldiers?

5. He is an unseen ensign. I mean, unseen with bodily eyes, wherein he differs from other ensigns. They are visible things; but by an eye of faith we see him, we behold him, Heb. xi. 27. This looks like a contradiction, but it is not, 1 Pet. i. 8.

6. He is an uniting ensign. It is by the flag that belongs to the company, as much as by any thing, that all the soldiers in that company, being gathered together, are knit together into one. That is their centre of unity; not only their having but one captain, and being engaged in one cause, and their taking one and the same oath, but having the same flag. So our great centre of unity is our Lord Jesus Christ, not only as our one captain, but as our ensign. We all profess to be one in him—O that we were so! "There is one body, and one Spirit, one

* Charles I.

hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." Eph. iv. 4, 5, &c. How many ones are there mentioned and amongst the rest one baptism, that is, one sacramental oath; and *one Lord*, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, the uniting ensign. Some plead to have the pope the centre of unity, so that all that do not unite in him must be out of the way of salvation. Others are for episcopacy and the common prayer. As heretofore, one for Paul, Apollos, Cephas, but I am, said Paul, for Christ, 1 Cor. i. 12. Where it seems to me, I of Christ, are Paul's words concerning himself: owning Christ, and no creature, as his centre of unity:

(1.) Because of v. 13. *Is Christ divided?* As if he had said, Are there many Christs? being all one in him, why not with one another?

(2.) Because of *chap.* iii. 4. "While one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?"—where he leaves out those that say, I am of Christ, from among them that are carnal.—When I say, we ought all to unite in Christ, I mean, that all that profess faith in Christ, and obedience to him, and walk answerable to that profession, ought to be thought meet for our communion in all the ordinances, without laying down other terms of our own devising, Gal. iii. 28. He united Jew and Gentile by this one ensign, Eph. ii. and it is a shame if others will not be united by him.—His prayer is "I pray for them also, which shall believe on me,—that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one," John xvii. 20—22. And the same should be ours also.

7. **He is an exalted Ensign.** Ensigns used to be so lifted up on high, to be seen afar off, and they are seen, accordingly, above the heads of all the soldiers. It is a custom also to choose the tallest, properest men to carry the colours, that they may help the more to lift them up. Now the blessed Jesus is such an ensign: lifted up three ways:

(1.) In the kind of death which he died, even the death of the cross, John xii. 32, 33. As the brazen serpent upon the pole, Numb. xxi. compare John iii. 14, 15.

(2.) In his resurrection and exaltation at the right hand of the Father. There he sits, higher by the head and shoulders than all the people, in personal excellences and perfection, Cant. v. 10.—the standard-bearer.

(3.) In the preaching of the gospel—that is the pole. The great work of ministers is to lift up Christ to people, to set him forth as the most eligible and desirable, both upon the account of what he is in himself, and what he is to poor sinners. They are the friends of the bridegroom, wooing for him, not for themselves: and will ye be won by them?

8. He is an exposed Ensign. Of all the officers and soldiers in the troop or company, he is most aimed at that carries the colours; kill him, and the flag falls, and when the flag falls they are all discouraged, and their hearts fail: therefore, "Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel." And is it not in like manner with the blessed Jesus? When he was here upon earth, what attempts were there, both by the devil and wicked men, by all means to destroy him; his person, even as soon as he was born, by Herod—afterwards, in the wilderness—afterwards, to break his neck. And at last they did prevail to get him hanged on a tree; and then they thought their work was done, but it proved otherwise. After his going to heaven, when himself was gone to heaven, what opposition was made against the spreading of his doctrine, against his disciples and followers, especially his under standard-bearers, his deputy ensigns, the preachers of the everlasting gospel. See 1 Cor. iv. 11—13. And still, even at this day, what striking at him in all his offices,—Prophet, Priest, King. Now certainly it is every one's duty to do all that ever he can towards the securing of the flag. (At Edge-hill * the king's standard was taken, and the standard-bearer killed; afterwards retaken. Alas! what can we do? I answer, What we can in our particular place and station. We can own it as our chief interest, and act accordingly; contributing our utmost endeavours towards keeping the flag up, as Aaron and Hur supporting Moses, who held forth the rod of God, Exod. xvii.

9. He is a covering ensign. As all the soldiers are concerned in the safety of the flag, so the flag is a means of the safety of all the soldiers, Cant. ii. 4. *His banner over me was love*:—by clinging close to it, unbroken, they are preserved. Our Lord Jesus is promised to his church under this notion, as a covering, Isa. iv. 5, 6; xxxii. 2. He will hide all that are his—in the hollow of his hand—under the shadow of his wings—in his secret place: to signify that he hath more ways than one of doing it.

10. **He is a conquering ensign.** In the account of victories always the number is given in, how many ensigns killed, how many colours taken; by that they judge. Now here is an ensign that lives for ever; a flag that cannot be taken. He always hath been, is, and will be, Jesus the conqueror, Rev. xix. 11, compare Rev. vi. 2. But what are his conquests to us? See Rom. viii. 37. We are told of a vision that Constantine had, the first Christian emperor, of a banner with a bloody cross in it, with this motto, "Conquer by this," which gave him great encouragement in his wars with heathen op-

* A. D. 1642. Ger. Br. Reliquiæ Baxterianæ, Lib. I. Part I. p. 47. Hume, v. 7. 140.

posers.* In our late wars, one prayed to know which side should get the better, for on that side he would be.

Use 1. By way of inquiry. What think ye of Christ. How like ye this brave ensign? Are ye listed under it? Who are ye for?

2. By way of exhortation. Be persuaded this day to give in your names to him afresh, as your own act and deed, to be his, Ps. xx. 5. Having done so, keep close to him.

SERMON XX.

CHRIST IS OUR EXAMPLE.

JOHN xiii. 15.

For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you.

THERE were two great ends of the coming of our Lord Jesus in the flesh.

The one, That by dying he might satisfy God's justice for our sins, and so make peace.

The other, That by living he may set before us an example.

Particularly in this chapter we have him with a basin of water and a towel, washing and wiping his disciples' feet. If you ask, What an unbecoming thing was that, and why should he do so? himself answers in the text, *I have given you an example.* I did it to show you, how you should stoop and condescend in offices of love one to another; *for if I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.*

DOCT. That our Lord Jesus Christ is our example.

Show, I. How we are to understand this.

II. What need we have of an example.

III. What kind of example he is.

IV. What lessons and what duty are to be learned from it.

I. How are we to understand this, our example?

When I say the Lord Jesus Christ is our example, I mean three things:

1. He is the copy we are to write after; as children when they are to learn to write have copies set them. It is not enough to tell them thus and thus you must do, but show them how, by making the letters, and setting them before them. So our Lord Jesus hath set us a copy; Mark how I have done, says he, and look that ye do likewise.

2. He is the pattern or sampler we are to work by; as girls when they begin to sew have samplers; as Moses when to rear the tabernacle, had a pattern of God's own making; *See thou do every thing according to the pattern showed thee in the mount*, Exod. xxv. 9, 40. So our Lord Jesus, that we might be sure to do all things well, himself became our pattern, our sampler.

3. He is the way we are to walk in, and his are the footsteps we are to tread in, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Where he hath trod before us, there we may safely tread. There are the footsteps of the flock, Cant. i. 8. which we are to go forth by. And there are the footsteps of the shepherd of the flock, that is, Jesus Christ, which we are carefully to tread in, and as far as we tread in those footsteps, wherein he hath trod before us, we are in no danger of missing; it is when we tread in other footsteps that we go astray.

II. What need have we of an example?

We have need of an example upon two accounts; as of a righteousness for justification, a fountain for washing, a foundation to build on, a refuge to fly to; so of a copy, pattern, example, to write, to work, to walk by.

We need it—because of our own debility, and —because of our work's difficulty.

If the work to be done be difficult work, and the person to do it be weak and infirm, and unskilful, and apt to miss it, then by all means let him have an example to help him, to go before him; besides a rule, let him have an example.

Now that is our case.

Is not the work we have to do hard and difficult? A God to glorify, a soul to save, duty to be performed, temptation to be resisted, affliction to be borne, relations to be filled up;—is this easy? Is repenting work easy?

Are not we, the doers, weak and infirm, bent to backslide, unskilful in the word of righteousness, not only backward to, but awkward in, every thing that is good? And have we not then great need of an example, one to go before us, to show us how, and which way?—Our heavenly Father, who knows our frame, hath provided for us accordingly; the whole Bible is a book of rules and examples, rules in the precepts, examples in the stories; both Old Testament and New; which are all to help our infirmities, and we should make use of them accordingly. But one example there is so in a special and peculiar manner; a pattern which in a special manner we are to take heed to; and that is, the blessed Jesus, whose properties are to be shown,

III. By considering what kind of example Jesus Christ is.

1. He is a good example. There are bad examples, and good examples. Bad examples there are enow, which we must not follow; good examples but a few; yet some. Aye, but one we have, eminent above all the rest, and that is, the blessed Jesus. He was good, and he did good, and he went about doing

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* Eusebius de Vit. Const. Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. v. 1. p. 263, &c. Milner's Church Hist. v. 2. p. 41, 42.

good; and all to set us a copy, that we might learn both to be good, and to do good, and to go about doing good. Ps. xxxvii. 3, 27. There is the precept, —do as your master hath done before you: there is the pattern,—imitate him.

2. He is a great example. Dr. Jeremy Taylor,* who wrote the history of his life, according to the four gospels, titles his book the Great Exemplar; and certainly he was, and is so.

The examples we have of other good men, even the best of them, in comparison with him, were but little examples, small copies, but he is a copy in text letters.—The reason is, they were but little folks in comparison with him; they but candles, at best but stars, he the sun. Now as the sun exceeds and excels all other lights, so the blessed Jesus all other examples. There was never one of them all but would yield and veil bonnet to him, as John the Baptist did. John iii. 30.

3. He is a general example, the example of examples; all others learned of him, he of none.

But I mean general in two respects:

(1.) He is an example to all persons. We are all to learn of him, and to do as he did, and to walk as he walked. But will one and the same copy serve every one to write after? Yes, here is a copy that will.

But there are many of us that are in such conditions and relations as he was never in: we are women, he a man; we husbands, wives, parents, children, tradesmen, husbandmen: how can he then be a pattern to us?

I reply, Though he never was, nor could be, all and every thing of that that we are, yet, however, be we what we will, his example will reach us, if not directly; yet by consequence, as the word is a general rule.—He carried it so and so, in all that he was, in every relation, and in every condition, and by parity of reason, if we carry it in like manner in our particular conditions and relations as he did in all his, soberly, righteously, godly, it cannot but be well. He had a spouse—and see, Eph. v. 25.

But not general, it is objected, for he was not an example to Old-Testament people.

Very true, and therein we have the pre-eminence: yea, and all now have it not—but he is *general to us*.

(2.) He is an example in all things. Other good men are patterns of good, one in one thing, another in another. Abraham in believing, Job in patience, Moses in meekness: but no one in every thing: Jesus Christ only is such. "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. xiii. 13, 14. It should be—and put on sobriety, chastity, charity; no, *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, which includes all.

4. He is a public, evident example: set forth to be seen of all. Not a candle lighted and put under the bed, or under a bushel, but upon the table, in a candlestick. Many godly people, men and women, live and die in obscurity; some are published, as in Clarke's Lives. We have the story of what he did written at large in the Bible, and of the two we might better spare all the rest of the stories of Scripture, than the one story of the life and death of Jesus Christ, because he is our great exemplar. Lose him and we lose all; therefore, I beseech you, prize that part of your Bible, in a special manner, that tells you what Christ did, and how he carried it.

We have ministers also, who upon all occasions, either do, or should, explain the great example to us; showing us what he did, and how he carried it, to the end we may receive instruction by it.

5. He is a plain, easy example. There is a great deal of difference in writing between one hand and another. Some hands are so full of cuts and flourishes, that it is hard for a learner to learn to write after them. Others again so plain, and easy, and free from such appurtenances, that there is little difficulty in copying them.—Now such a hand was that that Jesus Christ wrote, I mean, such a copy, such an example. The condition he put on was a mean, plain condition: a servant, not a knight, or a lord, or a prince. Now as his condition was, such his example was. He set a copy for poor people to write after: the meanest cannot say, it is out of my reach, Matt. xi. 29. Learn of me—What to do? to make the world, to raise the dead, rebuke the winds and waves? No: to be *meek and lowly*; as here, to wash one another's feet: not to build churches, or erect hospitals; not to fast forty days and forty nights, not to go barefoot on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, not to wallow naked in the snow, as Saint Francis.†

6. He is a perfect, exact example, a copy without a blot: there never was any other so but himself only; all the rest missed it in one kind or other, may, missed it in that very thing wherein they were most exemplary.—Abraham in unbelief, Job in impatience, Moses in passion, Peter in cowardice. The reason was, though they were good men, yet they were men compassed with infirmity, but here is one who had no infirmity, Heb. vii. 28. He was holy, harmless. See his challenge. "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" John viii. 46. O how well is it for us, and what cause have we to be thankful, that we have one sinless, spotless example, one that we can safely trust in and follow without fear of erring!

7. He is a purposely designed example. Designed by *God the Father* from all eternity to be so, and that was one reason why the covenant was

* Bishop of Down and Connor. He died A. D. 1667.

† The founder of the order of Monks called Franciscans. He died A. D. 1226. Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. v. ii. 56, &c.

that he should be a man like one of us; not only that in his death he might be a propitiation, the same nature that sinned satisfying; but also, that in his life he might be a pattern; a man to men. Designed *by himself* all along, in all that he said or did; he spake so and acted so that he might—Matt. iv. 19.—that is, I must be an example.

8. He is a peculiarly blessed example. I mean, blessed of God for good to those that apply themselves to work and walk according to it. There is a blessing that attends endeavours in reference to other good examples that are before us, but especially this. And many a poor soul hath found it so of a truth, found strength coming in from the Spirit of God, enabling him to do that in pursuing the example of the blessed Jesus, which otherwise he could not have done. "Wherefore seeing we are encompassed about with so great a cloud"—smoothing the way,—"of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus."

9. He is a perpetually abiding example, Heb. xiii. 8. Other copies of good men are worn out with time; we know little of them now, except some few Scripture patterns. But here is one that will last to the world's end, Matt. xx. 20. *I am with you*—as a copy for you to write after, as well as to support and bless you.

IV. What is to be learnt from this subject?

1. Then, hence we learn who is a true Christian.

There are Christians in name, such we all are, and there are Christians in reality. Who are they? Those that walk as Christ walked; that make him their pattern and sampler; that can say with Paul, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," Phil. i. 21. A Christian! and not conform to Christ, to his image, to live as he lived? It is a contradiction. As for a man to call himself a Lutheran, a Calvinist, and not hold with Luther, or Calvin;—an Aristotelian, a Pythagorean, a Platonist, and yet oppose their schemes. It is our badge as Christ's sheep to follow him; "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

2. We learn who are the best Christians amongst Christians.

It is certain some are better than others. Now, who are the best? I answer, they who walk most like Jesus Christ, that tread most closely in his steps: allusion to 2 Kings xiv. 3. "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father did." David was the sampler, the standard, —so is the Son of David.

3. Learn how far we are to follow all other examples, how good, how great soever;—no further than they follow Christ's example; when they leave him, we must leave them, 1 Cor. xi. 1. The reason is, he is the great exemplar, the pattern of patterns, Heb. xii. 1, 2. In sitting at the sacrament they are on a safer side than those that kneel, because Christ sat;—though that does not prove we must, it proves we may.

4. Then let us in every thing set ourselves to do as he hath done before us, "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked;" 1 John ii. 6. *ought*—not may, if he will, or may choose, but *ought*.—It is duty. Think you hear him say, *Learn of me*, or as Gideon, "Look on me, and do likewise," Judg. vii. 17. Who should children learn of but their father? servants, but their master? Who should sheep follow but their shepherd? It were a good thought in a doubtful matter, What would Jesus Christ do if he were here? how would he carry it? Would he play at dice or cards, revel, be wanton?

Wherein especially are we to imitate the holy Redeemer?

(1.) In his care to please God in every thing, John viii. 29. Did he so? then let us endeavour the same, Acts ix. 6.

(2.) In his contempt of this world, and every thing in it. What poor nothings were they to him. Are they so to us,—riches, honours, pleasures?

(3.) In his charity towards all men. He had a love of pity and compassion towards enemies, prayed for them; so should we. But his special love was for the excellent; so should ours be, Eph. v. 2.

(4.) In his carriage under his sufferings and at his death, so meek, so lamb-like, so silent, so submissive —such should ours be.

But is it possible we should be as he was, and do as he did?

I reply, It is not in the same degree, but yet as a child learning to write strives, and doth as well as he can, and eyes his copy often, we may do.

There are two motives to such endeavours.

It will be an evidence that we are his now in the kingdom of grace. And,

It will be an earnest that we shall follow him hereafter in the kingdom of glory, Rev. xiv. 4, 5.

SERMON XXI.

CHRIST IS THE DOOR.

JOHN x. 9.

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

OF all the comparisons made use of by our Lord Jesus to illustrate and set forth what he is appointed of God to be to true believers, there is none more seemingly uncouth and unlikely, and yet none wherein he is more express and positive, than this, of a

door,—I am the door. He says elsewhere, *I am the way*, and *I am the vine*; and here, *I am the door.*

Doct. That Jesus Christ is *the door.*

Show, I. Of what use a door is, that we may see and be convinced that we have need of him, as a door.

II. What are the properties of Christ as a door, and what kind of door he is.

III. What improvement is to be made of it.

Lord, give me a door of utterance, and the people, while I am speaking, a door of entrance. Amen.

I. Of what use is a door, and how is Jesus useful as such?

A door we all know is of a four-fold use, or for four purposes—to let out, and let in; to shut out, and to shut in; and so is Jesus Christ, and therefore it is not amiss here that he says, *I am the door.*

1. A door is to let those out of the house that are in it, and have a desire or occasion to go out. It is not to break the walls down, nor to creep out by the window. No, the door is made for the purpose of orderly going out.

Now there are four houses or places which it concerns us all to get out of, and the Lord Jesus Christ is the door by which we must get out if ever we mean to get out.

(1.) There is the prison house of a sinful state and condition. In this we all are by nature, one as well as another, Gal. iii. 22.—shut up under lock and key, as prisoners are shut up, either for debt, or as malefactors.

In this prison there are two rooms, one is God's, and the other is the devil's.

God's room in this prison, is that in which we are all shut up by reason of the guilt of sin, according to his law, exposing us to wrath and punishment. Consider sin as a debt; we are prisoners for that debt; as a fault, a trespass, a treason. We are prisoners for it, I say, prisoners already, though suffered to walk up and down, yet prisoners—bound over. There is a worse prison to come, but this is the way to it, the beginning of sorrows. Now is there never a door out of this prison, no way to pay the debt, to make satisfaction to divine justice, that we may be discharged? Yes there is, and Christ is that door; Whosoever believes in him, shall not come into condemnation, Rom. viii. 1. Thus it is prophesied of him, Isa. lxi. 1. "He hath sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." By him many a poor prisoner hath been set free, Ps. cxvi. 16. 1 Tim. i. 13—15. Methinks we should all be glad of this, both those that are out, and those that may get out if they will. Were such an offer made to the poor prisoners in Chester, or Shrewsbury, or Ludgate, or Newgate, the debtors' end, or the malefactors' end, how welcome would it be!

The devil's room in this prison, is that in which all unconverted sinners are; under the dominion of sin, under the power of a corrupt nature; led captive by him, 2 Tim. ii. 26. Like Samson with his eyes out, grinding in the Philistines' mill, and the Philistines making sport with him. Here is the truth of thy condition, sinner. "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," 2 Cor. iv. 4. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," Eph. ii. 2, 3. Now is there no door out? Must I live and die in this condition? Is there no escaping? Yes: there is a door; he is raised up, and sent of God, on purpose to be the deliverer; as Moses out of Egypt, Cyrus out of Babylon. Dost thou not hear him call? Thou hast heard it many a time, but not heeded it. O heed it this day, and close with it; say not, I like my master, and I will not go free, but yield thyself unto God, as one that is alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God, Rom. vi. 13.

(2.) There is the house of bondage under the ceremonial law; an uncomfortable house to dwell in; the fathers thought it so; a yoke, an intolerable yoke. But is there no door? Yes, Jesus Chirst is the door; by him the gospel church is called to go out, from bondage to freedom, from carnal to spiritual ordinances, Matt. xi. 28. And yet there are some that will not stir, nay, are angry with those that do, and hate and persecute them; as Ishmael the son of the bond-woman, did Isaac, the son of the free-woman, Gal. iv.

(3.) There is the house of correction under afflicting providences. And this is a house that few of us but one time or other are taking a turn in it, and glad would we be to get out;—the sick to be well; in pain to be at ease; they that are in want to be supplied; the sad to be comforted. Some cannot abide in this house, but will break prison, use unlawful means to get out. There is but one door of lawful escape, and that is Jesus Christ: he is the door, Ps. lxviii. 20. Make him thy friend, and let him alone. How? Humble thyself to him, accept of the punishment of thy iniquity, justify God, judge thyself, bear patiently his fatherly chastisement, use lawful means, and yet be willing to continue his prisoner: and mark if this be not the right door. Murmuring, quarrelling, complaining, shifting, sharking will not do, Job xxxiii. 19; xxiii. 24, 25.—a turn-key, a door-keeper, *chap.* xxxvi. 8—12.

(4.) There is the house of the grave: a house in

which we must all make our bed shortly; a dark, silent, lonesome house, wherein there is company enough, but no converse. Is there any door out of this house? Only one comfortable door, and that is Jesus Christ. "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," John xi. 25.—the *resurrection* only to them that believe, and to all them; others must be raised, but Jesus Christ is the resurrection only to true believers. None but they must come out through him, as the door. There is *victory* only through him, 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.

2. A door is to let those in that are without; being open, we go in at it, and it is the right and usual way of entering. Now, such a door for such a purpose is Jesus Christ.

(1.) He is the door into the pasture. So, in the context, he compares believing souls to a flock of sheep, and himself to their shepherd. Now sheep must have some pasture, some place to graze in; that place must have some gate or door, for the sheep to go in at. I am the door, says he. What, and the shepherd too? Yes, and the shepherd too. What is the pasture then, to which he is the door? The pasture for believing souls is the word of God, the ordinances of God, preaching, praying, singing psalms, sacraments, sabbaths: here Christ feeds his flock, Cant i. 7, 8. And brave *green* pastures they are, Ps. xxiii. 2, 3. Now the door is Christ; it is by him we enter, in his name, by the assistance of his Spirit. Without him there is no blessing, no nourishment. How do the sacraments become profitable? By the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit. See then that we come in his name, and strength.

(2.) He is the door into the presence-chamber, Eph. ii. 13, 18; iii. 12. There is no coming to God with comfort, but in at this door. It was his great end in dying, that he might bring us to God, 1 Pet. iii. 18.

(3.) He is the door into the storehouse, or treasury, of all the good things that we have need of, whether concerning this life, or the other. The door to them was shut and locked up, and barred and bolted, by the fall. There is no coming at any of them till the Son of God came, and himself became the door, "My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, *by Christ Jesus*."—They are laid up in the promises; now Christ is the door to the promises, 2 Cor. i. 20. Col. i. 19. compare John i. 16.

(4.) He is the door into the school-house. The church of God in this world is like a great school, wherein all true believers are scholars, or learners. The teacher is God, John vi. 44. His ushers are the ministers, the under-teachers. The lesson is, the will of God concerning our salvation. The door or entrance into this school, is Christ; by him it is we are admitted into this privilege; he gives us the understanding, 1 John v. 20. Ps. cxix. 130. —the entrance or door.—O beg of him to help thee in at this door, to take thee under his blessed tuition.

(5.) He is the door into the ark; I mean, Noah's ark, the close ship, wherein Noah and his family were saved. It had a *door*, Gen. vi. 16. Now that door is Christ; there is no safety, no salvation, but in, and by, and through his merit, and mediation, 1 Pet. iii. 21.—he shall be saved as here.

(6.) He is the door into the atonement. It is by him that we are let into the pardon-office; into a state of peace and reconciliation with God, Rom. v. 1. 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.

(7.) He is the door into grace and holiness; his blood is not justifying only, but sanctifying. It is by him that we are made new creatures, partakers of the divine nature; quickened, Eph. ii. 1.

(8.) He is the door into glory and happiness. He is the door into heaven. There is no coming thither, but by him. He is our forerunner.

3. A door is to shut out those that are without, to keep people from coming in at pleasure. They must knock that will enter. Our hearts have a door, and it is shut against him, and he is fain to knock, and call, Ps. xxiv. 7, 9. Cant. v. 2. Rev. iii. 20. These houses of his afore-mentioned have a door also, and they are kept by that door from being common. But if we knock, it shall be opened, Matt. vii. 7, 8. Provided we knock in time, else the door will be shut, Matt. xxv. 10, 11. Luke xiii. 26—28. And provided also we knock in earnest, Luke xiii. 24. not coldly, carelessly; not in guile and hypocrisy.

4. A door is to shut those in that are within. All that are let in by Christ into those blessed rooms before mentioned, let him alone to secure them there. John x. 28. 1 Pet. i. 5. When Noah was in the ark, God shut him in.

II. What are the properties of Christ as a door?

As a door he hath these properties.

1. He is a living door. This is peculiar to him. No other door is so besides him; as he is the *living way*, Heb. x. so he is the living door. The door to life, and a door that hath life. Other doors are dead things. Now, it is true he was dead, but he is alive, and lives for evermore, and thence it follows, Rev. i. 18. *and have the keys of hell and of death.*

2. He is a low door. They that will enter in by him must stoop, or else there is no entering. It was man's pride, lifting up himself against God, that shut up the old door; therefore it is humility, and humiliation, and self-denial, that must help us in at this new door, Luke ix. 23.

3. He is a strait door, Matt. vii. 14. As we must stoop, so we must strip; there is no taking our lusts and sins in with us at this door. Away with them, allude to Mark x. 50. He, casting away his garments, rose, and came to Jesus. See Matt. xix. 23,

24. A cable untwisted may, in time, be gotten through a needle's eye, but not else.

4. He is a strong door. The door into the temple was so, when twenty men were employed night and morning to shut and open it. We read of brazen gates. Such a gate Christ is, and it was needful he should be so,

For comfort to his people. Therefore he is able to save to the uttermost; therefore there is no danger of being broken open, or plucked out. And,

For terror to others. Therefore no breaking in upon him, otherwise than upon his own terms.

5. He is an open door. As yet I may say so in the sense in which he is an open fountain, Zech. xiii. 1. free to all, Isa. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17. He excludes none from coming in at this door, that do not exclude themselves.

6. He is the only door. Besides him there is no other. I am the door, *that* door, that one only door, Acts iv. 12. 1 Tim. ii. 5.

Our own merit and righteousness is no door; therefore said Paul, What things were gain to me, them I counted loss for Christ: yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," Phil. iii. 7, 8.

The mediation of saints and angels is not. They themselves have need of Christ to be their door.

General mercy is not; it never yet pardoned one sin, nor saved one soul, but in and by Jesus Christ.

Ministers are not, nor ordinances.

III. What improvement is to be made of this subject.

1. What cause have we to bless God that there is such a door, especially that in love to our souls he hath revealed it to us. Yet, more especially, that he hath helped us in by it; that it is shut upon us for our security, and not against us for our exclusion.

2. What a condition are they in that are either in darkness, or blindness, knowing nothing of this door, like the Sodomites, Gen. xviii. Or, that are shutting it against themselves by unbelief; or that are knocking at other wrong doors, like the priests of Baal, 1 Kings xviii.

3. Of what concernment is it to us, every one of us, both to own Jesus Christ as the only door, and to get in by him, and to do it quickly, before the door be shut.

SERMON XXII.

CHRIST IS AS THE DEW.

HOSEA xiv. 5.

I will be as the dew unto Israel.

THESE words are a gracious promise made to Israel by the God of Israel, wherein the thing promised is, that he will be *as the dew* to them. You know what the dew is. It is a moisture distilled from heaven upon the earth, in a summer's morning, whereby the earth is refreshed in a dry season, and the grass, and the corn, and the herbs are refreshed, and made to grow. Now to this little inconsiderable thing, the Lord doth here compare himself, that is, God in Christ, for out of Christ God is not a dew to us, but a consuming fire; and, therefore, I say in Christ, and therefore to him I shall apply it.

DOCT. That the Lord Jesus Christ is as the dew unto his Israel.

This comparison of the dew is made use of for illustration in sundry places of Scripture.

The inconstant goodness of an hypocrite or dissembler in religion, is compared to the *morning cloud*, and the *early dew*, Hos. vi. 4. The morning cloud promising rain, the early dew performing something towards it, but nothing to purpose; as good never a whit as never the better. So in the case of the hypocrite.

The multitudes of sincere converts that should be, and were, in the days of the gospel, especially at the first setting of it out, are compared to the multitude of the drops of dew in a morning, Ps. cx. 3. *the dew of thy youth*, that is, multitudes of young converts.

The benefits that the world hath from the presence of good people in it, especially when they are much made of; they are like the dew to the places where they live, Micah v. 7.

The excellency of brotherly love and unity, and unanimity among brethren, is like the dew, Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 3. It makes every thing to grow, and flourish, and prosper.

The word of God, especially the word of the gospel, is like dew, Deut. xxxii. 2. Isa. lv. 10, 11. Heb. vi. 7, 8.

Here the Lord himself says, *I* will be as *the dew* to Israel.

Show. I. What likeness there is between Jesus Christ and the dew.

II. Who the *Israel* is to whom he will be as the dew.

III. When especially it is that we have need of this dew.

IV. What our duty is in reference to it.

I. What likeness is there between Jesus Christ and the dew?

The dew hath six properties, all fitly applicable, without straining, to the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The dew is divine and heaven-born. It is not of the earth earthy, but of heaven heavenly. God himself is the *Father* of it, not man, Job xxxviii. 28. It is often called *the dew of heaven*, Gen. xxvii. 28, 39. Dan iv. 15; xxxiii. 5. 21. And is not Christ so? Is not God his Father? Was he not begotten of him before all worlds? Isa. liii. 1. *Who shall declare his generation?* He is the dew certainly, for he came from heaven; he is the *gift* of God.

2. The dew descends, comes down. The motion of the sun is circular,* in a round, from east to west; but the motion of the dew and the rain is perpendicular, in a direct line downwards; and both for the good of man. Jesus Christ descended: he ascended, it is true, but first he descended into the lower parts of the earth, Eph. iv. 9. And it was a descent indeed, if ever there was any,—from the right hand of the Majesty of heaven to be born of a poor woman, in a stable, laid in a manger; to condescend to be made man was much, but to be made sin, a curse, was much more.

3. The manner of the descending of the dew is observable; it descends silently, makes no noise, as the rain oftentimes doth, clattering upon the houses. Such was the coming of this dew, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world; he came not *with observation*, Luke xvii. 20. *with outward* show, did not cry, Matt. xii. 19.—not after the manner of kings and great men, sending harbingers before them. When he comes upon the soul, either in a way of sanctification, or of consolation, it is silently; there is no noise;—the friend that sits on the same seat knows nothing of it, scarce the soul itself at present, Cant. vi. 12.

4. It is the nature of the dew to soften as far as it goes. So doth Jesus Christ: he finds the heart hard, incapable of divine impressions, but he doth not leave it so. He turns the stone into flesh. That is more than dew ever did, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. By this we may know hath this dew ever descended upon our souls. What softness, pliableness, tractableness to the will of God, under ordinances, under providences, is there!

5. The dew moistens. So doth Christ. The heart, through sin, is not hard only, but dry, till grace comes, and that opens a spring, which spring springs up in the soul to everlasting life; then there is weeping and mourning for sin; our own sins, Zech. xii. 10. and other men's sins, Ps. cxix. 136. Ahab's repentance was in some things beyond Josiah's, but Josiah wept; so did not Ahab; compare 1 Kings xxi. 27. with 2 Kings xxii. 19. It is said of Gideon's fleece, it was wet with dew when all was dry round about it, Judg. vi. 37. So it is oftentimes with souls in ordinances, under providences.

6. The dew makes fruitful; the grass, and the corn, and the herbs, and plants in the garden, and in the field, grow the better after the early dew: it is refreshing to them, and causes them to thrive and shoot forth, Gen. ii. 4—6. Says Elijah, when he would foretell a famine, as the means of it, "There shall not be dew these years." Says David, in his elegy upon the death of Jonathan, when he would wish the mountains where he died barren, *Let there be no dew*, 2 Sam. i. 21.

The author of all the fruitfulness of souls is the blessed Jesus, by the working of his Spirit and grace. Isa. xliv. 4. See what follows here, *He shall grow*, that is, with all kinds of growth; downwards, upwards; in strength, comfort, usefulness. Hos. xiv. 8. "From me is thy fruit found." See John xv. 1—5. Mal. iv. 2. As a sun he furthers fruitfulness and growth: "*grow as calves of the stall.*"

II. Who is the Israel to whom he will be as the dew.

There is a two-fold Israel spoken of.

Israel the person. That was Jacob; so called from his prevailing with God in his wrestling. Of him it is not meant. He was dead and gone long before. And,

Israel the people. This is two-fold:

Israel *according to the flesh.* The nation and the people of the Jews; the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was a truth with reference to them, The Lord was unto them as the dew,—refreshing, cheering, comforting, making them to grow, and increase wonderfully. And,

Israel *according to the spirit.* All truly penitent believing people, whether under the Old Testament, or under the New. Such as are described doing according to rules given, Hos. xiv. 1—4. To such as these Christ is as the dew. It is true he must descend on us, ere we can be such, but when his grace hath made us such, then he is indeed the dew unto us. Now when it is said here, "I will be as the dew unto Israel," understand it,

1. Of the gospel church in general; and the particular churches and congregations, the visible members of it. The Lord Jesus hath been, is, and will be, as the dew to them; making them to grow, and thrive, and increase, and bring forth.

2. Of particular believing souls. Such as are Israelites indeed, princes with God; called, and chosen, and faithful. They will all witness for him —I am sure I have found him as the dew to me many a time; And so have I, will another say.

III. When especially have we need of this dew?

1. To be sure we have all need of it while we are in an unconverted state and condition. Till a shower of this dew falls upon thee, thou art good for nothing. God hath no service, no fruit, from thee. Thou art like the mountains of Gilboa, under God's wrath and curse. O that thou wert made sensible of it, that thy soul might be like the dry and thirsty ground, that gapes for the dew and for the rain; that thou wert set a longing after it; crying and calling for it.

2. When the conscience is parched at any time with the sense of guilt staring thee in the face, through some wilful omission, or commission. O then for a shower of this dew! What is there else that can give ease and comfort, but only this? 1 John

* That is, *apparently* so, except upon its own axis. It is now pretty generally agreed that the earth and other planets move around the sun.

i. 7; ii. 1, 2. Rom. v. 1. He alone is our city of refuge, the altar we must fly to.

3. Under the withdrawings of the light of God's countenance. When he is pleased to hide his face from the soul, whether provoked to it, or for trial, when mourning all the day long, this alone must be the dew that must refresh and comfort, Prov. xiv. 12. A beam of that favour shining upon the soul through Jesus Christ.

4. When a fit of barrenness prevails; through the stirrings of some corruption, the success of some temptation, or through the want of quickening means and ordinances, the word, sacraments, sabbaths, solemn assemblies. What hath the soul to recover itself by out of this ill frame? Nothing but a shower of this dew. When he that hath said here, "I will be as the dew unto Israel," comes by his Holy Spirit, puts in his hand by the hole of the door, speaks life and quickening to the soul, that makes a speedy change, as Cant. v. 2, 4, &c.

5. In a time of outward trouble and calamity; when creature comforts fail, relations are unkind, or, it may be, snatched away; when losses and crosses betide us, and our life is made uncomfortable to us; —O the help that is had then, at such a time and in such a case, from a shower of this dew! To be able to say, My Christ is mine still, and I am his. I have my fountain though my cisterns be all drawn dry, Hab. iii. 17, 18. As David, 1 Sam. xxx. 6.

6. When we come to die. The valley of the shadow of death is a very low place, so low that it is oftentimes very dark and uncomfortable to those that walk in it; but if the Lord Jesus be with us in that valley we need not fear, Ps. xxiii. 4. One shower of the dews of his refreshing, comforting Spirit, whispering peace, enabling us to look beyond, will make death to be quite another thing, 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.

7. When we go to an ordinance. The dew is necessary to prepare the ground for the plough.

8. When we have been at an ordinance. It is needful to close the soil with the seed.

IV. What is our duty in reference to this?

1. Mix faith with it, as a divine truth; that there is certainly such a thing as this dew; and that the Lord Jesus Christ is it. We see and feel the other dew, and know by experience what it is, but this is spiritual and invisible; yet it is as real a thing as the other.

2. Be more and more sensible of your need of it every day, in every thing; to soften, to moisten, to make fruitful. All is nothing without it. Nothing else will do the work but it only, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.

3. Ask it of God; and having asked it, expect and wait for it, in the use of appointed means. "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain," Zech. x. 1. Say, "Lord, I want a shower of dew for my soul: my plants, my graces, my comforts, wither and decline; my fruit fails; help, Lord!"—And for means; the ordinances are the way.—We must lie by the pool-side. Though they can do nothing without him, though he can refresh without them, yet his ordinary way is in and by them. Wait as the husbandman, Jam. v. 7. allude to 1 Kings xviii. 4.

But I can do nothing, says one, I am unworthy.

What doth the ground do to invite the dew? It thirsts, and desires, and gapes, that is all. What worthiness is there in the earth to deserve such refreshments from heaven? None at all; the manna, that is, Christ, came down in the dew—in the ordinances, to be gathered only in the morning. Look to it you that are young, it is the *early* dew; it is dried up at noon; there are no showers of it then; therefore, "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth."

4. Observe whence all your spiritual refreshments come, and all your fruit. It is from Christ as your dew; and let him have the glory of it, Ps. cxv. 1, 1 Tim. i. 12.

SERMON XXIII.

CHRIST IS OUR SUN.

MAL. iv. 2.

But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.

THIS sun here spoken of is certainly our Lord Jesus Christ. It must be he. It can be no other.

He is *the Sun of righteousness.* That is,

He is most righteous in himself; holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, as the Branch of righteousness, Jer. xxxiii. 15. Righteous as God; righteous as man, *Jesus Christ the righteous.* So he is called, 1 John ii. 1. He is a Sun for righteousness, transcending all other. Besides,

He is *made righteousness to us*, 1 Cor. i. 30. The *Lord* Jehovah, *our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. So that if ye have any thing to do at any time with the righteous God, any sin to get pardoned, service accepted, and are sensible ye have no righteousness of your own, take his, and go in his name, and your work is done.

He is also a *rising* sun. There is a two-fold rising of this sun;

The one general and universal to all the world: at his incarnation, when the day-star, that is, the sun, from on high, visited us, Luke i. 78.

The other particular and personal, in our horizon; and that is, when we are savingly converted. Then he rises, and never till then, to our souls; *to you that fear my name.* Not that we fear first, and then

the Sun rises. No, the *sun* rises first, and puts that fear into your hearts, that is, that repentance, faith, new nature, and then he rises in us, and on us, more and more. Now, the query is, what the soul gets by the rising of this sun. What doth the world get, what do particular creatures get, by the rising of the sun in the firmament every day? I answer, six things—light—life—heat—healing—furtherance in growth—and furtherance in fruitfulness.—So do the souls of true believers, by the rising of Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness, on them; every day they get spiritual light, life; and, therefore, if ye ask what kind of Sun Christ is, and what are his properties as such, I answer, He is an enlightening, enlivening, heating, healing sun, furthering our growth—and our fruitfulness. Of the two first we have discoursed before—as our *light and life*.* Of the four last this day.

Jesus Christ is made unto us of God, a soul-heating, soul-warming sun. What heat, what warmth is there in the beams of the sun in the firmament, in a summer's day! how extensive! There is nothing hid from the heat thereof, Ps. xix. 6. Nay, if it be in the midst of the winter, though, by reason of its distance from us, the rays are weak, and want force, yet how comfortable is it to us, how refreshing, how glad are we of it! And hath Jesus Christ never been in like manner warming, refreshing, comforting to your souls? Have ye never found him a heating sun to you? It is true, there are places where the heat of the sun is such, as not only blackens, but burns. And there are people too, to whom Jesus Christ is a burning, consuming sun; that is, to all the impenitent, unbelieving opposers of his kingdom and gospel, to all that go on still in their wickedness. See in the first of the chapter, a very terrible threatening,—"All the proud, yea, all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." But it follows,—"Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings,"—as if he had said—Be not ye afraid; he that will be a lion to others, will be a lamb to you—an oven to others, a sun to you.

Show, I. What need we have of these warming influences from Christ the Sun of righteousness. And,

II. How and in what way Christ the Sun of righteousness, communicates heat and warmth to those that fear his name.

I. What need have we of these warming influences from Christ the Sun of righteousness?

The need we have is, upon the account of the coldness we are subject to, in spiritual things.

Some are key-cold, stone-cold; they have no heat, no warmth at all. How should they? They are dead, dead in trespasses and sins, altogether void of spiritual life; and that was once the case of every one of us, and is still the case of every unconverted, unregenerate soul. Till Christ arise upon us, and give us life, we are dead, Eph. ii. 1. When life comes, heat comes.

Even the best, such as are spiritually alive, are subject to their cold fits. The sense and feeling of which, and complaining under it, is a sign there is life, and that it is not the cold of death. Living people are cold, as perhaps some of you are now at this time, while I am speaking,† and dead people are cold; but there is this difference, the dead are always so; they feel nothing from it.

The causes of this spiritual coldness are,

1. Some inward distemper prevailing in the soul; some mortified lust striving, which drinks up the spirits. There are spiritual ague-fits, strokes of palsy. The more of the stone in the heart, and the earth in the mind, the cooler it becomes.

2. From the season; night-time and winter-time are cooling times. When God withdraws, it is both night and winter with the soul; and no marvel then if it be cold.

3. From cooling circumstances, such as want of ordinances, engagement with carnal relations. See both in Ps. cxx. 5. "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" As if he had said—Alas! how cold am I!

The effects of spiritual coldness are,

1. Inward uneasiness. Warmth is comfortable; cold is uncomfortable. When this sun was eclipsed and gone, how sad were the disciples!

2. Unfitness for action. When numbness seizes the joints, the man can do nothing, Job xxxvii. 7. "He sealeth up the hand of every man." Wonder not if he cannot work.

3. Unaptness to receive impressions by the word and by the rod—as wax when hard and cold. Inquire,

II. How is heat and warmth communicated by Christ to those that fear his name?

In general—it is by his *wings*. The sun, say you, hath no wings. It means his beams. In allusion to the fowls, who not only fly with their wings, but warm and shelter their young with their wings, Matt. xxiii. 37. But,

1. In particular—he is a *warming* Sun to us.

(1.) He is so by the immediate motions and comforts of his holy Spirit. It is under that notion that he is promised as a *Comforter*, John xiv. 16. Comfort is warming. Also he is promised as fire, Matt. iii. 11. When he sanctifies, he works as fire, which is cleansing; also when he comforts. And,

(2.) He is so by his word and ordinances, though not without the Spirit. They are dead things in

* See Discourses IX and X.

† January, 1691-2.

themselves; it is the Spirit only that quickens; but the effect is produced when he is pleased to work with them and by them.

The word of Christ hath a warming faculty, Jer. xxiii. 29. Luke xxiv. 32. Have not you yourselves found it so many a time? When you have come cold to it, benumbed, frozen, how strangely, how suddenly, have you been altered, revived, quickened, comforted!

The sacrament of the Lord's supper is a warning, quickening, comforting ordinance,—as food, as physic, a cordial. Allude to 1 Sam. xxx. 11, 12.

Singing of psalms is another warming ordinance, Eph. v. 18, 19. "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord."

(3.) He is so, by good society. The very sight of a good man warms, much more converse with him; and the more inward and intimate the better, Eccl. iv. 11. Not only bad company, but the want of good company, is cooling. Fire is quenched as well by the withdrawing of fuel as by pouring on water. See Acts ii. 41—47.

May I be bold to ask you, How is it with you? What temper are you in? Are you cold? What kind of cold is it—the cold of the living, or the cold of the dead?

My exhortation to you in both cases must be one and the same: Away to Christ the Sun of righteousness. Lay thy soul under his wings, his warm beams, the influences of his Spirit and grace, his word and ordinances.

Beg of him to come and warm thee by them. This is the meaning of David's oft-repeated request, Ps. cxix. for quickening,—quickening.

Prayers must be seconded with endeavours. Motion begets heat; so does meditation: "While I was musing the fire burned."

When you meet with spiritual warmth at any time, let the Sun of righteousness have the praise. We may lay ourselves under his warming beams; but what do we towards our own warming? Some ministers, some subjects, are more warming than others; but we must use all the means, and that diligently.

2. Jesus Christ is made unto us of God a heavenly sun, *with healing* in his wings. Our condition is oftentimes not only a cold, starved condition, but a sick and wounded condition. We are sick—of the disease of natural corruption. We are sick—of the wounds of actual sin.

We should be greatly concerned, each of us, about these two. If any thing ails the body, if that be sick, if that be sore, we send hither and send thither, far and near, for help. What! and no concernedness for the poor soul? We should in this case be more concerned, much more; for the soul is more precious than the body; one soul is of more value than a thousand bodies. The soul is the man. If the body be sick and die, it is *but* the body, the soul may do well enough; but if the *soul* be sick and die, the man is lost. The body may perish alone, but the soul never perishes without the body also perishing with it.

Count upon it, each of you, you have need of healing. If you think not so, you have most need of all, Matt. ix. 12. Have you not a corrupt nature? Why, that itself is a disease. Are ye not daily trespassing and transgressing? Your backslidings must be healed, or ye are undone.

Behold I bring you tidings of great joy. There is healing, there is a healer. The Sun of righteousness is risen. Away to him then with all thy sores, with all thy sicknesses.

He cures of the disease of corrupted nature by his renewing grace. When the Spirit sanctifies, he heals. O beg that Spirit of his! Ps. li. 10.

He cures of the wounds of actual sin by his blood and merit; as a Sun of righteousness imputing righteousness to us before God, wherein we are made to be accepted. This justifies, acquits, absolves, and so heals. See both together, Ps. ciii. 3.

Consider, (1.) The healing that is with Christ the Sun of righteousness, is the alone healing. There is no other that can cure thee, Acts iv. 12. Whether it be true that the king's evil can be cured by the king's touch * only, is more than I know; but I am sure the evil of sin can be cured no other way than by the touch of the King of kings.—All other physic and physicians are of no value.

(2.) It is all-healing. There is no disease, no wound, that he cannot cure. Among diseases those that are hereditary are hardest cured. Now sin is such; but though it be so, he can cure it. Among wounds those that have been longest neglected are hardest cured. Are thine such? Say not there is no hope. David lay three quarters of a year under the peril of a neglected wound, yet he did well. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John i. 7. As when here on earth no disease was able to stand before him, so it is now. The diseases of the soul submit to his healing touch.

(3.) It is healing at hand. What is there nearer at hand to us, wherever we are, than the sun-beams? Would they afford a remedy for all sores and sicknesses, who would want it? Lo, here is a sun that

* "We now without the smallest danger of incurring the suspicion of disloyalty, can safely pronounce that the royal touch for the king's evil, is to be referred to the head of physical charms, evincing that no order of men escaped the ancient contagion of superstition." Brand's Observations on Popular Antiquities, v. ii. p. 599. An account of the ceremony may be seen in the Gents. Mag. v. xxi. p. 415.

will heal thy soul; and how near is it! Away then, each of you, with all the speed imaginable, to this healer. Delays are dangerous. David complains, Ps. xxxviii. 5. "My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness."

3. Jesus Christ is made unto us of God a growth-furthering sun; *they shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.*

Go forth—as a sick man when healed goes forth; walks abroad, after long keeping his bed or chamber; abroad into the open air, which is refreshing, and comfortable; abroad, about his occasions. So the soul, when cured of sin by the Sun of righteousness, then, and not till then, goes forth; that is, begins to live, to live to purpose, to the will and glory of God, to his own happiness and salvation, Ps. cxvi. 16.

And grow up.—Oftentimes after a fit of sickness, when cured, children are observed to grow and shoot forth exceedingly. So it is with the soul, and it is owing to the sun's wings or beams. Nobody doubts the influence the sun hath upon the growth of trees and plants in winter. When the sun is away they grow not, they scarce live. So it is with trees of righteousness, trees of the Lord's planting. All their growth is owing to Jesus Christ.

Can a tree or plant grow without a root? No. Lo, he is our root.

Can a tree or plant grow without watering? Lo, he is our dew.

Can a tree or plant grow without warmth? Lo, he is a sun to us, his warm beams make us to grow, and nothing else will do it without him. Sometimes growth in grace is spoken of as a commanded duty, 2 Pet. iii. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 1. In the text and elsewhere it is spoken of as a promised mercy, Prov. iv. 18. Job xvii. 9. And the blessed Jesus is the sole author of it.

As calves of the stall.—It shall be a speedy, useful growth. It is true he promotes and furthers it by appointed means, Ps. xcii. 12, 13. But still himself is the author of it.

Let us examine how it is with us. Do we grow, grow in knowledge, grow in grace? Are we better, better this year than the last, more humble, watchful, tender? It should be so. Growth evidences truth;—painted trees grow not. Many grow worse and worse, 2 Tim. iii. 13. Growth will appear in strength, and in stedfastness.

Let me exhort and instruct you. Would you grow? Get under the wings of this sun. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. iii. 18.—How in grace? By growing in the knowledge of Christ; not head-knowledge, but heart-knowledge. After so much preaching of Christ God will certainly expect you should grow apace. "Grow up into him," Eph iv. 15.—into acquaintance with him, into living upon him, especially as a Sun of righteousness healing us.

4. The same is also to be said concerning our fruit; our Lord Jesus is a fruit-furthering sun.

The summer time, when the sun is with us, is the fruit-bearing time of the year. So when Christ is near the soul, and the soul is under his influences, then it bears fruit. "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. From me is thy fruit found," Hos. xiv. 5—8. See John xv. 1—8. "I am the vine," &c.

SERMON XXIV.

CHRIST IS OUR SHIELD.

GENESIS xv. 1.

After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield.

THE word of the Lord that appeared to Abram, and said this, was the Lord, the Word, the second Person in the blessed Trinity—God the Son; our Lord Jesus Christ. He appeared often to the fathers in visions before his great appearance, when he was made flesh and dwelt among us. Now that which he said was, I am thy *shield.*

Aye thine, O Abram, says one; but what is that to us, what kin are we to Abram?

I reply, No kin at all, only he was our father; and is that nothing? It is true, we are no kin to him according to the flesh, only as he and we are come of the same Adam and Eve; but, according to the Spirit,—he is our father, and we are his children, if we are true believers. He is called the Father of the faithful, Rom. iv. All that was said to him was said to us. See chap. xvii. 7. *A God to thee, and* TO THY SEED.

DOCT. That our Lord Jesus Christ is made of God a *shield* to all true believers.

Thy shield? each faithful soul may hereupon say; *my* shield, Lord;—as David, Ps. iii. 3; xxviii. 7; cxix. 114.

Show, I. The meaning of this; what a shield is.

II. The properties of this shield; what kind of shield Jesus Christ is. And,

III. What use is to be made of it.

I. What is a shield?

A shield is the same with a buckler, a broad plate of gold, or brass, or steel, or such like, carried by soldiers in their left hand to ward off blows from the head and heart, while the right hand manages the sword. Such a thing God the Word promised Abram

here, and us in him, that he would be to him a shield, that is, a defence, a protection, a preservation to keep us from all evil, from all hurts and harms, from every thing that might annoy us.

But are we in danger? do we stand in need of such a thing?

Certainly. We do every day, and every night, every hour, and every moment.

1. We are engaged in a warfare; every Christian is to look upon himself as an enlisted soldier, and as such hath need of shield and buckler; not only of a sword for offence, but of a shield for defence.

2. Our enemies that fight against us are many, and mighty; the world, the flesh, and the devil are the three generals, and under each is Gad—behold, a troop cometh. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," Eph. vi. 12. that is, men like ourselves, and yet among such we have enemies, and therefore as to them we have need of a shield. *After these things*, after the war of four kings with five, after Abram had rescued Lot, and made them all his enemies, no doubt he was afraid. Now the Lord Jesus comes to him, *Fear not*, they shall none of them hurt thee. I will stand between thee and danger. Nay we have another enemy, I had like to have said, worse than all the rest, considered as an enemy, and that is God, the mighty and terrible God: a professed enemy to every wicked man, going on still in his trespasses. If thou have not a shield to defend thee from him, from the stroke of his offended justice, thou art undone. Now that shield is our Lord Jesus Christ; not only to defend us from men and devils, but from being hurt by God himself.

3. It concerns us to get a shield, considering what it is that is in danger; even our all; all we are, and all we have, our life, health, estate, families; nay, more than all these; our souls, our precious and immortal souls, are in danger. They are in danger of being wounded, of being destroyed. Their purity, their peace, is in danger. O then see, see, I beseech you, the daily need you are in of some shield, nay, any shield will not serve—of *this* shield.

II. What are the properties of this shield?

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is a living shield. Other shields are dead things, made of dead materials; but he lives, and lives for ever. He was dead, it is true, but he is alive again, and lives for evermore.

2. He is a lasting shield. Other shields are subject to be worn out in process of time with much using, and then new ones must be had. Solomon made golden ones. In his son's days, they were gone, and brazen ones made in the stead of them; but here is a shield the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; Heb. xiii. 8. It is a long time since Abram and David had him for a shield, yet he is as firm and good now as ever, as safe and as sure.

3. He is an encompassing shield. Other shields are for one side only, but here is a shield for every side—right side, left side, inside, outside, Ps. v. 12. It is said concerning Job, and though the devil said it he said truth, "Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side," Job i. 10.—a hedge about, and about, and round about, never a gap in it.—Were there one open place, at that one evil might come in.

4. He is an impenetrable shield, such a shield as cannot be pierced through. We are told of a buckler, or shield, that was seven-fold, the thickness of seven ox-hides. What sword, or spear, or dart, could pierce that shield? Lo, here is one beyond that, armour of proof, such a shield as nothing can prevail against, nothing can enter. Is it a thing possible to prevail by power against omnipotency?

5. He is the alone shield, besides him there is no other. Solomon, and the rest of the kings, had choice; if one failed, they had another—for variety. But this never fails: there is no need of any other; it alone is sufficient. Other shields are shields of no value, such as cannot do our business, neither of one kind nor other; none but Christ, none but Christ.

Are not, it is asked, magistrates shields? Ps. xlvii. 9.

They are sub-shields, under-shields; he alone is the chief shield. They can do nothing without him; he can do what he pleases without them. But,

Is not faith a shield? Eph. vi. 16. "Taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

It is not faith that quenches in itself, and of itself, but as it receives Christ, and holds up Christ. Every shield must have a hand to hold it, so must this shield. Now that hand is faith;—not love, not repentance, not patience; but faith.

6. He is an all-sufficient shield.

He is a shield to all them that *put their trust in him*. If there were more such than there are, he would be enough for each of them; but not to others, Prov. xxx. 5. Ps. xxxi. 19. It concerns every one then to make sure his interest in Christ. If Christless, shieldless.

He is so at all times, and in all cases; against all enemies, bodily, ghostly; in all perils and dangers, to the inward, to the outward man, Gen. xvii. 1. Being God all-sufficient, he is shield all-sufficient.

III. What use are we to make of this?

1. This is a very comfortable truth to all the Lord's people—that Jesus Christ is a sun to enlighten and warm us, that he is a shield also to protect and defend us. Let our condition be never so pleasant and delightful, if we be not safe in it, if exposed to perils and dangers by enemies, what the better are we?

It may comfort us,

(1.) In reference to public concerns. We should be of a public spirit, that is, disposed to rejoice in any truth we hear (as many are in news told) that is for the good of God's people in general. Now

such is this, the Lord Jesus Christ is his church's shield.

He is a shield to the universal church, visible and invisible—to protect and defend it from all its enemies, within and without, open and secret, Matt. xvi. 18. To his being so to it all along, we owe the continuance of the being of it in the world to this day. The power and policy of hell and earth hath not been wanting to undermine and destroy it, but our Shield defends it.

Now it is his tabernacle. Moses's tabernacle was secured from wind and weather, with a covering of rams' skins, and badgers' skins. So Christ is the covering of his church, Isa. iv. 5, 6.

It is his vineyard; and see what care he hath for the preservation of it, night and day, Isa. xxvii. 1—3.

It is his flock and fold; and to preserve it, see what he says, He will be a wall of fire round about.

It is his army, and to secure it he is a shield-general; not only captain-general, and ensign-general, but shield-general, for their protection. Therefore, ye that love Jerusalem, rejoice with her, Ps. cxxv. 1, 2. Her enemies shall not prevail.

He is a shield to particular congregations, and assemblies that profess faith in Christ, and obedience to him, especially that walk worthy of their profession, to protect and defend them against the wrath and violence of those that hate them. Are not we ourselves an instance, amongst many others in like circumstances? Had we been here to-day, if the blessed Jesus had not been a shield to us? Whose hand but his hath been our covering? It is true we have a good law, and a good king and queen,* but had they been for us, if the Lord Jesus had been against us? No, no; he hath been for us, therefore they. "The shields of the earth belong unto God," Ps. xlvii. 9. He that hath undertaken the protection of the whole tabernacle, hath undertaken the protection of every apartment in it. He that hath undertaken the care of the whole vineyard, hath undertaken the care of every bed in it. He that hath undertaken to look after the whole flock, hath undertaken to look after every sheep in it. He that hath the command of the whole army, hath the command of every troop in it. Therefore, to him let us give the glory. Therefore, on him let us still wait.

(2.) In reference to our own particular personal concerns, we have daily need of a shield; and we have one, and shall have him our shield, if we trust in him—even the blessed Jesus.

He is our shield to *secure and safe-guard us from God's wrath and curse due to us for our sins.* Were it not for him stepping between, every day we were undone. The blows falling upon us lighted upon our shield, and bruised him, Isa. liii. 4, 5. He was made a curse for us, died the death for us. O how should we love him!

He is our shield from *the rage and malice of Satan.* He goes about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour us. And who secures us from him, but the blessed Jesus—the lion of the tribe of Judah? He takes our part.

He keeps us from being tempted, preventing us with preventing grace. He was led himself into the wilderness to be tempted; Matt. iv. 1. But he doth not lead us so; and it is a great mercy, and that for which we should be very thankful.

When we are tempted he is our shield to ward off the blow of the temptation, so that it shall not fall so heavy as otherwise it would, 1 Cor. x. 13. Luke xxii. 30, 31. He was tempted, but see Paul's testimony, "He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," 2 Cor. xii. 9.

He is our shield, to give us victory over the temptation, nay, to make us more than conquerors, that is, triumphers, as Job was. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations," 2 Pet. ii. 9. Eph. vi. 16.—*quenching* the fiery darts of the wicked.—

He is our shield from the *violence of wicked men.* God had no sooner withdrawn his shield of protection from Job, but presently the Chaldeans and the Sabeans were upon him. We cannot imagine what our adversaries that hate us would do unto us, not only to our assemblies and meeting places, but to our persons and families, if the blessed Jesus were not our shield, 2 Kings vi. 15—17.

He is our shield from *all the evils and disasters that we are day and night exposed to*; going out, coming in, lying down, rising up. It is true, he makes use of second causes in doing it, but himself is the principal. The angels are of his appointing, Ps. xxxiv. 7; xci. 11; and cxxi. He strengthens our bars, Ps. cxlvii. 13. He is our shield from sickness. He is the body's shield from falls and bruises. He is the children's shield from burning and scalding, Job i. 10. Say then, how much are we indebted, and what shall we render?

2. Learn hence what a sad condition they are in, to whom Christ is not a shield. How are they exposed to all the evils and enemies that are against them! Imagine a man in a field fighting, and no shield, no friend. This is thy condition, sinner. O be sensible of it, and be afraid.

3. By way of exhortation and instruction.

(1.) Make Christ your shield, by a hearty closing with him as such, from a due sight and sense of your absolute need of him, and of the insufficiency of all others, in heaven and earth, to safe-guard and defend you. Renounce them all, and cleave to him.

* King William III. and Queen Mary.

Suppose a paper or pasteboard shield were all the defence a man hath in time of battle—how hopeless!

(2.) Having made him your shield, make use of him as your shield, every day, in every thing. Go not out, lie not down, but under the shadow of his wings. Say, as in Ps. xx. 7. "Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." Look up to him for protection.

(3.) Having and using him as your shield, fear not. There is a fear of care and caution, which is our duty, and it is awakening. There is a slavish, weakening fear, which is our sin. How often are we warned against it—as here, "Fear not, I am thy shield."

SERMON XXV.

CHRIST IS OUR STRENGTH.

PHIL. iv. 13.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

THIS were a big word of holy Paul, in the former part of this verse—*I can do all things*—unless he had somewhat qualified it by adding, in the latter part of the verse—*through Christ which strengtheneth me. Do all things?* One would hardly think it should be the same man that says elsewhere, I am nothing, the chiefest of sinners, less than the least of saints. Each of these sounds like humility, bespeaks him a humble, meek, lowly, self-denying man, such as we all should be; but to say, *I can do all things*, is high and strange. What could be said more even of God himself, Job xlii. 2. But his adding, *through Christ*, gives *him* the glory, even him who is God, blessed for evermore. It is true it is *I* that *do* when I do, but then it is as true, what I do Christ doth in me, Gal. ii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 10. Then it is he and not I; his *strength*, and not my own.

DOCT. That our Lord Jesus Christ is the alone strength of true believers, he is made unto us of God—strength.

Not only wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, not only sun and shield, but strength also. He doth not only strengthen us, but he is our strength. *The Lord is my strength*—in the same sense in which he is our life. We do not only live in him, and by him, and through him, but he himself is our life, Col. iii. 4. So *we* are not only strong in him, and by him, and through him, but he himself is our strength.

Show, I. What strength this is meant of.

II. What need we have of him to be our strength—wherein.

III. What are the properties of this strength.

IV. How and by what means does he communicate it to us.

V. What special inferences are to be drawn from it, that Jesus Christ is the strength of true believers.

I. Of what strength is this meant?

Strength is two-fold:

1. There is *natural strength*, which is strength of body. Some have very strong bodies in comparison of other; they are stronger to bear burthens, to endure hardship, to do work. The strongest that ever was was Samson. But that the story of him is a Scripture story, and therefore certainly true, one would hardly believe it, that he should kill a lion; slay a thousand Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass; carry the city gates, posts and all, on his back; burst the green withs; and overturn a house with his two hands, Judg. xiv. xv. xvi. The Lord was certainly with him, with him after a peculiar manner, strengthening him, or he could not have done it. He was herein a type of Christ. He is our Samson, Jer. l. 34. Now as to this strength, either we have it, or we have it not. We must be content if we have it; thankful. We must not by any means be proud of it, Jer. ix. 23, 24. For consider—there are sundry kinds of beasts that have more of it than we. We received it—and a small matter may take it away; a short fit of sickness.

2. There is spiritual strength, which is in the mind and soul; called strength in *the inner man*, Eph. iii. 16. The one of these may be where the other is not. Samson was strong in body, but weak in mind, else he would not have been deceived by a woman, Prov. vii. 26. Many are weak in the outer man—women are the weaker vessels—who, nevertheless, are of great spiritual strength.

II. What need is there that he should be our strength?

Those who think they have need of none have most need of all, as of righteousness, wisdom, washing, physician, so of strength.—That which needs strength is weakness. Now we are none of us weak, are we? All strong, strong to do any thing: we can *do all things*, I warrant. No such matter. We are weak and can do nothing, nothing, nothing truly good, as it ought to be done, further than Christ works it in us. "Without me"—separate from me, not taking me along with you—"ye can do nothing," John xv. 5. You cannot please God, profit others, save your own souls.

Our weakness is *universal weakness*. We are all over weak. I mean in the inner man; spiritually weak, Isa. i. 6.

We are weak in the head, weak-headed. The head is the upper region of the soul; the apprehending, understanding, remembering faculty is there. And are these strong or weak with us in spiritual things? Weak, certainly, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Do not ye find it so, in yourselves and others? Luke xiv. 25.

Prov. xxx. 3. How dull, how forgetful! Is it not our daily complaint, and yet will we say we have no need of Christ? O see your need of him, and beg of him to give you "an understanding, that ye may know him that is true," 1 John v. 20. Beg of him to open your understanding, that ye may understand the Scriptures, Luke xxiv. 45. Every time we open the Bible to read, every time we go to hear a sermon, let us say, Lord Jesus, be strength to my understanding, my memory.

2. We are weak in the heart—weak-hearted, Ezek. xvi. 39.

The heart is put for the lower region, the will and the affections. In these, it is true, there is strength, but it lies the wrong way, as wise to do evil, but to do good we have no knowledge. We are strong and stiff in choosing evil, and fast in holding it; in refusing good motions, resisting, gain-saying, loving simplicity, hating knowledge, Prov. i. but as to that which is good, how weak are we to embrace it, and hold it fast. How weak are we in spiritual combats with sin and Satan; yielding presently, overcome immediately, easily, at the first onset. What is that but weakness? Now the Lord Jesus is the strength of our heart, Ps. lxxiii. 26.

3. We are weak in the hands—weak-handed.

The hand is the part that we receive with, if any gift offered, money, a jewel. Such a hand we must have, or we cannot be saved. Now that hand is faith. And are we strong or weak in believing? As weak as water; it is not in us to believe, till the Lord Jesus works it in us; faith is his gift.—The disciples were of little faith.

The hand is the part that we hold with, when we have received. Suppose a man taking hold of Christ, good hold, justifying hold, saving hold, can he keep that hold by any strength of his own? No, he cannot, but as Christ is his strength. He is weak.

The hand is what we work with. We have a great deal of work to do for God, for ourselves, for the good of others; repenting work, obeying work, praying work. And are we not weak in it, not only backward to it, but awkward, untoward? And is not he our strength? I can *do* all things through Christ, Isa. xxxiii. 2.

4. We are weak in the back and shoulders.

Those are the bearing parts; and are we strong there? Can we hold up under a heavy cross, or calamity befalling us? No, no. We sink, we droop, we faint, and that is a sign our strength is small, Prov. xxiv. 10. But if the blessed Jesus put to his helping hand, that strengthens, that upholds, Phil. i. 29. Col. i. 11. Therefore to him we must go in this case also.

5. We are weak in the feet.

Those are the standing parts, that bear the weight of the body. The shoulders bear other things, but the feet bear them. Now what feet hast thou, what ability to stand? We are often called on to *stand; stand therefore*, Eph. vi. But have we strengthof our own wherewithal? Do we stand on our own legs? No, certainly, Phil. iv. 1. "Stand fast in the Lord."

Those are the walking parts. And what walking ability have we? The way we are to walk, is in the way of God's commandments, of righteousness, of holiness, of our duty. Alas, how weak! not only weak-sighted, eyes weak, not seeing our way, however not clearly and plainly, but weak-footed; as appears,

(1.) By our aptness to stumble, even at straws. Every little thing offends, and turns us aside.

(2.) By the slowness of our pace. Were it not for weakness, how might we rid ground in our way to heaven.

(3.) By our inability to hold out. We are soon tired; we begin well, but are weary presently.

This weakness is born with us, and is increased through our own default, more and more.

It is growing weakness; old men become weaker and weaker;—and yet we are loth to own it, through pride of heart.

III. What are the properties of this strength?

1. It is divine strength. Less than divine strength, and other than divine strength, will not do divine work. We had need of the strength of God to take hold, and to wrestle with God, and to walk with God, and to work for God, and, therefore, such is provided for us. "By *his* strength he had power with God," Hos. xii. 3.—not by Jacob's own strength, but Jehovah's strength. Everlasting arms were under him, enabling him to tug and wrestle with him, as he did. "According to his glorious power," Col. i. 11.—not according to our own shameful weakness. Christ the *power* of God, 1 Cor. i. 24. Therefore, be of good comfort, thou feeble soul; God and a weak creature can do any thing.

2. It is daily strength, that is, strength that we have need of every day, and strength that is ready for us every day; "Be thou their arm every morning," Isa. xxxiii. 2. Think of this, when waking every morning.

Three things are to be done every day:

(1.) New temptations are to be resisted; and how else shall we be able to resist them, but in the strength of Jesus Christ? Read 1 Sam. xvii.

(2.) New afflictions are to be borne. Sufficient for each day is the evil of it. We are born to trouble, and born again to trouble, but whence are we able to bear it, but in the strength of Christ? Col. i. 11.

(3.) New duties are to be performed—towards God—towards our neighbours—towards our families—towards ourselves. And whence are we able to do them, but in the strength of Christ? Christ is our arm in every prayer, in every thanksgiving, in every repenting act, in every believing act. Are we to give reproof, to take reproof? Strength is needful. So in the affairs of our particular calling.

3. It is inward strength. I mean not only strength

in the inward man, in opposition to bodily strength, but strength arising and flowing from an inward principle. A man may be strong to do much, and suffer much, from external weights pulling and drawing, that is, from motives from without—to please men, or gain applause from men, but that is another thing from what is done by an inward principle, grace in the heart, the love of God shed abroad there, the love of Christ constraining, as the bias in the bowl, the spring in a watch. Both of them are out of sight, but both are strong and strengthening. Now inquire, Have ye this principle, can ye witness to such a drawing from within?

4. It is increasing strength. It is said of our Lord himself, that he grew in strength, Luke ii. 52. that is, as man. So do all that are his, Prov. iv. 18. They go from strength to strength, Ps. lxxxiv. 7. Job xvii. 9. Thence it is that true believers who live long are best at last. Other things weaken by age, but grace strengthens by it.

5. It is suitable strength. It is suited

To persons that have it, according as their age, condition, need requires. The little finger hath not the strength of the arm, nor is it needful it should have it. So a private Christian needs not the strength of a magistrate, or minister; nor the child, or the servant, that of the master, or father, in the family. It is suited also

To the work that is to be done with it. All work requires not the same measure of strength for the doing of it; one hath work of one kind, now of another. See Numb. vii. 6—8. "As thy days so shall thy strength be." Deut. xxxiii. 25.

6. It is sufficient strength, 2 Cor. xii. 9. As for ourselves, we have no sufficiency of our own to any thing that is good. No matter, while there is an all-sufficiency in the grace of Christ. Therefore, fear not that any temptation, affliction, duty, will be too hard for thee, Ps. xxiii. 4.

IV. How is this strength communicated to us?

1. By the immediate influences of his Spirit, Eph. iii. 16. As it is the Spirit that quickens, so it is the Spirit that strengthens. He is the soul of our souls; as all the strength the body hath it hath from the soul, so all the strength the soul has is from the Spirit. He works all our works in us, and for us, Isa. xxvi. 12. Our mortifying work, Rom. viii. 13. our repenting work, Zech. xii. 10. our praying work, Rom. viii. 26.

2. By the ordinances.

The word is strengthening both read and preached. It strengthens the head in knowledge, the heart in faith, and love, and all obedience.

The sacraments as seals are strengthening: what a help to believing!

3. By good society. Ps. lxxxiv. 7. "They go from strength to strength;" that is, they increase in number, and by that means in strength.

V. What special inferences are to be drawn hence?

1. Learn what is the reason we are so weak, the ground of all our infirmities. We are Christless, Christless.

Some are totally so, therefore, tossed to and fro like children, by errors, by temptation: therefore no work is done for God, or for the soul.

All in part are so; we go forth in our own strength; as Peter, and you know what came of it.

2. Learn what to do that we may be strengthened. Ask it of God in the name of Jesus Christ. Ps. lxviii. 28. Isa. xxxiii. 2. Every day in every thing.

3. Learn what to do when we have asked and received it. Use it; it is a talent. We can do more than we think we can, through Christ strengthening.

4. Learn what to do when duty is done, especially if well done; give him the glory, Ps. cxv. 1. Gal. ii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 10.

SERMON XXVI.

CHRIST IS OUR SONG.

Ps. cxviii. 14.

The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

CHRIST, the true treasure, is certainly hid in the field of the Old Testament, particularly in the book of Psalms, yet more particularly in this psalm. Who else but he is the stone refused by the builders, and made the head-stone of the corner? *v.* 22. Who else but he is here spoken of? *v.* 14, *my strength and song*, Is it not the same that is become *our salvation*? our Jesus? All true believers may as truly say it in their measure as David,—he is *my song*.

DOCT. That Jesus Christ alone is, and ought to be, the song of all true believers.

Show, I. In what sense we are to understand it.

II. What of Jesus Christ is it that is especially a believer's song.

III. What are the properties of that song which Jesus Christ is to all true believers.

IV. Make the application.

I. In what sense are we to understand this, the Lord is my strength and song?

To be sure, not in that sense in which Job says, "Now am I their song, yea, I am their by-word," Job xxx. 9. Or David—"I was the song of the drunkard," Ps. lxix. 12. It is enough, and too much, that he is so to unbelievers, to them that swear by his blood and wounds, as unholy things, trampling them under their feet. No; "Unto you which believe he is precious," 1 Pet. ii. 7. Believers have other thoughts of him, carry it otherwise towards him; and

it is one of their best evidences that they are true believers.

But it is to be understood in a three-fold sense:

1. He is the main object of their hope and trust, and ought to be so. Of this we discoursed before, from 1 Tim. i. 1.* That which is our confidence uses to be our song. If gold be our confidence, gold is our song; if our great friends are our confidence, they are our song; and so every thing else. Now a believer's great, nay only, confidence is the Lord Jesus Christ; his hope is in him, and in no other; no, not in God himself, nor in the mercy of God, nor promises out of Christ. "The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation," Isa. xii. 2. Are our sins to be forgiven, our performances to be accepted? His merit and righteousness alone must be our song. We must hope and trust in no other.

2. He is the main subject of their praises and thanksgivings, and ought to be so. We have many occasions to sing, that is, to give thanks, upon the account of the many many mercies and deliverances vouchsafed, both public and personal, Ps. xxxii. 7. Nay, we must sing not of mercy only, but judgment also, Ps. ci. 1. Like the nightingale, even when the thorn is at our breast. But the mercy of mercies that we are to sing of, and to bless God for, is Jesus Christ, the gift of gifts, the unspeakable gift, 2 Cor. ix. 15.

3. He is the main matter of their joy and rejoicing, and ought to be so. He is the *head* of their joy, Ps. cxxxvii. 6. He is the *gladness* of their joy, Ps. xliii. 4. We may rejoice in other things: husbands are bid to live joyfully with the wife of their youth, Eccl. ix. We must eat our bread with joy, and rejoice in the labour of our hands; but still Jesus Christ must be our *chief* joy. Our song must be of him, above and beyond them all: and is it so? Can we appeal to God and say, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that it is so? If we can, it is a good sign of the good work wrought in us. "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh," Phil. iii. 3. Mark, no confidence; Jesus Christ alone is our confidence. And where is our joy? Is it not in Christ Jesus? He that rejoices aright in Christ Jesus can find enough in him to rejoice in, in the want of other things, Hab. iii. 17, 18.

Three things are requisite to the making of Jesus Christ our song, that is, the main matter of our joy and rejoicing.

(1.) An interest in him. Not a common interest, which all have in him as a common Saviour; but a peculiar interest, a special interest, as *my* Saviour: this must be supposed. Now that which gives this interest is our closing with him by faith; it is believing that makes him ours; that is the foot by which we come to him, the hand by which we receive him, the mouth by which we feed upon him. What is it that makes two one in the conjugal relation, but the mutual assent and consent each to the other? Hos. iii. 3. So it is here.

(2.) The knowledge of that interest. Many have the former that have not this, and that is the reason why many, concerning whom we hope they are truly in Christ Jesus, yet do not rejoice in him as they ought. He is not their song. Their strength he is, to uphold and support them, that they sink not under their doubts and despondences, but their song he is not. The more is the pity that these two should be parted; yet sometimes it is so. *Zion* said, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me," Isa. xlix. 14. And is it any marvel, when the King of Zion himself hath said so, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Ps. xxii. 1. It therefore concerns all true believers that have an interest in Christ, to clear up their interest to their own souls, that they may be able to say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his," and, therefore, he is and shall be my song.

(3.) Suitable walking. If we let the reins loose to sin and folly; if we suffer the world and vanities of it to encroach upon us, and to steal away our thoughts and affections, that will quickly spoil Christ's being our song, Hos. ix. 1. Joy is forbidden fruit to a backslider, such have other work to do. It is they only that keep conscience void of offence, that walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, that keep close to God and duty, I say, it is they only, that can rejoice in Christ Jesus. And therefore, see to it all ye that desire to make Christ your song, and to rejoice always in him; mind your way; mend your pace; ply your work.

II. What of Christ especially is a believers' song?

True believers sing, and ought to sing,

1. Of what Jesus Christ is in himself as to his personal excellences and perfections. It is usual to make songs, and to sing them by way of encomium, or praising, of worthy men that outshine others. They made songs of Saul, and of his valour; of David also. David himself made a song in praise of Jonathan. And have not we much more cause to make and sing songs of the blessed Jesus? Is there any like him, any in heaven, or on earth, to be compared with him? There is something in him that makes him more admirable than his being a Saviour. What is that? His perfections as God infinite, eternal, unchangeable in his being, wisdom, and power. Of these we ought to sing. His name is *Michael*—who is like thee, O Lord! We ought to sing of him as a Saviour, *our* Saviour.—So in the text—*and is become my salvation.* There is no need to make songs to this purpose, there are some made

* See Discourse VI.

already; read Ps. xlv. The book of Solomon's Song is an encomium of our Solomon, read *ch.* v. 10, &c.

2. We ought to sing of what he is to us. You have heard in sundry particulars already, and more is yet behind. He is our foundation, our food, our root, our raiment; and should we not sing of these? Is there not cause?

3. We ought to sing of what he hath done, and is doing, and will yet do, for us.

What he hath done. He hath taken our nature upon him, and in our nature suffered and died; he hath washed us from our sins in his own blood; called us with a holy calling; begun a good work.

What he is doing. Is he not ever living to make intercession for us? Is he not guiding and guarding us, enlightening and comforting us, every day?

What he will do for us. He will perform the good work that he hath begun; he will come again and fetch us to himself, that where he is there we may be also. Can ye name any other to sing of, that hath done the like for you?

III. What are the properties of this song?

1. He is the angels' song. They were singing songs at the beginning of time, to the praise and glory of God—creator, Job xxxviii. 7. Aye, and they were singing too in the fulness of time, Luke ii. and what was their song? It was to the praise and glory of God—redeemer, Luke ii. 13, 14. Though they could not sing, as we, *Who washed us from our sins*—yet for our sake they sang, *On earth, peace.* Yea, and for their own confirmation also. So that it is no disparagement to be heard singing this song, when the blessed angels themselves sing it. Christ is their song.

2. He is the most ancient song; the song of the ancients. All the Old-Testament saints sung of him, and rejoiced in him. Abraham saw his day, and rejoiced; the patriarchs sung of him; the prophets sung of him; Isaiah especially, the evangelical prophet, read *ch.* v. xii. xxvi. xxvii. and lxiii. only with this difference, they sung of him as one to come, for they saw him, though it was but as through the lattices, or as through a glass darkly.

3. He is the new song. Wherever ye read of a new song in Scripture, it points at him, Ps. xxxiii. 3; xl. 3; xcvi. 1; xcviii. 1; cxlix. 1. He is the New-Testament song. Ever since his coming in the flesh all his saints have been singing of him, as of one already come; rejoicing in him, and showing forth his praises. As fast as they have been made new creatures they have learned this new song.

New, that is, excellent, because when things are new they are at the best.

New, upon the account of new occasion given, a new mercy received.

4. He is their night song, Ps. xlii. 8. Job xxxv. 10.

In the night season, when others are sleeping, true believers are rejoicing in God their Redeemer, and solacing themselves in him, Ps. cxlix. 5. Cant. i. 13. Acts xvi. Paul and Silas sang at midnight.

In the night of sorrow and affliction. To be able to sing then, when every thing looks sad and sorrowful round about us, is a great matter; as David, 1 Sam. xxx. 6.

5. He is their song all the week, and their song on the sabbath. We are bid to rejoice in the Lord always, every day, and they that have an interest in Christ, and know it, do so; but especially on sabbath days, Ps. cxviii. 24. Sabbath days are set apart on purpose. Ps. xcii. is entitled a Psalm or Song for the Sabbath day, v. 1—3.

6. He is their song while they live, and their song when they die. While they live, in all the turns of their lives, Ps. cxlvi. 2. And in a special manner when they come to die; upon sick-beds, and death-beds. As it is said of the swan, that she sings sweetest when dying, so it is with many of God's people. At the death of Mr. John Janeway,* one present said, he never was in a room where God in Christ had more praises than there at that time.

7. He is their song in the world, and will be their song to eternity. What is the great employment of heaven, and what will it be for ever and ever, but to lift up God-redeemer, Rev. v. 9—13. Jesus Christ is to be our everlasting song, Isa. xxxv. 10. It is good to be found doing that now that we would be glad to be found doing hereafter—world without end.

IV. Let us make the application.

1. This may serve for an examining sign, or mark of trial, whereby to know what we are as to our spiritual state and condition. We are bid to try ourselves, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. The glory of God and our own comfort depend much upon our knowing, or not knowing, of ourselves. Marks are needful for our help herein. Amongst others this; What is Jesus Christ to us? What think we of him? Hath he ever been our song? Do we rejoice in him? Do we not rejoice in other things more than in him? Have not other things more of our thoughts, desires, pursuits, joys? If yea, suspect thyself, and change thy way. Conversion is often spoken of under the notion of singing, Ps. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Isa. liv. 1. Rom. xv. 9, 10.

Get acquainted with Jesus Christ. The Word reveals him to us, but the Spirit reveals him in us. Pray for that Spirit. Be learning Christ daily.

Make him thy own by believing; accept of him; close with him; let all go for him.

Having done this, be often meditating what the blessings and benefits are that are made over to us by him, and through him—justification, adoption, and sanctification—and call them all thy own: Ps. xlviii. 11, 12.

* A. D. 1667, æt. 23. See Clarke's Lives, p. 60. fol. ed. 1683.

2. Here is a word of reproof to the true believers among us, that do not make Christ their song, that are in him, but do not rejoice in him; however, not with evenness and constancy, not in that measure and degree, that they should and ought. Thou shouldst chide thyself for it, Ps. xlii. and xliii. 5. Consider—

It grieves the Spirit of God.

It blemishes the ways of God; makes thee a stumbling-block to them that are without, like the evil spies.

It is weakening to thyself. The more Christ is our song the more is our strength, Neh. viii. 10. Then search out the cause.

3. Exhortation, to all that call themselves believers. Make Christ your song, week days and sabbath days.

He is worthy that you should.

The gain of it will be thy own, in present comfort, in eternal recompence. "Now the Lord of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost," Rom. xv. 13.

SERMON XXVII.

CHRIST IS OUR HORN.

LUKE i. 68, 69.

Blessed be the Lord—for he hath raised up an HORN *of salvation for us.*

THESE are the first words of the song of Zacharias, the father of John, wherein he blesses God, not for John, though John was to him a great mercy, being the son of his old age; yea, and a mercy to all Israel, being the prophet of the Highest, and the forerunner of Jesus; but for Jesus, the mercy of mercies, the universal mercy. If you ask wherein?

I answer,—As a Redeemer—*who hath visited and* REDEEMED—God the Father, by God the Son; not from corporal, but from spiritual, slavery. We have cause to bless God every day for a Redeemer. And

As a horn of salvation.

DOCT. That our Lord Jesus Christ is raised up of God to be a *horn of salvation* to all true believers.

Show, I. The meaning of this—why a horn, and wherein a horn of salvation. And,

II. What kind of horn of salvation Jesus Christ is—what are the properties of this horn. And,

III. Make the application.

I. I am to explain this—a horn of salvation.

A horn hath many significations in Scripture:

1. There are horns, properly so called, wherewith beasts are armed; some with two, some, it is said, with one, as the unicorn, which hath its name from having but one horn, Ps. xxii. 20, 21. These horns are not only the beauty of the beast that hath them, but his strength also: with them he pushes, and gores, and tosses to and fro what is in his way; and it is incredible what the strength of some creatures is in their horns.

2. There are figurative horns.

We read of the *horns of the altar;* to which the beasts were tied that were unruly when they were to be sacrificed, Ps. cxviii. 27.—and to which Joab fled for refuge from the avenger of blood that was in pursuit of him, 1 Kings ii. 28.

The *power of wicked men*, wherewith they vex and oppress their poor neighbours, is called their horn, Ps. lxxv. 4, 5, 10. The godly also have their horns, "The horns of the righteous shall be exalted," Ps. lxxv. 10.—that is, I will advance them to honour and power. It is never well with a nation or kingdom but when it is so, Prov. xi. 10. Antiochus,* that bloody enemy of the Old-Testament church, the type of the antichrist, is called in Daniel, *the little horn*, Dan. vii. 8, 21.

3. There is the musical horn, to blow with; either made of a beast's horn, or of some other materials framed in the likeness of a beast's horn; crooked, 1 Chron. xxv. 5. The same are elsewhere called cornets, Ps. xcviii. 5, 6. Dan. iii. 5, 15.

4. There is a vessel called a horn wherein oil was put, when David was anointed king by Samuel, 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 13. Saul was anointed with a *vial* of oil, a small quantity, 1 Sam. x. 1. David was anointed with a *horn*, that is, abundance of oil; noting the difference that was to be between them—in their gifts for government—and in the duration of their kingdom.

Now which of all these is applicable to Jesus Christ? I will tell you when I shall first have told you what the salvation is. Salvation is three-fold.

Temporal—from temporal enemies.

Spiritual—from sin, and the world, and the devil.

Eternal—in heaven, from the wrath that is to come. Neither is that all. Salvation of each sort hath more in it than rescue from evil, it includes also the presence and fruition of the contrary good. So that salvation is the main matter. When it is said of Christ that he is *a horn of salvation*, it means—that he is the author and procurer of all good to us, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. It is he also that saves and delivers us from all evil, bodily and ghostly, present and future. Well might Zachary say, "Blessed be the Lord, for he hath raised up an horn of salvation," Ps. lxviii. 19, 20.

A horn of *salvation*, namely, a saving horn. Other

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* Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria. He died, B. C. 1650, in the 12th year of his reign, and the 39th of his life.

horns are destroying horns; beasts' horns are so; the little horn was so. But, lo, here is a saving horn, a horn that hurts nobody but those that stand it out against him, and think to fight it out with him; them he pushes and gores, and ruins with a witness, Luke xix. 27; xx. 18. As for others, he is to them a saving horn, a redeeming horn, a delivering horn.

II. What are the properties of this horn of salvation?

There are only two properties—according to the two-fold signature of a horn.

He is a plentiful horn of salvation, as horn signifies plenty. And,

He is a plentiful horn of salvation, as horn signifies power.

I shall put them together in this proposition:—*There is plenty of powerful salvation in Jesus Christ, by the appointment of the Father, for all true believers*, that is, for all that will come to him for it. I shall show,

1. That salvation by Jesus Christ is powerful salvation.

What we translate *a horn of salvation*, is by some rendered *a mighty salvation*. Salvation by Jesus Christ is mighty salvation, Jer. l. 34. *Their Redeemer is strong*. If he were not strong and mighty, yea, almighty, he could be no Redeemer for us, because of the mighty enemies that were, and are, against us; and because of the vigorous opposition they make to hinder our salvation. He that will be the Author of salvation to us must be strong enough to deal,

(1.) With God: for he is against us as sinners. His justice is our enemy, and must be satisfied. And can the blessed Jesus do that for us? is he able? Yes, he is able, in the sense in which we call a rich man an able man; he is able in respect of wealth and riches, to pay all our debts, if they were a thousand times more and greater than they are, not farthings, and pence, and pounds only, but even talents; and therefore, if any be sent to the prison of hell for their debts, it is not for want of a sufficient surety to undertake for them, but for want of accepting of him, Heb. vii. 25. O mix faith with this, and say, If it be so, why am I thus? His merit is of infinite worth and value.

(2.) With Satan. He is the gaoler in whose custody all unregenerate people are. They are his prisoners, his captives, his galley-slaves now, and must be with him for ever. And can the blessed Jesus deal with him? is he hard enough for him? He is certainly; he *hath broken his head*, Gen. iii. 17. He hath *led captivity captive*, Ps. lxviii. 20.—made *a shew of him openly*, Col. ii. vanquished and destroyed him.—We read, in Matt. iv. of a duel which he fought with him,—though upon great advantage on the devil's part, yet he beat him out of the field, which was a pledge, or specimen, or earnest, of his great victory by dying, Heb. ii. 14. It must needs be so. Though the devil have great power, as well as great wrath, Eph. vi. 12. yet his power is but created power. He is a creature still. But our Redeemer is Jehovah. There are two lions; the one —a fallen angel, 1 Pet. v. 8. the other—God blessed for ever, the lion of the tribe of Judah.

It is an act of infinite power to fetch a soul at first out of the devil's clutches—by converting grace, Luke xi. 24.

It is an act of infinite power to preserve us ever after, from being ruined by him.

(3.) With the corrupt nature in us. This is as hard to be dealt with, to be subdued and conquered, as the devil himself. Suppose an impregnable castle defended by a mighty giant, a Goliah; that is the case. There are two wards in this castle, as at Chester, the higher ward, and the lower ward.

The understanding, that is the higher ward; fortified with invincible ignorance, inveterate prejudices. These he pulls down, 2 Cor. x. 4. He enlightens the mind, Eph. v. 8. It is strange with what power.

The will, that is the lower ward; stubborn, obstinate; will by no means be persuaded, till the mighty grace of Christ comes, Ps. cx. 3.

(4.) With the malice and power of wicked men, the professed enemies of God's people. Can the blessed Jesus deal with them? Is his horn strong enough for their horns?—Certainly it is, and will be sure to overcome them.

(5.) With death and the grave, 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.

2. There is plenty of this powerful salvation, enough, and enough again; not a vial, but a horn, of salvation. It is the appointment of the Father that it should be so, "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," Col. i. 19. He is all *fulness dwelling*—not for himself, but for us, John i. 16. As the fulness of milk in the mother's breasts, of light in the sun, or the fulness of water in the spring or fountain, which is a flowing fulness, Zech. xiii. 1. "a fountain." Not a vessel or laver, alluding to that wherein the priests were to wash—larger in Solomon's time than it was in Moses's time, though still only a laver; but here is a *fountain*. There is a great deal of difference between a laver and a fountain. Our wants are many and great, and if our supplies be not accordingly, what will become of us?

(1.) We want righteousness wherein to appear before God every day—for the pardon of our sins, —and for the acceptation of our services. Our own will not do. He hath it for us; he hath enough, a horn of righteousness; Dan. ix. 24. *everlasting* righteousness. A spring that cannot be exhausted, Jer. xxiii. 6. He is Jehovah our righteousness.

(2.) We want wisdom to lead and guide us in all the practical affairs of our souls. How oft are we

at a loss for want of it! Lo, here is a horn of wisdom for thee, divine, heavenly wisdom, Col. ii. 3. Not for himself, but for us; not to be laid up, but to be laid out, 1 Cor. i. 30. James i. 5.—he gives *liberally*.

(3.) We want strength; strength to do in doing time; to suffer in suffering time. Our strength is weakness; our sufficiency, insufficiency, 2 Cor. iii. 5. Lo, here is a horn of strength for thee. Not only a strong horn, in itself strong, but a horn of strength for *us*, to make us *strong*. See discourse on Phil. iv. 13.* We can do nothing without Christ, John xv. 5. but all things through Christ.

(4.) We want grace. Some want it altogether—they have none of it. Others, that have it, want more of it, more faith, and more humility, and more meekness, patience, contentation, submission. Lo, here is a horn of grace for thee, a fulness. Wouldst thou have more faith? pray as the apostles, Luke xvii. 5. "Lord, increase our faith."

(5.) We want peace, that is, comfort in our souls, from the sense of God's love and favour towards us. Many a one would give all the world, if they had it, for one smile of his face. Lo, here is a horn of peace and comfort for thee in Christ Jesus, John xiv. 27. 2 Pet. i. 2. He is our peace—not only our peace-maker, but our peace-matter. Away to him then by believing.

(6.) We want eternal life; want it indeed, for we have forfeited it, and are never likely to recover it by any thing we can do. This is salvation—the top-stone. Now there is with Christ a horn of this also, John x. 10.

(7.) We have temporal wants also; some of one kind, some of another. I put these last because they are the least; of least consequence in comparison, though we are apt to complain most of them. One wants health; another wherewithal to pay his debts, and maintain his family, and pay his taxes; another is struck at by enemies, and wants a friend to stand by him. Lo, here is a horn of supply for thee in all thy wants; one that hath wherewithal; for the earth is his, and the fulness thereof, as well as heaven, and the fulness thereof,—"My God shall supply all your need," Phil. iv. 19.—it includes temporal needs. When he sent forth his apostles without purse or scrip, at their return he asked them, Lacked ye any thing; and they said, Nothing, Lord.

III. The application.

1. Let this advance your esteem of the blessed Jesus. Think of him according to what is meet, as a strong, mighty, rich, able Saviour. The pre-eminence is his; let him have it, Col. i. 18.

2. Let us bless the Lord God of Israel, who hath raised up the horn of salvation for us, laid help upon one that is mighty, Ps. lxxxix. 19. We have cause to be thankful for our temporal salvations by him, but especially for spiritual and eternal salvation. "Lift up the horn," 1 Chron. xxv. 5. that is, Christ. They sung the gospel psalms, such as Psalms ii. lxviii. cx. &c.

3. Let us make sure our interest in this horn by heartily closing with him upon gospel terms, that we may each of us call him *my* horn, Ps. xviii. 2.

4. Live upon him with all holy joy and cheerfulness, Eccl. ix. 8. There is no room for despair or distrust.

5. Live to him in all holy obedience—care to please, fear to offend—in order to living with him.

* Discourse XXV.

SERMON XXVIII.

CHRIST IS OUR HONOUR.

1 PETER ii. 7.

Unto you, therefore, which believe, he is precious.

THE DOCTRINE from these words is this, That Jesus Christ is an honour to all true believers.

To be precious to them, and to be an *honour* to them, you say, are two things.

I reply, They are in effect the same. However, to be an honour to them is, I am sure, more agreeable to the original, for what else is the Greek word here, but an honour? See the margin.

Two things I mean by it:

1. He is the Author of honour to them

2. He is, and ought to be, the object of honour from them. He honours them, and they do, and should, honour him. The latter follows upon the former. The former is to be spoken to as to the doctrine, the latter as the application by way of inference from it.

Show, I. Wherein, and upon what accounts, Jesus Christ is the Author of honour to all true believers.

II. What kind of honour it is.

III. What we learn from it.

I. How is the Lord Jesus the Author of honour to all true believers?

We use to say concerning the king, that he is the fountain of honour, that is, all his subjects that are men of honour, derive their honour from him. Others give them honour, but it is he that makes them honourable. Now King Jesus is he, and he alone, that is the fountain of honour to all true believers; they derive their honour from him.

1. He hath himself an honourable esteem of them. They are persons of honour, even the meanest of them, in his account, Isa. xliii. 4. He finds them, as all the rest of the children of Adam, without honour,

even as the beasts that perish by nature, Ps. xlix. 12, 20:—this is the burthen of that Psalm, but he doth not leave them so. They find favour in his eyes through his own mere mercy and free grace, and then he honours them: he loves them and then honours them. Just as it is with kings oftentimes; they do not honour men for desert sake but for good pleasure sake; they will because they will; and thence many unworthy men are men of honour. So the King of kings. We must say, "After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared: not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour," Tit. iii. 4—6. We must all say in like manner, *Not by works of righteousness.* It was the dear love he had to them, and the honourable esteem he had of them, that made him do and suffer as he did for their ransom and recovery, Rev. i. 5.—loved and washed; as John xiii. 1.—loved, and therefore washed their feet with water. He took upon him the form of a servant, Phil. ii. 7. And like a servant, he served that he might honour us. His degrading purchased our honour, Luke xxii. 27. O how should this affect us!

2. His will is, that every one else should be in this like himself, in having an honourable esteem of them. As when the king bestows a degree of honour upon a person, makes him a knight, or a lord, or an earl, he expects others so to regard him; so it is here. See Esth. vi. 3, 6, 7. They that do not honour the true saints and servants of the God of heaven, do not do as Jesus Christ would have them do, Ps. v. 4. It is made the character of a citizen of Zion, that he honours them that fear the Lord; *honours* them, hath a high and honourable esteem of them; how low and mean soever they may be in the world, as to their worldly state and condition. How much soever they may be despised, and scoffed, and scorned at by others, they are the excellent of the earth, in his eye, because they are so in Christ's eye, Ps. xvi. 2.

3. He hath done that for them, which in the account and esteem of men may, and doth, deserve that honour. I do not say, they deserve that he should honour them, I said the contrary before, but that men should honour them, Rom. xiii. 7.—honour to whom honour.

What is it that he hath done for them that may be the ground of men's honouring them?

(1.) One ground of honouring men is upon the account of their personal excellences and endowments; some are honourable for their learning, and knowledge in arts and sciences; some for their wisdom and prudence in the management of secular affairs; in the field, as soldiers; in the senate, as counsellors. Now if so, the people fearing God deserve honour indeed, for they have better knowledge than others. They from the least even to the greatest know God. And whence have they that knowledge, but from Christ, who gives them an understanding? 1 John v. 20. They have wisdom also; another sort of wisdom; wisdom from above in soul affairs: they are wise to discern the times—and whence have they that wisdom, but from Jesus Christ, who is made unto them of God wisdom? 1 Cor. i. 30. They search the Scriptures, and those make them wise; and therefore noble, Acts xvii. 11.

(2.) Upon the account of their great usefulness in their particular places and stations; in court or camp, for peace or war. Doth this deserve honour? Then saints deserve it; for who are more useful than they?

By their prayers: fetching down mercies, keeping off judgments, as Moses.

By their presence: they are chariots and horsemen, the militia of the country: allude to 2 Kings iii. 14.

By their pattern: they are the lights of the world shining amongst men; giving good examples; showing which is the way to heaven, by walking in it. And whence is all this, but from the Spirit of Jesus Christ, which is in them and with them? It is grace that enables them, and therefore he is their honour.

(3.) Upon the account of their honourable relations wherein they stand. He that is himself in honour reflects honour upon all that are related to him. Now what are the relations of true believers?

They are all the children of God; and how, but by faith in Jesus Christ? Gal. iii. 16. John i. 12. And is not that a high honour? We honour the children of great men for their honourable parents' sake; and is there not reason then that we should honour true believers, that are the sons and daughters of God Almighty? They are honourable by birth, not the first, but the second, both by father and mother, Gal. iv. 26. Amongst men some have one that have not the other; but we have both.

To be a servant, even the meanest, to men of honour, carries honour in it. Then believers are honourable, for *they are the King of heaven's servants*, by their own choice and by his acceptance, Ps. cxvi. 16.

Nay; *they are his friends*, admitted to his secrets, acquainted with his counsels, John xv. 15. As Hushai was a friend to David, 2 Sam. xv. 37. Zabud to Solomon, 1 Kings iv. 5. Sir Fulk Grevil had inscribed on his tomb—Servant to Queen Elizabeth, and friend to Sir Philip Sydney.

(4.) Some are made honourable by marriage;—the wife by the husband. Then all true believers are honourable, for they are all, and each of them, espoused to the Lord Jesus, and his honour is their honour, 2 Cor. xi. 2. Read Ps. xlv. which is the nuptial song.

(5.) Some are honourable on account of their

honourable hopes. Young heirs are honoured for their inheritance sake, though as yet under age. Then all true believers ought to be honoured, for they are all heirs, not of an earthly, but a heavenly, inheritance; heirs of heaven, nay more, heirs of God. God himself is their inheritance, and higher we cannot go, Rom. viii. 17. Their honourable attendants are the angels, Heb. i. 14. nay, the Son himself, Luke xii. 37.

(6.) Some are honourable on account of their honourable offices and employments, Rev. i. 5.—kings and priests; so he makes them.

(7.) Others are honourable on account of their honourable name, James ii. 7. The word Christian is from Christ: all this honour have all his saints, Ps. cxlix. 9.

II. What kind of honour is it that true believers have from Jesus Christ? It hath these properties.

1. It is real honour. Other honours are but a shadow, a dream, a fancy. This hath substance in it, Prov. viii. 21. As the riches of a believer are substantial riches, not things that are not, Prov. xxiii. 5.—so the honours of a believer are substantial honours. God doth really and truly honour such; so doth the blessed Jesus; so do the angels.

2. It is righteous honour. Other honours which the honourable men of the earth have, are oftentimes unrighteous—unjustly given, and unjustly taken; when they that have them do not deserve to have them. But here it is deserved; not, as we said before, at the hands of God—we can merit nothing, but at the hands of men it is, 2 Sam. vi. 22.

3. It is heavenly honour. Other honours are from below, this is from above; other honours are upon earthly accounts, this upon heavenly. The birth of a believer is heavenly, his endowments heavenly; he is heaven-born, and heaven-bred. His inheritance is in heaven hereafter; his conversation is there now. Therefore if it were asked—Is it from heaven, or of men? Luke xx. 4. you may answer, as to this honour—From both; but principally and originally from heaven.

4. It is harmless honour. Other honours often hurt those that have them, puff them up with pride, make them haughty and high-minded, as Haman, but so doth not this. Paul, to whom Christ was more an honour than to any other, was humble. Who was more humble than he, more low and mean in his own eyes? Eph. iii. 8. 2 Cor. xii. 11.

5. It is unsought honour. What endeavours are there to obtain other honours; what struggling and striving; what cringing and courting; what bribing and waiting. But here it is not so. This honour is truly like our shadow, it follows those that, in the sense of their own unworthiness, fly from it, and it flies from those that, in pride of heart, are ambitious of it, Matt. xx. 20—28. Ezek. xvi. 6.

6. It is unfading honour. It is honour that lasts, it is lasting, everlasting. We have known divers that for a time have been in great honour, upon the very topmost pinnacle of honour, and by and by in disgrace and dishonour, hooted at; but it is not so here. As he loves to the end, John xiii. 1. so he will honour to the end; not only to the end of time, but to an endless eternity; for ever and ever. We shall never fall from this honour.

III. What may we learn from this subject?

1. We learn what to think of the great and glorious Majesty of heaven and earth. His name, and his Son's name, is certainly, upon this account, to be admired and adored by us, and by all his creatures, angels and men. For what? For his infinite love and free grace, in condescending in this manner to a remnant of Adam's seed, so as to put all this honour upon them. We have cause to say, as David, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Ps. viii. 1, 3, 4, 9. Or, as the same David elsewhere, with reference to the honour done unto himself, in his advancement to the kingdom, "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto," 2 Sam. vii. 18. Especially may those say so, who themselves are made partakers of this honour, who are received into the family of God, who are made his servants, his friends, his children, though so mean, so vile. Lord, what am I, or what is my father's house?

2. We learn what to think of those who are not believers; all the ignorant, careless, carnal, unregenerate generation; certainly, they have no part nor lot in this matter. They are none of those that God will honour. They are all strangers to this dignity and advancement. Would you know what the esteem of God is concerning them? Look into his word; see what that says concerning good men. It says, they are God's jewels, the excellent of the earth, his favourites, his children, the dearly beloved of his soul. But what says it of the wicked? They are chaff, dross, dogs, swine. O then, see that none of you be such; fear, fear lest it be your condition.

3. We learn what is the true way to true honour. It is in our nature to desire it—as to be covetous in desiring wealth, voluptuous in desiring pleasure, so ambitious in desiring honour. But the misery is, we mistake our end, and consequently our way. We take those things to be wealth, and pleasure, and honour, that are not so, and that not to be so which is so; and we pursue accordingly. O be convinced that the way to be honoured, I mean, to have Christ an honour to us, is to believe, that is, to close with him upon gospel terms, Isa. lx. 19.—*thy God thy*

glory—Isa. xxviii. 5. John xii. 26. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Ps. xci. 15.

4. We learn what is our duty towards those to whom Christ is an honour. Certainly it is our duty to see them truly honourable, and to love and honour them accordingly. Allude to 2 Kings xx. 12, 13. The Babylonians worshipped the sun, and knowing that for Hezekiah's sake their god had gone back, they sent to do him honour. Let this advance your esteem and enhance your value of good men—that Christ himself does them honour; and, they deserve it at your hands, though not at his.

5. We learn what is their duty to whom Christ is an honour. To make it their business to honour him all they can, all their days; as they should love him, so they should honour him, 1 John iv. 19.

Why is he to be honoured?

He is worthy that it should be so; truly worthy, as God, as God-man, as our Redeemer and Saviour.

It is the Father's will it should be so, John v. 22, 23. Col. i. 18, 19. Therefore, he has the pre-eminence, because it pleased the Father.

It will be our own benefit and comfort, living and dying. We shall be no losers, but gainers, by it.

Wherein are we to honour him?

In general—let him be precious to you.

Have high and honourable thoughts of him.

Speak high and honourable things concerning him, as Paul did.

Do nothing to displease and disbonour him, but every thing contrary, Phil. i. 2.

Let other things be precious to you, and persons, for their relation sake to him; his word, day, worship, people.

Stand upon your honour; perform promises: do nothing below you.

SERMON XXIX.

CHRIST IS OUR SANCTIFICATION.

1 CORINTHIANS i. 30.

Who of God is made unto us SANCTIFICATION.

THESE words themselves are the DOCTRINE—

That Jesus Christ is made unto us of God sanctification.

The word translated sanctification, is most commonly rendered in Scripture *holiness*. Rom. vi. 19. 1 Tim. ii. 15. Heb. xii. 14. Jesus Christ is made unto us of God, holiness: he is not only holy in himself, the *holy child* Jesus, Acts iv. 27. 30. nay, *most* holy, infinitely, eternally, and unchangeably holy; but he is *made holiness* to us, that is,

1. He is appointed of God to be the author of our sanctification, to work holiness in us for the making of us holy. As the efficient cause, as he is the Lord our righteousness, to make us righteous by imputation, so he is the Lord our holiness, to make us holy by implantation. We are justified, that is, accepted of as righteous in the sight of God, through his merit made ours. We are sanctified, that is, actually made holy, by his Spirit which is given to us, to abide with us for ever, 1 Cor. vi. 11. Justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, sanctified by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, Heb. ii. 11. Now the question is—Are ye glad to hear this, or no? Every one would be willing to be accepted as righteous, acquitted from guilt, but are you willing to be sanctified, to be made holy?

2. He is the pattern, the sample, the exemplary cause, of our sanctification. Holiness in us is the copy or transcript of the holiness that is in the Lord Jesus, John i. 16. As the wax hath line for line from the seal, the child limb for limb, feature for feature, from the father, so is holiness in us from Christ.—To be sanctified is to be made conformable to the image of Jesus Christ. Rom. viii. 29. It is to be made like him in heart and life; yet so, as that in three things there is a difference.

He sanctified himself. So do not we. We are sanctified by him. John xvii. 19. As he raised himself to life, so never did any other; but we are raised: it would have been long enough ere we should have made ourselves holy.

He was originally holy, never otherwise, not only as God, but as God-man, Luke i. 35. So are not we. We were unsanctified before we were sanctified, unholy before holy. So was not he.

He is absolutely, universally, and completely holy. He had the Spirit poured out upon him without measure. So have not we. Our sanctification, at the best in this life, is but imperfect. It is true there is a perfect day to come, and our light shines more and more towards it, but here below we have it not. Our wine is mixed with water; our gold with dross. So was not his.

For further clearing of this I shall show,

I. What sanctification is, or what it is to be sanctified.

II. That we have need of one to be made sanctification to us.

III. That Jesus Christ is made so, and how he sanctifies. And,

IV. What practical inferences are to be drawn from this subject.

I. and II. I shall join the two first together, by explaining what sanctification is, and by showing that we need one to be made sanctification to us.

To be sanctified is variously expressed, represented, and set forth, in the Scriptures.

1. It is to be renewed. Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit, whereby we are *renewed* in the whole

man after the image of God, Eph. iv. 22—34. It is the making of us new creatures, 2 Cor. v. 17. It is the changing of our very nature. We are by it made *partakers of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4.—a high expression. Now have we not need of one to do this for us? Can we do it for ourselves, or for one another? We cannot; therefore the great God hath undertaken it for us, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. And he doth perform it by Jesus Christ. To him, therefore, we must go.

2. It is to be regenerated, that is, born again, John iii. 3, 5. As sure as there is a first, there is a second, birth. Now, can we beget ourselves? We cannot. The second birth is from above; we are begotten of God, and born of God, 1 Pet. i. 3. John i. 13. Tit. iii. 5, 6.

3. It is to be raised from death to life; to be quickened, Eph. ii. 1. that is, sanctified. Sanctification is the first resurrection, Rev. xx. 6. Now, can a dead man raise himself to life again? Did ever any do it? He cannot. It is God alone that raises the dead. It is by Christ alone that dead souls are made alive. He is the resurrection and the life.

4. It is to be reconciled to God.—There is enmity, enmity ever since the fall, between God and man; mutual enmity. God an enemy to man, man an enemy to God, Zech. xi. 8. Rom. viii. 7. Now Jesus Christ as Mediator brings them together, and makes them friends, and he alone can do it.

He makes God a friend by dying; his death satisfied, and so pacified. He hath said, in him I am well pleased.

He makes us friends by sanctification, destroying the enmity—not all at once, but by degrees; and hath committed to us the ministry of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. Is this reconciling work done with you?

5. It is to be converted. Sanctification is the same with conversion. It turns us about. We are born with our backs upon God and heaven, and our faces upon sin and hell, till grace comes, and that converts, turns, Acts iii. 19, 26. And we must be turning more and more all the days of our lives, Matt. xviii. 3. Luke xxii. 32. Now, can we turn ourselves? Have we not need of one to do it for us? Certainly we have, Jer. xxxi. 18. "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God."

6. It is to be called with an effectual call. There is a common call, and there is an effectual call; it is the effectual call that is the same with sanctification, Rom. viii. 30. Now, calling is by another; we do not call ourselves; that other is Christ, 2 Tim. i. 9. Who called Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, and Zaccheus? Did not he?

7. It is to be changed, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Sanctification makes a great change; the judgment is changed, the disposition, the way, the company,—I am not I. It is a greater change that grace makes at conversion, than that death makes. At death grace is turned into glory, Job xiv. 14—change come; which is the turning of the same thing from a lower degree to a higher; but at conversion it is from sin to grace, between which there is no likeness.

8. It is to be cured. Sin is the sickness of the soul, a dangerous sickness, a mortal disease; though but few are sensible of it. Can we cure ourselves, or cure one another? No: the only physician is our Lord Jesus Christ, raised up of God for that purpose; no hand but his can heal us: "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diseases," Ps. ciii. 3. *forgiveth* in justification; *healeth* in sanctification; by degrees. "I will heal their backsliding," Hos. xiv. 4. heal their bent to backslide. Compare Hos. xi. 7. "My people are bent to backsliding from me."

9. It is to be cleansed. Sin is the pollution of the soul: and it is pollution in grain, such as nothing can wash us from but the fountain opened, and that fountain is Christ, Zech. xiii. 1. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you," Ezek. xxxvi. 25. This was fulfilled, when at their return from Babylon they were quite out of love with idols and idolatry, of which they were so fond before, 1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. v. 25, 26.

10. It is to be clothed. A sinful condition is a naked condition, Rev. iii. 17. And what must poor naked souls do, but come to Christ, to his shop, and here buy of him white raiment? Rev. iii. 18. Zech. iii. 3, 4. "I clothed thee also with broidered work," &c. Ezek. xvi. 10—14. The prophet's statement is understood of their public privileges and advantages, above other people; but it is true also in a spiritual sense. Grace is rich raiment, princely, priestly, comely clothing, that waxeth not old.

11. It is to be consecrated. Sanctifying is the same with consecrating, that is, setting apart from common and profane to holy and spiritual uses, as persons, places, vessels, times, were under the Old Testament. In allusion to which, all true believers are a people sanctified, that is, set apart for God, separated from the world, and sin, and vanity, to be the Lord's peculiar; his temple; priests to him; anointed for that purpose, Ps. iv. 3. But,

III. How is Jesus Christ made all this to us? In what way, and by what means, doth he bring all this to pass in us and for us? That he doth it is plain in the text and elsewhere; but query, How?

1. Principally by the working of his Spirit and grace. The Spirit of Christ is the sanctifier. When he comes into the heart to dwell there, he renews, and he regenerates, and he raises, and he reconciles. The Father creates, the Son redeems, the Holy Ghost sanctifies, Tit. iii. 5, 6.—mark, *it is through Jesus*

Christ. If he had not satisfied and died, to make God friends with us, he would never have sent the Spirit, to make us friends with him. The sending of the Spirit to sanctify as well as to comfort us, is owing to the intercession of the Lord Jesus, John xiv. 16.

2. Instrumentally by the word, "Sanctify them through thy truth," John xvii. 17. Error never sanctifies. False doctrine, corrupt erroneous opinions, may prevail to bring people over to a party, but never to turn them from sin to God; to convert, regenerate, renew. Truth only doth that, Jam. i. 17. Tit. i. 1.

The word of truth begins, and the same carries on, this good work—As a word of conviction, of humiliation, of illumination, of regeneration, of faith, and of holiness, and therefore this should advance our esteem of the word of God, the written word, the word preached; and we should hear it accordingly, Ps. cxix. 9.

IV. The practical improvement.

1. Shall I propound one needful question to you?—Are ye sanctified? is Jesus Christ made of God sanctification to you? It is a thing that may be known. We may make our calling and our election sure; our election by our calling, by our sanctification; for to be sanctified is to be called, and to be called is to be sanctified: and not our election only, but our justification and our glorification may be made sure by it, Rom. viii. 30. And how sweet, how comfortable will that be! But how is this to be done? There are three marks:

(1.) Where Christ is made to us sanctification, it is become natural to us to walk in all holy obedience to the will of God. I say natural, not to the old, but to the new, nature. Now what is done naturally is done freely—as water from a spring, Ps. cx. 3.—easily, 1 John v. 3.—delightfully, John iv. 34.—and evenly, and constantly, and perseveringly. Fire always burns, stones always tend downwards, because their nature is so. Thus it is with the old nature in sinning, Jer. vi. 7. and thus it is with the new nature in obeying, John iv. 14.

Then, says one, I fear I am not sanctified.

I reply, The trial is not to be made by any one single action at any one time, but by our course and way. How is it *ordinarily* with us? There is no man but doth something that beasts do; but is he therefore a beast? There is no beast but doth something that a man doth; but is he therefore a man?

(2.) Where Christ is made to us sanctification, holiness is highly prized and dearly loved, and more and more of it earnestly desired. I believe it is never otherwise among the truly sanctified. Now, is it so with us? We love civility, and moral honesty, and temperance, and sobriety. So doth many a one that hates holiness.

(3.) Where Christ is made to us sanctification, he is owned and acknowledged as our all in all. The crown is set upon his head. We rejoice in Christ Jesus. To us to live is Christ. All the sanctified are brought by their sanctification to Christ.—They were strangers to him before, but now they are friends.

2. Shall I suppose you now propounding to me another needful question,—What may I do that Christ may be made to me sanctification?

(1.) We must be inwardly and thoroughly convinced that there is an absolute necessity he should be so. This must be the case,

If we mean to please God in this world.—None but the sanctified are accepted of him. He hath no pleasure but where his image is, and his likeness is. Our sacrifices are an abomination, our prayers an abomination, otherwise. Till the tree is good the fruit cannot be good. And also,

If we mean to enjoy God in the other world.—"Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. that is, see him so as to enjoy him. It is the *pure in heart* who shall see God, Matt. v. 8. Heaven would not be heaven to an unsanctified soul, if we might suppose such a one admitted there. Now are we convinced of this? "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 3, 5. When Christ thus discoursed to Nicodemus, he was offended. It may be, so may some of you.—How can this be? But "Verily, verily, I say unto you," must silence all objections.

(2.) We must apply ourselves to the Lord Jesus by faith and prayer.

By faith: closing with him, not only as the Lord our righteousness, but as the Lord our holiness. Not only as our only justifier by his merit, but as our only sanctifier by his Spirit.

By prayer: calling on him. Lord, if ever thou wilt do any thing for me, sanctify me, Ps. li. 10. Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians, should be ours for ourselves, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Thess. v. 23. So should Christ's prayer, John xvii. 17, "Sanctify them through thy truth."

(3.) We must attend upon the ordinances. These are the conduit pipes through which the grace of sanctification is conveyed to poor souls.

3. Shall I suppose you now propounding one question more,—What must they do to whom Christ is already made sanctification?

(1.) They have cause to bless God for it every day, all their days, Ps. ciii. 1—3.

(2.) They must press after further degrees of sanctification, more and more. Dying to sin. Living to righteousness.

(3.) They must promote the sanctification of others also.

SERMON XXX.

CHRIST IS OUR SUPPLY.

PHIL. iv. 19.

But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

DOCT. That the supply of all our needs is only from God, and only by Jesus Christ.

That is as much as to say, that Jesus Christ alone is our supply. Can you readily turn to a more sweet, comfortable text of Scripture than this is in all your Bibles, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation.

Supplies we would have, and here they are for us.

Supplies to *all* our needs; not some, but all.

And that from *God—My God* shall supply. Paul's God was the same that we call our God—Jehovah, blessed for ever. He says, *My* God, because he had supplied him, and his God would.

According to his riches in glory; that is, in such a manner, measure, and degree as becomes him. Not what is fit for us poor worms to receive, but what is fit for him to give.

And all this in and by and *through Jesus Christ.* Without him no supply is to be had to any of our needs. We might have starved, and died, and perished eternally, but for him; he himself is our supply.

Show, I. What our *needs* are, and what it is that he supplies us with.

II. What are the properties of this supply.

III. What special resemblances there are of it.

IV. What practical inferences are to be drawn from the whole.

I. What are our needs, and with what does the Lord Christ supply us?

There are seven things that we have need of, and there is supply to be had for them all in Jesus Christ, some pertaining to life, some to godliness, 2 Pet. i. 3.

1. Righteousness and strength.

Righteousness. They that have none have need; *There is none righteous, no not one,* Rom. iii. 10. We have to do with a righteous God, and a righteousness must be had, or there is no standing before him. Ho! where shall we have it? Of our own we have it not, nor hath any creature in heaven or earth wherewithal to supply us. It is to be had only in and by Jesus Christ. He is the *Lord our righteousness,* Jer. xxiii. 6. He is made unto us of God righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30. Our God hath supplied our need of this in his Son; Dan. ix. 24. *He hath brought in everlasting righteousness.* To him, therefore, we must go; plead his righteousness for the forgiveness of our sins; the merit of his death, his righteousness, for the acceptation of our performances.

Strength. They that are weak have need. Of what? Of strength. Now we are all weak, weak as water. Weak as sinners; how weak is thy heart! Weak as saints; under manifold infirmities. Weak to resist temptations, to bear afflictions, to perform duties. What shall we do? My God shall supply. Jehovah-Jireh—God will provide; nay, he has provided, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly," Rom. v. 6. Have they need of strength? I will die and purchase it for them. So that now the believer may say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," Phil. iv. 13. See both these together, Isa. xlv. 24. "Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

2. Mercy and grace.

Mercy to pardon. This we are, or should be, calling for every day, Ps. li. 1; lvi. 1. for certainly we have need, whether we feel our need or no. Now have we any hope? Will our God supply us? He will, *through Jesus Christ,* but not otherwise. Out of him there is no mercy. The mercy of God is, therefore, called the *mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ,* Jude 21. because our supplies of it are only in, and by, and through him.

Grace. Hast thou no need of grace, quickening grace, preventing grace, renewing grace, assisting grace? They that think they have no need have most need of all. Now, where is it to be had? *My God shall supply,* but it must be through Jesus Christ, "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace," John i. 16. Compare this with Col. i. 19. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." Away to him then, that is, to God by him. See both together in one scripture, Heb. iv. 16. "Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

3. Peace and comfort. I mean that which is inward; peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost. Do ye want it any of you? Many who do, think they do not, mistaking false peace of their own speaking to themselves for the true peace. Away with that, and come to Christ for the true peace, for that which he calls *his* peace, John xiv. 27—*my* peace. If he speak peace no matter who speaks trouble; if he troubles no matter who speaks peace, Eph. ii. 14.—*he is our peace.*

4. Food and raiment. Under these two are comprehended all the necessaries of life, and sometimes under one of them—bread; *Give us this day our daily bread.* Now have we no need of these? We all have, we cannot live without them, without daily

supplies of them; and whence are they to be had? Jehovah-jireh—my God shall supply; but it is only by and through Jesus Christ. He bought every meal's meat for us, and every suit of clothes for us, or we had never had either, and, therefore, to him we must have recourse every day. In all our needs, even of these things, we should say, Lord Jesus, feed me, clothe me, to-day. Hath he ever yet failed you? Luke xxii. 35.

5. Protection from enemies, bodily and ghostly; our great adversary, the devil, and all our little adversaries. They would swallow us up every day, if our God did not watch over us, if the blessed Jesus were not our shield. Our enemy sickness would destroy our health, our enemy pain our ease, our enemies the caterpillars, and the locusts, and the palmer-worms, all the increase of our fields; the murrain our cattle, the fire our houses; but he preserves and keeps us, Psalm cxxi. So likewise for public enemies.

6. A guard through death. We must all shortly, in the order in which God hath appointed, take our turn through the darksome valley; and dare we venture alone, without a convoy? There is no safe convoy but Jesus Christ, Ps. xxiii. 4. His presence with us, will bring us safe through, else we perish, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56. It is he alone that can make a lane through this Red sea, this Jordan. Jordan's rough, said a dying person, often repeating it, Jordan's rough. It may be, we may find it so, but the winds and the seas obey *him*.

7. A guide to glory. Shall we be supplied with this also? Never fear it, if Christ be ours, Ps. lxxiii. 24. "For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death," Ps. xlviii. 14.—beyond death. Not only to death, and through death, but beyond death. Compare Ps. cxxi. 1. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,"—beyond the hills,—"from whence cometh my help."

II. What kind of supplies are to be had for poor needy souls with Jesus Christ?

1. Rich supplies. *My God shall supply all your needs according to his riches.* A rich God gives rich supplies. He is rich in mercy, pardoning mercy, Ps. lxxxvi. 5. Therefore, he multiplies to pardon great sins. He is rich in grace, 1 Pet. v. 10. the God of all grace; therefore he gives *liberally*, 2 Cor. ix. 9. He is rich in comfort, the God *of all comfort*, 2 Cor. i. 3. God *who comforts*, 2 Cor. vii. 6. Therefore he makes the consolations of his people oftentimes to abound; not only full, but running over; "I can hold no more."*

2. Ready supplies. We need not go far for them, they are always at hand; the word is nigh thee. Other friends that should supply our needs are many times at a distance, afar off, and either know them not, or do know them, but cannot send to us. But there is nothing of that here. Our heavenly Father knows what we want, and whenever he pleases to supply, the way is short. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we may hear and receive from the blessed Jesus in heaven, Ps. xlvi. 1—11.

3. Glorious supplies—according to his riches *in glory*. That is glorious that is singular and superlative, such as makes him famous and renowned whose it is; now such fame, such great fame, is our Lord's. His supplies are such as he is worthy to be praised for, his supplies of mercy and grace. How many thousands in heaven, how many thousands on earth, are blessing him for these;—"Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever," Phil. iv. 20. They put a glory also upon them that have them, making them famous, as Manasseh, Mary Magdalen, Paul, being pardoned sinners.

4. Gradual supplies. We are not supplied with every thing all at once, but now with one thing, then with another; now in a lower, after in a higher, degree, Prov. iv. 18. A converted person no sooner hath a grain of grace, but his good will would immediately be perfect in grace; no sooner is he comforted a little, but presently he would have full assurance. Not so; soft and fair; when out of Egypt, you are not forthwith in Canaan. You must be willing to receive supplies as God is pleased to communicate them.

5. Universal supplies: *all* your needs.

But is there any more than one thing needful?

There is only one main thing chiefly and principally needful, but that one thing branches itself out into many things. Lo, there are in Christ supplies for all; all persons, at all times, in all things.

6. Undeserved supplies. There is nothing in us to merit any good thing at God's hands. Whatever we would have, we must sue for it as a beggar for an alms. If a beggar be blind, sick, sore, naked, dumb, old, his blindness, sickness, his disease, his nakedness, his want of speech, his age, speak for him, not in a way of merit, but as a meet object for mercy to work upon: so it is here. Our spiritual maladies bespeak us fit objects of mercy—but they surely lay no claim to it.

7. Covenant supplies, made over to us by promise; and he is faithful, that hath promised.

8. Constant supplies; daily, duly, for ever.

III. What resemblances are there of this?

We see it illustrated,

1. As the heavens supply the earth. The earth would be a barren, useless thing, if it were not for what the heavens supply it with every day, in daily influences; the warmth it has is from above; the

* "Sir," said the eminently holy Mr. John Janeway to a reverend divine who discoursed with him, in his last illness, on the excellency of Christ, and the glory of the invisible world, "I feel something of it. My heart is as full as it can hold in this lower state. I can hold no more here. O that I could but let you know what I feel." Clarke's Lives, fol. 1683. p. 77.

moisture, and thence comes its fruitfulness; Hos. ii. 21. "I will hear the earth," therefore the earth must call.—We are the earth, earthly; the heavens are Christ, heavenly; unless he supply us with warmth, moisture, sunshine, rain, what are we? Hos. vi. 3. But then he must hear us, hear from us. We should be crying, calling, Help, Lord.

2. As the earth supplies the inhabitants. The earth is not our mother only, but our nurse. We were not only made out of it, but we are maintained by it, Eccl. v. 9. Thence we have all our corn, wine, oil, hemp, flax,—to feed, to clothe us. A good nurse gives abundance of milk. Now as the earth nourishes and maintains all that live upon it, high and low, rich and poor, so it is with Jesus Christ. As we live by him, so we live upon him. But then as to this also, the earth must hear the corn, and the corn hear Jezreel, Hos. ii. 22. There must be asking by prayer; *seeking* in the use of means; *knocking* by importunity; and persevering in both.

3. As the head supplies the members. The head is the treasure of the body, wherein the spirits are lodged and laid up for the use of the body; and thence it is that all the members are supplied, and when they fail the body languishes and dies. So all believers; from Christ their head, having union with him, receive vital influences—righteousness, and strength, and grace, and peace, and comfort, and quickening, in want of which they are weak, and can do nothing, John xv. 5.

4. As the root supplies the branches. In the root of a tree the sap is lodged, and laid up for the use of the tree; thence it moves up into the branches, little and big, and the sap they receive is that which nourishes and feeds, and makes them grow and bring forth fruit. So all believers receive from Christ. He is our root, John xv. 4, 5.

5. As the sun supplies the stars; the stars have no light of their own, nor the moon neither, no more than a clod of earth, further than the sun shining upon them puts light into them. Their light is a borrowed light. So is all the spiritual light that we have—knowledge, grace, comfort—borrowed from Christ.

6. As the sea supplies the rivers, Eccl. i. 7. They come from it, they return to it. So the glory of all our receivings every day from Jesus Christ, should return to him again, in thankful acknowledgments.

7. As the fountain supplies the cisterns. The cisterns are often emptying, the bowls emptying: away to the well daily. So, in this case, Christ is our fountain.

8. As the store-chamber supplies the family. It is said concerning Joseph, that he built store-houses, and there he lodged the corn, and thence the people had it as they needed. Our store-house is Jesus Christ. There God the Father hath lodged and laid up a fulness for us. Therefore, to him we must go. And may we hope to speed? Never fear it: My God *shall* supply—he *shall*—observe with what confidence he speaks it.

IV. The practical improvement.

1. Beg of God this day to make you sensible of your needs: multitudes are not, Rev. iii. 17. We do not look into our souls, turn our eyes inward, and that is the reason. Beg the eye-salve, Rev. iii. 18. For "he hath filled the hungry with good things," Luke i. 53.

2. Believe the truth of this saying of Paul's; he was not hired to proclaim that which is not, to deceive people. It is a real truth, *My God shall supply all your need.*—Ps. xxiii. 1.

3. Have recourse to the blessed Jesus; tell him what thy need is—mercy, grace, righteousness.

4. Acknowledge him in all supplies.

SERMON XXXI.

CHRIST IS OUR RESURRECTION.

JOHN xi. 25, 26.

Jesus said unto her, I AM THE RESURRECTION, *and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.*

HERE we have it from the mouth of the Lord Jesus himself, and he having spoken it we may safely believe and assert, and make a DOCTRINE of it,—

That Jesus Christ is the *resurrection* to true believers.

Show, I. How we are to understand this.

II. What proof there is of it.

III. How we are to improve it.

I. How are we to understand this—*I am the resurrection?* There is a three-fold resurrection, and Jesus Christ is all the three to true believers.

1. There is *spiritual* resurrection; which is, the raising of the soul from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. It is called the first resurrection, for so I think we are to understand that passage, Rev. xx. 6. All that are made truly holy, by the renewing, sanctifying grace of God, are certainly thereby delivered from the second death, that is, from burning in hell for ever. Now all true believers have this holiness wrought in them; and how, but by Jesus Christ? When he is made unto us *sanctification*, then he is thus made unto us *resurrection*, Eph. ii. 1. It is his voice that opens the grave and fetches us out; he says unto us, Live; and we live, and the time is a time of love. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live," John v. 25.—and *now* is;

then, at that very time. There was a present resurrection, in the conversion of divers that left all, and followed him. No less than almighty power can do this, can bring to pass such a wonderful change.

Examine, inquire, brethren. Are ye thus raised again. Are ye *passed from death to life?* There is such a thing, and it may be known, and we can have no comfort in living the life of nature, if we be not spiritually alive, if we do not live the life of grace.

Now one good mark to know it by is,—the *end* that we live to. Whether is that—God, or *self*? Do we live to God, or to ourselves? Rom. vi. 11.

Another, is by the *food* that we live upon. Is that Christ? Phil. i. 21.—his merit and righteousness for justification, his spirit and grace for sanctification?

Another is, by the *rule* that we live by. Is that the rule of the new creature—the word of God? Is that the card and compass we sail by, the light and lamp we walk by? or, is it something else—the dictates of our own corrupt nature, carnal reason, fleshly appetites, the course and custom of this vain world? Try by this.

Let me exhort you. Would you have Christ this resurrection to you? Close immediately with the gospel call; stand it out no longer against the voice, entreating—beseeching. As soon as ever Christ said to Lazarus, *Come forth*, presently Lazarus *came forth*, without ifs or ands, without making objections. How, you ask, can I that am dead stir? No, though you are as he was with the grave-clothes about him, yet he that was dead came forth. So I address you —"Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. v. 14.

2. There is a *figurative* resurrection; and that is, the raising of a person, or people, from an exceeding, low, miserable, afflicted, helpless condition, to a state of comfort and joy, peace and safety. Such a thing there is, and it is a resurrection. There is something in it, like to a resurrection, Hos. vi. 1, 2.—when smitten and torn, reckoned as dead; when delivered, and recovered, and settled again, reckoned as raised again. Read Ezek. xxxvii. That valley of dead and dry bones, was the nation and people of the Jews, in the time of their captivity in Babylon, where they lay past all hope, till the end of the seventy years, and then, by a proclamation from Cyrus, they were released, and it was like a kind of a resurrection. It is in like manner with them at this day, and hath been for near seventeen hundred years,—a scattered, broken, miserable people. There is a time, we hope, at hand, when God will gather them again, that there may be one sheep-fold, as there is one Shepherd. Now how is that time called? Resurrection time, Rom. xi. 15.—*life from the dead*—Once more: The condition of many ministers and people amongst ourselves, of many in France, hath been, in outward appearance, a dead condition. The words of the Act* are, that they shall be as if naturally dead; but, blessed be God, there hath been a resurrection, in some measure, a coming out of the grave again, of which, whoever was the instrument, the Lord Jesus himself was the principal agent. He is the resurrection to us. When a company of nonconformists went to court, to congratulate the king and queen, and to thank them for the present liberty, being clothed alike in long black cloaks, such as ministers usually wear in London, a scoffer said, Whither are all these going, to a burial? No, Sir, said one of them, to a resurrection.† It is so, likewise, in reference to personal deliverances from personal calamities, as Isaac, when bound and laid on the altar, Heb. xi. 19. It was Paul's case, 2 Cor. i. 8—10. Hath not Jesus Christ, in this sense, been the resurrection many a time to thee, and to me? We were brought low, and he helped us. Was not Job's restoration a resurrection? so some understand Job xix. 25, 26.

Learn hence, on whom to depend, and to whom to fly, in such cases; even to the blessed Jesus.

Learn also, to whom to give the praise of such a resurrection, public or personal: even to the same.

3. There is a *proper* resurrection, and that is, the raising up of the dead bodies, properly, naturally dead, out of which the life and the soul is departed. And is Jesus Christ that too? He is. That is chiefly meant here. The text was spoken to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, upon occasion of raising her brother to life again, after he had been dead four days. Now, as to this, Jesus Christ is the resurrection three ways:

1. As he was the only one that ever raised himself to life again: no one ever did it but he. (It is not with us in the sleep of death as it is in the death of sleep, when we have slept enough we wake of ourselves. No: the human body must be waked.) And therefore, as in some places it is said, God raised him from the dead, so in other places it is said, He rose again on the third day, making it his own act and deed. 1 Cor. xv. 4. He had two natures, the divine, and human. His human nature could never have raised itself: no, his divine nature raised his human nature. Christ, as God, raised himself as man.

2. As by his power alone it was that all were raised that ever were raised; all under the Old Testament, all under the New. Though himself in his own proper person, raised three only; the ruler's daughter, newly dead; the widow's son, upon the bier; Lazarus, buried; yet all that ever any of the prophets raised, or that ever any of the apostles

* The Act of Uniformity, 13 and 14 Car. II. c. 4.

† A similar humorous and probably originating in it, is related of the Rev. Thomas Bradbury, in the reign of King George I. See Wilson's Hist. of Dissenting Churches, v. 3. 154.

raised, they raised in his name, not in their own; by a power derived from him, not by any power of their own: allude to Acts iii. 12, 16.

(3.) As to the day of the great resurrection at the end of the world, when all the dead shall be raised. It will be done only by the power of the Lord Jesus, especially as to true believers; the raising of them will in a special manner be his doing. And as to this it is that he is the *resurrection.*

II. Let us consider the proof of this.

1. It is certain there is to be such a thing. As sure as we must die, we shall live again; go to the grave, and come out again. But Job asks, "If a man die shall he live again?" Job xiv. 14. I answer,—Not a life of opportunity again. There have been, and there are, those that deny this; old Sadducees, new Sadducees, 1 Cor. xv. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 18. I shall give no other proof at present but that of our Lord Jesus, Matt. xxii. 23—34. Therefore Abraham was alive—in soul—but the soul of Abraham was not Abraham, therefore his body must live too.—Can this be? Yes, easily, to almighty power.

2. For the manner of it, how it is to be, God hath revealed it to his holy apostles, else we could not have known it:—"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord," 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

The Lord himself shall descend. This Lord is the Lord Jesus Christ, and no other. The Father hath committed it wholly into his hand. He is the resurrection: the same that ascended, the same shall also descend. He descended once in rags of flesh, but when he shall descend the second time, it will be in robes of glory.

There will be a *great shout*, the *voice of the archangel*, that is, of Christ himself. We never read of more than one archangel, the Lord of the angels. *And the trump of God.*—Trumpets were used in calling of assemblies. So here—the greatest of assemblies that ever was. They are used at the assizes, when the judges are going to the bench. So here—This was the trumpet that Jerome * said was always sounding in his ears.

The dead in Christ shall rise first—either, the dead for Christ, the martyrs, before other saints—or, the dead in Christ, that is, all true believers, before the rest of mankind. Those who lived and died in true union with him by faith, which union still remained even when dead; or, before those that shall then be found alive.

And what then? *Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up, &c.* This is the short account the Scriptures give us concerning this matter; and we are bound to believe, without doubting or wavering, that so it shall be.

Read to the same purpose, but more fully, 1 Cor. xv. It is the scope of the whole chapter. Where the apostle,

(1.) Positively asserts and proves that there is to be such a thing, that all true believers must and shall certainly rise again at the last day. See one of his arguments, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," *v.* 19.

(2.) Plainly lays the ground of it upon Christ's being made the resurrection to them. If he be risen, then they shall rise. But he is risen; therefore believers shall rise.

The consequence he proves,

From their union with him. He is the head, they the members. It is a real union, 1 Cor. xv. 15. If the body of one saint were lost, there would be a maim in Christ's mystical body.—Therefore it is said we shall be changed, that of the same metal our glorious body may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, Phil. iii. 21. It is said also, that the head and members shall be together in the same place, John xvii. 24.

He is the first-fruits; they the lump, 1 Cor. xv. 20. Lev. xxiii. 10, 11. Read Deut. xxvi. 1, &c. It is a relative union.

He is the second Adam; they the children descended from him, 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. This is another relative union.—He proves it also,

From the victory that he hath obtained over every thing that might hinder; sin, death, the grave, the devil, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. Heb. ii. 14, 15.

Is not Christ the resurrection to unbelievers, must not they rise also?

They must rise; but neither by virtue of any union they have with him, nor any victory he hath obtained for them. The devil is not against the rising of the wicked; he doth nothing to oppose or hinder it; he would have their souls and bodies to come together again, in order to their being tormented together. The grave is free to part with them for the same reason. But they would hinder the rising of the godly. Aye, but they shall not, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56. The wicked are raised by the power of Christ, in order to condemnation; but the righteous by their union with Christ: the one in wrath, the other in love, John v. 28, 29. The righteous to be married—crowned; the wicked to be executed.

3. He declares, also, with what kind of bodies they shall be raised: the self-same in substance, Job xix. 26. but greatly changed in qualities; no defect, no deformity. If scars have been received in suffering, they are not to disgrace, but to honour them. They shall be made like Christ's body; either

* A celebrated father of the church. He died A. D. 420.

that, Matt. xvii. 1, 2. or that, Acts i. 9—11. or that, Rev. i. 13—16. In particular, see 1 Cor. xv. 35—38, 42—44. Their bodies shall be made spiritual, immortal, incorruptible, powerful, able to attend the soul in all its actings and operations, without weariness: not as here below; but able to bear up all that weight of glory which is prepared. In a word, have you seen the body of the sun in its noonday brightness, such a light as you are not able to behold? Then you have seen something like it. "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars;" but it is said in Matt. xiii. 43. "They shall shine forth as the sun."

III. The improvement.

1. That of the apostle, 1 Thess. iv. 15. "Wherefore comfort one another." It is a thing that the servants of the Lord should be often talking of one to another, for the comforting and encouraging one of another. If one another, sure ourselves much more. This should be done,

Under bodily blemishes and infirmities:—they shall shortly be done away.

Against fears of death and the grave:—it is but unclothing us to put on better—the grave is as the refiner's furnace.

Against inordinate sorrow at the death of godly friends, John xi. 23. 1 Thess. iv. 13. They are not dead, but asleep—as when we take leave over-night.

2. That of the same apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 58. "Be ye stedfast,"—it may be rendered, *Exhort one another*, —"unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

A notable spur to all manner of duty in general—to abound therein. It will certainly not be in vain.

In particular—to serve God with our bodies, 1 Cor. vi. 14, 15—not to serve the devil and lust, and sin with them.

SERMON XXXII.

CHRIST IS OUR REDEMPTION.

1 Cor. i. 30.

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us redemption.

The words themselves are the DOCTRINE—

That Jesus Christ is made of God unto all them that are in him *redemption.*

Show, I. What this means.

II. What kind of redemption.

III. What the duty is that it calls for from us.

I. What does this mean,—"made redemption?"

You may think we had this before, when it was showed that he is made freedom to us, from John viii. 36.* But you will see presently that there is something else meant by it.

He is made of God redemption to us; that is, God hath ordained and appointed him from all eternity, and in the fulness of time raised him up, and sent him, to be the author and procurer of redemption for us; or, which is all one, to be a redeemer to us. So that if asked, what did Jesus Christ come into the world to do? We answer, to redeem us. They are the first words of Zechariah's song, Luke i. 68.

Now to redeem is, in general, to recover those that are in bondage out of bondage. As suppose one rowing in a galley under the Turks, is rescued (which may be done three ways, besides that of voluntary discharge and dismission)—as the Jews were released by Cyrus out of their captivity in Babylon, he may be said to be redeemed. Redemption, viz.

1. By power; when those who kept us in bondage are conquered and overcome.

2. By exchange; when one prisoner is let go for another.

3. By price; when a sum of money is paid to buy off a prisoner, more or less, according as the quality of the prisoner is. Now this last is properly redemption, and this last is the way in which Jesus Christ hath made us free. He hath bought us out of the hands of divine justice, by laying down a ransom for us.

If you ask what that was? I answer, that sometimes it is said to be his life, Matt. xx. 28. sometimes himself, 1 Tim. ii. 6. and sometimes his blood, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. These three come to the same. We are redeemed by Christ dying for us, shedding his blood, laying down his life, offering up himself. This fully satisfied the demands of God's justice. Let me have this, saith he, and I have enough. I expect no more by way of satisfaction for the sin of man. I am well pleased, atoned, reconciled, made friends. To this purpose we are told of a covenant of redemption which was transacted from all eternity between the Father and the Son, the terms whereof were—That if the Son would come and be man and die, that dying of his should be accepted as the price or ransom of all the elect, how many soever there were. The Son accepted of this motion, did what was to be done, suffered what was to be suffered, and so became our redemption. See some footsteps of this covenant transaction in two scriptures, Ps. xl. 6—8. Isa. xlix. 2, 6, 9. But,

II. What kind of redemption is this?

1. Needed redemption. It is the redemption that we needed. He came to supply all our needs. Now

* See Discourse XV.

among other needs, being in bondage, we needed one to redeem us: not only one to clothe us, being naked; to feed us being hungry; to wash us, being filthy; to heal us being wounded; to cure us, being sick;—but to redeem us. If he had done all this for us in our bondage, and left us still in bondage, we had been miserable notwithstanding. Therefore, he comes and buys our freedom, pays our ransom. We were God's prisoners, and the devil was the gaoler. We were left in his hand, under his power, and his we must have been for ever, but for Christ the Redeemer.

2. It is a nonesuch redemption, when compared with other redemption. Whether personal, as Joseph out of prison, or Peter, Acts xii. or Daniel, out of the lions' den. Whether public; as from Egypt, from Babylon. It surpasses them all in number, way, and consequences.

3. Distinguishing redemption. It is the redemption that others needed, as well as we, but it is denied to them, and granted to us, therefore, I must call it distinguishing redemption.

It is denied to the angels that sinned. They had as much need as we, for they are in bondage as well as we; under God's wrath and curse as well as we; nay, before we were; but he took not on him the nature of angels: the commons are ransomed, the nobles left behind. He paid no price to redeem them. As that tree fell so it lies, and must lie for ever.

It is denied to the greatest part of mankind, as to the saving benefit and efficacy of it: the elect reap the benefit absolutely, others conditionally, yet there is no collusion, because the decree is secret; for multitudes there are that know nothing of it, and of those few that do multitudes reject and slight it, and are never the better for it: Rev. v. 9. "*Redeemed to God out of* every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." How should we then adore, and admire! "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?" John xiv. 22.

4. It is divers, manifold redemption according to the manifold evils that we lay under. They are of three sorts—temporal, spiritual, eternal.

(1.) He is redemption to us from temporal evils. Such as concern the body, and the life that now is; such as sickness, death, poverty. Not that they shall not befall us—for they do, and all things come alike to all, redeemed and unredeemed. But, that they shall not hurt us. The sting of them is taken out, Ps. xci. 10. No evil things befall. There is no curse attends them, Gal. iii. 13. Were this rightly understood, and duly made use of, it were the sweetest argument imaginable, both against fears of temporal calamities before they come, Job v. 19. And the best against inordinate dejections and despondencies when they are come. But,

(2.) Which is better, it is redemption to us from spiritual evils. These are worse evils than the former, because they affect the better part of us, which is our souls; them first and immediately, but not them only, but our bodies also. I shall mention two only:

The *guilt of sin;* whereby we are bound over to punishment, the fear whereof causes bondage, Heb. ii. 14. To redeem us from this, he is made righteousness to us for our justification, that is, for our discharge from that guilt, for the forgiveness of all our sins, and the accepting of us as righteous. This is an unspeakable blessing and benefit, and it is made over to all the Lord's redeemed ones, who are now to reckon themselves at peace with God, Rom. v. 1.

The *filth and power of sin;* whereby sin hath dominion over us, and we are perfect slaves to it, the vilest of slaves, John viii. 34. To redeem us from this he is made sanctification to us; he sends his Spirit into the heart, who renews and regenerates, turns the man from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, enabling him to die to sin more and more, and to live to righteousness more and more. This he doth as a Redeemer, and is doing; it is called *redeeming* us, Tit. ii. 14. *By redeeming from all iniquity*, the apostle doth not there mean from the guilt and punishment of it only, but from the power and dominion of it, from the love and liking of it. It is the same with *purifying*. These two, justification and sanctification, are never parted, Ps. ciii. 3. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

(3.) There is another sort of evils yet, and those are eternal evils; and by redemption here we are especially to understand our deliverance from those.

Because it is mentioned after righteousness and sanctification, as a thing different from them. And

Because of what we find in other scriptures, where redemption is applied to something in the other world: "Waiting for the redemption of the body," Rom. viii. 23. that is, the resurrection and glorification of our bodies: compare Luke xxi. 28. with Eph. iv. 30. *the day of redemption.* This is certainly some day yet to come, when the work of our redemption shall be fully finished, the top-stone laid; for hitherto, as we see and know but in part, so we are redeemed but in part. In Heb. ix. 12. it is called *eternal* redemption. Our present redemption by Christ is eternal in the design and tendency of it, it is in order to eternity; but that to come is eternal in regard of the eternal evils it frees us from, and the eternal happiness it puts us into possession of, when it shall be accomplished, and Jesus Christ is made all that to us.

Taking it in this sense, I shall show,

1. What those eternal evils are which redemption frees us from.

(1.) It frees us for ever, not only from the guilt, and filth, and power of sin, but from the very being of it also. It must not only no longer have a throne in us, as at conversion, but not so much as a seat

or place in us, and that for ever. And are ye not glad at the very thought of this? Nay, it frees us from all possibility of sinning to eternity. Adam had no sin, but a possibility of sin he had, and so it appeared, for he did sin. Paul groaned for this, Rom. vii. 24.

(2.) It frees us from Satan ever having any more to do with us, either as a tempter or as a tormentor. He is busy now with the saved, 1 Pet. v. 8. and he will be more busy hereafter with those that perish, Matt. xviii. 34. But where the redeemed are he comes not, Rom. xvi. 20.

(3.) It frees us from all sorrow and suffering, of what kind soever, in mind or body. All tears shall be wiped away, there shall be no weeping, nor wailing, nor gnashing of teeth; no fire, no worm, no brimstone, no darkness. These are the portion of the damned, not of the redeemed, Rev. xxi. 4.

(4.) It frees us from all society with wicked and ungodly men, and that for ever. They are blended here, and it pleases neither, Ps. cxx. 5, 6. But there is a redemption coming, Matt. xxv. 33. All this happiness you say a stone hath, no sin,—no sorrow, —therefore I shall show,

2. What there is that is positive in this redemption.

(1.) As soon as the redeemed die, (for die they must, even as others: Jesus Christ hath not redeemed us from dying,) their souls immediately go to God, to the vision and fruition of him in glory, Luke xxiii. 43. Phil. i. 23. It grieves me and shames me that I can speak with no more sense and savour of these things. Such apprehensions as a child prior to its birth hath of this world, such we have of the world to come.

(2.) At the resurrection, at the last day, the same soul and the same body shall come together again. Though we are not redeemed from death, we are to be from the grave; not from going down into it, but from being held by it, Isa. xxvi. 19. Hos. xiii. 14. Nay, not raised only, but raised incorruptible and immortal; glorious, like Christ's glorified body.

(3.) To all eternity there shall be a fulness of uninterrupted joy and felicity; a remaining rest; a sabbath without a week of working days after it, perpetual, eternal. Lo, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9. It is a happiness such as the infinite love and wisdom of the great God could contrive, and the infinite love and power of the great God could effect and perform, on the behalf of a remnant, whom his delight was to honour. Read Esther vi. 6—9. But that was a poor honour in comparison with this honour.

3. I shall show how Jesus Christ is made this to us, this future redemption.

He is the purchaser of it; it was bought with his blood, bought back. We had mortgaged it for an apple, and must never have retrieved it, had not he died, Eph. i. 14. It is redeemed for us, and we are redeemed for it.

He is our forerunner in it, Heb. vi. 20. He went thither as our attorney or proxy, to take possession of the purchase in our name and stead, John xiv. 1, 2.

It is he that himself actually puts us into possession of it.

When we die the angels are his messengers, sent by him to convey us into Abraham's bosom.

At the resurrection it is his voice and trumpet that raises the dead; *he* is the *resurrection.*

At the judgment he is the Judge, the sentence is from him; Come, ye blessed.

It is he himself alone that is the sole object of all our future happiness; to be with *him*, to see and enjoy *him*, is our future redemption, Rev. xxi. 23.

III. The improvement,

1. Then it concerns us all, by all means, to give all diligence to make sure to ourselves our interest in this redemption.

It is certain all are not thus redeemed; abundance of mankind miscarry and perish.

It is certain those that do are miserable creatures, and will be so to all eternity.

Those will be most miserable that were once in a fair possibility of being saved, and yet missed; therefore, I beg of you, for the Lord's sake, and for your own souls' sake, look about you.

Now those to whom Christ is made redemption are such, and none but *such, as are in him.* Are ye in him, grafted into him, by a lively faith? Have ye his spirit?

Those to whom Christ is made redemption are such, and none but such, to whom he is made *wisdom*, and *righteousness*, and *sanctification.* Hath he been these to you? If so, the redemption is yours. Is he your *wisdom?* have ye left the follies of sin and chosen wisely? Is he your *righteousness?* have ye called him by that name, and renounced your own merits? Is he your *sanctification?* are ye new creatures?

2. If Jesus Christ be made of God this redemption to you, then, in God's name, take the comfort of it. Lift up the head and hands that hang down; *rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, rejoice.* Were there but a small portion of worldly happiness made sure to us in reversion, after a few years in this world; were we sure of some great lordship, with the appurtenances of it; our thoughts would be running upon it, we should solace ourselves in the foretaste of it; and lo, heaven itself made ours will not keep us from drooping! It is our unbelief that hinders our joy.

3. Then live as the redeemed of the Lord. Live,

With your eye upon the redemption: be viewing it often, aiming at it as your scope, 2 Cor. iv. 18.

Live with your hand upon the plough; abounding always in the work of the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 58.

Live with your feet upon the world; despising its glories, bearing patiently its frowns, Heb. x. 34.

Live with your heart upon the Redeemer; in love and thankfulness, Ps. cvii. 1, 2.

SERMON XXXIII.

CHRIST IS OUR LESSON.

EPH. iv. 20.

But ye have not so learned Christ.

DOCT. That our Lord Jesus Christ is the *lesson* that we are to learn.

Show, I. The meaning of this.

II. What kind of lesson Jesus Christ is.

III. What inferences may be drawn from it.

I. Let us inquire into the meaning of this—He is a lesson.

To understand this, we must look upon the church as a great school, wherein we ourselves, and all others that are baptized with Christian baptism, are thereby entered as scholars. Baptism is the enrolling or enlisting of us as scholars in this school. And can any thing be said then, with reason, against the baptizing of infants? Do not ye oftentimes send your children to school very young and little, before you expect they should learn much? No matter, say you, we will enter them. Now in this great school,

1. There is a head master, or teacher, and that is the Spirit of God, the alone teacher of hearts, John xiv. 26; xv. 1.

2. There are the ushers and under teachers; and those are the ministers, whose work it is, as ministers, to instruct and teach people, young and old, weak and strong, one with milk by catechising, the other with strong meat by preaching, as they are able to bear it.

3. There is the lesson they are to learn, and that is, in one word, *Christ*. Christ is the lesson, the great lesson, taught in the church. Learn him, and you learn all. Learn not him, and you learn nothing. The expression may seem harsh and uncouth, but you see it is Paul's phrase of speech, and, I think, he had the Spirit of God,—*Ye have not so learned Christ.*

What is it to learn Christ?

1. We must learn *to know* him. This is absolutely necessary, and on this the foundation of all the rest is to be laid, John xvii. 3. it is life eternal; the way to life eternal; the first step towards it. The knowledge of Christ blessed Paul preferred before every thing in this world, Phil. iii. 8, 10. Now how unlike herein are the most of us to Paul, who prefer every thing else before this. There are four things, especially, which we should all covet to know concerning Christ.

(1.) Who and what he is in himself. He is God and he is man. He is God-man.

He is God blessed for ever, begotten of the Father before all worlds. This account of the knowledge he had of him Peter gave when the question was put to him, Matt. xvi. 15, *Whom say ye that I am?—Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* Do ye know this? Not with comprehensive knowledge,—as if we could, by our finite understandings, fathom the depth of it, for it is a mystery *how* it should be, a son without a mother,—but with the knowledge of faith that it is. We are to believe it because God hath revealed it.

He is man also. He was born of the Virgin Mary, in the fulness of time; when the word was made flesh: and here is another mystery to be believed, and not to be pryed into—that there should be a son without a father. Now these two natures, united in one person, are Christ. Have ye learned this? O learn it.

(2.) What he hath done.

He hath fulfilled all righteousness, by the perfect obedience of his life.

He hath satisfied God's justice for all our sins, by the merit of his death.

He hath raised himself again out of the grave, on the third day, and thereby declared himself to be the Son of God with power.

Yea, and he is still doing for us in heaven, where he lives to make intercession.

And hereafter, at the end of the world, he will certainly come again with great glory to judge both quick and dead. Have ye learned this? Do ye know it? Again,

(3.) What he hath said. There are a great many choice sayings of his recorded in the book called the Bible; nay, choice sermons preached by him, for he was a preacher. Those we should learn, for they contain in them the whole will of God concerning our salvation, which he came out of the Father's bosom to reveal and make known. And yet how many heed them not, nor mind to learn them; they had rather be reading an idle romance, or play-book. God complains, Hos. viii. 12. "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing,"—much more, my gospel.

(4.) What he is made of God to all his elect, such as were given to him from all eternity by the Father. He is their foundation, food, root, raiment, head, hope, refuge, righteousness. Have ye learned this? Ye have heard it often, but have ye learned it? Have ye understood all these things? Can ye say ye know them? There is a two-fold knowledge:

One that swims in the head, and goes no further.

Another, that sinks into the heart.

2. We must learn to *believe* in him. Not only learn what it is to believe, but to do it. Many can answer to what is faith in Jesus Christ that have not faith in him. Now to learn Christ is to have faith in

Christ; none else can say they have learned him. John vi. 45. To believe in Christ, is to come to Christ, as the sick man comes to the physician, the thirsty to the fountain, the hungry to the cupboard, the malefactor to the city of refuge. Have ye thus learned him, received him, closed with him, let all go for him, all your sins, all your own righteousness, saying, None but Christ, none but Christ?

3. We must learn to *love* him. The apostle speaks of being *taught of God to love one another*. 1 Thess. iv. 9, and certainly there is such a thing as being taught of God to love Jesus Christ. Now have ye been so taught? Can ye appeal to him, with Peter, and say, Lord Jesus, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee? They that do not love him have not learned him. Learn but two things of him, and you cannot but love him:

How lovely he is in himself, Ps. xlv. 2. Cant. v. 10, &c. And

How loving he hath been to you in giving himself for you, Gal. ii. 20.—in washing you from your sins in his own blood. Paul prays—"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Eph. iii. 19.

4. We must learn to *obey* him, to do in every thing as he would have us to do. Faith and love without this, if we could suppose them without it, which certainly they are not if true, are nothing, signify nothing. John xiv. 15; xv. 14. Paul is in the context exhorting Christians to walk worthy of their calling, not as do the heathen: No, says he, you have *not so learned Christ*—you are better taught.

5. We must learn to suffer for him, if he call us thereunto. And what day passes over our heads wherein we are not, in one kind or other, called to it? Now have ye learned to do it, to take up your cross, and to follow him? Luke ix. 23.

II. What kind of lesson is Christ?

1. He is the lesson that all should learn; all that mean to be saved should learn Jesus Christ. There is no salvation in any other, Acts iv. 12. John xiv. 6. You are not all bound to learn Latin, or Greek, or Hebrew; to learn Logic, Philosophy, or Mathematics; to learn the several trades and manufactures; but you are all bound to learn Christ, bound by the covenant of your baptism, bound by your being called Christians. Either cease to be called a Christian, or learn Christ,—to know, believe, love, him.

2. He is the lesson that any one may learn. There are some arts and sciences that are above and beyond the capacity of some people, though they would never so much wish it: though they desire and endeavour all that ever they can, yet it will not do: they labour in vain. Now such a lesson Christ is not. He is an easy lesson, easy to be learned. Mistake me not; I do not mean easy to mere nature; no, it is quite contrary; it is to mere nature hard and difficult, nay, utterly impossible, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. Witness Nicodemus. John iii. But easy—to the mind enlightened, easy—to the willing learner. Prov. xiv. 6. easy—where God gives a faculty, which he always doth to those that seek it. Christ is a way—wherein "The way-faring men, though fools, shall not err." Isa. xxxv. 8. O learn this way, you must travel it. How could it have been else, that so many plain illiterate men, such as the apostles were, should all on the sudden be such professors in this learning?

3. He is the lesson that few do learn: the more is the pity. People are taken up with the study of other things, but make light of this learning, as of the gospel feast. Matt. xxii. 1—7. Matt. vii. 14.

4. He is the lesson that multitudes are damned eternally for not learning. If I should say it is the only damning sin, I could make it good from Scripture. Whatever we have done amiss, if we have learned Christ, it shall be forgiven: whatever good we have done, unless we have learned Christ, it will not be accepted. This will be the question,—Hath he learned Christ? Is he found in him? Rom. viii. 1. If children at school do not learn their lesson, there is but a rod to whip with: but if we do not learn Christ, there is a hell to burn us in.

5. He is a lesson that we must be sure to learn by heart. I mean, be hearty in learning, inward, sincere, upright, serious. *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness*. Rom. x. 10. Prov. xxiii. 26. If we learn Christ to talk of him only, and not to walk in him; to have him on the tip of our tongues, and not to lodge him in the secret chambers of our hearts, it will not do.

6. He is a lesson that is best learned upon our knees. When in a humble sense of our ignorance, blindness, darkness, dulness, we go to God, every day, for the portion, saying, Lord, teach me—as David, up and down the 119th Ps. *be thy servant*—we, thy Christ,) we learn best; we then make the best progress in this school. Ps. xxv. 9. Zech. xii. 10. 13.

7. He is a lesson that but one book is enough to teach us. Other learning is not had without abundance of books, philosophers, historians, physicians, lawyers, must have large libraries, but one book alone well learned will suffice to make thee a Christian. 2 Tim. iii. 15. Then search the Scriptures. John v. 39. Prefer having eyes to read the Scriptures, and be blind to every thing else, than to read every thing else and neglect the Bible.

8. He is a lesson that it will do us abundance of good to learn. It is a useful lesson. All kinds of learning are in some way or other useful, but this learning excels them all, for it is profitable for all things.

It is unspeakably satisfying to the understanding part. The most learned, after all their inquiries into other learning, have professed themselves uneasy and dissatisfied, but this fills; as the great Mr. Selden,* when dying, said, he had rest no where but in Tit. ii. 11—14.

It is unspeakably sweet, and comfortable, and refreshing, and joyous; like honey and the honeycomb. Every word of God is so, Ps. xix. 10. but especially God the word.—How sweet is it to a lost undone sinner, to be acquainted with a Saviour! Other learning increased, increases, sorrow, Eccl. i. 18. but this doth not.

It is strangely renewing and changing within, in the inner man; making the tree good; bowing the will; raising the affections, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

It is strangely reforming and amending without—in the life and conversation.

There is no bridle like this to keep us from sin. When a temptation to sin comes, it says—No, I have not so learned Christ. I thank God, I am better taught. There are other arguments on this head.

> Is this thy kindness to thy friend?
> It will be bitter in the end;
> Thy vows, O God, upon me lie,
> Should such an one as I am fly?

Was Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. Did he teach me to be proud, passionate, envious, drunken? No, I never learned that of him.

There is no spur like this to put us on duty.

He that hath learned Christ hath learned the example of Christ, learned him as a copy to write after. To learn Christ is to learn of Christ—"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me," Matt. xi. 29. It is called his law, Gal. vi. 2.

He that hath learned Christ, hath learned the encouragements given by Christ in the promises.

9. He is a lesson that we can never be perfect at. He that hath learned it best, and learned most of it, must, after all, say there is more to be learned; —yet *ever learning*, 2 Tim. iii. 7. is true of this learning.—It is a bottomless ocean that we can never fathom; our finite understandings are not capable of reaching his infinite perfections, 1 Cor. viii. 2.

10. He is a lesson that when we have once learned we can never unlearn again. It is the better part, that can never, never be taken away, Luke x. 42. All other learning may be lost. Many a great scholar hath gone mopish. However, death dissolves it, melts it, it is gone like a snow-ball in a thaw. It is a pity it should be so, but so it is. But he that hath learned Christ, hath learned him for ever. Death robs him not of it, but perfects it, 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

III. What inferences are to be deduced from hence?

1. An inference of reproof to several sorts of persons.

(1.) To those that slight and despise this excellent lesson and learning, as if it were not worth the looking after. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." The blessed stoop to look into this depth, and is it below us?

(2.) To those that have learned Christ in some good measure, but do not improve their learning — Who do not improve it for their own furtherance in the ways of God and godliness; that use it not as a bridle, a spur.—Nor for the instruction of others; especially those under their charge. When Andrew had found Christ he called Peter, when Philip found him he called Nathaniel, John i. So should we; not in pride and vain glory, but with an earnest concern that others may be acquainted with him.

2. An inference of comfort and encouragement to those that fall not justly under either of these reproofs—that prize this lesson, and are learning and improving it for their own and others' good. Go on and prosper; the Lord is with you, "Your path shall be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. There is a promise, Matt. xxv. 29. for your encouragement—"Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance."

3. An inference of exhortation to all.

By all means, whatever ye do, learn Christ. Con this lesson; be conning it every day. "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord," Hos. vi. 3. *Follow* on by daily prayer, reading, hearing, meditation, conference. When ye have it, it will make you rich amends—here and hereafter. Value that preaching best, that hath most of Christ in it. It is sad to see whole sermons printed, and Christ not once named in them. Is that preaching Christ? Paul could say, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord," 2 Cor. iv. 5. 1 Cor. ii. 2. Remember, ye are Christians. What! and not learn Christ?

Ye that are young. Now is your learning age; some of you are scholars—O learn Christ.

Ye that are old. There is yet a learning day. Nicodemus was old when he began.—Yea, all of you—learn Christ.

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* Called by Grotius the Glory of England. He died A. D. 1654.

SERMON XXXIV.

CHRIST IS OUR LADDER.

GEN. xxviii. 12.

And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

THIS ladder which Jacob saw, was no other than our Lord Jesus Christ, who was, under that notion and resemblance, represented to him. What else should it be? And a very clear notion it is, and very helpful to our understandings to apprehend what he is made of God unto us—*a ladder*.

DOCT. That our Lord Jesus Christ is made of God unto us our ladder.

You all know what a ladder is, and what use it is for. Now just such a thing our Lord Jesus Christ is—*our ladder*; and of the same use he is to us spiritually, for the good of our poor souls.

But, says some one, it was only a dream.

I answer, It was a divine dream, sent of God; a vision, than which nothing can be more certain.

Show, I. The properties of this ladder.

II. Of what use it is to us.

III. The inferences.

I. I am to show the properties of this ladder.

It is a ladder in all respects extraordinary; there never was any other like it.

1. It is a living ladder. In the same sense in which, as a way, he is called a *new and living way*, Heb. x. 20. in the same sense, as a ladder, he is a *new and a living ladder*. Other ladders are dead things, but this ladder lives. It is true he was dead, but he is alive again, and lives for evermore, Rev. i. 18. And it is well for us that he is so; for if he live, then we shall live also.

2. A long ladder. The longest that ever was, for it reaches from earth to heaven. That was the posture in which Jacob saw it—*the foot upon the earth, and the top of it in heaven*. Hereby was signified his two natures;—his divine nature, as God; his human nature, as man. As man—he was set upon the earth, a son of Adam, born of a woman, lived here upon the earth for a time, as other men do. As God—he was always in heaven, begotten of the Father before all worlds, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. The uniting of these two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man, in one person, is the mystery of all mysteries, 1 Tim. iv. 16. That the glory of the Godhead did not destroy the meanness of the manhood, nor the meanness of the manhood debase the glory of the Godhead, is mysterious indeed.—The bush which Moses saw, burning and not consumed, was an emblem of this.

But what need was there that the foot of the ladder should be upon the earth—that our Redeemer should be man?

I reply, There was need, that he might have a body wherein to suffer and die; such a body as ours that had sinned, for whom he was to die.

But what necessity is there that the top of it should reach to heaven—that he should be God?

I answer, That the Godhead might give virtue and value to the sufferings of the manhood, and that he might support it under them—which else would have failed. Besides, to bring God and man together, it was requisite he should be both God and man; God—that he might deal with God, which man as man was not fit to do; man—that he might deal with man, which God as God, a holy God, could not do, without consuming him, a sinful creature; as a consuming fire, with stubble. Here is the meaning of his being *Emanuel*, God with us; God in our nature; which if he had not been he could not have been *Jesus*, a Saviour, Matt. i. 21—23.

Now our duty hereupon is,

(1.) To adore infinite love and infinite wisdom in the contrivance of this way, which no other could have found out; saying, Lord, who is like unto thee. And,

(2.) To say also—What shall we render?

3. A lasting ladder. Other ladders wear out in process of time, and fail, and come to be good for nothing but the fire: says the workman, I dare not venture to climb it, I shall fall and break my bones, it is worm-eaten and rotten. There is no danger of that in this ladder, Heb. xiii. 8. The righteousness which is brought in by him is *everlasting* righteousness, Dan. ix. 24. All the saints from the beginning have made use of it, and it never yet did fail any, nor never will, to the world's end. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him," Heb. vii. 25.—to the *utmost* of times.

4. A free ladder, open and common to all; whosoever will may come, and make use of it and welcome. If we do not by unbelief exclude ourselves, God hath no where excluded us. The promise runs in general terms, Isa. lv. 1. Matt. xi. 28. John vii. 37. Rev. xxii. 17. The fountain is *open*, not sealed, Zech. xiii. 1. Our Lord Jesus was born in an inn, which is free to all comers;—died with his arms stretched out upon the cross, and was nailed so, to signify his readiness to embrace all that will come to him.

5. A firm ladder; steady and strong. Our Redeemer is mighty, Heb. vii. 25—*able to save*. From what? From our sins.

From the guilt of them: how many, how great, soever; crimson, scarlet, guilt; by the infinite merit of his blood and passion.

From the dominion and power of them, by his Spirit and grace. Though the devil himself steps in to

strengthen the snare he is able to burst and break it, and to set us free.—Therefore fear not, nor be dismayed; greater is he that is with us than he that is against us.

6. A ladder fitted every way for the use for which it was intended. But,

II. Of what use is it to us?

1. That by it blessings might descend from heaven unto us. If our Lord Jesus had not interposed by dying to make peace, this could not have been. Curses, wrath, light-bolts, thunder-bolts, might have come down, and would have come, without this ladder; but, no blessing, no token for good, no beam of favour. There would have been fire and brimstone, as on Sodom.—The reason was, because man had sinned, and thereby God was provoked, and till divine justice was fully satisfied, mercy could do nothing. The way was blocked up. Now Christ comes, and by dying makes satisfaction, and so takes out of the way that that hindered, and now blessings are showered down of all sorts, temporal, spiritual, concerning the life that now is, and that which is to come. "God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus," Phil. iv. 19. —not some, but *all*. And how? By Christ Jesus. He is the ladder by whom they descend, the conduit pipe for conveyance of all our fresh water from the fountain above to the cisterns below.

It is by this ladder—that all our pardons come. We are needing of them every day; give us this day —and forgive us this day; and we never have them but when we come for them in his name. All the infinite mercy that is in God, did never forgive one sin out of Christ.

It is by this ladder—that all the grace and strength we have comes. Of this also we have daily need,—for doing duty, resisting temptations, bearing afflictions. It comes down to us by this ladder, therefore it is called the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, because we have it only by him, and from him, and through him, John i. 16.

It is by this ladder—that all the returns of prayer come in, John xvi. 23. We had lately a day of prayer, wherein special mercies were prayed for with reference to present affairs. Which way must those mercies come, think ye? Certainly, down this ladder.

2. That by it we may ascend from earth to heaven, and go to God.—From earth to heaven is a long way, and up-hill too. There is no ladder from *hell* to heaven. Fly *it* we cannot, Luke xvi. 26. We have no wings for the purpose. But climb to heaven we may; and how, but by a ladder? Christ is that ladder.

By this ladder our performances must all ascend while we live; our prayers, and praises, and alms-deeds, our fastings, and humiliations. You would have them go to God, would you not? and be accepted of God, would you not? Then they must go by Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 5. Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5. He is the high priest, his intercession is the incense, Rev. viii. 3.

By this ladder our persons must ascend when we die, John xiv. 6. No man cometh to the Father, but by him, to the kingdom of the Father, the glory, presence, vision, fruition of God.

It was the merit of his death that purchased it for us; that is the price of it.

It is the working of his Spirit in us that fits us for it.

It is the efficacy of his prayer that brings us to it, John xvii. 24. We never begin to climb this ladder till converted, and then step by step; gradually is sin weakened, grace strengthened; not all at once.

III. What inferences arise hence?

The inferences shall be by way of answer to five questions.

1. If Christ be our ladder for us to ascend on, how is it then said here, that Jacob saw the angels of God ascending and descending?

The ascending and descending of the angels of God upon this ladder, Christ, is for our good, benefit, and advantage. The angels are ministering spirits for us, Heb. i. 14. The design of the vision was to comfort Jacob at his entrance upon a perilous journey in his flight from his angry brother. It was a seasonable refreshing cordial, Ps. xci. 11, 12; xxxiv. 7. 2 Kings vi. 17.

But why ascending?

(1.) For fresh orders, to act for their good every day, Matt. xviii. 10. *their* angels; though nothing else be theirs, "their angels always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven,"—expecting the least nod or beck.

(2.) To give account of their stewardship; what they have done. Allude to Luke xiv. 21. Read Job i. and Zech. 1.

(3.) With separate, departed souls in their arms, to place them in Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. 22.

But why descending?

To execute their orders, for preservation, provision, society, supply.—Jacob was alone here, he had no company. O how sweet is it to see both the ladder, and the travellers going up and down! Note, all are either ascending or descending, none standing still, none idle, all busy. This may comfort all the Lord's poor Jacobs in all their straits and troubles; not the Esaus, the wicked of the world; their attendants are ugly devils, living and dying.

2. If Jesus Christ be our ladder, what is faith?

The hand by which we take hold of the ladder.

The foot also, by which we come to it, and climb by it. As good then even no ladder as no hands and feet; as good there were no Christ as no faith, John viii. 24. an unbelieving soul is a maimed soul, handless and footless, and therefore helpless. Then be not faithless, but believing. Reach hither thy hand, as Christ said to Thomas, John xx. in a sight

and sense of thy undone condition without him: receive the report of the gospel concerning him, his ability and willingness to save. Renounce all other ladders, and cleave to this alone; behold, he calls thee.

3. What are the rounds of this ladder?

The several particulars of his undertaking: steps downward first, and then upwards; on each of which there is matter for faith to fasten on,—his incarnation, temptation, passion, resurrection

4. Is Christ alone the ladder? are there no other ladders but he?

No other: how should there be? Who are they? Who besides him hath his foot on earth, and his head in heaven? Name who.

The papists fancy other ladders to themselves; saints and angels: the Virgin Mary. Are these God? The angels ascend and descend upon the ladder; they are not the ladder.

But their end in ascending and descending is as mediators for us; they ascend with our prayers and descend with God's answer.

What Scripture is there for that? Where doth the word of God tell us so? If no where, there is no ground for faith, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin; nay, it says the contrary, 1 Tim. ii. 5.

The protestant, pharisaical self-justiciaries make a ladder of their own righteousness. They hope to work out peace, and pardon, and salvation for themselves, by their own performances, as the poor carnal mistaken Jews of old did. Rom. x. 3. Paul disclaims this way to heaven, Phil. iii. 7, 8. How can we be a ladder to ourselves! Alas! the best of our doings are imperfect, and defiled. However, they are *duty*, therefore they cannot *merit* any thing. Say then, I beseech you, None but Christ.

5. Why is it said, *Behold* a ladder?

It is common both in the Old Testament and the New, when Christ is spoken of, to say, *Behold*, Isa. vii. 14; xlii. 1. John i. 29. This notes to us, what our duty is in reference to him.

We are to admire and wonder, as oft as we think of him, Isa. ix. 6. his name is wonderful. They do not know him, that do not wonder at him; at what he is, at what he hath done and suffered, at what he is doing, at his love and free grace especially.

Behold and bless God for making and rearing this ladder.

To behold him, is to believe in him, Isa. lxv. 1; xlv. 22—*Look unto me*, as the stung Israelites to the brazen serpent.

There are four special seasons wherein to behold this ladder:

(1.) when we are doing any thing for God, then behold it as the only way and means of being strengthened for it, and of being accepted in it.

(2.) When we have done any thing against God, when guilt stares us in the face, then behold—as the only way and means of peace and pardon.

(3.) When distress, and trouble, and danger are before us, then behold it, and the angels ascending and descending on it.

(4.) When death is about to lay his cold hand upon us.—as Stephen, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God," Acts vii. 56.

SERMON XXXV.

CHRIST IS THE TRUTH.

JOHN i. 17.

The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

THERE are two Johns especially spoken of in the New Testament, John the Baptist, and John the divine. These words were spoken by the former, and recorded or written by the latter, *John bare witness of him*, that is, John the Baptist, his fore-runner or harbinger, that was to him, as the morning star is to the sun, his messenger, to tell the world that he was coming. And what was it that he bare witness to concerning him? This among the rest, that *grace and truth came by him.*

Two things are here opposed to *the law* that came by Moses.

Grace. It is elsewhere so opposed, Rom. vi. 14. "Not under the *law*, but under *grace*."—where by law is commonly understood the Mosaical dispensation, the management whereof was in such a way, with so much terror, that it looked like as if it had been the first covenant of works; and some have so mistaken it to be, and called it so. Then by grace is meant the new covenant, called the covenant of grace, which it is a great privilege to be under. There is between this covenant and the other as much difference as between being under the cold, dark shades of the night, and the bright, warm, refreshing beams of the noon sun; between being in bondage and being at liberty. Now taking *grace* in this sense, it came by Jesus Christ, it is made in him, and by him, and through him. And, therefore, he is expressly called the covenant, Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 8. We should bless God for this grace, and take the comfort of it, and walk answerably to it, not letting sin have dominion over us.

Truth.

DOCT. That truth came by Jesus Christ: it came when Jesus Christ came—when the word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

He is *the truth*, John xiv. 6.—the way, *that* way:—the truth, that truth; *the* life, *that* life. There are many ways, and many truths, and many lives, or kinds of life, but Jesus Christ is most eminently and

transcendently that way, truth, life: the true and living way, or the way in which, the truth by and through which, we come to that life, which alone deserves the name of life, and that is, eternal life.

I shall, I. Explain what the truth is, and how the truth came by Jesus Christ. And,

II. Apply it.

I. Explain the subject.

When our Lord Jesus Christ was at Pilate's bar, John xviii. 37, 38. he said, "*For this cause* came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth,"—to which Pilate replies by asking him a question—*What is truth?* and before he had his answer, went his way. It is a pity he had not staid; we had then known from the mouth of truth what is truth; but he went out. It is so with many people; they take on them as if they desired to know the truth, and to know their duty; but it is but a copy of their countenance, really they do not; as Balaam, Numb. xxii. There is one way of knowing what is truth, by the contraries. There are three things that are contrary to truth, by considering which, it may be known what truth is:

1. Figures, and shadows, and types are things contrary to truth. As suppose the picture or representation of a man; we do not say it is the true man; the *truth* is he that is represented by it. Now so the truth came by Jesus Christ; that is, all the figures, and types, and shadows of him whereby he was held forth to the fathers under the Old Testament, were all fulfilled in him, and therefore when he, *the* truth, the substance, was come, they were all to vanish away; and so they did, Heb. ix. 24—*the figures of the true.* For example,

Under the Old Testament they had manna—little, round, and white—which came down in a dew every morning, and was their food for four years. Here was a figure, a shadow.—Now the truth of this came by Jesus Christ; he is the true manna, John vi. 32.—the *true* bread.

They had a brazen serpent hung upon a pole, that whosoever had been stung, and did but look, was healed by virtue of God's ordinance.—Now when Christ came, the truth of this came. He is the true brazen serpent, John iii. 14, 15. The looking is by faith, Isa. xlv. 22.

They had a rock that followed them, and supplied them with water.—The truth of that rock was Christ, 1 Cor. x. 4.

We read of a ladder that Jacob saw, the feet whereof was upon earth, the head in heaven.—The truth of that ladder was Christ.

We read of a ram that was brought to Abraham to sacrifice instead of Isaac.—The truth of that ram was Christ sacrificed for us and in our stead.

We read of a lamb that was slain at the passover, and the blood sprinkled, whereupon the destroying angel passed by.—That lamb was Christ, 1 Cor. v. 7.

We read of a high priest richly clothed, and bearing on his breast the names of the twelve tribes, and going into the holy of holies, and burning incense there.—The truth of this was Christ: and so of all the rest. Now to make more new significant ceremonies, is to intimate that Christ is not come.

2. Falsehood and error is contrary to truth. There is truth doctrinal, 2 Tim. ii. 18. Now this truth is but one; error is manifold. There are many errors, but only one truth, and that one truth is Christ. When he came, the truth came.

A preacher of the truth came.

A witness of the truth came.

(1.) He preached the truth. All that he said in all his sermons, parables, discourses, disputations, was all true, as true as truth itself. He never broached, nor owned, nor patronized, any error; no, not any, not the least. Several great truths of grand importance he taught. As,

Concerning the design of the Father in sending him into the world, which was, to save the world, John iii. 16. He was the first that plainly and clearly revealed this. It was hid before, John i. 18.

Concerning the necessity of regeneration, John iii. 3, 5. Which of the prophets spake of such a thing as a new birth? They call for turning, amending—but he, of being born again.

Concerning spiritual worship, John iv. 24. in spirit; in opposition to the Old-Testament carnal way, by carnal ordinances. There is now an end put to those. The truth is come.

Concerning the process of the great judgment. Where have we such a manifestation of it, as that in Matt. xxv. 31—46. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them

on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, In as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. The judge himself tells us here, how, and in what manner, he will proceed.—Now we have great reason to bless God that the truth is come in this sense also. But,

(2.) He came a witness to the truth, John xviii. 37.

A witness is a martyr, and such was he: he sealed the truth with his blood. So have many others besides him, both preachers and others, but he led the van. We call Stephen the proto-martyr of the New Testament, Acts vii. No; Jesus Christ was the Proto-martyr of the New Testament. Therefore, none need to fear or be ashamed; their dear Lord went before them to martyrdom.

3. Falseness and unfaithfulness is contrary to truth. A man of truth is he,

(1.) That speaks the truth in his heart, Ps. xv. 2. He will not tell a lie for the sake of any one, nor for any worldly gain or advantage whatsoever. Such a man of truth was Jesus Christ; not only when in the pulpit, in his preaching; but in his ordinary converse. His word was not yea and nay, but his yea was yea, and his nay, nay.

(2.) That keeps covenant, and performs promise. This he doth. You may safely venture upon what he says in those scriptures, Matt. xi. 28. John vi. 37—"Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."—And in any other, for in him all the promises are yea, and in him amen, 2 Cor. i. 20. Compare Rev. iii. 14. and read Ps. lxxxv. 10. He promised his disciples, when he went, he would come again; and did he not meet them in Galilee? Did he not send upon them his Spirit? He did so.

Is he not true also to his threatenings?

He is, certainly, except we repent. If we do, he repents; else not. See, as to Jerusalem, Matt. xxiii. 38. which came to pass.

(3.) That is just to all his relations, and discharges honestly all his undertakings, without failing in the least.—So did he, to his disciples, while with them, as their master; so doth he to all his saints, as head, husband, father, brother, friend, king, captain. Then for his undertaking, he fulfilled it to the utmost. I mean, his great undertaking to redeem and save. He fulfilled it to the utmost, without flinching, or starting back, John xvii. 4. Did his Father contradict what he said? No, he did not. And then, for all his other undertakings subordinate to this, he hath been, is, and will be, just and true to them;—in hearing prayers, forgiving sins, supplying wants, subduing enemies.

II. The application.

Is Christ the truth? When he came did the truth come? Then what is our duty? what doth this call for at our hands?

1. We must *know* the truth, John viii. 31, 32. Be acquainted with it. It is a pity we should any of us be ignorant of it, not acquainted with it, personally acquainted. Do ye know Jesus Christ? Have ye learned him? O get to know him, it is life eternal, John xvii. 3. It will make you *free*, John viii. 32. free from a deal of bondage, and misery, and mistake, that poor ignorant souls are subject to. See Paul's resolution, "I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2. Phil. iii. 7, 8. The way to know this truth is to search the Scriptures; dig into them, John v. 39. Also pray much. Beg of God an enlightened mind.

2. We must *buy* the truth, buy it and not sell it, Prov. xxiii. 23. Christ the truth is a jewel worth your dealing for. You may all have him, you cannot buy him at any rate too dear, though with the price of all you are, and have, and can do. He is the true treasure, Matt. xiii. 44—46.

3. We must *receive* the truth. This receiving act is it that makes the truth ours, John i. 12. Not only receive him in our understandings, by unfeigned assent, but into our wills and affections, into our hearts and souls, by unfeigned consent; as the wife receives the husband when she takes him to be her husband; the servant the master, Matt. xi. 29.

4. We must *rejoice* in the truth, 1 Cor. xiii. 6. This we cannot do till we know it, till we receive it. Hast thou received Christ Jesus the Lord? Then thou hast reason to rejoice in him, for if he be thine all is thine. We are told of a philosopher,* that having found out a mathematical demonstration, was so pleased that he ran about like a madman, crying, I have found it, I have found it. Much more may the upright soul, Phil. iii. 3. John i. 45.

5. We must *love* the truth, 2 Thess. ii. 10. Zech. viii. 19. Truth is a thing peculiarly amiable; it hath a loveliness in it above and beyond all other things, especially this great truth, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15.—a truth worthy to be embraced with both arms.

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* Archimedes. He died about 208 years before the Christian æra.

6. We must *speak* the truth one to another, Eph. iv. 25. It is an abominable thing for those that call themselves the followers of Christ—the truth—to be found liars, Eph. iv. 15. Isa. lxiii. 8.

7. We must *worship* God in truth, John iv. 23, 24. "Let us draw near with a true heart," Heb. x. 22. That is, in sincerity and uprightness, not in guile and hypocrisy,—or in truth, that is, in Christ, as our only medium of worship—in his name.

8. We must *walk* in the truth, 3 John 3, 4. that is, in Christ Jesus, Col. ii. 6. Have ye received him as the truth? then walk in him as the truth;

By relying wholly and solely upon him, in the great business of your reconciliation and salvation, and in all your straits and troubles, Acts xxvii. 25.

By being in your measure like him, in word and deed; just and true, and fast and faithful, to God and man, Rev. ii. 10.

SERMON XXXVI.

CHRIST IS OUR TREASURE.

MATT. xiii. 44.

Again: The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field.

BY this *treasure* we are to understand our Lord Jesus Christ, the king of this *kingdom* here spoken of.

DOCT. That our Lord Jesus Christ is our treasure.

He that hath found him, and hath him, may truly say he hath found treasure.

Show, I. What treasure is, and what it implies.

II. What kind of treasure Jesus Christ is; and,

III. What use we are to make of it.

I. What is a treasure?

In treasure two things are supposed:

The one: That the things be excellent and useful.

The other: That there be abundance of them; else it cannot be said to be treasure.

The things must be such as are both excellent and useful; things of worth and value. We do not reckon a heap of stones or dirt to be treasure. Treasure is of gold, or silver, jewels; either money or money's worth. In Jeremiah xli. 8. we read of *treasures of wheat and barley, and oil and honey:* though these are not gold and silver, yet they are things useful and necessary.

There must also be abundance of them. A little is not said to be treasure. No; where there is treasure, there is a deal to be had of such things; plenty of gold, variety of jewels, stores of wheat. And is not Christ treasure, then? Are there not abundance of excellent useful things to be had with him? Can you name any thing that is either truly excellent, or truly useful, that is not to be had with him, and that in abundance, full measure, pressed down, and running over? Col. i. 19.—*fulness—all* fulness *dwelling* in him.

1. Is he not the *Sun* of Righteousness? Mal. iv. 2. the *light* of the world? John viii. 12. As full as the sun is of light, and that is as full as it can hold; so full, and infinitely more so, is Christ of righteousness and grace, and strength of Spirit, and merit; which are excellent things, and I am sure useful to us, for we are undone without them.

2. Is he not the *fountain* opened? Zech. xiii. 1. A fountain is not a cistern, though it is true a cistern may be full; yet there is a great deal of difference between a cistern full, and a fountain full. A cistern may be full, but it doth not run over; if it do there is nothing to supply it with more, as there is in a fountain. Empty a fountain as often as you will, it fills itself without pouring any thing into it; not so a cistern. Now Christ's fulness is a fountain-fulness, and we have need of such.

3. Is he not a *horn* of salvation? Luke i. 69. A horn signifies plenty. His salvation is plentiful salvation. He is able to save to the uttermost, Heb. vii. 25. And is not salvation an excellent useful thing? Is any thing more excellent, more useful? Especially spiritual salvation; to be saved from our sins, the guilt, the power of them:—eternal salvation, to be saved from the wrath to come, from hell, and damnation; to be instated in the heavenly inheritance? Of all this there is a horn, an abundance, with Jesus Christ for poor sinners. Therefore, we may well say of him, he is our treasure.—But,

II. What kind of treasure is the Lord Jesus Christ?

There are these properties of this treasure.

1. It is peculiar treasure. The great God hath such a saying concerning his people Israel, Exod. xix. 5. *Ye shall be a peculiar people.*—I am sure his people Israel may truly say so of him.—He is a peculiar treasure; that is,

He is treasure by itself; such treasure as hath none like it; a nonesuch treasure; a treasure beyond all other treasures. *The peculiar treasure of kings, and of the provinces,* which Solomon speaks of, Eccl. ii. 8. is not to be compared with this treasure. It is as far beyond it as gold is beyond dross, as pearls are beyond pebbles, as substance is beyond shadow.

He is the treasure of but a few. There are people that have worldly treasure, here and there one in a country; there are few people that make Christ their treasure. The most despise and make light of him; they mind him not. God's number is by far the smaller number. Many are called, but few chosen; like the grape-gleanings of the vintage, so like the shaking of an olive tree. But

These few may have him, have propriety in him, they may call him theirs. My beloved is *mine*—mine to all intents and purposes: a *peculiar treasure unto me*. And that is indeed the sweet of it: "Who loved *me* and gave himself for *me*, *my* beloved and *my* friend."

2. Precious treasure.

Precious in himself; of infinite worth and value. The pearl of price, v. 45, is Christ. His blood is precious, 1 Pet. i. 19. His promises are precious, 2 Pet. i. 4.

Precious in their account and esteem that have him. 1 Pet. ii. 7. They have precious thoughts of him. **Ps. cxxxix. 20. They have let all go for him, as** Paul. Phil. iii. 7, 8. "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ: yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." This is the language of one that had found this treasure.

3. Unseen, hid treasure. Other treasures are visible, this invisible, out of sight, as believers and God's hidden ones are. So Christ is a believer's hidden one, Col. iii. 3. Manna that none knows but they themselves that have it, and not they themselves always. Mary, when Christ spake to her, thought it had been the gardener, John xx. 15.

4. Undefiled, heavenly come by. Other treasures are not so oftentimes; they that have them scrape them together by fraud, violence, oppression. That which Solomon had, was in a great measure of that kind, as appears by what they told his son—Thy father made our yoke grievous. But those that have this treasure, Christ

Have him by *free gift*, John iii. 16. He gave him for us, he gives him also to us. They have him

By *lawful purchase*. It is said here he *bought* it, v. 46—not by paying a valuable consideration. I do not say so; it cannot be. Christ buys us so, but we do not buy him so. **It is a purchase *without money and without price*.** Isa. lv. 1.—*by* barter or exchange. We part with our sins, and we have a Saviour; with our own righteousness, our rags, and have his righteousness, that white robe. Have ye been at this market? Have ye made this bargain?

5. **It is enriching treasure. It cannot be but that he that hath worldly treasure must needs be a rich man. But he that hath this treasure—Christ, is made rich by it *towards God*, and that is the true riches; that is to be rich indeed. A man may have treasure *for himself*; such treasure as the fool, Luke xii. 20, had in his barns, and not be rich *towards God*, in God's account and esteem; rich towards the world, and a beggar towards God. But if Jesus be thine, thou art rich towards God, God will own thee for a rich man: perhaps poor on earth, rich in heaven. O covet these riches. Get Christ to be thine, and thou hast enough.**

6. It is enduring treasure. Other treasures are not so:

Sometimes they moulder away of themselves. Prov. xxiii. 5.

Other times they are spent by the owners.

Other times they are plundered and stolen by thieves.—But of either of these, there is no danger as to this treasure.

It hath no principle of corruption in itself.

They that have it shall not spend it; they may live upon it.

They that would cannot take it away. The hiding of it *in God*, speaks not only the secrecy, but also the safety, of it, John x. 28, 29. Luke x. 42. **A good reason why we should each of us give all diligence to make it sure unto ourselves, Matt. vi. 19, 20.**

III. What use is to be made of this subject?

1. If Christ be treasure, then what a condition are they in that are without him? They are in a poor beggarly condition, Rev. iii. 17. Worldly poverty nobody is fond of; it is a grief, a trouble, a shame, a disgrace, a burthen. They that are under it are weary of it, and fain they would, if they knew how, be delivered from it: but as to spiritual poverty, it is not so, quite otherwise. There is no evil in it, nothing felt from it. O be persuaded this day to change your mind herein. Believe a poor soul that hath no spiritual riches, no Christ to make it rich towards God, to be in a far more miserable condition than the poorest beggar in the country, that hath not a rag on his back, nothing to eat, but what he wanders for, no bed to lie on, no place to hide his head in; I say, far more miserable. For,

All this concerns the body only, which is but the shell of the man; the other concerns the soul, the heaven-born soul.

All this concerns this life only, which is passing away, and will be gone shortly, and then in the grave the rich and the poor meet together; there will be no difference between the dust of the one and the dust of the other. But spiritual poverty is the forerunner of eternal misery. The Christless poor here, that live and die so, must be miserable for ever.

All this may be, and yet the man may be in the love and favour of God; his sins pardoned, his peace made; as Lazarus, and many another. But if thy soul be Christless, thou art poor towards God. God is against thee, and all that is in God is against thee, though nothing appear. So it is—there is no middle state.

2. What is to be done that this treasure may be ours?

What did this man do here in the text?

He *found* it hid in the field. He hid it. He was glad he had found it. And he went and sold all

that he had and bought it. Something like this is to be done by each of us that Christ may be ours.

(1.) We must find him where God hath hid him, and that is, in the field of the Scriptures. I mean we must mix faith with what God hath revealed there concerning him; his ability and willingness to save; his suffering, dying, rising again, with the design thereof; his many gracious invitations, encouraging promises, made to poor sinners to come to him, to accept of him. This must be done with application to ourselves, as if our own names were found written therein. Have ye thus found Christ? He bids us, John v. 39.—*search*. *Search* the Old Testament; he is hid there, but by digging we may find him. Search the New Testament; he is above ground there; we are blind if we see him not. In this sense it is said concerning the strait gate, and narrow way, Few there be that find it; and of the few that *find* it, fewer go in at the gate, and walk in the way: so as to this treasure, not one in ten, twenty, or even a hundred, who read the Bible, find Christ in it, or desire to find him.

(2.) There should be joy at our thus finding him, this was before making the bargain here. Have you ever seen, and understood, and been affected with, God's unspeakable mercy to you in affording you the field, the Scripture, wherein Christ is? in casting your lot and portion within hearing of the joyful sound? Have you said, Lord, how is it? "All the people," on one occasion, "went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them," Neh. viii. 12. It cannot be but the joy must be greater afterwards, when the treasure is made ours; but there is great joy even in this—that it is revealed to us.

(3.) We must hide it. Not with the hiding of concealment, to conceal from others our having found it, lest they should put us by the purchase; there is no danger of that; there should rather be an inclination to the contrary, to proclaim it, as Andrew told Philip. Read John i. Hezekiah did ill to show his treasures, but we must show ours. We must hide it with the hiding of meditation and consideration, as David hid the word, Ps. cxix. 11—as Mary, Luke ii. 19. We must hide it as the woman hid the leaven in the batch, as the husbandman hides the seed by harrowing it, as the stomach hides the meat in order to the digesting of it. Have we ever done this by what we have read and heard out of the Scriptures concerning Jesus Christ? Have we reflected afterwards, meditated on it, prayed over it? If not, do it yet. It is God's way, a special means that he hath appointed, and that he uses to bless.

(4.) We must sell all and buy it. Is Christ the truth? buy the truth. Is Christ the treasure? buy the treasure. There is no making him ours any other way.

Begging will not do; we may beg long enough, unless we buy. Read Matt. xxv. Luke xiii.

Steal him we cannot. Some have been made rich that way; but not with these riches, not towards God.

Borrowing will not do. The foolish virgins would have borrowed oil of the wise; but not so.

It passes not by descent from father to son, as land doth to the heirs, or personal estate to the executors; nothing of that here,

There is but one way, and that is by *buying*; and the terms are here set down,—*selling all.*

What all?

(1.) All our sins, Ezek. xviii. 31. how beloved soever, Matt. v. 29, 38.

(2.) All our own righteousness, as to any hope or expectation from the merit of them. We are more loth to part with this than the other, but it must be done, or we cannot possess the treasure.

(3.) All our worldly concerns, if God calls, Matt. x. 37. Now what say you to this? Are you sorrowful, as the young man? Matt. xix. 22. Or do you like the bargain, and will you strike hands this day? It is all trash that you are called to part with; you shall have treasure for it. Could I make you an offer, a real serious offer, of better clothes, instead of those poor ones you have; a better house, estate; you would be glad, and hearken to me, and thank me. But, alas! I fear I shall prevail with none of you to do this for your poor souls. O be persuaded, not almost, but altogether.

3. What must they do that have this treasure, that can say, upon good grounds, I have thus bought it?

There is cause why thou shouldst bless God, all the days of thy life, for enriching thee with this treasure.

Oppose the having of this to the want of all other worldly treasure, Phil. iv. 18.

Where your treasure is, there let your heart be also, Matt. vi. 21.—the thoughts, the affections.

Hold fast your treasure, Cant. iii. 4.

SERMON XXXVII.

CHRIST IS OUR TEMPLE

REV. xxi. 22.

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it.

THAT the Lamb here spoken of is our Lord Jesus Christ, there is no question; but the doubt is, what we are to understand by the *city* here described, whereof the Lamb is the temple. The description of it begins at *v.* 10. And he carried me away in

the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony: the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eight, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it." It cannot be understood literally; there never was and never will be such a city, literally taken, of gold, of pearls. All agree in that. It is therefore to be understood figuratively, and mystically, and spiritually. Something like it is said by the prophet Isaiah, *ch.* liv. 11, 12.

Now the query is, Whether it be meant of heaven, or of some future state of the church in this world? when Babylon shall be fallen, the Jews called, and all the kingdoms of the earth be the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ.

I think of both, and that neither is to be excluded, for as we say of grace and glory,—that grace is glory begun; and glory is grace perfected: so of this city we say,—it is begun on earth, finished in heaven. If I can prove it is not to be understood of heaven *only*, that will serve my present purpose.

I prove it, 1. Because this city is the bride; the Lamb's wife, *v.* 9. Now that is the church—not triumphant only, but militant.

2. Because it is the holy Jerusalem, *v.* 10. And is not the gospel church so, even in this world; the Sion, the Israel, the Jerusalem of God?

3. Because it is said to descend out of heaven, *v.* 10. therefore it is not heaven; for heaven doth not descend out of heaven.

4. Because it is said, *The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it, v.* 2. *and the glory and honour of the nations, v.* 26. Now that cannot well be understood of heaven: therefore, of some future state in this world when religion shall be uppermost, and every thought brought into obedience. In like manner it may be queried, Whether Matt. xxiv. intend the destruction of Jerusalem, or the day of judgment. I think both.

This is the city; but what churches are in it? How many, and what are they called? Hath this Jerusalem no temple? Yes: *The Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it: the Lord God and the Lamb*, that is, the Lord God which is the Lamb—as John xvii. 3—he is the temple.

This is true of heaven. There is no temple, no altar, there are no sacrifices, no ordinances, there; God in Christ is all in all, 1 Cor. xv. 28.

It is true of all the future state of the churches, that there will be ordinances; and so of their present state, there are ordinances,—the word, sacraments, prayer; but the Lamb is the temple, Christ the soul, of those ordinances.

Doct. That the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb, the Lord God Almighty, is our temple, and is to be so more and more.

Show, I. The further meaning of this by way of explication.

II. The properties of this temple.

III. The use we are to make of it; which is the application.

I. I shall further explain the subject.

Temple is a general word, and signifies a place of worship, whatever it is that is worshipped in it, 1 Cor. viii. 10.—an *idol's temple*, 2 Chron. xxvi. 7. Some think it were more proper to call our churches, or other places of meeting for divine worship, temples, rather than churches. But *the* temple, peculiarly so called, is the house or place of worship built at Jerusalem by king Solomon, whereof we read at large in 1 Kings vi. &c. It was one of the wonders of the world for state and magnificence. When it was burnt, another was built, in Ezra's time; short of that in outward glory, but beyond it, in that it had Christ's personal presence, who taught in it, Hag. ii. Now when I say, Jesus Christ is our temple, I mean, that the temple of king Solomon was a type of Christ, it was one of the shadows by which Christ was signified. He is the substance. This will appear in the following particulars:

1. The temple was the place of the peculiar residence of God: he dwelt there *between the cherubims*, 2 Chron. vi. 1, 2. There his *glory did shine forth*, it *filled the house*, 2 Chron. v. 14. It was called the *Shechinah*.—He was so there, as he was no where else

in the world besides. So Christ, he is the true temple, "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9.—bodily—not in such a manner as in the temple, but bodily—in a way far beyond it.

His conception was by the power of the Holy Ghost over-shadowing the Virgin Mary, Luke i.

The name given him was Emanuel, God with us; God in our nature; he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, Phil. ii. 6, 7. He was God manifest in the flesh, 1 Tim. iii. 16. If asked, What think ye of Christ? who is he? Say—God manifest in the flesh, God clothed with a body.

His endowments and perfections were all of them divine; his wisdom, power, holiness, 1 Cor. i. 24. Col. ii. 3. What else was it but the power of God, that wrought all the miracles that were wrought by him, that raised not others only, but himself also, from the dead? It was requisite it should be so; both, that he might bear up under his sufferings, and to give virtue and value to them. If the fulness of the Godhead had not dwelt in him, he could not have been a Saviour for us. We should adore this wise contrivance.

2. The temple was the place of the people's peculiar recourse to God. If any of them had at any time any special business with him, thither they must come, to the temple; and there he promised he would meet with them, and hear their prayers, and do for them as there should be occasion, 2 Chron. vii. 12—16. If they did not come to it, however, they must look towards it.—Now our temple is Christ. If you have any of you, at any time, any thing to do with God, you must go to him in Christ. In Christ it is that he will meet with you: no otherwise.

If you have done amiss and would be pardoned, it must be only in and by Jesus Christ; all your repentings are nothing without him; it is his blood alone that makes atonement, 1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5. In the temple was the altar.

If you have done well and would be accepted, it must be only in and by Jesus Christ, Eph. i. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 5. The Jews when they pray turn their faces towards Jerusalem to this day, because of the temple that was once there—as Daniel, Dan. vi. 10. Compare 1 Kings viii. 28. So must we towards Christ; not the face of our bodies, no matter whether eastward or westward, but—the faces of our minds and souls, the face of our faith; looking at him as our advocate with the Father, as the great high priest of our profession, as our altar, our temple, our all. We do certainly lose our labour if we do otherwise.

II. What are the properties of this temple?

1. It is the only temple. There is none other besides it. There were many synagogues, but only one temple; "so there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. ii. 5. Saints and angels are no temples for us, no mediators for us. The one temple was to be to them their centre of unity, so should our one Christ be to us, Eph. iv. 4—6.

2. It is the ordained temple; set apart and consecrated by God, in his decree and purpose from all eternity, to be so. "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore, Heb. vii. 28. *consecrated*, Rom. iii. 25—*set forth*. This decree and purpose of his was declared and published in the fulness of time, to the end that all might take notice of it, especially when he raised Christ again from the dead, Ps. ii. 7, 8. He said to the Jews, *Destroy this temple*, and in three days I will raise it up, John ii. 19—meaning the temple of his body. This was the great sign of his divine commission, John ii. 18. He could give them no greater.

3. It is high and conspicuous, 1 Kings ix. 8. to be seen afar off. When he died he was lifted up upon the cross, John xii. 32, 33. When he went to heaven he ascended up on high. When he comes again, every eye shall see him. God hath not hid him from us, but laid him open to us, that whosoever will may come to him.—Cities of refuge were situate on the tops of hills. Christ is also high in place and pre eminence.

4. It is holy, and beautiful, and glorious. The temple was called the beauty of holiness, Ps. xcvi. 9. To be sure Jesus Christ is so; absolutely, infinitely, eternally holy.

The temple of his body was holy, as it had no seeds of sickness in it, for we never read of any thing ailing him. So in him was no sin, no disorderly appetites, or desires, but all under rule. His eye was never guilty of one sinful glance; his tongue never spake one idle word. Grace was poured into his lips, Ps. xlv. 2. It was absolutely necessary it should be so, for he was to be an offering for sin, Heb. x. 10. And all offerings for sin were to be without blemish, Lev. xxii. 19, 20. Heb. vii. 26.

The temple of his human soul was holy. He received the Spirit without measure, was sanctified throughout. There was in him no defect, no darkness, no guile; all was pure, and holy, and without spot. He was so in all his faculties; his will was perfectly complying with the will of his Father.—It is not so with us. In the temple there was the holy place, and the most holy place, called the holy of holies. Our temple is all most holy, the holy of holies. None is holy as he is holy.

5. It is a living temple. Solomon's temple was a dead thing, made of dead materials, but our temple is a living temple.

Christ personal is so; he *was* dead but he is alive, and it is well for us that he is so.

Christ mystical is a living temple, that is, Christ considered in union with all true believers; he is a

living foundation, and they are the living stones, 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5. And both together make a living house, Eph. ii. 20—22.

6. It is a lasting temple. Solomon's temple was long since laid waste; so was Ezra's temple, not one stone left upon another. But our temple abides for ever, Heb. xiii. 8. It is not a tabernacle to be taken down.

III. The improvement.

1. If Christ be our temple, then we should, upon all occasions, rejoice in him, and make our boast of him. The Jews did so of their temple, even to excess; though it was far short of ours, Jer. vii. 4. They would not endure to hear any one speak against it; this was their quarrel with Stephen—"This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place," Acts vi. 13, 14. with Paul, Acts xxi. 28. Nay, before them, with our Lord Jesus himself, John ii. 19, 20. And have not we much more reason to carry it in like manner towards our temple, the blessed Jesus? Should we not boast of him, saying, with holy David, Ps. lxxiii. 25. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee! or with that other good man, None but Christ, none but Christ. This is one evidence of our being the circumcision, Phil. iii. 3. as Paul was, Phil. iii. 7, 8. Can we endure to hear him spoken against, his name dishonoured, his blood and wounds blasphemed, by hideous oaths? There are great outcries for the church, the church, but how few mind the temple, the temple, *this* temple. The less others do, the more let us.

2. Then it concerns us all to get into this temple; not to rest in the outer court of profession, but to press within the veil. The door into this temple is faith, Acts, xiv. 27. When we receive the Lord Jesus, as he is offered to us upon gospel terms, in the way of believing, we are brought into him, we have union with him. He becomes ours, we become his. Now inquire, I beseech you—Is this receiving work done? Are ye in Christ Jesus? If so, there is no condemnation, Rom. viii. 1. Joash was hid in the temple, and secured there, and so escaped, 2 Kings xi. 2. This temple of ours is a safe hiding place from guilt and wrath. It is our city of refuge. O refuse not this offer; say not, as Nehemiah, "Who is there that being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in," Neh. vi. 11.

3. All the worship we perform to God every day, of what kind soever, must be in this temple. If it be not temple worship, that is, if it be not offered up in the name of Jesus Christ, it is worth nothing.

We must go about it in his strength, not in our own; for our strength is weakness, John xv. 5. Compare Phil. iv. 13. There were two pillars in the temple—Jachin and Boaz, 1 Kings vii. 21.

We must trust to his merit and mediation alone for acceptation. If we pray, whether in the closet alone, or in the family, or in the solemn assembly, it must be with an eye to Christ. Turn your faces towards this temple. If so, we have a promise, John xvi. 23. Else none. If so, we have an encouraging instance, Ps. xviii. 6. Else none.—It is said, Israel "hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples," Hos. viii. 14. So of many—they have other confidences—their own merit.

4. Is Christ our temple, we must also reckon ourselves his temple, and carry it accordingly, 1 Cor. iii. 16. Even our very bodies, these poor, weak, frail bodies of ours, are dignified and honoured with that title, 1 Cor. vi. 19. Now temples must be kept for him whose temples they are, for his use and service. Then glorify God, 1 Cor. vi. 20. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. Temples must not be defiled, buyers and sellers must be whipped out of these temples, that is, the world, lust, sin. How angry was Nehemiah: "And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. And it grieved me sore; therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber," Neh. xiii. 7, 8. We should do likewise: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

SERMON XXXVIII.

CHRIST IS OUR ARK.

HEBREWS xi. 7.

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark.

THERE are three arks mentioned in the Scripture, and they had all some reference to Jesus Christ.

1. Moses' ark, whereof we read in Exod. ii. 3. This was a basket or coracle made of bulrushes, by means whereof he escaped being drowned in the Egyptian river. Our Lord Jesus Christ is to us that ark. By him we are saved from being drowned for ever in the infernal lake, which burns with fire and brimstone.

2. God's ark, whereof we read in Exod. xxv. 10. This was a chest or coffer of wood, covered with gold, wherein the two tables of the law, written with the finger of God, were kept; a sign or token of the special presence of God with that people. Where the ark went, God went. Our Lord Jesus Christ is to us that ark. By him the law was perfectly kept for us; and if we have him with us, we have God with us as a reconciled Father.

3. Noah's ark, whereof we read in Gen. vi. 14—16. This was a boat or ship, wherein Noah and his family were all saved when the world was drowned. And to this I especially refer, when I say, the Lord Jesus Christ is our ark. Of this the apostle here writes, giving us a short account of the story, how it was—

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark.

Doct. Our Lord Jesus Christ is our ark.

He is that to us, and to all true believers, that Noah's ark was to him, and to his family.

1. There are several things wherein they agree; and,

2. Several things wherein they differ.

For the first—They agree as follows:

1. Noah's ark was of God's directing and ordaining; he both appointed that it should be made, and also gave particular instructions how he would have it made, Gen. vi. 14, &c. It was no invention of Noah's; had not God himself spoken to him about it, it had never entered into either his head or heart. Now whose invention was the sending of Christ to redeem and save us, by suffering and dying for us? Was it ours? No; our heavenly Father himself, in infinite wisdom, contrived it for us, Job xxxiii. 24. *I have found a ransom*, Ps. lxxxix. 19, 20. I have found—he seems to glory in it as his own invention. The angels contrived it not for us, but the great God himself. And how should this affect our hearts with love and thankfulness. It did Noah's, no question, that he that contrived heaven and earth how they must be, and every creature belonging thereunto, should so far debase himself, as to contrive a box for Noah, to save him in. Lord, what is man? Lord, what am I? might Noah say. And so must we. The first inventor of some rare device or engine, usually goes away with all the praise; every one commends him. Lo, here is a rare device indeed.

2. The appointing of the ark for Noah, was the result of the world's sin. If the world had not been so vile and wicked as it was, there had been no flood to drown it. If there had not been a flood, there had been no need of an ark to save Noah in. So here, if the first Adam had not sinned, the second Adam had not been revealed: he came to seek and to save that which was lost. If we had not been lost, he had never left the heavenly world. The whole need not the physician, but they that are sick. One of the fathers calls the sin of Adam, Felix culpa quæ talem meruit habere redemptorem—*A happy fault which deserved to have such a Redeemer*. Not that we are, therefore, to think ever the better of sin, or to harbour a good thought towards it, or concerning it—either that or any other; no, but the worse. By the breadth of the plaister, you may judge of the length and breadth of the wound. It was a great debt that would not be paid without such a surety.

3. When the ark was ready prepared, Noah went not in of himself, till the Lord was pleased to come and call him, Gen. vii. 1. *Come thou*—and then he obeyed and went in, and the Lord shut him in. So here, though there be a Christ given of God to redeem and save, a ransom provided, yet none are actually redeemed and saved by him, but those only to whom the Lord is pleased to give an effectual call, Rom. viii. 30. Till he says, Come, thou man, thou woman, thou by name, come thou into Christ, we never stir a foot towards him, John vi. 45. As it was with the Jews in Babylon, though a proclamation issued out, yet none moved but those "whose spirit God had raised to go up," Ezra i. 5. Or as with Lazarus, though the stone was rolled away, yet till Christ said, Come forth, he never stirred, Eph. ii. 1. Isa. lxv. 1. Jesus saw Zaccheus, and invited himself to his house, before Zaccheus saw him, Luke xix. And have not we cause, as to ourselves, to adore the free grace of God? Then for shutting him in, that was also God's own act and deed, for his security and safety. He would not trust Noah to shut himself in. So, "we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," 1 Pet. i. 5. Phil. i. 6. John x. 28, 29. Were our salvation in our own keeping we should certainly lose it, as Adam did; therefore, see that sweet promise, and be comforted in it, Jer. xxxii. 40. "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

4. When God put Noah into the ark, and shut him in, he did not leave him destitute. No, he provided comfortably for him.

He had the divine presence. It is not, Go thou, but, *Come* thou, implying that himself meant to go along with him, and to abide with him there, and to bear him company. All that God puts into Christ shall be sure of his blessed presence with them, at all times, and in all conditions, Isa. xxvi. 20. "*Come*, my people, enter thou into thy chambers." Perhaps alluding to this very passage: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee," Isa. xliii. 2. "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5. Is not this matter of comfort to a child of God? It was so to Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15. "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."

He had the benefit of a window, Gen. vi. 16.

For the conveying of light into it, else it had been a dungeon to him, a coffin, a grave; it had been called a darksome house. They that are in Christ are enlightened with heavenly light, Eph. v. 8. God opens the eyes of their minds. And,

For viewing the mighty works of God in the great waters, and the sad desolations made thereby upon the earth, especially the drowning of his obstinate neighbours, that would not be persuaded: now he might see them floating by thousands. It is good for those who are in the ark, Christ, to be often looking abroad, as through a window, into the perishing world, where they may see both matter of

pity as to others; and matter of praise as to themselves, John xiv. 22.

By that window it was that the dove went out, and by the same was taken in again with the olive-branch. They that are in Christ have a window open heaven-wards, by which they send thither, in prayers and supplications; and by which they receive returns thence, in suitable supplies: that window is Christ himself.

He had food also convenient for him, Gen. vi. 21. The ship was sufficiently victualled for the voyage, though a year long. They that are in Christ, are certainly well provided for; he himself is their meat and drink, meat indeed, and drink indeed. "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing," Ps. xxxiv. 10.

5. All the while Noah was in the ark, the ark, and he in it, was tossed to and fro with the winds and waves; yet still, as the waters swelled and prevailed, the ark was lifted upwards towards heaven. The saints of God, in this world, are exposed to various trials, troubles, temptations, Isa. liv. 11.—*tossed with tempests*;—the ship was so in which the disciples were, and yet Christ himself was with them in it. And as the ark lifted heavenward, so we should be elevated towards heaven, weaned from the world, and things below, raised upward to things above, in our thoughts, affections, desires, hopes, 2 Cor. iv. 16—18. This benefit by their afflictions makes them say with David, "It is good for me, that I have been afflicted," Ps. cxix. 71.

6. The ark was a means of safety and preservation to Noah. Nay, it alone was so, and there was no other. All that were in it escaped, all that were out of it perished, though they climbed up to the top of hills, and mountains, and high trees; though they clung, as no question some did, to the sides of the ark, all would not do, they were fetched thence, and drowned notwithstanding. So here—there is no Saviour but Christ. Out of him there is no salvation; in him there is no damnation, Acts iv. 12; xvi. 30, 31. Rom. viii. 1. He is set forth, and there is no other, to be the propitiation for sin. There is only one sun of righteousness. There was only one brazen serpent. There is only one mediator, one advocate. People may climb high in parts, gifts, profession, in freedom from common pollutions, in the performance of external duties; but all will not do, unless they are in the ark, unless they are in Christ Jesus. They may cling to him by a temporary faith, but unless they are *in* him they will perish. It was, methinks, saddest of all with the carpenter, who helped to make the ark, to be shut out;—so it will be for those preachers, who are the means of saving others, but are not saved themselves.

7. They that were saved in the ark of Noah, were but few, very few; eight souls; Noah and his wife, and his three sons and their three wives. All the rest of mankind, men, women, and children, were all lost. In like manner, they that are in Christ are but a remnant, Matt. vii. 14. Not many are in him by external profession; far the greater part of the world are Jews, Turks, heathens. Amongst those who are in him by external profession, very few are effectually called, are truly such as they profess to be. There are abundance of hypocrites. In the ark, of the eight, one was a Cham, whatever the four wives were. Among the twelve apostles, one was a Judas. In the destruction of Sodom, only Lot and his family escaped. Of six hundred thousand that came out of Egypt, but two entered the land of Canaan. This should be no offence to us, nor occasion of stumbling. It is better to be in the ark with a few, than to be drowned with the rest for company. Do not ye think so? Would ye not choose so? When the saved come all together, they will be a great many. Let there be one the more for thee this day, and another for thee. It is observable, these eight saved ones in the ark, were all of Noah's family, either born in it, or married into it. We have a saying, It is good to be akin to land. Say I, It is good to be akin to God's Noahs; their kindred often fare the better in this world for their sakes, and sometimes in the other world, Luke xix. Acts xvi. All the eternally saved are such, and only such, as are of Christ's family, married to him, born of him. He is no ark to others, as to their everlasting state. Should we not then forthwith flee into the ark?

For the second—They differ as follows:

1. The ark was a dead thing; made of dead materials, gopher-wood, pitched within and without, to hold out water; and when it had served that present occasion, what went with it we know not; probably it rotted and became worm's-meat, as other ships are used to do. But our ark is a living ark, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; an everlasting, ever-abiding Saviour.

2. The saved in Noah's ark were but eight, and all those eight were either men or women, not a child among them. But in Christ, our ark, though the saved are but few, they are many eights, and amongst them not only some of both sexes, male and female, but some of all ages, old, and young, and little children.

3. The saved in Noah's ark escaped by a present temporal death only; they were not drowned in the flood of waters as their neighbours were; I mean, the ark was no further instrumental of good to them. But the saved in Christ Jesus are saved by him from eternal misery, from the wrath that is to come, from being burned in hell for ever. As for death temporal, they have no exemption from it, of no kind, in no circumstances; they die suddenly, even as others, a violent death, even as others; but then let the kind and circumstances of their dying be what God

pleases, they are safe beyond death. Lo, here is a nonesuch ark.

Use 1. To you that hear me this day, I have three things to beg of you, not for myself, but for your own souls; and they are the same three things that Noah is said here to have done, to *believe*, to *fear*, and to *prepare*.

(1.) To *believe*, not what I say, or what other men say, but what the great God says, who cannot lie. And what says he? He says there is another flood coming, another deluge; a great one at the end of time for certain; besides, other little ones, that may come, and how soon we know not.

He says there is an ark ready of his own preparing, and that ark is Christ, and whosoever will may come, and be saved by him. Do ye believe this? If not, ye make God a liar.

(2.) To *fear* and be afraid. Noah believed and feared. Why should not we? Fear what? The flood threatened, death, judgment, the wrath to come. Are not these things to be feared? Fear, lest you be found out of the ark; graceless, Christless, Heb. iv. 1. They that are in the ark, must not fear, Luke xii. 32. Others must. The men of the old world would neither believe nor fear, but went on; and what came of it? Did they escape thereby? "The flood came and destroyed them all," Luke xvii. 26—30.

We do believe, we do fear—Then,

(3.) *Prepare*—What? An ark? We do not need; God hath prepared one. But prepare, that is, make ready for this deluge, by getting into this ark of his preparing, renouncing all other. Accept of him, close with him, yield yourselves to him. Do it now, to-day, while it is called to-day. You may go into the ark, before ye stir hence to go homewards.

Use 2. A word to those of you that are in this ark.

Bless God; it is the mercy of mercies; let him have the glory. Do ye think Noah was not deeply affected—Why was I preserved and not such a neighbour, Gen. viii. 20.

Labour to walk answerable to the mercy:

Cheerfully—against base fears. If Christ be thine, come what will, thou art safe.

Fruitfully—in all holiness, and new obedience, as saved ones.

SERMON XXXIX.

CHRIST IS OUR ALTAR.

Hebrews xiii. 10.

We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

By this altar we are to understand our Lord Jesus Christ, concerning whom the Christians may say, they have him, they have him as their *altar*. As for those that serve the tabernacle, that is, the obstinate wicked Jews, that would adhere to Moses, and retain still the ceremonial law, and the worship, and the carnal ordinances thereof, either entirely alone, and by itself, or in conjunction with gospel institutions, they have nothing to do with him, no right to eat of him, that is, to partake of gospel privileges by him.

Doct. That the Lord Jesus Christ is our altar; he is made of God to be so unto us; we are to call him by that name, and to own him as such.

Show, I. What kind of thing an altar is, and what use it was for, and that Jesus Christ is of the same use to us spiritually.

II. What are the peculiar properties of this altar, which distinguish it from all other ordinances.

III. The application.

I. I am to show what an altar was, and that the Lord Jesus is, spiritually, of the same use to us.

An altar was like a square table, bigger or less, according as it was made, to be used in worship. There were altars of remembrance, Exod. xvii. Josh. xxii. We read of altars which the heathen had, and made use of in the worship of their idol gods; and of altars used in the worship of the true God, Jehovah, blessed for ever.

The altars made use of in the worship of the true God, were either occasional, or fixed.

The occasional altars were such as were suddenly made, upon some particular occasion; and when that occasion was over, we hear no more of them. Such was that which Noah reared when he came out of the ark. The first we read of is in Gen. viii. 20. Abraham also, and Isaac, and Jacob, did all rear altars, in the several places to which they came in their travels, Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 18; xxvi. 25; xxxv. 6, 7. Still where they had a tent, God had an altar, which we bring as an instance of the antiquity of family worship—Among God's people, there were family altars.

The fixed altars were those that were made afterwards by God's own appointment; two by Moses, belonging to the tabernacle, and two by Solomon, belonging to the temple: both for the same purpose, only Solomon's were larger than those that Moses made, because in Moses's time the people of God were low and poor, and in straits in the wilderness, but in Solomon's time, rich and full, and much more numerous. Our altars should be as our circumstances are. The same measure of service will not suffice when we are increased and advanced by God, that might when we were low and poor. Of those to whom much is given, more is required. See the different sizes, in Exod. xxvii. 1. Compare it with 2 Chron. iv. 1. The one was five, the other twenty, cubits square.

These fixed altars, both in Moses's time, and So-

lomon's time, were two of different materials, and for different use, and diversely placed.

There was one made of wood covered with brass, to burn the beasts upon that were offered in sacrifice to God, which stood without doors in the courts.

There was another made of wood too, but covered with gold to burn incense upon, which stood within in the holy place. Now which of these is Christ; that is, by which of them was he typified and his undertaking for us represented, as our Redeemer and Saviour? By both. He is our alone altar: himself alone is that to us which both these altars were to them.

1. He is our altar for sacrifice. In his dying for us, he offered himself upon himself: he was himself the priest and the altar. There must be a sacrifice offered, or else no atonement. The sacrifice of bulls and goats, &c. would not do: then said he, Lo, I come, Ps. xl. 6, 7. The Son of God himself must be the sacrifice, no other could do. But who will be the priest then, where is one sufficient to manage this sacrifice? Priests were to be *mighty men of valour*. I will be priest myself, said he; and it was so. But where will an altar be had for the purpose, sufficient to bear the weight of this sacrifice? I myself, said he, will be the altar too; and he was so;—sacrifice, priest, and altar, Heb. ix. 14. Now this altar for sacrifice is to be considered,

(1.) In the matter of it. That was wood, covered with brass. Not wood outermost, for the fire would have burnt it, but wood within; brass without signifying the two natures of Christ, his divine nature, and his human nature. The brass of the divine nature secured and safe-guarded the wood of the human nature, else the fire of God's wrath had consumed it; and if so, no atonement could have been made. This was the *eternal Spirit, through which he offered himself without spot to God*. Heb. ix. 14.

(2.) In the figure and form of it. It was exactly four-square, as broad as it was long, and as long as it was broad. By whose order was this? Who appointed it so? The great God himself. This signified the stability and permanency of his undertaking; the square figure is stedfast and stable; *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*. Heb. xiii. 8. —a sure foundation.

(3.) In the placing of it. It stood without, in the outward court: noting, the sufferings of Christ to be here below in this world. Here it was that he gave himself to death, even the death of the cross. Or else, noting the particular place of his dying, which was without the gate, Heb. xiii. 12. Now this altar, and this sacrifice on it, is all the hope we have for reconciliation with God. He alone is our propitiation, 1 John ii. 2. God hath *set him forth* to be so, Rom. iii. 25. And, therefore, to him we must betake ourselves, upon all occasions, trusting to his merit and righteousness alone for peace and pardon: it is impossible we should have it any other way.

2. He is our altar also for incense, in his interceding for us. Note—

The matter of it—wood covered with gold; not with brass as the other, but with gold, pure gold—signifying the two natures of Christ, in both which he makes intercession, as God-man; hence with authority,—"*Father, I will* that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory," John xvii. 24.

Note—He is now a golden Christ, a glorified Redeemer. Heaven makes all gold that comes thither. There was a crown over the altar of incense. Observe,

The form of it: this as the other was four-square, Heb. vii. 25. "He ever liveth to make intercession." Compare Exod. iii. 2. Notice also,

The place of it, *within*, not without; in heaven, not on earth; in God's immediate presence, before the mercy-seat. There it is that his blood cries, and his merits cry—not from the ground, as Abel's, Heb. xii. not in humiliation but in exaltation, Zech. vi. 13. Hence we may take occasion,

(1.) To adore the infinite wisdom and free grace of God the Father, in contriving such a way of redemption for us, and in performing that contrivance. He himself appointed the altar; he himself appointed the Saviour, 1 Cor. i. 30. "*Made unto us of God* wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

(2.) To examine ourselves, what interest we have in this oblation, in this intercession, in this double altar. Is it ours? Can we say we have an altar? The way to know it is by inquiring what use we make of it. They only have interest in it that make use of it every day, in every thing,—for pardon for what we do amiss, for acceptation of what we do well. Many have none, nor desire none. Many have such as they should not. "Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images. Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images," Hos. x. 1, 2. "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing," Hos. viii. 12.

(3.) To exhort, by all means, to acquaint yourselves with this altar; to know Christ Jesus the Lord, as your only atonement, and only advocate; to fly to him as such, 1 John ii. 1, 2.

Further, concerning these altars, note,

1. It is said of each of them, They had four horns, one at each corner—for ornament, and for use.

The use was double. *To bind the sacrifice to.* The beast, from a principle of self-preservation, was

loth to die; they were forced to bind him, Ps. cxviii. 27. There were no need of cords to bind the blessed Jesus; he gave himself, *I am he.* That which bound him was his Father's will and his own inclination, his love to poor sinners. The call is to us, to bind all our sacrifices to the horns of this altar. So we must, or there will be no acceptance, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

For guilty malefactors to take hold of: as Joab, 1 Kings ii. 28. Adonijah, 1 Kings i. 50, 51. When we have sinned, what else have we to take hold of? He alone is our city of refuge. The horns were four, pointing to the four corners of the world, east, west, north, and south. Our Lord Jesus is a universal Saviour, to all nations and people. Whosoever will may come, Isa. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17. There are no rails about this altar.

2. It is said, the *altar did sanctify the gift*, Matt. xxiii. 19.

How sanctify it?

By being offered there in due circumstances, by a right priest, in a right manner; the gift received a kind of adherent holiness from the altar. Whereas before it was a common beast, like the rest of the flock or fold; now it became hallowed, it had a peculiar worth and value put upon it. The Lord did own it as his, and accept of it for atonement. So Christ, by his merit and mediation, sanctifies all our gifts, puts a worth and value on them before God. As they come from us they are worth nothing, Eph. i. 6. Therefore, in all our performances, as we must look to him as our alone temple, so we must present all upon him as our alone altar, 1 Pet. ii. 5. Heb. xiii. 15. The voice from heaven testified, Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5. "*In whom*"—not only *with* whom—"I am well pleased."

3. They that served at the altar did eat of the altar; —*others have no right to eat.* But we have; we that hold fast our profession stedfast. Compare 1 Cor. ix. 13; x. 18. When a beast was offered, unless it were a burnt-offering, wherein God had all, God had one part, the priests another, and the offerer another. Some think they are called peace-offerings because all these three did agree peaceably so to divide.

The offerer with his part did make a feast for his friends, and they did eat together.

The priest with his part maintained his family.

God's part was burnt upon the altar.

Now our altar is Christ: the same is also our sacrifice. Of him we have all a right to eat, and may each of us take our part in him, and be refreshed and nourished by him if we will. But multitudes will not eat, that is, will not believe in him; for eating is believing, John vi. 53, 54. By faith we make his death, and sufferings, and resurrection, and intercession our own, applying it to ourselves as we do the meat when we eat it. To this we invite all, but most make excuses, Matt. xxii. O, be yet persuaded. Consider, all other things are not food for you, Isa. lv. 1, 2. This is excellent food, none in the world fare better, than those that eat of this altar. It is most excellent fare, and great plenty of it. This is true also of the Lord's supper, in the nature and design of it; it is a feast upon a sacrifice. Christ is not sacrificed there, as the papists say, who therefore call it the sacrament of the altar, and him a prop priest that administers it. He was sacrificed once for all; (awhile ago, to symbolize with them, some would needs have the communion table in churches set altar-wise;) but there he feasts his family and friends upon the sacrifice, that is, his body and blood, and they are welcome, Cant. v. 1. But multitudes refuse to be his guests. They choose rather to serve the tabernacle, nay worse, to serve their sins, their humours, their prejudices. They will repent it one day.—The Jews prefer Moses, therefore as yet they have no right to eat.—As the uncircumcised had no right to the passover, so the unbaptized have none to the supper.

II. What are the peculiar properties of this altar?

1. It is the alone altar; besides it there is no other. Saints and angels are no altars for us; our own righteousness is not; nay, God's mercy, out of Christ, is not. None but Christ, none but Christ.

2. It is the appointed altar, appointed of the Father. He reared it, therefore there is ground of hope that he will accept us, if we come to him in this way, which is his own way.—Jeroboam's altar and Ahaz's altar were their own, not God's, therefore they were rejected.

3. It is a living altar. Other altars, as temples, were dead things, made of dead materials; but this lives, and lives for ever.

4. It is a lasting altar; after it there is to be no other. It needs no repairing, as other altars do.

III. The application.

Exhortation to all; to renounce all other, and to make Christ alone your altar, that is, in all your addresses to God to look at him alone for acceptance, Col. iii. 17. "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months," Rev. xi. 1, 2. Bishop Usher* expounds this of two sorts of people bearing the Christian name. Some that worship in the outer court. And some in the temple; at the altar: that is, some in the spirit rejoicing in Christ Jesus; others, in a formal, slighty, Christless way.

* This illustrious prelate was promoted to a bishopric in 1620, and in 1625 was made Archbishop of Armagh. He died in 1655.

—These are left out, to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles; others are measured, to be the Lord's marked, sealed, saved remnant.—O then see to this.

SERMON XL.

CHRIST IS OUR ALL.

COLOSSIANS iii. 11. latter part.

But Christ is all, and in all.

You have had an account of thirty-nine things, which Jesus Christ is made of God to us—foundation, food, root, raiment, head, hope, refuge, righteousness, light, life, peace, passover, portion, propitiation, freedom, fountain, wisdom, way, ensign, example, door, dew, sun, shield, strength, song, horn, honour, sanctification, supply, resurrection, redemption, lesson, ladder, truth, treasure, temple, ark, and altar. Now, to what purpose is it to multiply more particulars? I am this day, from this text, to show you, he is our *all*; or, as the apostle expresses it, our *all in all*. Twice, and but twice, is this phrase found in all the Bible; here, and in 1 Cor. xv. 28. Here, it is spoken of Christ, what he is in this world; there, of God the Father, what he will be to us in the other world,—our complete happiness alone, without any other person or thing to help.—And the one follows upon the other. If Christ be *all in all* with us now, the Father will be *all in all* to us to eternity;—else not.

DOCT. That Jesus Christ is a Christian's all, or, his all in all.

There are two other Scripture phrases to the same purpose,—*The root of the matter*, Job xix. 28. and *The one thing needful*, Luke x. 42. He alone is sufficient, himself without any other, to make us happy, and without him nothing else can do it.

What is a sick man's all in all? A physician.—A condemned man's? A pardon.—A captive's? A ransom.—A hungry man's? Food.—A thirsty man's? Drink.—A man's in debt? A surety.—This, in all respects, is our condition, and all this he is to us.

Show, I. Wherein Jesus Christ is all in all.

II. What we learn from it.

I. Wherein is the Lord Jesus Christ all in all? He is so to all persons—whether Jew, Greek, Barbarian; no advantage, no disadvantage. Are they in Christ, learned or unlearned, it is all alike. And he is so in all things.

1. In respect of the benefits we receive from him, and by him, and through him.

(1.) Jesus Christ is all in all in *election*, Eph. i. 4. He hath chosen us *in him*, in him as our *head*. The free grace and love of God is the head of election. God did, therefore, choose us, because he did love us; and he did therefore love us, because he would love us. No other reason can be given, John iii. 16. Deut. vii. 7, 8. But the head of the elect is Christ. God the Father gave them to him to be his body, and him to them to be their head. But for him, and his undertaking for us, there had been no such thing as electing of us.

We are *chosen* to be *conformed to him*, Rom. viii. 29. that being made partakers of his image and likeness, we might be loved of the Father. There is reason, therefore, to love him above all.

(2.) He is all in all in *creation*. But for him the world had never been; we ourselves had never been. We owe our being to him, John i. 3. Heb. i. 2. Young men are exhorted, Eccl. xii. 1. to remember their *Creator*—their Creator is Jesus Christ. We are all exhorted, 1 Pet. iv. 19. to commit our souls to him as unto a faithful Creator. Having made them, he will look after them.

(3.) He is all in all in providences; universal, to all; special, to his church; particular, to ourselves, John v. 22. He alone hath the ordering of all events that are concerning us. What pleases him, that he doth. If he be for us, it matters not who is against us.

(4.) He is all in all in redemption. He alone is the Redeemer, and there is no other but he; he paid the price alone; there are no joint purchasers with him, for the satisfying of God's justice. He fought the field alone with the devil, whose captives we were, and by destroying him, he rescued us, 1 Tim. ii. 5.

(5.) He is all in all in conversion. When the fulness of time is come that a poor soul is to be brought home to God, whose work is it, who manages it? Not the man himself for himself. How should he? He is dead in trespasses and sins. Not the minister; he is the tool, the instrument, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7. It is only the blessed Jesus, by his Holy Spirit. He is all in all in the work of conviction, and illumination, and humiliation; he opens the eyes, and he softens the heart, taking the stone away, and turning it into flesh.

(6.) He is all in all in justification. Who was ever justified without him? His righteousness is it alone wherein we appear before God—are acquitted, accepted. There is not a sin pardoned but for his merit sake. His name is the Lord *our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6. 1 Cor. i. 30—he is made *righteousness*. The quarrel between us and God is taken up by him alone; he is our peace, and he our propitiation, and he our advocate, 1 John ii. 2.

Sure, faith is all in all, Rom. v. 1.

If there were no Christ, there would be no faith.

(7.) He is all in all in consolation. The Spirit, who is the comforter, is of his sending, John xiv. 16—18. And how doth the Spirit comfort, but by telling the soul that Christ is ours. Say that, and you say enough.

(8.) He is all in all in preservation, Jude 1. We are not our own preservers, neither do we preserve one another. He alone keeps us, *keeps us from falling*, Jude 24. from falling away; from being tempted, from being overcome by temptation. Peter's faith had certainly failed, but for his praying for him, Luke xxii. 30, 31.

(9.) He is all in all for teaching. He is the best teacher, John iii. 2. Matt. xi. 29.

(10.) He is all in all for strength. If he be our arm, for doing—our back, for bearing—we can do, we can bear, all things.

(11.) He is all in all at death. There is no dying safely without him, without an interest in him. We shall certainly perish in that Jordan if he do not part the waters, and make a lane for us to go through, Ps. xxiii. 4. Never fear to look death in the face, if Christ be thine. There is no dying comfortably without him. It is he alone that takes the sting out, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56. This is the cordial of cordials in a dying hour. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," (1 John i. 7.) says one good man; "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit," (Rom. viii. 1.) says another. Even those that will not own him for their all in all living, will acknowledge him so dying: then, None but Christ, none but Christ.

(12.) He will be all in all at judgment. That is all in all to a man then, that will appear for him, and plead his cause, and bring him off. Now, that the blessed Jesus doth for those who are his.

He is the judge; the absolution must come out of his mouth.

He is the advocate, to plead on our behalf.—This is one of those for whom I shed my blood; he hath loved me and owned me, and now I will love him, and own him.

He is our plea also; our best plea, our only plea. What canst thou say, sinner, why sentence of condemnation should not pass upon thee? This I have to say, Christ hath died for me, yea, rather, is risen again. But so will every one say: what proof is there of this? I have accepted of him, believed in him, yielded myself to him, so have not others. Now if this must be our plea then, let it be our plea now, renouncing all others.

(13.) He will be all in all to eternity. What is the heaven of heaven but to be with Jesus? Phil. i. 33.—in the vision and fruition of him, to behold his glory, and to partake with him in it? For this he prayed, John xvii. 24. As if he himself could not be well there without us. To be sure we cannot without him.

2. In respect of duty to be done to him. As he alone is our Alpha, the beginning, the first, from whom all comes; so he alone is our Omega, the last, to whom all tends.

(1.) He is all in all to be known. Paul thought him so, and tells us as much for our imitation, 1 Cor. ii. 2. Phil. iii. 8—10. The understanding part of a man can find no solid satisfaction in the study of any thing else without him, but in him it is abundantly to be found.

"Si Christum noscis, satis est si cætera nescis.
Si Christum nescis, nihil est si cætera noscis."*

"In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Col. ii. 3. that is, not only as the subject, with whom it is, but as the object, about whom it is, conversant.

(2.) He is all in all to be chosen. He is not only the truest truth, but the best good. Nothing we can name is so worthy of our choice as he is. Creatures are, all of them, jointly and severally, but partial good: each one of them good for some one thing and no more; food will not clothe us; clothes will not feed us; but, lo, here is a universal good, good for every thing. Is not this the Christ? All in all for food; all in all for clothing.

(3.) He is all in all to be loved. It is one of the titles that the spouse gives him in the book of Canticles, *ch.* i. 7. *O thou whom my soul loveth!* and David, Ps. lxxiii. 25. There are many persons and many things that our love is closing with, and running out upon, but I dare say none of them all deserves it as the blessed Jesus doth. There is no danger of thy over-loving him.—Love him with all thy heart, soul, mind, might, and he deserves it, both upon the account of his loveliness in himself, and his lovingness to us, Ps. xlv. 2. 1 John iv. 19.

(4.) He is all in all to be desired. It is one of the names given him, The desire of all nations, Hag. ii. 7. that is, worthy to be desired by all; though actually desired but by very few. What say ye brethren, is your desire towards him? But what kind of desire is it? Warm desire; hearty, lively desire; like that of the hunted stag after the water-brooks, or the gaping earth after the rain? Can ye say, with the church, "The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee?" Isa. xxvi. 8. There is good reason why it should be so.

(5.) He is all in all to be delighted in, Phil. iii. 3. He is to be made our song, the head, the gladness, of our joy. Rejoice we may in the good things that God gives us; he is angry if we do not, Deut. xxviii. 47. but it must be with trembling, Ps. ii. 11. There is no trembling required here; we may let forth the utmost strength of our souls when we are solacing ourselves in him.

(6.) He is all in all to be trusted. As the strength

* If you know Christ it is enough, if you are ignorant of other things.—If you are unacquainted with Christ, it is nothing if you know every thing else.

of joy may be laid out on him, so the strength of faith and hope; and therefore of joy, because of faith and hope. He never failed any that put their trust in him, for he is faithful and true; in him all the promises of God are yea, and in him amen, 2 Cor. i. 20. He is all in all in the promises. Take any one, either concerning the life that now is, or that which is to come, and act faith upon it, according as it is, and try if it do not prove as I say.

(7.) He is all in all to be thought on. He is the most excellent, lovely, amiable, sweet, comfortable object that our thoughts can possibly expatiate upon. "How precious," says the Psalmist, "are thy thoughts unto me, O God," Ps. cxxxix. 17. The covetous man's money is all in all with him, to employ his thoughts about; the ambitious man's honour, and the sweet of it, as Haman; and the voluptuous man's sports and recreations; but the godly man says of Christ—He is my all in all.

(8.) He is all in all to be followed, as our pattern for imitation. We have before us a whole cloud of witnesses, but none like Christ, to be absolutely rested in, as a pattern, and sampler. He is a copy without a blot, Eph. v. 1, 2. Heb. xii. 2.

(9.) He is all in all to be preached, 2 Cor. iv. 5. And certainly it is the best preaching, the most affecting, the most edifying, the most saving. To read or hear a sermon, by a Christian minister, before a Christian congregation, and Christ not once named from the beginning to the end, how absurd is it! And yet too many such there are! Tell it not in Gath. How unlike herein to blessed Paul, who did breathe Christ in all his sermons.

(10.) He is all in all in the Scriptures. When you take your Bibles in hand to read a chapter, and have read it, reflect when you have done; and say, What is there of Christ here? He is the treasure in that field, the marrow in that bone, the manna in that dew, the diamond in that ring, the milk in that breast, John v. 39.

(11.) He is all in all in the sacraments. What is baptism without Christ? An insignificant ceremony; a laver without water. His blood for justification, and his Spirit for sanctification, are the main in that ordinance, 1 Pet. iii. 21. What is the Lord's supper without Christ? A table without meat, or drink. O take heed of Christless sacraments, not only the bread of the Lord, but the Lord the bread, should we press after.

(12.) He is all in all in sabbaths. The day is his, it bears his name; and yet how many come and go, and Christ is not once thought of.

(13.) He is all in all in praying. A Christless prayer is of as little worth as any of the other. As when we pray in our own strength, and not by the help of the Spirit of the Son;—and when we rely upon any thing but him, and his merit, and mediation; either for acceptance, or an answer.

II. What improvement are we to make of this subject?

1. For discovery. Here is a mark whereby to try ourselves—What think ye of Christ?

2. For reproof and admonition—to those to whom Jesus Christ is nothing at all.

3. For exhortation to all—to learn him—to live on him.

SERMON XLI.

CHRIST IS OUR ALL. (Continued.)

COL. iii. 11. latter part.

Christ is all, and in all.

MY brethren, it is now about eleven months since I began to show you what Jesus Christ is made of God to us in forty particulars. Some who were here then and since, are gone now into eternity, while we are yet alive before the Lord, within hearing of this joyful sound. That which the whole runs into, as the sum total, is this—That Jesus Christ is our all in all. Prove this, and there needs no more proving. Improve this, and we improve all. Now to prove it was the work of the last, to improve it is to be the work of this, sabbath.

The improvement we are to make, by way of inference from all that hath been said, is this:

I. It should put us upon solemn and serious self-examination. And I am glad it proves to be a sacrament day, because of the suitableness of that duty by way of preparation for that ordinance, 1 Cor. xi. 28. I hope you have done it already, for fear of the worst: if not, do it yet. For this once, shall *I* do it? Shall *I* put the question, and will you make the answer? not outwardly, with the voice, but inwardly, in your own consciences, as before the Lord. We shall be examined for certain shortly, in another manner, by another examiner. Doing it well now may prevent doing it then, for "if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged," 1 Cor. xi. 31. The thing to be inquired after is,—Whether Jesus Christ be our all or no, our all in all? Would you know? Look within. Inquire,

1. Have ye renounced all other things for your all, and have ye received him to be your all. This must be; God hath so ordered it. The terms are so laid; there is no remedy. If we look for any other we must seek another gospel. Now,

Is the renouncing act done? Have ye seen every thing else, besides Christ, to be so far from being likely to make an all for you, that it is even just nothing at all? and, therefore, have ye disowned, disclaimed it, saying, This is no portion for me, no propitiation for me, and so of the rest? Three things

are to be thus renounced—the devil, the world, and the flesh; likewise, our sins—our own righteousness—and all our worldly possession. Away with them. Two of these, the two first, God doth call for; and the third we must be willing to part with, if he *should*; else, how can Christ be said to be our all?

Is the receiving act done? Have ye heartily closed with the gospel offer, and taken Christ as your all? I do not mean in word and tongue only, for that will not do, but in deed and truth, inwardly, heartily? The hand is faith, John i. 12. I do not ask whether it were not a trembling hand, whether it were not done with some difficulty, as a thing against the grain; but whether it be *done*, really and truly done?

2. It may be known by the value we put upon him, and by the daily use we make of him.

That which is our all we esteem and prize above any thing else, let it be what it will. It is uppermost with us; it hath the pre-eminence. Now what say ye, brethren? Is Christ uppermost with you? Hath he in all things the pre-eminence? Col. i. 18. I have often showed you there is reason he should. He best deserves it, Ps. xlv. 2. It is the Father's will he should have it, John v. 23. And, if he shall not be uppermost, he will be nothing. Either he will be in the throne or not at all. It is said there was a motion made in the senate at Rome, that Jesus Christ might be taken in among the rest of their gods; answer was made, No: because if he were one he must be all; they must put away all the rest; he would be partner with none of them. The poor, low, mean thoughts that many people have of Christ, is a clear argument that he is far from being their all; they heed him not, neither his friendship nor his fellowship.

That which is our all we make use of daily, upon all occasions wherein it may be advantageous to us. A potion, a balsam, a friend, we so use. If we want any thing, our trust is to it, our reliance is on it. Now is Christ made use of by us daily, as our foundation to build on, our food to feed on, our refuge to flee to, our righteousness to rest in, our wisdom to guide us, our way to walk in, our lesson to learn, our ladder to climb by, our temple to look towards when we pray, our treasure to have recourse to when we want any thing, our ark to run into when the deluge threatens, our altar to offer all our gifts on? If he be not all this to us, who is, what is? We must have it somewhere. It is all one to have no Christ, as to make no use of him.

3. It may be known by our concernedness for him, and carriage towards him.

Concernedness for him. That which is a man's all he is careful to keep, cautious not to lose, Job ii. 4. The reason is, because his life is his all; when that is gone, all is gone with him. Now is Christ our life? Shall skin for skin, or skin after skin, and all we have, go for him, to get him, to keep him? What is his name, and honour, and glory, and gospel, and day, and book, and people, and ordinances to us? Are they all precious, more precious than thousands of gold and silver? If it go well with them, can we rejoice, and grieve if it be otherwise? It was so with David, as to ordinances, Ps. lxxxiv. 10. and as to his church and people, Ps. cxxxvii. 5, 6. Never call Christ thy all unless this be so. It may be known also by our

Carriage towards him. That which is a man's all he loves, delights in, is pleased and satisfied with. Is it so with thy soul towards Christ? Ps. lxxiii. 25. Dost thou love him above all? Are thy desires towards him, thy delight in him? Is he the head, the gladness, of thy joy? Dost thou see him to be enough for thee, and canst thou say, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee—to see thy power and glory. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness," Ps. lxiii. 1, 2, 5.—satisfied; None but Christ, none but Christ. Now by these marks we may try, if we will be faithful to our souls, whether Christ be made all this to us, or no, in these forty things which ye have heard of; that is, whether we be in Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. i. 30.—whether we be true believers; whether we be for heaven or no? I beseech you, be not unwilling to come to the touchstone: once well done and it is done for ever.

II. Here is ground for sharp reproof to those to whom other things are all in all, and Christ is nothing at all.

Are there any such? Certainly there are. But are there any such here? I wish there may not be. Why, who are they? They are of several sorts.

1. With the Jews to this day Moses is all in all. They are altogether for the ceremonial law, not believing that the Messiah is come, and hath put an end to it. Their condition is sad, John viii. 24. It is our duty to pity and pray for them. There were, it seems, among the Christians, some that were for both Christ and Moses too; but that would not do, Gal. v. 2—4. Those among ourselves with whom a pompous worship is all in all, are too like them.

2. With the papists, in matters of faith, the church is all in all. They believe as the church believes, though what that is they know not. They practise as the church enjoins, without inquiring—is it agreeable to the mind and will of him that is the King of the church? All for the mother, no matter for the Father: The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these, Jer. vii. 4. When Christ sent forth his apostles, their commission was not, Go teach what the church commands, but what Jesus commands. There are those who please themselves with drinking healths to the church.

3. With the same people, in matters of devotion, the Virgin Mary is all in all. They go on pilgrimage to her shrines; they vow to her; pray to her. For one chapel and altar that Christ hath, she hath twenty, forty. For one Pater noster there are ten Ave Mary's. They call her, queen of heaven, gate of glory, fountain of mercy, mother of all grace; their saviouress, mediatress, advocatress. In the Psalm where God and Lord is, they put Lady, and apply all the passages to her blasphemously; our Lady's psalter. They call to her to command her Son to do what they would have him to do. We are told, at Diep, in Normandy, there is an image of our Lady with a rod in her hand, to correct her Son if he refused her.

4. With the same people, in matters of power and supremacy, St. Peter is all in all. The popes call themselves the successors of St. Peter. If in any thing, it is in denying his Master, and in cutting off the ear of Malchus with his sword. Their church lands they call the patrimony of St. Peter; they count him the rock upon which their church is built, as if he were the foundation, not Christ. God deliver me from that church that is so founded. When the time of its fall comes, it will appear it was sand-built, not rock-built.

5. With some the light within is all in all. It is so

For guidance and direction. As it dictates they say we are to do; without trying by the written word, whereas—"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," Isa. viii. 20. Time hath been, said Paul, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth," Acts xxvi. 9.—and it is said, it shall be again, John xvi. 2. Also,

For justification and salvation. Some have said they expect it not by a Christ crucified at Jerusalem, but by obedience to the light within. By which I am well assured they will never have it, Acts iv. 12. We deny not a light within, but we deny its sufficiency in these two things.

6. With some, and those too many, their own righteousness is all in all. The merit of their own performances, what they are, have, do, suffer; their prayers, tears, alms-deeds, their innocency, and freedom from common pollutions that are in the world through lust, as the Pharisee, Luke xviii. These are the things they trust too; at least, in conjunction and copartnership with Christ. These with a little, to eke, from God's mercy, and Christ's merit—as the old ignorant Jews, Rom. x. 3. No; if this were so, how is Christ all in all! See the mind that Paul was of, and be like-minded; "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him," Phil. iii. 7—9.

7. With some carnal pleasures and sensual delights are all in all. Let them have their fill with these, and they have enough. Wine, and music, and dancing, and mirth, and jollity; sports, and pastimes, and recreations; horses, and hounds, and hawks, and whores; these their hearts are upon—rioting and drunkenness, (Rom. xiii.) making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.—And will this do? In sober sadness tell me, canst thou think thou art made and maintained for such a purpose? Eccl. xi. 9. Jam. v. 1, 5.

8. With some worldly wealth is all in all. Let them have money enough, and land enough; and much good may others have with God, and Christ, and heaven, with grace enough, and glory enough. Poor creature, what a miserable choice dost thou make! Prov. xxiii. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10, 17. See a sad instance of the consequences of this folly, Luke xii. 16—21.

9. With some a thing called reputation is all in all. To have a name amongst men, especially great men; to be in honour and power, and to have preferment. They will sell God and their souls to compass it, as one of the popes did to be pope. And what a vain, poor, empty thing is this when they have it—a puff, a bubble! How uncertain! of how short continuance! how many ways exposed!

10. With some, in one word, self is all in all. The great idol of the world is loving self, and seeking self, and pleasing self, and applauding self, Phil. ii. 21. O let us all take warning, and look to it. Our first lesson in Christ's school, is to deny self, Luke ix. 23.

III. Then suffer, I beseech you, a serious word of exhortation; it is to you all, without exception, one or other:

1. To make Christ, Christ, I say, and Christ alone, your all in all.

If you *make* him so to yourselves, it is the best evidence you can have, that God hath *made* him so to you. Make him so by a cordial and speedy closing with him, accepting of him as your foundation, food, root. Remember the forty things you have heard explained. I hope you will, though preached to you in a despised barn; nay, a barn which has been cursed and cursed again by such as pass by; but, the curse causeless shall not come. Teach them your children, and when they have learned them, explain them to them as well as you can. It will be a means to increase your own knowledge. God will make it so, Matt. xxv. 29.

Your baptismal vow binds you to it. Into what are ye baptized? Was it not into Christ? And did ye not put on Christ? Gal. iii. 27. A Christian, and Christless! how sad it is! A Christian, and Christ

nothing to him! Is it so with Mahometans?—with papists? Is the pope nothing to them?

If Christ be not all in all with you, he will be nothing at all to you—for justification, salvation.

If Christ be not all in all with you, you are nothing at all to God; only as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal;—your praying is nothing, your repenting is nothing.

2. To walk as those that have made Christ their all.

Circumspectly, watchfully. Learn Paul's lesson—"To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," Phil. i. 21. "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him," Col. iii. 17. Pray, repent, deny yourselves, give alms, suffer reproof; all in his name, strength, merit.

Comfortably, cheerfully. There is cause. Thou art a happy man. All is thine if Christ be thy all; "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation, Hab. iii. 17, 18. "Christ is all, and in all."

THE END.

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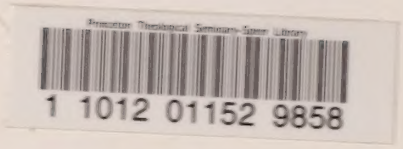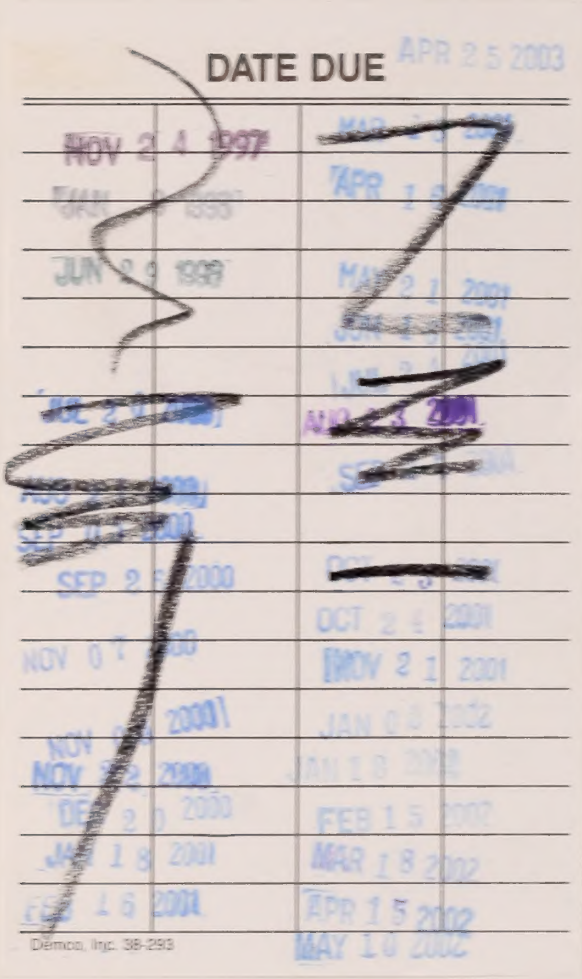
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